

## Model NATO Summit 2024

On 08 July 2024, 32 young professionals nominated by Allied Embassies in Washington DC or the George Washington University convened at the Elliott School of International Affairs for the first-ever Model NATO Summit.

The Model NATO Summit (MNS) aimed to offer selected young professionals the opportunity to experience the workings and decision-making process of NATO. Participants prepared for and participated in a dynamic simulation of NATO's principal political decision-making body, the North Atlantic Council at Heads of State and Government level.

Representatives from Allied Command Transformation, Strategic Issues and Engagement Branch chaired the NAC session by acting as the Secretary General, Chair of the Military Committee and Assistant Secretary General.

The MNS deliverable is an agreed NATO Youth Summit Declaration tabled by the Model Heads of State and Government. The Youth Declaration assembles the work of the participants and presents the Youth stance on NATO's way forward.

The next MNS will take place on the margins of next year's NATO Summit in the Netherlands.

## Model NATO Summit 2024 Youth Declaration

**Issued by the Model Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the Model North Atlantic Council in Washington DC on 11 July 2024.**

1. We, as Model Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance, have convened in Washington DC for the first time to outline the strategic direction for the Alliance from a Youth perspective. As war continues on the European continent, its implications for future generations are far-reaching and profound. Russia's unprovoked and ongoing war in Ukraine shows that peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area are at stake. As a defensive Alliance, we adhere to international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We are committed to upholding the rules-based international order.
2. We stand united in our commitment to the Alliance's principles of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Transatlantic unity remains the cornerstone of our collective security, underscoring the shared values and strong bond between Europe and North America.
3. We condemn Russia's ongoing war of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. This war has caused immense human suffering, economic instability, food scarcity, geopolitical tensions and disruptions to global stability. The impact is more present than ever across the Euro-Atlantic area, affecting present and future generations. In line with international law and regulations, Russia must be held fully accountable for its cruel actions.
4. We continue to face evolving threats in all operational domains and from all strategic directions. In particular, the rise of hybrid warfare, including disinformation campaigns, as well as geopolitical shifts and increased power competition, pose significant challenges to the security of our Allies and Partners. A lot of these challenges are fuelled by access to technology, hence a stronger focus on opportunities and challenges posed by emerging technologies is more critical than ever.

Against this backdrop the following has been agreed:

5. We stand united with Ukraine and its right to self-defence in the face of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression. Recognising the impact of Russia's aggression on Euro-Atlantic security, we support Allied investment in providing comprehensive aid, including military, humanitarian and economic support, as well as capacity-building mechanisms. We stand ready to support the full implementation of commitments and enhance efforts to train and reform the Ukrainian Armed Forces. In line with NATO standards, we are in favour of upscaling the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine and also incorporating additional mechanisms that will ensure long-term security assistance to Ukraine. We are committed to facilitating Ukraine's irreversible path to NATO membership when membership criteria are fulfilled.

6. We believe that Article 5 is an iron-clad commitment to defend every inch of Allied territory. In response to Russia's recent malign and aggressive hybrid activities against Allies, we support strengthening the deterrence and defence posture, especially on the Eastern Flank. These measures should include prepositioning stocks, delivered through pooling and sharing of costs and reducing the time it takes to procure and deliver critical resources and capabilities. We advocate for the full resourcing of regional defence plans and the execution of more joint exercises to increase NATO's readiness and preparedness. Furthermore, we believe that there is a need to enhance NATO's energy resilience by diversifying supply chains and expanding a NATO pipeline system to meet operational needs.
7. We express concern regarding the increased competition and militarisation by Russia and China in the High North. The strategic significance of the Arctic region for NATO's deterrence and defence posture has never been more profound. As melting ice in the High North opens new shipping routes, the region appears to be turning into a focal point for emerging economic and geopolitical opportunities. Further, the Arctic has increasingly turned into a pivotal area for our collective defence efforts, presenting opportunities for fostering cooperation and addressing emerging challenges, including climate change. In line with our 360-degree approach, we welcome Iceland's consideration to establish a NATO Strategic Direction-North Hub (NSD-N Hub) in Reykjavík. This Hub should enhance NATO's understanding of the High North's regional dynamics by consolidating expertise from various Centres of Excellence. It would also serve as a forum to discuss Arctic issues through an annual NATO Arctic Security Symposium. We recognise that investing in key capabilities and vigilance activities are essential to keep tensions in the Arctic low, thus we see a need to conduct large-scale military exercises in this region.
8. We acknowledge that NATO's deterrence and defence posture is underpinned by nuclear capabilities possessed by Allies. As long as operational needs require, Allies should continue to maintain their nuclear capabilities in accordance with their respective nuclear doctrines.
9. Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine has shown that peace, security and stability should not be taken for granted. In response, we support an increase in defence spending and enhancement of NATO's capabilities to meet the Alliance's new and emerging security challenges. We emphasise the importance of fair burden sharing to ensure NATO's collective defence, interoperability and operational effectiveness. While we recognise the progress made on defence spending, we encourage our governments to continue to increase defence spending to accelerate the implementation of the deterrence and defence commitments previously made, including the resourcing of regional defence plans adopted at the Vilnius Summit.
10. As part of NATO's investment pledge, we support continued focus on investing at least 20% of defence budgets on modernization. A robust and interoperable defence industry contributes to strengthening the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture. Considering the importance of interoperability and modernization of the Alliance, we should enable more vigorous and agile NATO-Industry cooperation and joint development of defence systems. We also encourage a defence trading regime that prioritises development and procurement of capabilities within NATO.

11. Public-private and academic partnerships are essential to accelerate military modernization through initiatives like the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) and the NATO Innovation Fund (NIF). We are committed to support cooperation on, and investment in, innovation, emerging technologies and capabilities to counter cyber and hybrid threats. We call for the establishment of a Technology Sovereignty Joint Task Force, responsible for investigating structural threats across the cyber domain and to critical infrastructure, as well as developing an Alliance-wide strategy to secure those domains. This Task Force should include a rotational Youth Ethics Delegate chosen from the NATO-wide Temporary Staff pool.
12. Climate change is a threat multiplier and key challenge for Allied security, impacting both current and future generations. We applaud continued reduction of greenhouse gas emissions within NATO's political and military structures and facilities, while integrating sustainable practices within our defence sectors. To strengthen our resilience, climate adaptation strategies should also be incorporated into our military plans, operations and infrastructure. Furthermore, we encourage the enhancement of public-private cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic Disasters Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC) to augment climate disaster responses. We should engage in collaborative efforts with our partners to address the global impacts of climate change, ensuring a more sustainable future.
13. The current security environment in which NATO operates emphasizes the importance of like-minded partners. In order to address global and emerging security challenges, our partner networks must continue to strengthen and expand. This should include increased cooperation with Indo-Pacific nations (Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea) as well as the Mediterranean and North Africa regions. When necessary, we support continued close cooperation with the European Union on a wide range of issues, including defence cooperation, cybersecurity, innovation, and crisis management. Moreover, we believe that our partnership with the African Union should be expanded to focus on youth engagement and outreach across Africa to fight disinformation and create awareness of NATO's mission and values. In order to gain public support to tackle issues such as irregular migration, freedom of navigation, protection of critical infrastructure and climate change, we believe that enhancing engagements with public audiences is necessary.
14. We are committed to NATO's Open Door Policy based on Article 10 of the Washington Treaty. We welcome any Euro-Atlantic state that shares NATO's principles and values and is committed to global security. However, we stress the importance of adhering to NATO's membership criteria, democratic ideals and the rule of law. In this spirit, we support the accession of Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Moldova, once they meet the Alliance's requirements. We encourage continuous engagement and practical support for aspiring members to enhance their defence capabilities and resilience against external threats.
15. We believe that there is a need to intensify NATO's outreach and engagement campaigns to foster a deeper understanding of the Alliance among future generations. Recent studies and surveys have shown that awareness of NATO, especially among younger demographics, remains low. Therefore, targeted and tailored campaigns are crucial for building trust, maintaining public support and enhancing resilience against disinformation. In line with NATO's gender and

diversity perspectives, these campaigns should include a strong educational component to inform citizens about NATO's mission and values. Recognising the significant role of social media in information flows, we believe that NATO's social media messaging and presence should be strengthened, including by the two NATO strategic military commands. Investigations should be conducted to identify foreign clandestine interventions seeking to influence public opinion.

16. We call for the establishment of a NATO Youth Council to foster greater involvement of Youth in NATO's decision-making process. Future generations are essential for the continuation and sustainability of our Alliance. Today's generation of Youth is the largest the world has ever known and exclusion from decisions affecting their future could potentially lead to disengagement from society, lack of trust in government and NATO, and the decline of democracies. In its advisory role, the NATO Youth Council would convene bi-annually. While one meeting should be held at NATO Headquarters in Brussels to discuss future challenges, the other should take place on the margins of the NATO Summit and discuss the current challenges and their impact on Youth. The Youth Council should consist of national Youth Delegates selected by each Allied nation on a rotational basis. In addition, the Youth Delegates will serve as vital educational resources for national Youth, informing about NATO's mission, actions and values.
17. We express our appreciation for the generous hospitality extended by the Kingdom of The Netherlands to host the next Model NATO Summit in The Hague in 2025.
18. With our decisions today, we have firmly set the direction for the Alliance's continued adaptation and transformation from a Youth perspective. In light of our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, NATO remains the strongest Alliance in history. Through our bond and our mutual commitment, we continue to safeguard the freedom and security of all Allies, as well as our shared democratic values, now and for future generations.