

Beat: Politics

## Europe and North America stand united in NATO

### Annual report of the NATO

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**USPA NEWS** - "We have entered an era of strategic competition. Authoritarian powers are challenging the rules based international system. The clearest example of this is President Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine. China's growing assertiveness and coercive policies also have consequences for our security. Other threats remain, including the continued threat of terrorism, cyber-attacks, disruptive technologies and the security impact of climate change," said on Tuesday the NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, during the official presentation of the Alliance's report for 2022.

"In the face of these challenges, Europe and North America stand united in NATO. We continue to adapt to this new reality with a stronger deterrence and defense and deeper relations with our partners around the world. We have supported Ukraine with around €150 billion of military, humanitarian and financial assistance," explained Jens Stoltenberg. "At our Madrid Summit in June 2022, Allies agreed a fundamental shift in our deterrence and defense, making it clear to the world NATO's determination to defend every inch of Allied territory. Allies also agreed a new Strategic Concept, NATO's guiding document, to reflect our new more dangerous world," he added.

The NATO's annual report claims that "President Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine is the biggest security crisis in Europe since the Second World War. It is not only a direct threat to the existence of Ukraine as a free and independent country, but to the entire rules-based international order. Putin must not win. If he does, it will show that aggression works and that force is rewarded. This would be dangerous for our own security, and for the whole world. This war did not start in 2022, it started in 2014, when Russia illegally annexed Crimea and entered eastern Ukraine. Since then, NATO Allies have trained tens of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers and supported its defense and security sector. NATO will continue to stand by Ukraine for as long as it takes. NATO Allies shared precise intelligence about Moscow's plans for an invasion long in advance."

According to the NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, "the bond between Europe and North America remains rock solid. More than 80% of citizens polled by NATO in 2022 believe that cooperation between our two continents on security matters is important." And the report underlined that "for more than 30 years, NATO tried to build a partnership with Russia. Despite this, over the past decade, Russia has continuously violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order. Russia's brutal and unlawful war of aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 has shattered peace and gravely altered the security environment. In light of its hostile policies and actions, NATO cannot consider Russia to be a partner. The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area."

"However, NATO remains willing to keep open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency. NATO does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia. In 2022, the Alliance continued to respond to Russian threats and hostile actions in a united and responsible way," they added.

In this report, NATO explained the concrete actions that the Alliance has taken to further adapt their Alliance politically and militarily to an ever-changing world. "It covers NATO's work and achievements throughout the year, including the Madrid Summit, the new Strategic Concept and NATO's unwavering and unprecedented support for Ukraine," said Jens Stoltenberg. In 2022, NATO commissioned surveys across all 30 Allies to understand their citizens' perceptions of NATO and to monitor trends in comparison to 2021. These show that overall support for the NATO Alliance, the transatlantic bond and collective defense is stronger than ever.

The Report also includes the details of estimated 2022 national defense expenditures for all 30 NATO Allies. 2022 saw the eighth consecutive year of increases in defense spending across European Allies and Canada. From 2021 to 2022, defense spending increased by +2.2% in real terms. In total, over the last eight years, this increase added USD 350 billion for defense.

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