



For Immediate Release
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Fact Sheet: 2008 NATO Summit

President Bush Acts to Strengthen And Expand Our NATO Alliance

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Today, President Bush is in Bucharest, Romania, to participate in the NATO Summit where Allied leaders will make important decisions to continue NATO's transformation to meet 21st Century challenges by adding new capabilities and new members committed to advancing freedom throughout Europe and beyond. Together, NATO Allies are conducting critical missions around the world, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kosovo, to build security and stability for the citizens of these young democracies. NATO will affirm that the door to Alliance membership remains open to European democracies that seek it and who meet the standards of membership.

At the Summit:

- **NATO will decide on whether to invite three Balkan nations – Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia – to join the Atlantic Alliance.** The United States strongly supports inviting these nations to join NATO. These countries have walked the difficult path of reform and built thriving free societies. They are already making important contributions to NATO missions, and their citizens deserve the security NATO membership brings.
- **The Alliance will also decide how to respond to requests by Georgia and Ukraine to participate in NATO's Membership Action Plan.** The United States has taken a clear position that NATO should welcome these countries into the Membership Action Plan, and NATO membership must remain open to all of Europe's democracies that seek it. NATO must make clear that it welcomes the aspirations of Georgia and Ukraine for membership in NATO and offers them a clear path forward toward that goal.
- **Leaders will decide whether to accept the requests of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro to begin an Intensified Dialogue with NATO.** This is a major step on the road to NATO membership, and the U.S. fully supports this action. At the Summit, NATO leaders will also make clear that the door to closer cooperation with NATO is open to Serbia as well.

In Afghanistan, NATO Forces Are Bringing Honor To Their Uniforms And Pride To Their Countries

NATO's role in Afghanistan has expanded significantly. Since NATO took over the International Security Assistance Force in 2003, NATO's presence in Afghanistan has grown from a small force operating only in Kabul to a force of over 47,000, leading operations throughout the country.

NATO forces are helping Afghans take increasing responsibility for their own security. With NATO's help, the ranks of trained Afghan soldiers have increased from 33,000 last year to 55,000 today. Afghan forces are now leading many important combat operations.

Our Alliance must maintain its resolve and finish the fight in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, which was once a safe haven for al-Qaeda, is now a democracy where boys and girls are going to school, new roads and hospitals are being built, and people are looking to the future with new hope.

- France is sending additional forces to Afghanistan.
- The United States is deploying an additional 3,500 Marines.
- Romania and the United Kingdom are also adding forces in Afghanistan, as are several other allies.

Many NATO Allies Are Also Fighting The Forces Of Terror In Iraq

During the Summit this week, Allied leaders will reiterate their support for the Government and people of Iraq and to assist with the development of Iraqi Security Forces.

- **Currently, 10 NATO nations have forces supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.** NATO forces from 14 nations plus Ukraine are also serving in Iraq as part of the NATO training mission (NTM-I). NATO has trained more than 7,000 Iraqi officers so far and Iraq has asked NATO to continue and expand its mission.
- **During the Summit, the NATO Alliance will endorse a new NATO-Iraq partnership to allow more Iraqi officers to attend NATO schools and seminars.** Preparing Iraqi officers to lead their troops in battle will help them defeat the terrorists and extremists, and defend their young democracy.

The NATO Alliance Is Taking On Other Important Missions Across The World

NATO is an expeditionary alliance that is sending its forces across the world to help secure a future of freedom and peace for millions.

- In the Mediterranean, NATO forces are patrolling the high seas to combat terrorism as part of Operation Active Endeavor.
- In Kosovo, NATO forces are providing security and helping a new democracy take root in the Balkans.
- In Darfur, NATO has airlifted African Union peacekeepers and provided them with training to protect the people of that troubled region. The Alliance stands ready to provide further assistance to the UN-African Union forces.

One of the most important steps to protect the citizens of NATO nations is the deployment of new capabilities to defend against ballistic missile attack. Today, dangerous regimes are pursuing powerful capabilities and building ballistic missiles that could allow them to deliver the world's most dangerous weapons to the capitals of free nations.

- **The need for missile defense in Europe is real. Iran is pursuing technology that could be used to produce nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles of increased range.**
 - The U.S. is working with NATO to develop Allied capabilities to defend against short- and medium-range attacks from the Middle East.
 - The United States is also working with Poland and the Czech Republic to deploy a system that could defend countries in Europe from a limited, long-range attack from the Middle East.
 - The U.S. has invited Russia to join in this cooperative effort to defend Russia, Europe, and the United States against an emerging threat that could affect us all.
- **The United States has deployed initial missile defense capabilities in the Pacific that can protect the U.S. from limited missile attack including threats emanating from Northeast Asia.** Now, the U.S. is deploying elements of this system to Europe so we can defend against attacks emanating from the Middle East.

Over the past seven years, NATO has taken decisive action to transform the capabilities of the NATO alliance.

NATO has:

- Created a new NATO Transformation Command to ensure that NATO is preparing for the threats of the future.
- Created a new NATO Response Force to ensure the Alliance can deploy rapidly and effectively anywhere in the world.
- Launched a new Strategic Airlift Initiative to ensure that NATO members have a dedicated fleet of aircraft their forces need to deploy and sustain themselves over great distances.
- Created a new NATO Special Operations Coordination Center in Belgium to increase the interoperability and effectiveness of our special forces.

During the Summit, President Bush will encourage European partners to increase their defense

investments to support both NATO and European Union operations. The U.S. believes if Europeans invest in their own defense, they will also be stronger and more capable when we deploy together.

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