

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 251

Celebrating the 2023 NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, and expressing priorities related to transatlantic security and the NATO Strategic Concept.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 14, 2023

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. TILLIS)
submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee
on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 2023 NATO Summit in Vilnius, Lithuania,
and expressing priorities related to transatlantic security
and the NATO Strategic Concept.

Whereas the United States signed the North Atlantic Treaty,
done at Washington, DC, April 4, 1949 (commonly
known as the “Washington Treaty”), to provide collective
security and strengthen security and political cooperation
with allies of the United States;

Whereas the United States and its allies recognized that se-
curity cooperation was a necessary precursor to enhanced
political and economic stabilization and engagement;

Whereas, in 1991, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
(commonly known as “NATO” and the “Alliance”)
issued an unclassified Strategic Concept for the first

time, outlining the basic principles and plans of the Alliance to address security challenges and strategic threats;

Whereas, in 1994, NATO established the Partnership for Peace to enable partner countries to share information and modernize and democratize their political and security infrastructure with NATO;

Whereas, in 1999, NATO established the Membership Action Plan to facilitate the accession of aspiring member countries by providing advice, assistance, and support in meeting the political and military principles of the Alliance;

Whereas any country that wishes may pursue NATO membership consistent with the 1995 Study on Enlargement and article 10 of the Washington Treaty by—

- (1) pursuing formal accession talks with the Alliance;
- (2) sending a letter of intent to NATO, including a timeline for the completion of necessary reforms recommended by the Alliance;
- (3) working with member countries so that accession protocols are signed and ratified by such member countries;
- (4) receiving an invitation from the Secretary General of NATO to accede to the Washington Treaty; and
- (5) acceding to the Washington Treaty in accordance with national procedures and by depositing instruments of accession;

Whereas, following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, NATO invoked article 5 of the Washington Treaty for the first time, calling on the Alliance to provide for collective defense;

Whereas Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, which were among the first Eastern European nations to declare independence from the Soviet Union, formally joined NATO in 2004 and have provided notable support for NATO operations, including—

- (1) operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;
- (2) operations that have been enhanced in response to increased threats; and
- (3) operations in response to the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation in February 2022;

Whereas, in 2006, the Alliance agreed that each member country would commit at least 2 percent of their Gross Domestic Product to defense spending to ensure sustained readiness;

Whereas the Alliance consists of 31 independent member countries, including Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States;

Whereas, in response to the unprovoked and illegal war on Ukraine by the Russian Federation, Finland and Sweden applied for NATO membership in May 2022;

Whereas, during the 2022 NATO Summit in Madrid, Spain, NATO formally extended an invitation to Finland and Sweden to join the Alliance;

Whereas Finland formally ascended to the Alliance on April 4, 2023, as the most recent country to join NATO;

Whereas the accession of Sweden into NATO awaits final ratification by Hungary and Türkiye;

Whereas NATO—

(1) leads operations in Kosovo and other countries in the Mediterranean region to maintain peace and stability;

(2) supports operations around the world, including in Europe and the African Union, to advance priorities of the Alliance; and

(3) facilitates a training mission in Iraq to develop the capacity of the security infrastructure of Iraq;

Whereas, since the further invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on February 24, 2022, which followed the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014, the Alliance is the strongest and most united it has ever been;

Whereas, as the Russian Federation illegally attacks the sovereignty of Ukraine, individual members of the Alliance have contributed essential military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, including through the Ukraine Defense Contact Group established by the United States;

Whereas, in response to the brutal war on Ukraine by the Russian Federation, NATO enhanced its presence on the eastern flank of the Alliance by reinforcing existing multinational battlegroups and establishing new multinational battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia;

Whereas efforts by NATO to bolster the security of the eastern flank and to counter aggression by the Russian Federation followed efforts in 2016 by establishing NATO

forward presences in the northeast and southeast of the Alliance;

Whereas the Alliance recognizes the strategic importance of the Black Sea region, which the Russian Federation has tried to weaponize, including by attempting to block shipments of grain from Ukraine through the Black Sea, bringing the world to the brink of a global food security crisis;

Whereas, for the first time in history, the 2022 NATO Strategic Concept recognized that the stated ambitions and coercive policies of the People's Republic of China challenge the interests of the Alliance;

Whereas the Alliance recognizes that deepening ties between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation have resulted in immediate and long-term challenges to the rules-based international world order;

Whereas NATO is prepared to respond to existing and emerging threats to transatlantic security;

Whereas Vilnius, Lithuania, will host the 2023 NATO Summit following the 700-year jubilee of the city on January 25, 2023;

Whereas the 2023 NATO Summit will highlight the leadership of the Baltic States in NATO and as supporters of democratic values globally;

Whereas Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are among the top 5 per capita contributors of assistance to Ukraine;

Whereas, despite continued belligerence by the Russian Federation, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have welcomed exiled opposition leaders from the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation;

Whereas the choice of Vilnius as the location for the 2023 NATO Summit underscores the Baltic States as vital NATO members and further demonstrates the strength of the Alliance; and

Whereas the 2023 NATO Summit is an opportunity to build upon the work of previous summits to continue strengthening the Alliance and pave the way for new NATO member countries that can join in upholding democratic values: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) reaffirms that, for 74 years, the unity and
3 strength of North Atlantic Treaty Organization
4 (commonly known as “NATO” and the “Alliance”)
5 has contributed to peace and stability in Europe and
6 around the world;

7 (2) celebrates that the 2023 NATO Summit
8 will be held in Vilnius, Lithuania, on July 11 and
9 12, 2023;

10 (3) acknowledges individuals around the world
11 who have served in NATO missions and operations
12 since the Alliance was founded;

13 (4) supports the sovereignty of all nations to
14 decide whether to pursue membership to the Alli-
15 ance;

16 (5) urges Hungary and Turkiye to ratify the
17 accession of Sweden to NATO without further delay;

1 (6) recognizes that Sweden would bring new
2 and unique capabilities to NATO, which would en-
3 able the Alliance to respond to existing and emerg-
4 ing threats to transatlantic security;

5 (7) encourages the Alliance to operationalize
6 the 2022 Strategic Concept, including by countering
7 the aggressive and coercive behavior exhibited by the
8 People's Republic of China;

9 (8) expresses support for the decision of NATO
10 to open an office in Tokyo, Japan, to address pacing
11 challenges to transatlantic security in the Indo-Pa-
12 cific Region;

13 (9) asserts that NATO members should con-
14 sider the commitment to spend 2 percent of Gross
15 Domestic Product as the lowest percent contribution
16 to ensure the sustainability, resilience, and readiness
17 of the Alliance;

18 (10) emphasizes that the Alliance should con-
19 tinue to support Ukraine as it fights for freedom,
20 sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and

21 (11) reaffirms the commitment of the United
22 States to meet obligations as a member of the North
23 Atlantic Treaty, done at Washington, DC, April 4,
24 1949.

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