

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024

Statement on the 75th Anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
April 4, 2024

Today we celebrate a historic milestone: the 75th anniversary of NATO.

This is the greatest military alliance in the history of the world. But it didn't happen by accident, nor was it inevitable. Generation after generation, the United States and our fellow allies have chosen to come together to stand up for freedom and push back against aggression, knowing we are stronger and the world is safer when we do.

We saw this during the cold war, as we stood united against the forces of Soviet totalitarianism. We saw it again when America was attacked on September 11, 2001, and our allies invoked NATO article 5—an attack against one, is an attack against all—for the first and only time in history. And we've seen it over the last 2 years, as allies have stepped up to support the brave people of Ukraine in the face of Russia's vicious invasion, the largest war in Europe since World War II.

Today, NATO is larger, stronger, and more determined than ever before. We've added Finland and Sweden to the alliance, two democracies, with two highly capable militaries. Over the past 3 years, our NATO allies have increased their own annual defense spending by almost \$80 billion. As our adversaries have plotted to break our remarkable unity, our democracies have stood unwavering. And this July, the United States will host a Washington NATO summit, bringing together our allies to modernize our defense and deterrence.

Now, like generations before us, we must choose to protect this progress and build on it. We must remember that the sacred commitment we make to our allies—to defend every inch of NATO territory—makes us safer too and gives the United States a bulwark of security unrivaled by any other nation in the world. And like our predecessors, we must ask ourselves: What can we do—what must we do—to create a more peaceful future?

Seventy-five years ago today, after signing the treaty that brought NATO into existence, President Harry Truman said: "If there is anything certain today, if there is anything inevitable in the future, it is the will of the people of the world for freedom and for peace." I believe that will is stronger today than ever before, and in the years ahead, I know we'll prove it.

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