

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

MetMUNC XLIX

Topic: NATO Reform

Chairpeople: Joshua Feller and Leah Reed



NATO, as one of the largest global alliances, is constantly trying to improve its various policies to support all thirty of its member countries, as well as its non-member country allies. This requires constant consideration on ways to reform and continue to grow. NATO has gone through three stages of reform and purpose, stage one being the Cold War, stage two being very expansion and counter-terrorism

focused, and stage three being refocused on Russia once more. It is thought by some that stage four will come as soon as 2030 and have an emphasis on cyber capabilities alongside Russian threats¹. But Russia is not the only



The NATO Military Committee meeting to discuss how NATO's defences can be improved.

issue that plagues modern-day NATO. The controversies centered around the so-called “2% Rule,” which states that NATO countries should be spending 2% of their GDP on defence to prevent defence cuts, are plentiful, and NATO expansion on the fronts of member countries and

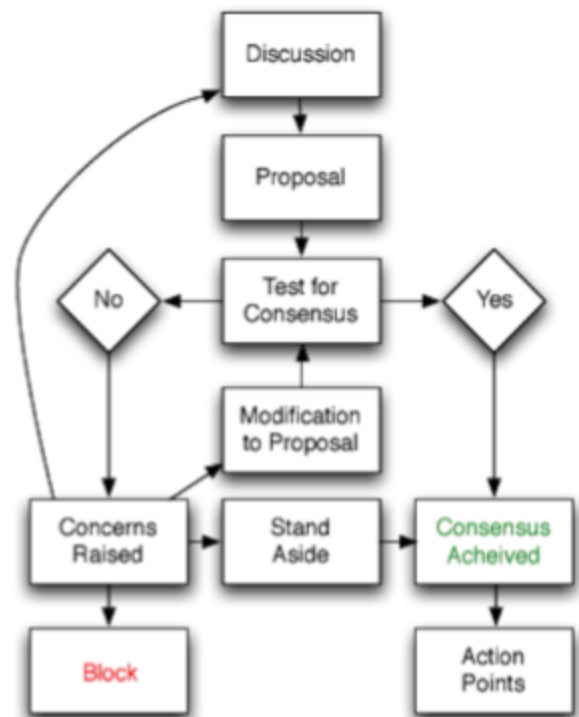
¹ <https://www.politico.eu/article/nato-at-70-where-next/>
Graphic 1: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49633.htm

alliances is something that needs to be considered. NATO's command structure on how they make decisions should not be set in stone, and it is worth considering if it could be structured in a way more beneficial to member countries. China is also a newer threat, and we have little foreign policy regarding them¹. It is up to us to decide what reforms should be considered to help the current and future stability of NATO.

Command Structure and Decision Making

NATO at its core is an organization built on the defense of nations through the use of military force, thus each nation contributes in some way or form, The question is who is truly in charge? Obviously with each nation

contributing different amounts of materials, armaments, and personnel each with different ranks, there are going to be conflicting heads on how resources should be distributed, personnel are ranked and decisions about what operations should be performed.² The decisions originate with the North Atlantic Council (NAC) which is the main decision making body within NATO dealing with all issues with the exception of nuclear matters.³ All decisions made by the organization is through the



The decision process used by the North Atlantic Council

² https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_75565.htm?selectedLocale=en

³ <https://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2006/hb-en-2006/Part2.pdf>

consensus of all member nations.⁴ This process, while it may leave all nations on the council happy, will slow down decisions as every nation needs to approve of the events or a single nation can block something agreed upon by the other 29. This especially is an issue with nations that don't reach the 2% rule (see next paragraph) who demand a say in how resources are distributed. The highest military official known as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), traditionally a US commander, is generally in charge of coming up with advice and battle plans for any operation agreed upon by the NAC.⁵ This idea works in theory, however, on the ground and the sea most troops are led by a commander from their home nation. This issue comes ahead when two nations have conflicting ideas on how the organization should be done and how to keep allies outside of NATO happy. An example of this is the conflict between France and Turkey in operation Sea Guardian. It is the belief of some nations that decisions should be made more centralized while other countries believe it should be more decentralized.

The 2% Rule

In 2006, the NATO Defence Ministers all agreed the NATO member countries should be spending at a minimum, 2% of their GDP on defence, but now in 2020, fourteen years later, a mere nine countries actually meet this guideline⁶. Of NATO's thirty member countries, the United States defence spending accounts for more than two thirds of money spent. Though not all of this is focused on NATO goals, and the US has military interests in other regions of the world that parts of their defence budget goes towards, the alliance still relies on them for

⁴ <https://www.nato.int/wearenato/how-are-decisions-taken-nato.html>

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https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50110.htm#:~:text=SACEUR%20is%20appointed%20by%20the,from%20one%20to%20eight%20years.

⁶ https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_11/20191129_pr-2019-123-en.pdf

intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; air-to-air refuelling; ballistic missile defence; and airborne electronic warfare⁷. There are many questions about if the 2% rule is fair if the majority

of countries are not following

it, or if it should exist at all,

for it gives no guarantees that

the 2% will be spent

efficiently or wisely. Some

argue that instead of having a

blanket guideline of 2% with

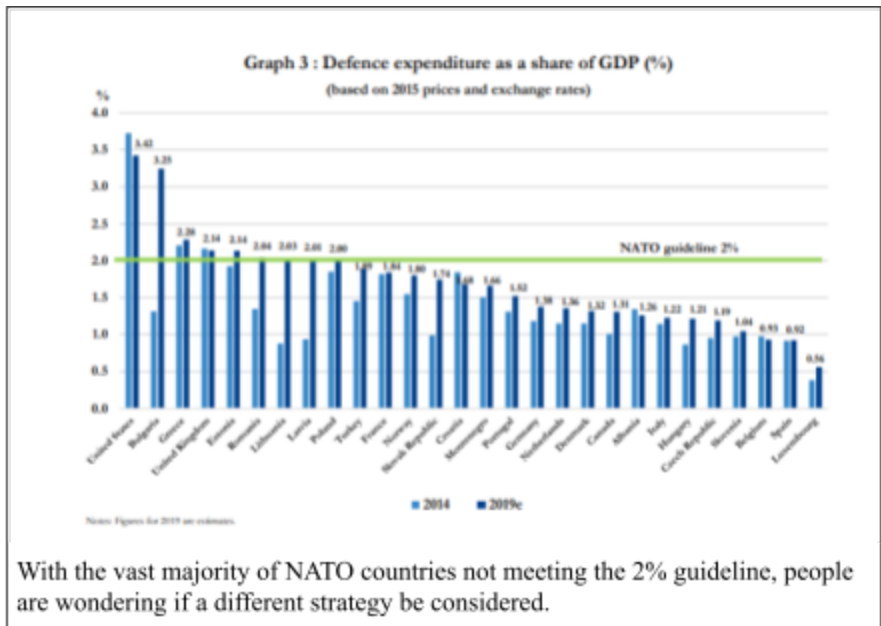
no guarantees that it will be

spent in the countries best

interests, there should be guidelines specific to each NATO member country. It is thought by

some that NATO commanders should take the time and go in detail on each of the thirty

countries and what they should be spending⁸.



The Expansion of the NATO alliance

Currently NATO has 30 members, far from its 12 founding members back in 1949.⁹ With the expansion of NATO eastwards towards the main enemy of its founding, there is a question of where does NATO expand now. Under the founding treaty of NATO, Article 10 states that “The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, invite any other **European State** in a position to further

⁷ https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_67655.htm

⁸ <https://www.csis.org/analysis/nato-going-2-non-solution-meaningful-planning>

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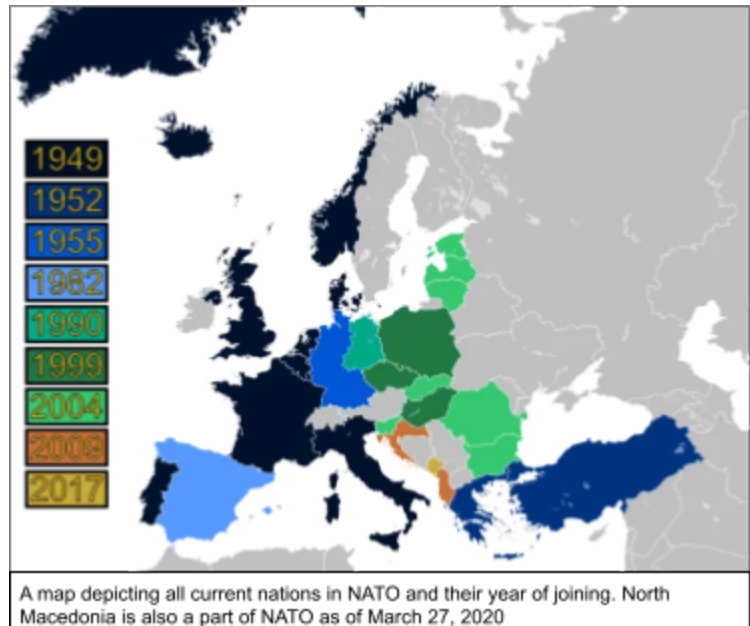
https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm#:~:text=At%20present%2C%20NATO%20has%200,Kingdom%20and%20the%20United%20States.

the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to accede to this Treaty.” and of course most European Nations are already in NATO with the exceptions of Switzerland, Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, Malta, Serbia and Sweden.¹⁰ NATO also has the ability to give a nation a Major

Non-NATO ally (MNNA) status which provides certain benefits in the areas of defense trade and security cooperation.¹¹

The members with this MNNA status include Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines,

Thailand, and Tunisia.¹² Some members, however, are hoping to secure the active involvement of some of the listed countries. President Trump of the United States has repeatedly suggested that Brazil should be offered full NATO membership. Donald Trump was not the first, nor the last to suggest the expansion of this alliance, but with the United States constantly urging nations to meet other requirements, perhaps new nations will reintroduce commitment to the organization and ease the weight on several nations.



¹⁰ https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm

¹¹ [https://www.state.gov/major-non-nato-ally-status/#:~:text=Major%20Non%2DNATO%20Ally%20\(MNNA,defense%20trade%20and%20security%20cooperation.&text=While%20MNNA%20status%20provides%20military,commitments%20to%20the%20designated%20country.](https://www.state.gov/major-non-nato-ally-status/#:~:text=Major%20Non%2DNATO%20Ally%20(MNNA,defense%20trade%20and%20security%20cooperation.&text=While%20MNNA%20status%20provides%20military,commitments%20to%20the%20designated%20country.)

¹² <https://www.state.gov/major-non-nato-ally-status/>

Foreign Policy Regarding China

China poses a new and unique threat to NATO, but also has many potential opportunities. Technology companies in China, most notably Huawei, are some of the pioneers in 5G technology that could revolutionize communication. However, due to vague wording of Chinese laws, there is a very real concern that Beijing could use these companies to steal private information. It is difficult to deny the threat that China poses through cyber-espionage, intellectual property theft, infiltration of critical infrastructure, debt manipulation, and disinformation, but it isn't hard for a country to turn a blind eye to these threats for the economical gain China brings¹³. China has recently been first mentioned in NATO documents, and though the wording is a bit timid, its being mentioned at all is a huge deal, seeing as many countries don't want to risk the economic hurt that withdrawing from China would cause. It shows that for the first time, China is officially on NATO's radar¹⁴. Though the United States has been eager to push for more restrictions on China, countries like France and Germany have influenced the softer language used when announcing the newer watch of China and their products by NATO. Whether we decided to trust or crack-down on Beijing, a more concrete policy regarding China is clearly needed.

Where is NATO going now

The question on how to fix the many issues and disagreements now falls upon you, a select group of delegates, in order to create a more effective and efficient organization. Whether

¹³ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/08/china-nato-hybrid-threats-europe-cyber/>

¹⁴ <https://warontherocks.com/2020/02/china-brought-nato-closer-together/>

it be punishments for not reaching the 2%, pursuing a more aggressive stance against NATO's enemies, trying to take a more diplomatic route, changing who is in charge of NATO troops and ships, changing the way organization is run, or debating whether or not article 10 should be removed to allow for new members or have NATO stay in Europe, it is our hope that we will be able to solve these problems.

Questions to Consider:

1. Has your country ever disagreed or gone against NATO decisions?
2. Do you think that the 2% rule is a good guideline for countries' defence spending, or should the rule be reexamined?
3. Does your nation have significant alliances with other countries outside of NATO
4. How closely do you think that Chinese movements should be monitored?
5. Is your country having thoughts about leaving the alliance and if so why?
6. Does your country want a bigger say in how decisions are made our believe command should be under NATO rather than their home country?

Helpful Links:

1. <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/structure.htm>
2. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/nato-going-2-non-solution-meaningful-planning>
3. https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10296?seq=7#metadata_info_tab_contents
4. <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/huawei-chinas-controversial-tech-giant>

5. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/nato-enlargement-moving-forward-expanding-the-alliance-and-completing-europes-integration/>