

*Guidelines for the Alliance's Force Posture*

1. To implement the Alliance's fundamental security tasks and the principles of its strategy, the forces of the Alliance must continue to be adapted to meet the requirements of the full range of Alliance missions effectively and to respond to future challenges. The posture of Allies' forces, building on the strengths of different national defence structures, will conform to the guidelines developed in the following paragraphs.

2. The size, readiness, availability and deployment of the Alliance's military forces will reflect its commitment to collective defence and to conduct crisis response operations, sometimes at short notice, distant from their home stations, including beyond the Allies' territory. The characteristics of the Alliance's forces will also reflect the provisions of relevant arms control agreements. Alliance forces must be adequate in strength and capabilities to deter and counter aggression against any Ally. They must be interoperable and have appropriate doctrines and technologies. They must be held at the required readiness and deployability, and be capable of military success in a wide range of complex joint and combined operations, which may also include Partners and other non-NATO nations.

3. This means in particular:

(i) that the overall size of the Allies' forces will be kept at the lowest levels consistent with the requirements of collective defence and other Alliance missions; they will be held at appropriate and graduated readiness;

(ii) that the peacetime geographical distribution of forces will ensure a sufficient military presence throughout the territory of the Alliance, including the stationing and deployment of forces outside home territory and waters and forward deployment of forces when and where necessary. Regional and, in particular, geostrategic considerations within the Alliance will have to be taken into account, as instabilities on NATO's periphery could lead to crises or conflicts requiring an Alliance military response, potentially with short warning times;

(iii) Until such time as nuclear forces are removed from the Alliance force posture, such forces will be based only on the territory of the three Nuclear Weapon State Allies;

(iv) that NATO's command structure will be able to undertake command and control of the full range of the Alliance's military missions including through the use of deployable combined and joint HQs, in particular CJTF headquarters, to command and control multinational and multiservice forces. It will also be able to support operations under the political control and strategic direction either of the WEU or as otherwise agreed, thereby contributing to the development of the ESDI within the Alliance, and to conduct NATO-led non-Article 5 crisis response operations in which Partners and other countries may participate;