

Departamento de Seguridad Internacional y Defensa

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Chairman's Statement

Meeting of the NATO-Russia Council at the level of Ministers of Defence NATO Headquarters, Brussels, 13 June 2008

The NATO-Russia Council met in Brussels at the level of Defence Ministers on 13 June to discuss defence and military cooperation and current international security issues.

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the further development of practical cooperation and, in this context, welcomed Russia's planned contribution of the RFS LADNIY to Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR foreseen for later this year. Ministers regarded this third deployment of a Russian vessel in NATO's maritime anti-terrorist operation in the Mediterranean as an example for enhanced operational cooperation and a signal of the NRC's continuing commitment to the fight against terrorism.

While acknowledging that NRC practical cooperation has not yet achieved its full potential, Ministers noted positive developments on Theatre Missile Defence (TMD), progress toward initial operational capability of the NRC joint project to counter terrorist threats to civil aviation (the Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI)), and continuing efforts toward developing logistical interoperability. Ministers renewed their commitment to completion of an Air Transport Framework Agreement as soon as possible, which could make the Russian Federation's significant strategic airlift capability available for future joint efforts. Ministers also welcomed the progress made in the area of search and rescue at sea and, in particular, Russia's successful participation in the recent NATO submarine search and rescue exercise BOLD MONARCH 08.

Ministers reaffirmed the NRC's commitment to greater operational cooperation and endorsed the NRC Long Term Vision for Defence and Military Cooperation. The Long

Term Vision provides a guidance framework for practical defence and military cooperation for a 10 to 15 year period and will support the development of a capacity, given a political decision, for effective joint action. As part of their review of ongoing cooperative initiatives, Ministers also endorsed the 2007-2008 Progress Report on Interoperability and tasked the NRC to address obstacles to further progress in developing interoperability between forces of Russia and NATO nations.

Ministers also discussed a range of current international security issues, including Afghanistan, CFE, missile defence, and the situation in the Western Balkans. While acknowledging disagreements on some issues, they reaffirmed the NRC's value as a forum for a constructive exchange of views. Ministers expressed strong common interest in the establishment of peace and stability in Afghanistan. They welcomed toward that end arrangements to facilitate land transit through Russian territory of goods in support of ISAF, and the decision to make the NRC Project for Counter-Narcotics Training of Afghan and Central Asian Personnel an ongoing initiative. Ministers reiterated their commitment to pursue increased practical cooperation even as common ground is sought on complex political issues.