

**Debate Pack**

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# British support for Ukrainian membership of NATO

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# 1

## Background

A Westminster Hall debate on British support for Ukrainian membership of NATO has been scheduled for Wednesday 8 December 2021, from 9:30-11:00am. The debate has been initiated by Daniel Kawczynski MP.

### Situation around Ukraine: “fluid and unpredictable”

The situation in and around Ukraine “[remains fluid and unpredictable](#)” according to NATO’s Secretary General. NATO Foreign Ministers discussed Russia’s intentions towards Ukraine, amid recent build-up of Russian troops along Ukraine’s border, at a meeting on 30 November in Latvia.

Commenting before the meeting, Liz Truss, the UK Foreign Secretary, said any aggressive action by Russia would be a “[strategic mistake](#).” Following the meeting Jens Stoltenberg said any further Russian aggressive “[would come at a high price](#)” for Russia. The US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, speaking after bilateral talks with his Russian counterpart, [warned Russia against any further aggressive action](#) against Ukraine.

For its part, Russia denies any plans to invade Ukraine and says it is the Alliance’s deployment of an anti-missile defence system along its eastern front that is bringing back the “[nightmare scenario of military confrontation](#)”. Further discussion of Russia’s build-up of military forces in April 2021 can be found in Library briefing paper: [Crisis averted in Ukraine? CBP-9205](#).

### Ukraine/NATO relations

Relations date back to Ukraine’s independence in 1991, when it first joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Since then, relations have deepened and Ukraine has actively contributed to NATO-led operations and missions.

Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 sparked a further deepening of relations and NATO’s practical support for Ukraine is set out in the Comprehensive Assistance Package. This supports Ukraine’s [goal to implement security and defence sector reforms](#) according to NATO standards through capacity building programmes. In June 2020 Ukraine was [granted Enhanced Opportunity Partner status](#) in the Alliance which gives the country preferential access to NATO exercises, training and exchanges of information. Detailed information and further background is available on NATO’s website: [Relations with Ukraine](#).

### Ukraine reaffirms intent to join NATO

Ukraine has long aspired to join NATO and in 2019 [amended the constitution](#) committing the country to becoming a member of the Alliance. Ukraine’s 2020 National Security Strategy similarly aspires to membership of NATO. NATO’s 2021 summit ended with a reaffirmation of the 2008 decision for [Ukraine to](#)

[become a member](#) through a membership action plan (para 69 of the Brussels Summit Communiqué). However, it gave no timetable to do so and NATO's Secretary General has said Ukraine "[needs to do more](#)" to fulfil promised reforms.

Ministers have reaffirmed the [UK's support for Ukraine's NATO membership aspirations](#), including during an adjournment debate on Ukraine in May 2021.

## UK military assistance to Ukraine

UK military assistance to Ukraine is longstanding but has been expanded, at the request of the Ukrainian government.

In 2015 the UK launched Operation Orbital, a non-lethal training and capacity building operation to support the Ukrainian armed forces. The MOD has also gifted non-lethal military equipment. Further information on this, and other western support to Ukraine, can be found in Library briefing paper: [Military assistance to Ukraine](#), SN07135.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Jeremy Quin, [reaffirmed the UK's commitment](#) to Ukraine's security and territorial integrity during a visit to Kyiv in August 2021 to mark the country's thirtieth anniversary of independence.

The UK is supporting [Ukraine's efforts to boost its naval capabilities](#). The UK, Ukraine and industry signed a Memorandum of Implementation in June 2021 that will see Ukraine receive two Royal Navy Sandown-class minehunters, assistance in building new naval bases in the Black Sea and Azov Sea, and the development and joint production of eight new missile vessels. [Babcock International is the primary partner](#), with funding made available by UK Export Finance. In November the UK and Ukraine [signed an Intergovernmental Framework Agreement](#) further progressing these joint projects.

## 2

## Press and media articles

The following is a selection of press and media articles relevant to this debate.

Please note: the Library is not responsible for either the views or accuracy of external content.

### [Russia has no say in Ukraine joining Nato, Moscow told](#)

The Times  
Marc Bennetts  
2 December 2021

### [A look at the UK's strategic partnership with Ukraine](#)

UK Defence Journal  
J. Vitor Tossini  
28 November 2021

### [Ex-Nato head says Putin wanted to join alliance early on in his rule](#)

The Guardian  
Jennifer Rankin  
4 November 2021

### [NATO's flirtation with adding 2 more members runs the risk of starting a war the US can't afford to fight](#)

Business Insider  
Sascha Glaeser  
24 October 2021

### [Russia says Ukraine joining NATO would be 'Extremely Dangerous'](#)

Newsweek  
Brendan Cole  
21 October 2021

### [Ukraine and NATO — don't ask, do](#)

Kyiv Post  
Steven Pifer  
1 October 2021

### [Making Ukraine a NATO member in all but name](#)

Cato Institute  
Ted Galen Carpenter  
30 September 2021

[Why Ukraine must join NATO](#)

Atlantic Council  
Adrian Hoefler  
9 September 2021

[Are Russia fears holding up Ukraine's bid to join NATO?](#)

Euro News  
Stefan Weichert and Emil Filtenborg  
15 July 2021

[Ukraine wants to join NATO. Letting it in would just provoke Russia.](#)

The Washington Post  
Michael O'Hanlon  
16 June 2021

['We need more' before Ukraine can join NATO, says Stoltenberg](#)

Defense News  
Joe Gould  
15 June 2021

[Ukraine urges Nato to hasten membership as Russian troops gather](#)

The Guardian  
Dan Sabbagh  
6 April 2021

[Ukraine pressures Nato to speed path to membership](#)

Financial Times  
Roman Olearchyk and Michael Peel  
6 April 2021

[Why is Ukraine still not in NATO?](#)

Atlantic Council  
Dmytro Kuleba  
16 February 2021

## 3 Press releases

### 3.1 UK Government

#### Foreign Secretary warns a Russian incursion into Ukraine would be strategic mistake

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

30 November 2021

- Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is attending her first meeting of the NATO Foreign Ministers in Latvia this week
- the Foreign Secretary will use this opportunity to underline the importance of NATO, demonstrating the force of a ‘network of liberty’ against malign activity
- the meeting follows a visit by the Foreign Secretary to see UK troops deployed as part of NATO’s collective defence in Estonia

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss will underline the UK’s ongoing commitment to the transatlantic Alliance as an essential defence, protecting democracy, security and prosperity, at her first meeting of the NATO Foreign Ministers today.

Top of the Foreign Secretary’s agenda is the need for Allies to come together to stand against continued destabilising actions by Russia and Belarus. This follows the build-up of Russian troops on the border of Ukraine and the cruel instrumentalisation of migration by Belarus. Russia has also tried to use economic coercion to undermine NATO Allies in recent years, for example through seeking to exploit energy dependency.

The Foreign Secretary will call for Allies to rally together, to stand up to any Russian aggression while maintaining open channels of communication to set out our intentions and values. She will underline NATO’s purpose as an organisation for collective defence and deterrence, calling out recent false claims by Russia that the Alliance seeks to provoke. Russia has previously used such claims that NATO aggression justified the illegal annexation of the Crimea and continues to take this position to try to create a false pretext. Indeed Russia has just this week alleged that NATO’s response to a build-up of Russian forces on the border of Ukraine is an act of hostility rather than deterrence. She will underline that an incursion into Ukraine would be a strategic mistake, and the UK will use all diplomatic and economic levers at our disposal to avoid that outcome.

The Foreign Secretary will outline the need for NATO Allies to increase their financial commitments to the Alliance in response to these and other hybrid threats, and encourage countries to support Ukraine’s defences. The UK is helping Ukraine strengthen its military capabilities and ability to work with

other forces, including through Operation Orbital, under which the UK has trained over 21,000 members of the Ukrainian army. Ukraine and Georgia will both attend the meeting this week in Riga as key NATO partners.

Foreign Secretary, Liz Truss said:

We want a world where freedom and democracy don't just survive, they thrive. To this end, we will stand with our fellow democracies against Russia's malign activity.

We will support Ukraine and stability in the Western Balkans, to safeguard their security and build their economic resilience.

We have seen this playbook from the Kremlin before when Russia falsely claimed its illegal annexation of Crimea was a response to NATO aggression. NATO is an alliance forged on the principle of defence, not provocation. Any suggestion that NATO is provoking the Russians is clearly false.

Any action by Russia to undermine the freedom and democracy that our partners enjoy would be a strategic mistake.

Ahead of the meeting, the Foreign Secretary visited Estonia to show her support to UK troops protecting NATO territorial integrity on NATO's Eastern flank. More than 800 British soldiers are currently stationed there as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, with collective forces across Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland.

Looking ahead to NATO's new Strategic Concept, Foreign Ministers will discuss new and emerging forms of hybrid warfare, and the need to continue work to future-proof the Alliance against these threats. Allies will also discuss continued work to prevent Afghanistan becoming a safe haven for terror.

This follows the publication of the Integrated Review earlier this year, which brought together diplomacy, development and defence to strengthen the UK's ability to build a global network of liberty and protect against malign actors. This was supported by the biggest investment in our defence for thirty years and a reinvigorated, expanded diplomatic network.

After Estonia and Latvia, the Foreign Secretary will be travelling to Stockholm for the Annual OSCE Ministerial Council. The meeting will bring together the OSCE's 57 participating states, most represented by their Foreign Ministers, and will be a forum for further discussion of issues critical to the security of the region, including human rights violations in Belarus and the situation in Ukraine.

## UK reaffirms security commitment to Ukraine

**Ministry of Defence**

**25 August 2021**

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin spoke at the International Crimea Platform (ICP) in Kyiv and attended celebrations to mark the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's independence to reaffirm the UK's commitment to Ukraine's security and territorial integrity.

The UK continues to work with NATO allies and partners to support Ukraine in reducing threats to the region and improving stability and prosperity in support of the rules based international system.

Minister Quin also represented the UK at the independence celebrations and military parade in Independence Square in Kyiv. This included a marching contingent from the Royal Lancers, and Colchester Band, and a flypast of RAF Typhoon fighter jets.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

It is an honour to represent the UK at such illustrious events to restate our support for Ukraine and celebrate 30 years of the country's independence.

I was proud to watch the Royal Lancers, Colchester Band and RAF Typhoons supporting the military parade to mark this historic occasion.

The launch of the International Crimea Platform signifies the global community's recognition of the hugely important need to keep pressing for the reintegration of Crimea as part of Ukraine which the UK fully supports.

The aim of the ICP is to integrate Crimea back into Ukraine. Heads of State from Poland and the Baltic countries, and Foreign Ministers from countries, including France, Germany, Spain, Italy and the UK attended. The ICP helped the global community coordinate on Crimea, increase the effectiveness of the international response, enhance pressure on Russia and step up efforts on ending the illegal annexation.

The UK and NATO are committed to Black Sea regional security, stability and prosperity alongside Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. We have demonstrated that ambition with action, conducting joint maritime and land exercises, such as SEA BREEZE and COSSACK MACE with Ukraine, allies and partners this summer.

The UK enjoys a strong bilateral relationship with Ukraine and is committed to securing its security. Since 2015, the UK has trained over 21,000 Ukrainian military personnel in medical skills, logistics, counter improvised explosive

devices, leadership, planning and infantry tactics as part of Operation ORBITAL and the UK-led Maritime Training Initiative.

**PM meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy: 14 June 2021**

**10 Downing St**

**14 June 2021**

The Prime Minister spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy this morning, ahead of today's NATO Summit.

They discussed Russia's destabilising activity on Ukraine's border and the Prime Minister reaffirmed the UK's commitment to the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The Prime Minister said he would raise his concerns about the issue at today's NATO Summit and that G7 countries were steadfast in their support for Ukraine in discussions this weekend.

The Prime Minister stressed that NATO Allies have a responsibility to support Ukraine's defence and underlined the importance of the UK's Operation ORBITAL training mission in Ukraine to this end.

**PM meeting with President Zelenskyy: 8 October 2020**

**10 Downing St**

**9 October 2020**

The Prime Minister met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Downing Street this morning ahead of signing the UK-Ukraine Political, Free Trade and Strategic Partnership Agreement.

[...]

On defence, the Prime Minister welcomed NATO's recent decision to grant Ukraine Enhanced Opportunities Partner status. He offered the UK's support to Ukraine as they make progress on defence and security reforms.

The two leaders discussed the importance of working together to counter Russia's malign influence, both in Ukraine and in the wider region. They also expressed their shared concern about the situation in Belarus. The Prime Minister outlined the steps the UK has taken in response to human rights abuses in the country, including the imposition of sanctions.

[...]

## Defence Secretary welcomes Ukraine receiving NATO Enhanced Opportunity Partner status

**Ministry of Defence**

**12 June 2020**

Ukraine has been granted Enhanced Operating Partner (EOP) status by NATO Allies on Friday 12 June 2020, a decision supported by the UK and welcomed by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace.

The status is part of NATO's Partnership Interoperability Initiative, which aims to maintain and deepen cooperation between Allies and partners that have made significant contributions to NATO-led operations and missions.

The decision means that Ukraine will benefit from increased opportunities to help sustain such contributions, such as enhanced access to interoperability programmes and exercises, and more sharing of information, including lessons learned.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

It is excellent news that Ukraine has been granted NATO Enhanced Opportunity Partner status.

The UK already has a close relationship with Ukraine, where our soldiers have trained over 18,000 personnel, but we now look forward to deepening that cooperation on NATO exercises and operations. We will all benefit from closer association and increased interoperability - NATO is fortunate to have such a partner.

The UK currently has personnel deployed on Operation Orbital, which is the UK's training mission to Ukraine, established in 2015 following the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia a year earlier. It is a demonstration of the UK's unwavering commitment to Ukraine's independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty. Since 2015, UK personnel have trained over 18,000 members of the Ukraine Armed Forces, making a real difference and saving lives. It was extended by three years to March 2023 by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace in November 2019.

## 3.2

# Ukraine Government

### Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with the Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom

**President of Ukraine**

**16 November 2021**

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with Secretary of State for Defence of the United Kingdom Ben Wallace, who is on a working visit to Kyiv.

The President thanked Ben Wallace for the unwavering support of the UK for the independence and territorial integrity of our country within its internationally recognized borders.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy also praised the signing of the Ukrainian-British Bilateral Framework Agreement on official credit support for the development of the Ukrainian fleet's capabilities.

"The United Kingdom has become our key partner in building the Ukrainian fleet. I expect that future security projects planned under this agreement will be effectively implemented," the President stressed.

The President briefed the British Secretary of State for Defence on the challenges facing Ukraine in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the international steps needed to restore a safe navigation regime in the region and the importance of further deepening bilateral cooperation in the field of security and defense.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy stressed the need to take consistent steps to ensure the realization of Ukraine's aspirations to gain full NATO membership in the near future.

During the meeting, the President said that Ukraine is trying to intensify the work of all negotiation formats in order to achieve peace in the east and restore sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Ukrainian President noted the recent statements by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Foreign Secretary, which stressed the support of our state in the context of opposing the implementation of the Nord Stream 2 project.

## Cooperation with NATO

### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine**

**6 August 2021**

The relations between Ukraine and NATO are defined by the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, signed on 9 July 1997, and the Declaration to Complement the Charter, signed on 21 August 2009.

NATO-Ukraine relations began much earlier, in 1991, when Ukraine, after gaining independence, joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (since 1997 – the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council). Ukraine was the first post-Soviet state to join NATO's "Partnership for Peace" Program (February 8, 1994).

Deepening integration with NATO and the EU is a priority of state policy enshrined in the Constitution of Ukraine. Implementing reforms is a condition for Ukraine to receive the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP).

On 12 June 2020, Ukraine was granted the Enhanced Opportunities Partner status.

On 18 March 2021, Ukraine joined the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence.

Ukraine's National Security Strategy of 14 August 2020 determines that in order to strengthen its distinctive partnership with NATO and gain full membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Ukraine plans to:

- achieve sufficient compatibility of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other components of the security and defense sector with the relevant structures of the Alliance member states as soon as possible;
- substantially intensify the reforms that need to be implemented in order to meet the criteria for NATO membership in the framework of the implementation of the Annual National Programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission;
- receive the NATO Membership Action Plan.

One of the main messages of the final Communiqué of the NATO Summit 2021 (14 June 2021, Brussels) is the confirmation by the Allies of the right of our country to become a member of the Alliance with the MAP as an integral part of this process.

#### **I. Political dialogue.**

Ukraine's political dialogue with the Alliance is ensured through bilateral contacts at all levels, including the inter-parliamentary dimension. The

NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC), established in 1997 according to the provisions of the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, plays a leading role in deepening of this dialogue.

The parliamentary dimension of NATO – Ukraine cooperation consists of three elements – collaboration between the Parliament of Ukraine and Parliamentary Assembly (PA) of NATO, legislative support for Ukraine-NATO relations, and parliamentary control over the implementation of legislative decisions on Ukraine's integration into the Euro-Atlantic security sphere, achievement of the criteria necessary for NATO membership.

In the NATO PA Ukraine is represented by the Permanent Delegation from Ukrainian Parliament, which since May 1992 has the status of an associate member.

Parliamentary oversight of the implementation of the Euro-Atlantic integration strategy is conducted by the Ukrainian Parliament independently and in cooperation with NATO PA. At the bilateral level, such control was ensured by the established in November 2000 under the provision of the Charter on Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine, Joint Monitoring Group of the Ukrainian Parliament and NATO PA. In March 2003, this group was reorganised into the NATO – Ukraine Inter-Parliamentary Council.

In April 2021, the Crimea Platform Support Group was established in the NATO PA.

The spring session of the NATO PA is planned to be held in Kyiv on 27-30 May 2022.

## **II. Annual National Programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission**

The Annual National Programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission (ANP), which have been implemented since 2009, are important instrument of reforms implementation in Ukraine. ANPs are approved by the President of Ukraine.

On 24 February 2021, the President of Ukraine approved the new Regulations on the development of Annual National Programs under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission and evaluation of their implementation. According to the document each section of the ANP contains a description of reforms in the relevant areas, defines the strategic goal of reforms, goals and priorities for the year. The annexes to the ANP indicate the priority tasks, the responsible authorities for their implementation, the deadlines, as well as performance indicators the ANP.

The special attention in ANPs is paid to meeting the criteria for NATO membership, promotion Ukraine's security and defense sector to NATO standards, and strengthening democratic civilian control.

### **III. Practical cooperation between Ukraine and NATO**

The Commission for Coordination of Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine (headed by the Vice Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine) was established in July 2016.

Four NATO-Ukraine Joint working groups were set up in order to develop practical cooperation under the auspices of the Commission: on military reform; on defence and technical cooperation; on cooperation in science and environment; on civil emergency planning.

The main purpose of the NATO-Ukraine Joint working group on military reform is to promote the maintenance of military-political dialogue and the involvement of the Alliance in the reform of the security and defense sector in Ukraine. Under the auspices of this Joint working group, a number of projects are being implemented aimed at promotion of security and defense reform: to combat corruption (NATO's Integrity and Transparency Initiative, reducing corruption risks in defense and security institutions), to train civilian security and defense personnel, to reform the military education in Ukraine, to retrain and provide social protection of discharged servicemen.

The NATO-Ukraine Roadmap on defense and technical cooperation signed in December 2015 determines the activity of the NATO-Ukraine Joint working group on defense and technical cooperation. The document was updated in December 2019 in Brussels as a consequence of the cooperation results revision. The Roadmap defines the main measurement of cooperation in the light of Ukraine's capabilities development in the field of armaments and military equipment. The document determines the level of assistance provided to Ukraine to complete the transition to technical standards of the Alliance and Ukraine's participation in multinational projects in the framework of the NATO Smart Defense Concept.

The NATO-Ukraine Joint working group on cooperation in science and environment, established in 2000, is responsible for cooperation coordination between Ukraine and NATO in the field of science.

Ukraine's cooperation with NATO under the Science for Peace and Security Program has been going on since 1991. It has been recognized as a successful project by all the NATO member countries whose representatives have participated in the Program projects.

Since 2014, Ukraine has been first among other partners for the number of research projects and the amount of their funding within the Science for Peace and Security Program.

Cooperation with the Alliance in the field of civil protection takes place within the framework of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Civil Emergency Planning. In NATO, the NATO Senior Civil Emergency Planning Committee, which includes the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre since 1998, plays a key role in these activities. Its main tasks include the exchange of information and coordination of cooperation in disaster response.

The main tasks of the Joint working group are to plan and coordinate joint activities in the spheres of mutual interest. The activities of the group are considered an integral part of the work of the Civil Emergency Planning Committee and its subordinate units.

Ukraine is actively involved in NATO's international disaster response exercises.

Currently, cooperation is aimed at creating a national system of resilience to security challenges and threats in Ukraine.

#### **IV. Ukraine's participation in NATO-led missions**

Ukraine is a NATO Partner country, whose units are involved in the Alliance's numerous operations and missions, the NATO Response Force, including the NATO-led Kosovo Force and the NATO Mission in Afghanistan.

On 22 July 2020, the North Atlantic Council approved a decision on Ukraine's accession to NATO's Sea Guardian Operation as a Potential Operational Partner. The Armed Forces of Ukraine plan to involve two "Island" patrol boats in the operation by 2023, and in the future - the frigate "Hetman Sahaidachny" with a Ka-27 helicopter and a care team.

Ukraine has participated in the NATO training mission in Iraq since 2006. Ukrainian officers have served as military advisers at the National Operations Center of the Office of the Prime Minister of Iraq and the Joint Operations Center of the Iraqi Ministry of Internal Affairs, and have been actively involved in developing operational procedures at both the tactical and strategic levels.

In 2019, the Alliance invited Ukraine to continue cooperation: Ukraine was granted the status of a Potential Operational Partner of the NATO Mission in Iraq. In order to regulate sending of the Ukrainian national staff to positions in this mission the relevant legal procedures are underway.

## Ukraine continues to move towards NATO membership - Volodymyr Zelenskyy

**President of Ukraine**

**14 June 2021**

Ukraine commended the decision of the NATO Summit that our country will become a member of the Alliance, and the Membership Action Plan (MAP) is an integral part of this process.

"We are grateful to NATO members for such a logical decision, which fully confirmed the decision of the 2008 Bucharest NATO Summit," said President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

"At the same time, the decision of this year's Summit lacks specific time frames for the next steps in our rapprochement with NATO, which we expected," the President said.

In the communiqué of the Brussels Summit, NATO member countries welcomed the significant Euro-Atlantic reforms that Ukraine has already implemented and reaffirmed their willingness to continue to provide practical support to our country in implementing security and defense reforms.

"We will continue the course of security and defense reforms in order to meet the standards of interoperability with NATO member states even more," Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

NATO leaders praised Ukraine's significant contribution to the Alliance's operations, participation in the NATO Response Force and NATO exercises. They also stressed the importance of military cooperation and capacity-building initiatives between Allies and Ukraine, in particular the activities of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade.

"Ukraine, not being a member of NATO, is already making a significant contribution to Euro-Atlantic security. Confronting Russian aggression in the east, during which, unfortunately, Ukrainian soldiers continue to perish, is our invaluable contribution to the security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area," the President said.

In his future bilateral talks with the leaders of NATO member states, the President will continue a detailed discussion of Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations. This will be discussed in particular at his meeting with US President Joe Biden during the planned visit to the United States.

"Ukraine's role in ensuring global security must be properly assessed," Volodymyr Zelenskyy stressed.

## 4

## PQs

### HMS Defender: Black Sea

15 Jul 2021 | HL1780

#### **Asked by: Lord Truscott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 6 July (HL 1576) and her remarks on 30 June (HL Deb, col 793) that HMS Defender was "conducting an innocent passage through a stretch of water open to international navigation", what military operation HMS Defender was engaged in on the Black Sea on 23 June.

#### **Answering member: Baroness Goldie | Ministry of Defence**

HMS DEFENDER was in the Black Sea from 14 June - 2 July 2021 to conduct planned defence engagement activity with the Armed Forces of Ukraine and Georgia as a disaggregated unit of the Carrier Strike Group. These events focused on the UK's commitment to Black Sea security through capability demonstrations and exercising with other NATO allies and partners who operate in the Black Sea.

### Russia and Ukraine: Diplomatic Relations and Security

25 Jun 2021 | 17875

#### **Asked by: Mark Logan**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the diplomatic and security situation of (a) Ukraine and (b) Russia; and what steps his Department is taking to work with (i) NATO and (ii) western Governments to maintain oversight of the situation in those countries.

#### **Answering member: Wendy Morton | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The UK is one of Ukraine's few international partners offering a full range of military, security, economic, political and governance support. We operate at the heart of the international community's engagement in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, which includes shaping international sanctions against Russia; deepening NATO's partnership with Ukraine; and leading efforts in the UN and OSCE to hold Russia to account for its destabilising behaviour.

The Integrated Review makes clear that Russia's actions pose an acute and direct threat to the national security of UK and its allies. The Russian State's record of unprovoked, reckless and destabilising activity is a stain on Russia's reputation, damages its international standing and undermines the Russian

Government's claims to be a responsible global actor. The UK takes the threat from the Russian State extremely seriously and will respond and call out Russian aggression wherever it occurs.

The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have held recent discussions with their Ukrainian counterparts, on 14 June and 2 April respectively. We maintain functional channels of engagement with the Russian Government. The FS spoke with Russian FM Lavrov on 17 June. As fellow Permanent Members of the UN Security Council and other multilateral organisations, we will continue to engage with the Russian Government on matters of international peace, security and to address global challenges facing the world today, including climate change, biodiversity loss and the Coronavirus pandemic. The Prime Minister attended the NATO Summit on 14 June where NATO leaders discussed Russia and issued a communiqué, affirming NATO support for Ukraine and its commitment to continue to respond to the deteriorating security environment by enhancing NATO's deterrence and defence posture, including by a forward presence in the eastern part of the Alliance. The Prime Minister also hosted the G7 Leaders' Summit on 11-13 June, where leaders called on Russia to stop its destabilising behaviour and malign activities, which followed G7 Foreign Minister statements regarding Ukraine on 18 March and 12 April.

### **NATO Enlargement**

**23 Mar 2021 | 171524**

**Asked by: Gregory Campbell**

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress NATO is making on expanding its membership since the joining of North Macedonia.

**Answering member: James Heappey | Ministry of Defence**

NATO membership is open to any European country that is able to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership of the Alliance, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. This "open door policy" is based upon Article 10 of the Washington Treaty.

Since the accession to NATO of the Republic of North Macedonia in March 2020, three NATO partner countries have continued to undertake domestic reforms which will help them to pursue their Euro-Atlantic aspirations: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine. NATO's engagement with each of these continues through bespoke means: with Georgia through the NATO-Georgia Council; with Ukraine through the NATO-Ukraine Council; and with Bosnia-Herzegovina through the Membership Action Plan, which has been in place since 2010. As a means of improving their interoperability with NATO, Georgia and Ukraine also enjoy "Enhanced Opportunities Partner" status with the Alliance.

### Ukraine: NATO

28 Oct 2020 | HL9299

**Asked by: Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they are supporting Ukraine's preparations for full membership of NATO.

**Answering member: Baroness Sugg | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office**

The Government supports NATO's Enlargement process. The UK played an active role in helping Ukraine achieve Enhanced Opportunity Partner status in June 2020, deepening Ukraine's interoperability with the NATO Alliance. As members of the G7 Ambassadors Group and Ukraine's Defence Reform Advisory Board, the UK continues to provide substantial support to assist Ukraine in pursuing the vital reforms needed to bring the country further in line with Euro-Atlantic standards.

### Ukraine: Peace Negotiations

15 Jun 2020 | 58039

**Asked by: Catherine West**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to (a) facilitate the peace process in Ukraine and (b) support the implementation of reforms in Ukraine in line with the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement.

**Answering member: Wendy Morton | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The UK is committed to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to helping Ukraine build a strong economy, strong institutions and counter Russian aggression. We welcome President Zelensky's commitment to ending the conflict in eastern Ukraine. We have been clear on the importance of finding a diplomatic solution and continue to support the Minsk agreements, as well as the work of Germany and France within the Normandy Format. We continue to call on Russia to play its part to end the conflict by immediately ceasing its support for the armed formations it backs and fulfilling its obligations under the Minsk agreements. We repeatedly raise with Russia the need to use its influence over its proxies to ensure unrestricted access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and humanitarian organisations. Continued discussions are fundamental for further progress towards peace.

In common with the EU and other like-minded partners, the UK continues to provide substantial assistance to strengthen Ukraine's democracy and institutions, and to support implementation of Ukraine's reform programme. In July 2017, we hosted the inaugural Ukraine Reform Conference, launching a series of annual reform conferences. For 2020/21, the UK has allocated over

£40 million of programme support, with at least £12 million through the Good Governance Fund to help Ukraine deliver economic and governance reforms, including in the context of Ukraine's aspirations towards EU and NATO integration. This work includes initiatives to tackle corruption, deliver sustainable economic development and strengthen democracy. The UK is working to protect citizens affected by the conflict, develop peace-building expertise and promote social cohesion and resilience. This year we are focused on supporting Ukraine to mitigate and address the secondary implications of COVID-19 on conflict and stability.

**Ukraine: NATO**

**08 Oct 2019 | 292868**

**Asked by: Emily Thornberry**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Ukrainian counterpart on that country's prospective membership of NATO.

**Answering member: Dominic Raab | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The United Kingdom continues to support NATO's Open Door policy under which all European democracies are entitled to pursue NATO membership. The decision over whether to seek NATO membership is a matter for the people and government of Ukraine. Last month the Minister for Europe and the Americas met with Foreign Minister Vadym Prystaiko and Vice Prime Minister for European Integration Dmytro Kuleba, and discussed Ukraine's long-term aspiration to membership of NATO. We continue to support Ukraine's path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

**NATO Enlargement: Ukraine**

**01 Jun 2018 | HL7963**

**Asked by: Lord Balfe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their policy position at the forthcoming NATO summit on Ukraine's aspiration to join NATO.

**Answering member: Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

The UK supports NATO's 2008 Bucharest Summit declaration that Georgia and Ukraine will become members of NATO, and continues to support NATO's Open Door policy, under which all European democracies are entitled to pursue NATO membership. Ukraine must now achieve the standards expected of an ally and be able to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership.

## **NATO Enlargement**

**11 Nov 2015 | 14546**

### **Asked by: Nigel Dodds**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had on extending the list of NATO aspirant countries.

### **Answering member: David Lidington | Foreign and Commonwealth Office**

There is no formal list of NATO aspirant countries. However, this term is presently understood within the Alliance to refer to Georgia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia. The United Kingdom strongly supports NATO's open door policy for any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area. We therefore support the membership aspirations of all countries currently seeking to join the Alliance.

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## Statements

### Exercises in the Black Sea

24 Jun 2021 | HCWS122

**Secretary of State for Defence (Ben Wallace):** On Wednesday 23 June 2021, HMS DEFENDER (a Type 45 Destroyer), left the Ukrainian port of Odesa en route to the Georgian port of Batumi in the Black Sea. HMS DEFENDER conducted innocent passage through Ukrainian territorial waters via a direct route using a traffic separation scheme (TSS), as is the right of the United Kingdom (and all nations) under international maritime law. This TSS is governed by the International Maritime Organisation and is designed to assist vessels in safely transiting congested waterways. The United Kingdom does not recognise any Russian claim to these waters, nor do we recognise the assertion from the Russian Ministry of Defence that HMS DEFENDER was in violation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

At 0950 BST, HMS DEFENDER entered the TSS, inside Ukrainian territorial waters. At 1000 BST, a Russian coastguard vessel warned that Russian units would shortly commence a live fire gunnery exercise. At 1008 BST, HMS DEFENDER noted gunnery astern and out of range of her position. This posed no danger to HMS DEFENDER. During her transit, HMS DEFENDER was overflown by Russian combat aircraft at varying heights, the lowest of which was approximately 500 feet. These aircraft posed no immediate threat to HMS DEFENDER, but some of these manoeuvres were neither safe nor professional. HMS DEFENDER responded by VHF radio to the Russian units on several occasions and was, at all times, courteous and professional.

HMS DEFENDER maintained a safe course throughout her innocent passage, on one occasion manoeuvring to avoid a hazard presented by a Russian coastguard vessel before re-assuming her intended course. HMS DEFENDER completed the passage safely and in accordance with her intended route, departed Ukrainian territorial waters at 1026 BST. At no point were warning shots fired at HMS DEFENDER, nor bombs dropped in her path as has been asserted by the Russian authorities.

Later on Wednesday 23 June 2021, the United Kingdom's Defence Attaché was invited to a meeting in the Russian Ministry of Defence at which he received a note verbale. This will be considered and addressed in due course.

Under Article 19 of UNCLOS, HMS DEFENDER had the right to exercise innocent passage through Ukrainian territorial waters in the manner she did without giving any notice of her intention to do so. This is a right the United Kingdom affords to Russia and other states in the context of the UK's territorial waters, including the Dover TSS in the English Channel.

The Royal Navy, as well as other NATO and partner nations, have enjoyed a routine maritime presence in the Black Sea for many years. At the time of this interaction, there were both Dutch and US warships operating elsewhere within the Black Sea. The Royal Navy's presence is about cooperating with our partners and Allies to advance regional security, stability and freedom of navigation.

HMS DEFENDER continues with her planned deployment and programme of visits. The Royal Navy will always uphold international law and will not accept unlawful interference with innocent passage.

### [NATO Leaders' Meeting 3-4 December 2019](#)

20 Dec 2019 | HCWS4

#### **Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Dominic Raab):**

On 3-4 December, NATO Leaders met in London to mark 70 successful years of the Alliance, in a valuable opportunity to reaffirm British leadership. These events demonstrated a strong sense of NATO's unity and purpose, progressed the largest reinforcement of collective defence since the end of the Cold War and agreed ways to ensure NATO will continue to meet future threats. I have placed a copy of the NATO London Declaration, capturing these commitments, in the libraries of both Houses.

[...]

Alongside the formal meetings, Her Majesty The Queen hosted the NATO Secretary General and 29 other Heads of State and Government from NATO countries and North Macedonia on 3 December. The Prime Minister undertook a range of bilateral meetings, including with the leaders of France, Germany and Turkey where they discussed the situation in Syria and agreed on the importance of humanitarian access and protection of civilians. I hosted Foreign Ministers from NATO Allies - and NATO Partners Ukraine and Georgia - on 3 December. NATO also held a major outreach event under the banner of "NATO Engages", with a diverse, predominately young audience of more than 1000 attendees. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also hosted 100 university students for a 'Model NATO' exercise, and visited more than 1000 students in 15 universities across the UK in the weeks leading up to the Leaders' Meeting.

I look forward to working with all NATO Allies and Partners in implementing the outcomes from the Leaders' Meeting and in welcoming North Macedonia as the thirtieth member of our Alliance in the coming months. When we stand together, decide together, act together - we are stronger and safer. These steps will further strengthen the purpose and unity of an Alliance that continues to be the cornerstone of our security, and post-Brexit we will continue to reinforce its importance.

### **NATO Summit**

**16 Jul 2018 | 645 cc22-40**

**The Prime Minister (Theresa May):** With permission, Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the NATO summit in Brussels last week.

[...]

Our long-term objective remains a constructive relationship with Russia, so it is right that we keep engaging, both as individual nations and as a NATO alliance. I welcome the meeting between President Trump and President Putin in Helsinki today, but as I agreed with President Trump in our discussions last week, we must engage from a position of unity and strength. This means being clear and unwavering about where Russia needs to change its behaviour, and for as long as Russia persists in its efforts to undermine our interests and values, we must continue to deter and counter them. That is exactly what we will do. In that context, in a separate discussion during the summit, the alliance also reaffirmed our unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine. We continue to support both Georgia and Ukraine in their aspirations for full membership of the alliance. The alliance also extended an invitation to the Government of Skopje to start accession talks following their historic agreement with Athens. This builds further on the progress made earlier in the week in London at the western Balkans summit, which took important steps to strengthen the stability and prosperity of the region.

[..]

## 6

# NATO communiqué

### NATO: Brussels Summit Communiqué

**Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on 14 June 2021**

Press Release (2021) 086

Issued on 14 June 2021 (Last updated on 2 December 2021)

[Extract]

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the 30 NATO Allies, have gathered in Brussels to reaffirm our unity, solidarity, and cohesion, and to open a new chapter in transatlantic relations, at a time when the security environment we face is increasingly complex. NATO remains the foundation of our collective defence and the essential forum for security consultations and decisions among Allies. NATO is a defensive Alliance and will continue to strive for peace, security, and stability in the whole of the Euro-Atlantic area. We remain firmly committed to NATO's founding Washington Treaty, including that an attack against one Ally shall be considered an attack against us all, as enshrined in Article 5. We will continue to pursue a 360-degree approach to protect and defend our indivisible security and to fulfil NATO's three core tasks of collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security.

[...]

14. We reiterate our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova within their internationally recognised borders. In accordance with its international commitments, we call on Russia to withdraw the forces it has stationed in all three countries without their consent. We strongly condemn and will not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, and denounce its temporary occupation. The human rights abuses and violations against the Crimean Tatars and members of other local communities must end. Russia's recent massive military build-up and destabilising activities in and around Ukraine have further escalated tensions and undermined security. We call on Russia to reverse its military build-up and stop restricting navigation in parts of the Black Sea. We also call on Russia to stop impeding access to the Sea of Azov and Ukrainian ports. We commend Ukraine's posture of restraint and diplomatic approach in this context. We seek to contribute to de-escalation. We are also stepping up our support to Ukraine. We call for the full implementation of the Minsk Agreements by all sides, and support the efforts of the Normandy format and the Trilateral Contact Group. Russia, as a signatory of the Minsk Agreements, bears significant

responsibility in this regard. We call on Russia to stop fuelling the conflict by providing financial and military support to the armed formations it backs in eastern Ukraine. We reiterate our full support to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. We stress the importance of ensuring its safety and full and unhindered access throughout the entire territory of Ukraine, including Crimea and the Russia-Ukraine border, in accordance with its mandate. We further call on Russia to reverse its recognition of the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia as independent states; to implement the EU-mediated 2008 ceasefire agreement; to end its militarisation of these regions and attempts to forcibly separate them from the rest of Georgia through the continued construction of border-like obstacles; and to cease the human rights violations, arbitrary detentions, and harassments of Georgian citizens. We reiterate our firm support to the Geneva International Discussions. We also call on Russia to engage constructively in the Transnistria Settlement Process. We are committed to supporting the Republic of Moldova's democratic reforms and providing assistance through our Defence and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative.

[...]

69. We reiterate the decision made at the 2008 Bucharest Summit that Ukraine will become a member of the Alliance with the Membership Action Plan (MAP) as an integral part of the process; we reaffirm all elements of that decision, as well as subsequent decisions, including that each partner will be judged on its own merits. We stand firm in our support for Ukraine's right to decide its own future and foreign policy course free from outside interference. The Annual National Programmes under the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) remain the mechanism by which Ukraine takes forward the reforms pertaining to its aspiration for NATO membership. Ukraine should make full use of all instruments available under the NUC to reach its objective of implementing NATO principles and standards. The success of wide-ranging, sustainable, and irreversible reforms, including combating corruption, promoting an inclusive political process, and decentralisation reform, based on democratic values, respect for human rights, minorities, and the rule of law, will be crucial in laying the groundwork for a prosperous and peaceful Ukraine. Further reforms in the security sector, including the reform of the Security Services of Ukraine, are particularly important. We welcome significant reforms already made by Ukraine and strongly encourage further progress in line with Ukraine's international obligations and commitments. We will continue to provide practical support to reform in the security and defence sector, including through the Comprehensive Assistance Package. We will also continue to support Ukraine's efforts to strengthen its resilience against hybrid threats, including through intensifying activities under the NATO-Ukraine Platform on Countering Hybrid

Warfare. We welcome the cooperation between NATO and Ukraine with regard to security in the Black Sea region. The Enhanced Opportunities Partner status granted last year provides further impetus to our already ambitious cooperation and will promote greater interoperability, with the option of more joint exercises, training, and enhanced situational awareness. Military cooperation and capacity building initiatives between Allies and Ukraine, including the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade, further reinforce this effort. We highly value Ukraine's significant contributions to Allied operations, the NATO Response Force, and NATO exercises.

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## NATO factsheet

### NATO relations with Ukraine

#### NATO website

Last updated: 27 August 2021

A sovereign, independent and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. Relations between NATO and Ukraine date back to the early 1990s and have since developed into one of the most substantial of NATO's partnerships. Since 2014, in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, cooperation has been intensified in critical areas.

- Dialogue and cooperation started when newly independent Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (1991) and the Partnership for Peace programme (1994).
- Relations were strengthened with the signing of the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to take cooperation forward.
- The 2009 Declaration to Complement the NATO-Ukraine Charter mandated the NUC, through Ukraine's Annual National Programme, to underpin Ukraine's efforts to take forward reforms aimed at implementing Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, in line with the decisions of the 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest.
- Cooperation has deepened over time and is mutually beneficial with Ukraine actively contributing to NATO-led operations and missions.
- Priority is given to support for comprehensive reform in the security and defence sector, which is vital for Ukraine's democratic development and for strengthening its ability to defend itself.
- In response to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO has reinforced its support for capability development and capacity-building in Ukraine. The Allies condemn and will not recognise Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of Crimea, and its destabilising and aggressive activities in eastern Ukraine and the Black Sea region. NATO has increased its presence in the Black Sea and stepped up maritime cooperation with Ukraine and Georgia.
- Since the NATO Summit in Warsaw in July 2016, NATO's practical support for Ukraine is set out in the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine.
- In June 2017, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted legislation reinstating membership in NATO as a strategic foreign and security policy objective. In 2019, a corresponding amendment to Ukraine's Constitution entered into force.
- In September 2020, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy approved Ukraine's new National Security Strategy, which provides for the development of the distinctive partnership with NATO with the aim of membership in NATO.

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