

Bucharest: a milestone in NATO's transformation

NATO Secretary General, **Jaap de Hoop Scheffer**, describes the role he sees the Bucharest Summit playing in NATO's evolution:



On April 3 and 4, in Bucharest, NATO will hold its next Summit meeting.

This event is part of a three-Summit strategy that started with the Riga Summit in 2006 and will conclude with NATO's 60th Anniversary Summit next year.

Within this rather short time span, we want to significantly accelerate NATO's transformation: with stronger operational capabilities, and new political relationships with other nations and institutions, the Alliance will be a much more effective security provider in an increasingly globalized and more dangerous world.

In terms of the number of nations participating, the Bucharest Summit will be NATO's biggest ever. Heads of State or Government from all 26 NATO nations, partner countries from across the globe, and representatives from many major international institutions will come together to discuss new ways of building security.

Nothing could underscore more clearly NATO's evolving role as a hub of broader coalitions – a flexible political-military instrument at the service not just of its own member nations, but also at the service of the wider international community.

What will be the major issues at the Bucharest Summit? Four key areas stand out.

First of all, operations.

Our Bucharest Summit will feature a strong focus on NATO's operational commitments. Over 60,000 brave men and women are deployed in NATO-led missions and operations today, on three different continents. At Bucharest, we will underline the commitment of all 26 Allies to the success of those operations, and send a strong message of support in particular to the people of Kosovo and Afghanistan.

As far as Kosovo is concerned, the Allies have made clear that KFOR will remain there on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1244, unless the Security Council decides otherwise. KFOR is there to ensure a safe and secure environment – for all the people of Kosovo.

But they have also stressed that this should be a **controlled and coordinated process**. The Balkans lie at the heart of Europe and they are vital to the stability of our continent. We want all countries from the region to integrate with the rest of Europe. That is why NATO will continue to help Kosovo to get on its feet, but also continue to assist reform efforts by Serbia, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

We must continue to help Afghanistan to become a stable, democratic, and properly governed nation.

Afghanistan represents a long-term commitment for NATO. We must continue to help Afghanistan to become a stable, democratic, and properly governed nation

that no longer exports terrorism, crime and drugs to our nations and the rest of the world. There are clear signs of progress, in a number of areas – ■ better education, ■ economic growth, ■ functioning institutions. The challenge before us is to reinforce and sustain that progress.

I expect our Bucharest Summit to agree on a clear strategy for the way ahead in Afghanistan – with a robust NATO presence underlining our commitment; enhanced training of the Afghan National Army to make sure the Afghans are better able to look after their own security; better interaction between international organizations, including the United Nations and the European Union, to make sure that security goes hand in hand with reconstruction and development; and a strong appeal to Afghanistan's neighbours to support our common goal of a stable and democratic Afghanistan.

A second major issue that will be high on the agenda of our Bucharest Summit is **NATO enlargement**.

The NATO Allies have committed to issue invitations at Bucharest to aspirant countries that meet our performance-based standards, and that are able to contribute to Euro-Atlantic security. We have been working hard in the context of our Membership Action Plan (MAP) to assist **Albania, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** with their preparations for eventual membership. And it is clear that, if they were to join, that would be a major step in the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Balkans region.

As I write these words, nothing has been decided yet. All three MAP countries still have work to do to merit an invitation. As in previous rounds of NATO enlargement, the Bucharest decision will ultimately be a political one. I cannot and do not want to prejudge that decision here and now. It will reflect the consensus among our current 26 members on the next stage of NATO enlargement. Clearly, though, NATO does not suffer from enlargement fatigue – and I hope that the same can be said for the European Union. Because it is the combination of NATO and EU enlargement that offers the best guarantee for long-term peace and stability on our continent.

Third, our Bucharest Summit must advance **NATO's transformation**. This means the adaptation of NATO's own structures and capabilities to the new security environment. It is obvious that not all security challenges require military solutions, but military competence has been, and no doubt will remain, crucial for dealing with many of them. And so it is vital that the Alliance maintains its military edge, and that all our member nations continue to make the necessary investments – in making our forces more flexible and useable, and giving them the right equipment to do their job.

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While we reinforce our ability to meet current requirements, we must also look ahead and prepare for emerging security challenges. In light of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, we have decided to take a fresh look at missile defence, and to examine ways to make the system which the United States has been discussing with Poland and the Czech Republic

complementary to ongoing NATO programmes.

But we are also looking at ways to better protect the security of our energy infrastructures and how NATO can add value to efforts by the international community to ensure greater energy security. And we are developing policies to improve the protection of NATO's key information systems against internet crime and cyber attacks.

The fourth and final Bucharest Summit issue that I wish to highlight is the development of **NATO's partnership relations**.

Over the past 15 years, NATO has helped non-member countries all across Europe to meet difficult reform challenges – and this has been a major boost to the security and stability of our continent.

Many of our Euro-Atlantic Partners have shown a strong determination to be providers of security rather than mere consumers, by making valuable contributions to NATO missions and operations. And so NATO has a strong interest in continuing this Partnership policy – to tailor it even better to the needs and requirements of our Euro-Atlantic Partners – and to further engage them in meeting today's security challenges. There will be a meeting with our Euro-Atlantic Partners in conjunction with our Bucharest Summit, and that will be an excellent opportunity to reach out to our Partners all over Europe and Central Asia.

Russia is part and parcel of this Partnership effort, and I look forward to its participation at the Bucharest Summit. Despite its recent harsh rhetoric, and the stance which it has taken on issues such as Kosovo and the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, Russia occupies a special place among NATO's Partners. We value and want to continue our constructive and frank dialogue with Russia, including on issues on which we disagree, and to continue to look for common ground. As far as NATO is concerned, there really are no "red lines", and no limits, on how far our relationship can go.

Finally, we also want to strengthen NATO's partnership network beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. From Northern Africa to the Middle East to the Asian-Pacific region, interest in NATO is rising – and for good reason. Countries in these regions have carefully observed NATO's evolution. They have concluded that many of NATO's operations benefit their own security, and that it is in their interest to work with the NATO team. We in NATO should make that possible – by engaging in dialogue, opening new channels of cooperation, and enhancing the interoperability of our forces with those of interested countries.

Beyond Bucharest?

The Bucharest Summit will not be an isolated event. It will further the implementation of many decisions taken at the previous Summit in Riga, as well as generate decisions to be implemented in the months ahead. Next year, when NATO will be celebrating its 60th anniversary, we will take NATO's transformation another major step further. I believe that this should include a decision to revisit NATO's conceptual foundations, possibly by starting work on a new Strategic Concept. Such a document should lay out why NATO is unique; how it is transforming; and how it will tackle the core security challenges before us. It will strengthen our common purpose, and it will ensure that NATO remains understood by our publics, and relevant to their security needs.

SACEUR, US General JOHN CRADDOCK



The future of the NATO Response Force

The NATO Response Force, which reached operational capability in November of 2006, is a valuable concept. We have got to continue to generate the forces, what is difficult to do when we are in operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo. The concept is solid. There is no change in that. We are going to continue to work with nations to generate a command and control capability, to generate enablers, if you will, a niche capability and then obviously the maritime, the air and land component forces. I think the

future is bright. I think, we will continue to see the force and the transformation effect for NATO, now and in the future.

KFOR, a well led mission

This mission, KFOR, NATO-led Kosovo Force, has not changed. It is to enable a secure environment. KFOR has been there for some time. It is well led, well trained. It is postured in a range throughout that province, in a good fashion. There are no caveats that will affect the flexibility of commanders to operate when required, and in the past several months, it has been reorganized to multinational task forces, with a much greater flexibility, both at KFOR commander's level and at task force level, to accommodate, react and respond to any arising situation. The mission is not changed. We still want to ensure a secure environment. We know there is anticipation, there is angst and I think the KFOR elements are aware and working closely with other law enforcement organizations and I think they will posture just fine.

When road ends, the Talebans begin

ISAF is having some good effects. There is much in the open press, in newspapers, television, radio about the security situation in Afghanistan, which is mixed. In 60% of the country, the situation is stable. There are criminal arms but no insurgents. In the remaining parts of country, about 40%, in south and east, the security is not to the level we want it to be. I think there are some key things in Afghanistan that we need to focus on. First, we must enable the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police to grow up, stand up, become capable, provisioned and be able to provide security for their people. And the effort is ongoing and it is showing significant progress with the army. The police are a bit behind and they need more work in terms of mentoring and training. The effort also is ongoing. We, NATO countries, need to support the training effort for the army to support the Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams and continue then to fill up the number of troop units, the forces required for the ISAF mission. It is yet to be fully sourced and continue to do so. I think there is a focus that needs to continue, starting now on bringing together a better delivery of reconstruction and development from international and nongovernmental organizations all the way down to the province and district level, with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams. We need a better coordination and better effects on the ground: the delivery of schools, the delivery of medical clinics, the delivery of roads, because roads are very important. Someone said where the road ends, the Taleban begin. And that is, probably, a true statement. Also, I think the governance corruption level is too high. There needs to be more work done in the rule of law, the courts need to be effective and the people need to know that. Narcotics continue to be a problem and much of the country both ignore the poppy, the processing, the traffic into the country. A greater concern and effort is needed. We have authorities in ISAF. I have directed the commander there to pursue those to the limit of their authority and offer his support to the Afghan Narcotics Forces. So those are some of the key measures needed to be undertaken.

Romanian participation in ISAF

I think it is superb. I have visited the Romanian forces in Zabul province, in Qalat. I have received briefing from them. I know there is an American company that is embedded there, in the task force, in a very difficult area, strategically important. But Romanians do a very good work in that complex environment. We are hopeful. There will be some expansion in the future, in the work with the PRT Provincial Reconstruction Team, to a greater extent. Let me think it will be hopeful. When I talked to President Karzai, after I visited the Romanian soldiers, I told him I have been to Zabul Province. He said two things: it's a very difficult area, and the Romanians are doing very well. And he knows the effect the Romanian forces have there.

Bucharest Summit, a superb event

NATO is very grateful to the Romanian people for the offer to host the summit. We expect it is going to be a superb event. Obviously, there are a lot of issues, but there will be great opportunities there. Bucharest is a beautiful city. There will be a wonderful, generous, warm hospitality. I have been there. I am looking forward to coming back and have a very good Summit, as a participant with all those heads of state.

NATO IS THE BEST ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY SECTOR THAT THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN



STEWART ELDON, UK Permanent Representative to NATO

Afghanistan, a long-time challenge for NATO

Afghanistan is the NATO largest operation and perhaps the most important. I visited it and I have two impressions. The first is that there has been significant progress on the military front. The Taleban have suffered serious reverses in the S-E of the country, where the Romanian contingent is stationed. Really good progress is being made in pushing back the insurgency in those areas of the country. But against that, there is a broader security concern, a feeling of unease, among the general population. That is partly because the insurgents have moved back to more asymmetric terrorism. This is a consequence of the fact that they are unable to carry forward a major campaign. I think what we need is determined efforts to hold the territory that has been taken. That is not really a military matter. This is a question for the Government of Afghanistan, to extend its authority into areas which previously were not under its control.

I am sure, NATO will be in Afghanistan for some time, deeply committed. The mission in Afghanistan is not just a military one. Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. A lot of development is required. People need to feel an improvement in the quality of life. Since NATO has been deployed, there has been a lot of progress. But it is going to take a long time to finish the job.

Relationship between the UK and Romanian Armed Forces

It is very good. I must say I greatly enjoyed the days I spent in Bucharest. It was fantastic both to meet people, and see the site of the Summit. I want to thank those who hosted me for the marvellous time they gave me. The relationship between the UK and Romanian Armed Forces is very good. There is a lot of bilateral training going on. The relationships are mutually beneficial for both sides.

NATO Summit agenda

I think it is going to be a significant meeting. Operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo will be a big slice of the business. I hope that Bucharest may be an occasion to recognize the role of non-NATO troop contributor countries, like Australia and Japan.

Then we will look at the issue of enlargement. Bucharest will be the occasion to decide on whether any of the three countries currently with Membership Action Plan will be invited to join the Alliance – Croatia, Albania and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. You know from your own Romanian experience that it is a complicated business preparing to join NATO. We will be looking very closely to see how well those countries are meeting the performance related requirements of preparing for the membership. If you look at the experience of new members of the Alliance, they can tell you it is difficult in run up to achieving the invitation to join, but it is more difficult afterwards. And nobody does anyone any service by accepting things before they are ready. It is the UK's hope that we shall be able to invite all three countries to join NATO.

A message for the Romanian viewers of Public Television

I am sure the Summit is going to be a great occasion and I know the Romanian Government wants to make it a great occasion. The city will change, that always happens with major meetings like this and this will be one of the largest. We are looking forward to coming and please put up with the inconvenience and I am sure you will be rewarded in some fantastic results for Bucharest.

NATO-Russia and NATO-Ukraine relations

The NATO-Russia relationship is very special. We have the NATO-Russia Council, which is the only body in the Alliance which sits in the jargon as "27". Russia has an equal seat at the table. We have the NATO-Ukraine Council as well. Both countries have a special and distinct relationship with NATO. There are difficulties over some issues with Russia at the moment, but the most important thing we keep doing is to keep talking. The NATO-Russia Council has provided a very good forum for an exchange of views on sometime difficult issues. There is a fundamental truth in diplomacy: "The more people understand each other, the easier it becomes to settle the disputes."

NATO new policy on Public Affairs

NATO's public affairs policy is very important. There is a lot of support for NATO in United Kingdom. The Alliance has almost become a fixed part of the political scene. It has been there for nearly 60 years. It works. It is vital, in terms of providing a common defence a more expeditionary security capacity, that allows us to take on some of the crises we face. NATO projects itself. And projecting itself it takes account of a new media, like Internet. We have a delegation website here. I am contemplating writing a blog, because that is a very good way of getting across to people exactly what people working at NATO do all day. I hope that in Bucharest we will be able to use some good, modern Public Diplomacy in the margins of the Summit to get out the message about what we are doing, how and why we are doing it.

Energy security

We are working on energy security. I think it is an important part of what we are going to do. But it is also important to take account of the fact that many other organizations than NATO have a role to play in energy security. The trick will be to find an area of energy security, where NATO can add value.

Al-Qaeda, a long-time danger?

I was living and working in New York on 9/11. I experienced that day and the aftermath. I am absolutely determined personally that terrorism must not be allowed to happen again. In the United Kingdom, we suffered some terrorist attacks from al-Qaeda and related organizations. I am absolutely determined that we must do everything possible to ensure this activity ceases.

Is NATO a response to challenges from the future Europe?

NATO is a part of Europe and a part of Euro Atlantic area, and it provides a vital security component, a defence component, to what we are doing. NATO is important for Europe. NATO is the best organization for security sector that the world has ever seen. If you look at the changes, for example, in Eastern Europe, over the last ten or fifteen years, NATO has been instrumental in promoting changes in defence ministers and security forces of countries that are now allies, like Romania, it spread the concepts of what democratic security is about into the countries of the former Soviet Union and now down into the Balkans. NATO and EU do provide aspirational pillars for the countries in the Balkans and shaping their future. It is vital that these countries should be part of general Euro Atlantic area and Euro Atlantic democratic concept.

Kosovo, a particular case

For the whole western Balkans. Kosovo is a particular case, as NATO has troops on the ground. But it applies to the whole region. That's why the discussions about the three MAP countries are so important. As you know, Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina joined PP at Riga. I hope that will help anchor them into a European perspective. Security is not just hard military matters. Security is much broader. NATO is actually a political-military alliance. It can help anchor peoples' aspirations where they should be.

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NATO Air Police mission – personnel from the Romanian Air Force in the Baltic air space

We are very grateful to Romania, to almost twenty allies that took part in this missions since the very beginning of our membership, in 2004. This is a real kind of solidarity – sharing responsibilities. During the preparations for NATO membership, we were advised by force planners not to focus on air forces, but on ground forces. Now, we are able to allocate more resources, more efforts to other operations – peace operations or in areas like Afghanistan. This is a really good sign of solidarity. I can remind when we were promising, all of us being in the same Vilnius Ten group, and preparing for NATO membership, to help each other, to cooperate with each other. And this is a really sign of solidarity, which is still alive.

Lithuania is a voice in the campaign against terrorism.

I believe, we are quite active. One can say, a little bit above our possibilities. Because we are leading one of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), that operates in central Afghanistan, Province of Ghor, whose territory, is larger than Belgium. It is a mountainous area, forgotten by Government from Kabul, and with the same population as newborn Republic of Montenegro. It is really a challenge. But we are together with other nations – US, Denmark, Croatia. I was also happy to receive in our team one military officer from Ukraine. It is the first attempt of this country to take part in ISAF, Ukraine becoming the only partner nation taking part in all NATO-led operations. This is the most important task. But we have also Special Forces in the southern part of Afghanistan, which is quite dangerous and difficult.

Kosovo, a challenge for NATO

We are also on the ground. Like other allies. It is important to finalize the status of this province. So far, the situation is well tense but stable. It is a real challenge for us. Our soldiers are on the soil. I believe we should put together all the efforts of international community, because we are not defining the final status. It is discussed at United Nations and other forums. We are on the ground. I should not say we are hostages of the situation. We are an interested part of it and will be an active one after the status will be defined. I visited Kosovo many times. And last time, I once again understood that both conflicting parts needs NATO on the soil. I am talking about Serb community. I am talking about Albanians. All of them, for different reasons, would like to see NATO on the ground. And this adds credibility to our Alliance and our presence in this "hot spot" of the continent.

NATO Response Force

It is important to have some tools. I mean forces to take part in any place, when it is necessary. We, especially the politicians, should really match their level of ambitions with the readiness to allocate forces to the operations. Business as usual, I would say. We do have NRF. We do have ambitions. We do have a concept. And at the same time, we face practical challenges to generate forces when it is necessary. The future will depend on how we will be available to match ambitions to the practical abilities to generate forces, to streamline all these procedures. That is our task in nearby future.

Lithuanian Armed Forces and NATO transformation

Same rules, same challenges, I would say, same criteria. We have chosen this way before joining the Alliance, shifting the focus not on territorial forces, but on deployable, sustainable forces, trying to increase the percentage of useability of these forces. This is a guideline for our force planners, for how we are transforming our armed forces. I believe it is very important, to streamline the chain of command. Now we are working on that. We are intensively looking for ways to coordinate the horizontal ties between military structures and civilian structures, not to duplicate each other, to shorten the making decisions process, to streamline the legal procedures when we have to send troops to theatres of operations.

New countries could be invited to join the Alliance

Our approach is quite clear. I would remind that three countries of Vilnius Ten group are still beyond our club. The best solution is to be invited all three to the Alliance. But as you know, all the decisions are made through consensus. And so far, it is too early to say who, when and how they will be invited. I believe that enlargement will continue. The Bucharest Summit will be a historical one. Future



LINAS LINKEVICIUS, Ambassador of Lithuania to NATO

allies will be invited to join the Alliance. I hope so. No doubt, this will extend the area of stability and predictability we have proven so far.

European Security and Defence Policy and NATO operations

From my experience as ambassador and also, I can add, as former minister of defence, for seven and a half years, I remember quite well that it is not easy at practical level to put together all the resources, it is not easy to cooperate even on the obvious issues. I believe we have something to do. Our country, it is especially the case of small countries, but I would say, all countries need cooperation not duplication. Simply, for a practical reason. They have not enough manpower or resources to allocate to different operations. For us, it is not important which flag is waving above an operation. For us, the most important aspect is the political, practical priority. In this respect, I would return to Afghanistan. I would be very happy if EU flag waved alongside NATO flag in our PRT. We should not focus on who is subordinated to whom, but to put together all the resources when the situation requires it. This is what really could be done on the ground, not in the offices in Bruxelles. We can prove we are thinking right or wrong on the ground. And do the best for our soldiers, for our people, because intellectual debate in safe offices is one part of the story. But when you have troops on the ground, they are exposed to danger. And this is a real situation of which we have to take into account.

Romania and Lithuania, common training and exercises.

As far as I remember, we have experience in cooperation, in exercises. Not only with the regional countries, which is business as usual. We have a very interesting cooperation with Italy, for instance. A real challenge for us and Italian troops – logistic objectives, changing the environment, sharing experience. You can never replace participation in real missions by exercises. But nevertheless, changing dramatically the environment, and acting in a non-familiar neighbourhood is a very good experience for soldiers as far as I know, as I was told by officers. So, in this respect, we can also find something interesting with your country. And recalling air police mission, I believe it will continue in the future. Because pilots should fly. It is a good opportunity for them to train, offering new environment and experience, extending their professional acknowledges. So we can really find common ground between us.

Expectations for the summit

One can say, "Another summit. What's new?". It would be nice to have enlargement. To reiterate the importance of **Article Five** and confutations of the Alliance. The environment is changing. Risks are also changing. Asymmetric risks are developing. New challenges are arising, like cyber defence or energy security. They mean new tasks. We have to adapt. Otherwise, we will not be relevant. But we have also to preserve the confutations that found our Alliance. I believe the summit will be a good opportunity to reiterate both the trendiness to adapt and also our faithful attitude to confutations.

A message for Romanian viewers

We belong to the same family, the same Euro-Atlantic family. We are not as remote as it appears on the map. We are much closer. And we can feel that here, in Bruxelles, how close we are. So, I really wish you, you and us, together, all success!