

NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept and Its Impact on Global Security

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Abstract

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has revealed the importance of NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept and its contribution to the Euro-Atlantic peace and security. This paper analyzes the three previous NATO strategic concepts and their different security concerns, the security environment and the means to respond to such issues. In the past versions of the document, NATO first regarded the Soviet Union, and then non-traditional security threats, as the main challenges for NATO member-states; after the Russia-Ukraine war, however, Moscow has emerged as the most significant and direct threat, while China is regarded as posing a systemic threat. How to prevent Russia-China strategic cooperation from upending the global security order will be the most important task for the U.S.-led Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific partnership.

This paper first examines NATO's three previous strategic documents: "The Alliance's New Strategic Concept" (1991), "The Alliance's Strategic Concept" (1999) and "Active Engagement, Modern Defence" (2010) in order to better understand the different factors that impacted Euro-Atlantic security. It then analyzes the origins and content of the "NATO 2022 strategic concept" and how China and Russia react to this new strategic concept. Lastly, the paper discusses the importance of the new strategic concept and future potential countermeasures from China and Russia. It also looks at how Taiwan can seize this juncture to enhance its connectivity with NATO.

Keywords: NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, Global Security, Russia-Ukraine War, Russia, China

I. Introduction

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a military invasion of Ukraine and announced that its two objectives were the de-militarization and “de-Nazification” of Ukraine. The invasion was the largest land warfare operation in Europe since World War II and triggered a refugee crisis, food shortages, and energy problems. The conflict had a direct impact on the complex security situation in Europe and affected the U.S.-China-Russia triangle relationship.

Moscow’s disregard for international law caused deep security concerns for neighboring European countries. As a result, Finland and Sweden have changed their long-term policy of neutrality and considered applying to join NATO so as to benefit from Article 5 — “collective defense” — under NATO.



Figure 1. Russian Troops Destroyed Ukraine Airport in Gostomel, Ukraine, April 2022

Source: Depositphotos.

The U.S. criticized Russia's aggression and called for economic and financial sanctions against Russia. It also provided Ukraine with military assistance, including the provision of heavy weapons and logistics. Washington also warned Beijing not to support Moscow in any form and to prevent China and Russia from disrupting the global security architecture.

During the Madrid Summit in June, NATO released its "NATO 2022 Strategic Concept," which emphasized that "The Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area," and added that China's "ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values." In other words, NATO was saying that China and Russia were undermining the rules-based international order. At the same time, NATO also invited non-NATO countries, including Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, to join the Madrid Summit, which demonstrated that NATO was expanding its relationships with Asia alongside the U.S.-led QUAD and AUKUS.

The communiqué issued after the summit in Brussels earlier in June had already stated that "China's stated ambitions and assertive behavior present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order and to areas relevant to Alliance security." The "NATO 2022 Strategic Concept" underscored that Russia represented a threat to the NATO alliance and that China was emerging as a long-term strategic threat. Over its history, NATO's "strategic concept" papers have revolved around three main issues: the strategic environment, main security threats, and the means by which to fulfill NATO's goals.

On February 4, 2022, during the Beijing Winter Olympic Games, Russian President Vladimir Putin paid a state visit to China, where he and Chinese leader Xi Jinping signed a "Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development" which stated that both sides opposed NATO expansion and called for the abandonment of "Cold War ideology" and respect for sovereignty, security, interests and multilateral cultural diversity.

China and Russia also opposed alliance building in Asia and contested the U.S.-led Indo-Pacific strategy, saying such developments prejudiced peace and stability in the region. In sum, China and Russia engaged into a strategic partnership in order to balance U.S. power in Asia; Russia can also use China's power as leverage against NATO in Europe.

II. Background of NATO's Strategic Concept Development

1. The Alliance's New Strategic Concept (1991)

In 1949, 12 nations from North America and Western Europe signed the *Washington Treaty* and founded the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. initially, the main purpose of the organization was to deter Soviet expansionism. But NATO had two other goals:” forbidding the revival of nationalist militarism in Europe through a strong North American presence on the continent, and encouraging European political integration.”¹

After 73 years, NATO has reached 30 member states² through an eastern expansion after 1991. The organization still plays an important role for international peace and stability, and more so within the Transatlantic region. Article 5 of the *NATO Treaty* stipulates: “The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all” and shall provide “collective defense” for all member states when they face any kind of aggression on their soil.

1. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “A SHORT HISTORY OF NATO,” June 3, 2022, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_139339.htm>.

2. In 1949, there were 12 founding members of the Alliance: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. The other member countries are: Greece and Türkiye (1952), Germany (1955), Spain (1982), the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (1999), Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (2004), Albania and Croatia (2009), Montenegro (2017) and North Macedonia (2020). The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Member countries,” August 16, 2022, Accessed, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52044.htm>.

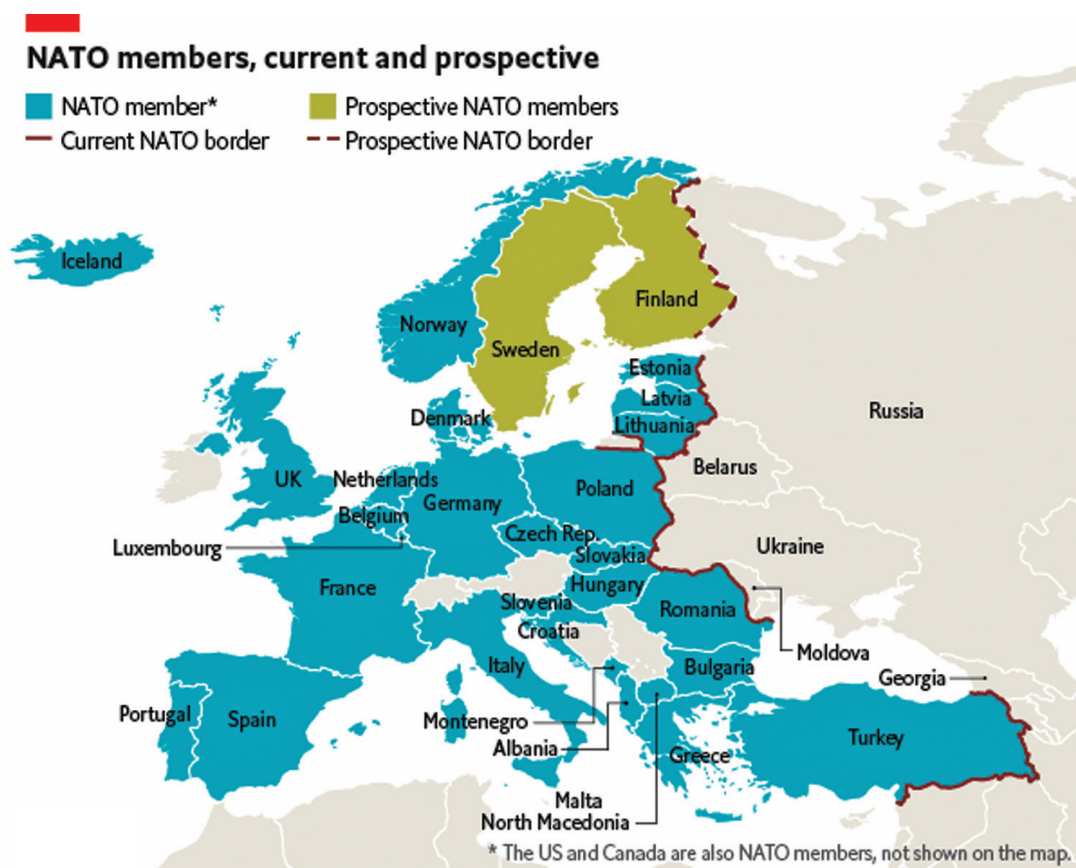


Figure 2. NATO Members, Current and Prospective

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, “NATO leaders outline new objectives to project unity,” July 4, 2022, *Economist Intelligence Unit*, <<http://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=1852249568&Country=Italy&topic=Politics&subtopic=Forecast&subsubtopic=International+relations&u=1&pid=1772282960&oid=1732282956>>.

NATO was founded in response to the threat posed by the Moscow-led Warsaw Pact NATO adopted different military strategies during the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods,³ such as “The first strategic concept” (1949), in which NATO

3. The following military strategies are: *THE SECOND STRATEGIC CONCEPT* (1952), *The Sword and the Shield: NATO's Third Strategic Concept* (1957), *Flexible Response: NATO's Fourth Strategic Concept* (1968), Please see Sean Monaghan, “Resetting NATO's Defense and Deterrence: The Sword and the Shield Redux,” June 28, 2022, *CSIS*, <<https://www.csis.org/analysis/resetting-natos-defense-and-deterrence-sword-and-shield-redux>>.

sought to deter Soviet aggression through deterrence by punishment and the threat of American nuclear weapons. NATO combined conventional and nuclear forces and adopted a strategy of “massive retaliation,” which later on was replaced by a doctrine of “flexible response.”

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, German reunification in 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 changed the security environment for Europe as a whole. As a result, NATO had to identify its new role and mission. At the 1990 NATO summit in London, member states began to think about the implications of the fall of strategic rivalry and what role NATO was to play in the new strategic environment. In 1991, NATO passed “The Alliance’s New Strategic Concept” (1991), a security policy comprising five key elements: dialogue; co-operation; and effective collective defence as mutually reinforcing instruments for preserving the peace.⁴

After the NATO Summit in 1994, NATO began its enlargement eastwards. First, NATO invited former members of the Warsaw Pact to participate in the “Partnership for Peace (PfP)” initiative, which developed into an important feature of European security by linking NATO and partners and providing the foundations for joint action with NATO in dealing with common security problems.

2. The Alliance’s Strategic Concept (1999)

In July 1997, NATO heads of state and governments agreed that the Strategic Concept should be re-examined to ensure that the organization’s goals remained coherent with Europe’s new security situation and challenges. In 1995, the UN had

4. There are five parts to this new strategic concept: Part I - the Strategic Context: The new strategic environment; Part II - Alliance Objectives And Security Functions The purpose of the Alliance: To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against the territory of any NATO member state; Part III - A Broad Approach To Security: Protecting peace in a new Europe; Part IV - Guidelines For Defence Principles of Alliance strategy; Part V - Conclusion: This Strategic Concept reaffirms the defensive nature of the Alliance and the resolve of its members to safeguard their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “The Alliance’s New Strategic Concept (1991),” November 7, 1991, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_23847.htm>.



Figure 3. NATO Alliance and Partnership in Europe

Source: “Take Five: NATO -- dead or alive?” *REUTERS*, November 29, 2019, <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-global-markets-themes-idUSKBN1Y31PG>>.

Note: NATO has worked to build relationships with neighboring non-members through programmes such as Joined Partnership for Peace and Individual Partnership Action Plans.

approved a NATO role as a Peacekeeping Force—the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) conducted its first major crisis response operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At the NATO Summit meeting in Washington, D.C., in April 1999, NATO heads of state and governments accepted the Alliance’s new Strategic Concept.⁵ With NATO entering its sixth decade, it had to be ready to respond to the challenges of a new century.

5. Part I - The Purpose and Tasks of the Alliance, Part II - Strategic Perspectives, Part III - The Approach to Security in the 21st Century, Part IV - Guidelines for the Alliance’s Forces Principles Of Alliance Strategy, Part V – Conclusion. Please see: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept (1999),” April 24, 1999, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_27433.htm>.

3. Active Engagement, Modern Defence (2010)

At the NATO Summit meeting in Lisbon in 2010, NATO member states approved a new strategic concept called “Active Engagement, Modern Defence,” which aimed for effectiveness in a changing world, against new threats, with new capabilities and new partners. The 2010 Strategic Concept sought to address the increasingly complex threats facing allied members, including nuclear terrorism, cyber crime, and global climate change, as well as the institutional changes necessary to maintain NATO’s relevance in the 21st century. The document also stated that “NATO’s enlargement has contributed substantially to the security of Allies,” and “We will enhance our partnerships through flexible formats that bring NATO and partners together – across and beyond existing frameworks.”⁶

The three NATO strategic concepts discussed above highlight NATO’s historical development based on three elements: security threats and environment, military strategy and comprehensive means and ways to reach different goals. The Soviet Union, and then Russia, were always the greatest security concerns for NATO, but non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, climate change, regional conflicts also became critical problems. NATO therefore had to adopt different ways and means to fulfill its goals of peace and stability. This included crisis management, strategic communication, as well as security dialogue.

III. Origins and Content of the 2022 Strategic Concept

1. 2021 NATO Brussels Summit Communiqué

In March 2021, a national security meeting between the U.S. and China was held in Alaska. At the meeting, Washington said Beijing’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was having a detrimental impact on Eurasian economic development, and that its

6. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Strategic Concept For the Defence and Security of The Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation: Active Engagement, Modern Defence,” August 15, 2022, Accessed, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <<https://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf>>.

assertive diplomacy, especially the use of military means to enhance its presence in the East and South China Sea, was a source of regional instability. Amid the Covid-19 pandemic and a deteriorating global economic situation, the U.S. began to explore more constructive and comprehensive means by which to wage its strategic rivalry with China.

At the June 2021 NATO Summit in Brussel, U.S. president Joe Biden endeavored to repair the Transatlantic relationship, which had suffered under the Trump administration. President Biden emphasized three “backs”: America is back, diplomacy is back, and alliances are back. He also sought to enhance security cooperation between the U.S. and NATO member states to counter external security threats.



Figure 4. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomes U.S. President Joe Biden at the NATO Summit in Brussels

Source: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “Secretary General welcomes US President to NATO Summit,” June 14, 2021, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185056.htm?selectedLocale=en>.

During the summit, all leaders agreed that the complex international security environment called for a new chapter in the Transatlantic relationship. On June 13, 2021, during the G7 Leaders' meeting in London, members states released a joint communiqué which urged China should respect human rights in Tibet and Xinjiang and maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

G7 governments also agreed to launch the Build Back Better World (B3W) initiative to counter China's BRI. During the 2021 NATO summit, the "NATO 2030" was also proposed, which aims to build on NATO's ongoing political and military adaptation, strengthen NATO's ability to deliver on its three core tasks and contribute to making NATO's strong alliance even stronger and ready for the future.⁷

2. 2022 NATO Madrid Summit Resolution

Three emerging problems have influenced the contents of the "2022 NATO Strategic Concept." First, the Russian invasion of Ukraine posed an emerging territorial threat to NATO members and worsened relations with Russia. NATO seeks to keep balancing relations between Russia and Ukraine to avoid the conflict descending into a nuclear war. Second, during the Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO members united to help Ukraine militarily against the Russian invaders. Sanction against Russia, however, saw less unity among member states and generated different reactions. Germany has suspended the "Nord Stream II," which is used to provide Russian natural gas to Germany.

Three months into the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Sweden and Finland changed their long-term policy of neutrality and applied for NATO membership. The two countries' strategic location in northern Europe will spark strong reactions from Moscow, since Russia has already opposed any NATO expansion in the European landscape.

7. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Brussels Summit Communiqué, Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels 14 June 2021," June 14, 2021, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_185000.htm>.

3. The 2022 Strategic Concept in Action

The new Strategic concept's purpose and principal goal is to "ensure our collective defence, based on a 360-degree approach" and three core tasks: deterrence and defense; crisis prevention and management; and cooperative security. This contrasts with the the previous strategic concept of 2010, which emphasized NATO's core tasks: collective defense, crisis management and cooperative security. NATO stated two important alterations: the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which undermined European security, and the "Authoritarian actors challenge our interests, values and democratic way of life." NATO therefore continues to regard Russia as the most significant and direct threat to NATO.

For the first time, the NATO strategic concept also stated that "The People's Republic of China's (PRC) stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values," adding, however, that "We remain open to constructive engagement with the PRC, including to build reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests."

Besides deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management and cooperative security (as in the 2010 strategic concept), the latest iteration stipulates the need to "Ensur[e] the Alliance's Continued Success" with the following: "Investing in NATO is the best way to ensure the enduring bond between European and North American Allies, while contributing to global peace and stability and Sharing equitably responsibilities and risks for our defence and security."



Figure 5. NATO Summit in Madrid, Spain, June 27-30, 2022

Source: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “NATO Summit Madrid - Spain, 27-30 June 2022,” June 29, 2022, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/photos_197215.htm>.

IV. Impact on Global Security

1. NATO, Russia and European Security

Before NATO released its new strategic concept in Madrid in 2022, tensions between Russia and NATO member states were already high because of Crimea and Russian-affiliated militant activity in Eastern Ukraine. Additionally, the Ukrainian government under president Volodymyr Zelenskyy took a pro-European stance and was eager to obtain membership in NATO and the European Union.

After Russia invaded Ukraine, President Putin gave a televised address in which he accused western countries of unfriendliness, besides. He also ordered Russian nuclear forces to maintain a state of readiness and warned NATO and its allies against the imposition of sanctions.

Moscow criticized the NATO summit in Madrid and restated its opposition to NATO expansion. In an interview, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said, “The summit in Madrid confirms and consolidates this bloc’s policy of aggressive containment of Russia.”⁸ During the Brussels summit in 2022, NATO also declared that NATO unanimously agreed to Sweden and Finland’s application for NATO membership.

Reacting to NATO’s northwards expansion, Putin said that while Russia was not concerned whether the two countries joined NATO or not, “if military contingents and military infrastructure were deployed there, we would be obliged to respond symmetrically and raise the same threats for those territories where threats have arisen for us.”⁹ Under the circumstances, Moscow would bolster its defense posture in the Baltic Sea region, which would include the deployment of nuclear weapons, Putin added.

After outbreak of war in Ukraine, European leaders expressed worries regarding the potential for Russia completely cutting off natural gas. Putin has used energy for political leverage in his confrontation with the West, including the war in Ukraine. At the end of July, Moscow announced a 20% reduction in capacity on Nord Stream 1, linking Russia and Germany, allegedly due to technical reasons.¹⁰ Russia also threatened the EU by reducing gas flows to the bloc, with the possibility of a complete shutdown during winter 2022.¹¹

8. “NATO summit in Madrid proof alliance seeks to contain Russia: Moscow,” *Alarabiya News*, June 29, 2022, <<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/06/29/NATO-summit-in-Madrid-proof-alliance-seeks-to-contain-Russia-Moscow->>.

9. Andrew Roth, “Putin issues fresh warning to Finland and Sweden on installing Nato infrastructure,” *The Guardian*, June 29, 2022, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/29/russia-condemns-nato-invitation-finland-sweden>>.

10. “EXPLAINER: Can Europe live without Russian natural gas?” *AP News*, July 27, 2022, <<https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-germany-european-union-553209d62edd0f925a3e2af00abada74>>.

11. Todd Prince, “Boom To Bust: Putin Sacrifices Gazprom’s Lucrative European Market, ‘Geopolitical Heft’ In War With Ukraine,” *RadioFreeEurope*, August 4, 2022, <<https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-gazprom-ukraine-war-european-market/31974160.html>>.

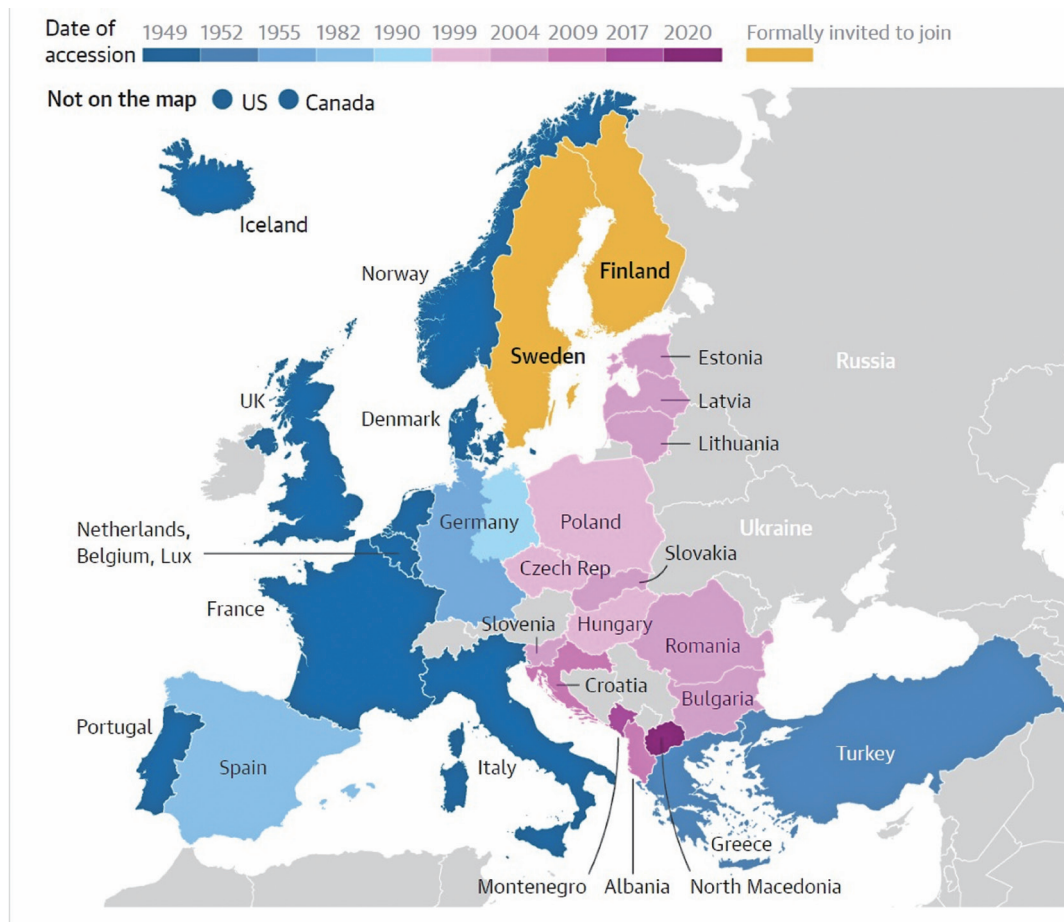


Figure 6. Sweden and Finland Have Been Formally Invited to Join Nato

Source: Andrew Roth, “Putin issues fresh warning to Finland and Sweden on installing Nato infrastructure.”

2. NATO, China, and the Indo-Pacific Strategy

The 2022 strategic concept describes China as a “systemic challenge” which, because of China’s stated ambitions and coercive policies, undermine NATO’s interests, security, and values. This statement about China signals a strategic transformation within NATO, which now extends its remit to the Indo-Pacific region. According to Chinese scholar Shi Yinhong, “It frames China as an adversary in a global perspective, not only in the Pacific and in East Asia, and it does so in a formal

document.”¹²

China has also stated its opposition this new strategic concept and emphasized that it “smear[ed] China’s foreign policy and pointed fingers at China’s normal military posture and defense policy.” It added that the concept encouraged confrontation and antagonism and smacked of “Cold War mentality” and ideological bias.¹³ An unnamed spokesman for China’s mission to the European Union accused NATO of “provoking confrontation,” adding that “it is NATO that is creating problems around the world.”¹⁴

During the China-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) foreign ministers’ meeting in Tashkent on July 29, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said members of the SCO should carry forward the “Shanghai spirit,” sustain solidarity and aid each other, and continue to promote the building of a closer SCO community with a shared future.¹⁵ This statement revealed that Beijing is bolstering its multilateral platforms such as SCO to play a bigger role in influencing the global order, at a time when Washington and an expanding NATO pay greater attention to the challenges emanating from China.¹⁶ In July 2022, Moscow announced plans to conduct the “Vostok” (East) exercises from August 30 to September 5. China announced that

¹² Amy Qin & Austin Ramzy, “Labeled a ‘Challenge’ by NATO, China Signals Its Own Hard-Line Worldview,” *The New York Times*, July 1, 2022, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/01/world/asia/china-nato.html>>.

¹³ Zhao Lijian, “Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference on June 30, 2022,” June 30, 2022, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China*, <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/xwfw_665399/s2510_665401/202206/t20220630_10713185.html>.

¹⁴ Amy Qin & Austin Ramzy, “Labeled a ‘Challenge’ by NATO, China Signals Its Own Hard-Line Worldview.”

¹⁵ Wang Yi, “Wang Yi: Carry Forward the Shanghai Spirit to Continuously Promote the Building of a Closer SCO Community with a Shared Future,” July 29, 2022, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China*, <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/zxxx_662805/202207/t20220730_10730837.html>.

¹⁶ Amber Wang, “China calls on regional bloc to ‘oppose hegemonic bullying’ as Nato set to expand,” *South China Morning Post*, July 2, 2022, <<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3183811/china-calls-regional-bloc-oppose-hegemonic-bullying-nato-set>>.



Figure 7. Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of SCO Member States, 2022

Source: Wang Yi, “Wang Yi: Carry Forward the Shanghai Spirit to Continuously Promote the Building of a Closer SCO Community with a Shared Future.”

PLA troops would take part in the joint military exercises alongside India, Belarus, Mongolia, Tajikistan and other countries.¹⁷

3. Interactions among NATO, Russia, and China

Russia and China represent different strategic concerns for NATO. From NATO’s perspective, the Russian invasion of Ukraine means that all NATO member states of face a continuous threat to their national security. Russia possess nuclear weapons that can deter a U.S. intervention during a crisis. The 2022 strategic concept states that although Russia is not a partner of NATO, NATO is nevertheless “willing to keep

17. “China to send troops to Russia for ‘Vostok’ exercise,” *REUTERS*, August 18, 2022, <<https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinese-military-will-send-troops-russia-joint-exercise-2022-08-17/>>.

open channels of communication with Moscow to manage and mitigate risks, prevent escalation and increase transparency.”¹⁸

The escalating confrontation between the U.S. and China poses a security dilemma for NATO and European member states. Because of China's growing economic power and the BRI, which has helped central and east European countries with infrastructure projects such as the “China Railway Express,” economic dependence on China has increased. Despite this, most European countries remain critical of China's one-party system of authoritarian governance, as well as its human rights abuses in Tibet and Xinjiang.

In recent years, the PLA has conducted air and naval military drills around the First Island Chain, particularly around and across the Taiwan Strait. The 2021 G7 meeting highlighted “the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and encourage the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.” The 2021 NATO London summit emphasized China's systemic threat to the international community. In addition, under the U.S.-led Indo-pacific strategy framework, NATO will support U.S. security agreements in the region, such as joint military exercises and dialogue with U.S. allies and partners. All this is in response to the deepening Russia-China strategic partnership and their mutually reinforcing attempts to weaken the rules-based international order, which runs counter to NATO's values and interests.

V. Conclusion

1. Importance of the 2022 Strategic Concept

Since its founding in 1949, NATO has played an important role in maintaining peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, which provides member states a military alliance with features of “collective defense.”

¹⁸The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, “NATO 2022 STRATEGIC CONCEPT,” June 29, 2022, *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, <https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf>.

NATO has also adopted different military strategies over the years, including how to combine conventional and nuclear forces to deter Soviet aggression during the Cold War.¹⁹ Despite tensions between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the two military blocs did not engage in a direct military confrontation during the entire Cold War period.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, followed by the reunification of Germany in 1990 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, deeply altered the security environment in Europe. NATO adopted “The Alliance’s New Strategic Concept” in 1991, which changed the “forward deployment strategy” into a “flexible strategy” to counter international crises. In 1999, NATO approved “The Alliance’s Strategic Concept,” which sought to address non-traditional security threats and safeguard freedom, human rights, and democratic values. Henceforth, through humanitarian intervention in Kosovo, since 1999 NATO has been leading peace-support operations as part of wider international efforts to build peace and stability in Europe.

In 2010, NATO released its third strategic concept, which emphasized the importance of cooperation with Russia on European security issues. From 2014, Russia has occupied Crimea through an illegal plebiscite and has raised tensions with NATO countries. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, NATO announced its fourth strategic concept, which not only pointed out the most serious security threats posed by Russia, but also identified China as a country that poses a systemic threat to NATO. China and Russia have undermined the rule-based international order, which has become the most immediate task for NATO’s future strategic planning.

19. 1. deterrence by punishment through the threat of American atomic weapons; 2. deterrence by punishment (through strategic bombing and conventional military power) and by denial (through forward defense and measures short of war); 3. massive retaliation—including the possibility of their first use in response to conventional Soviet aggression; 4. from relying on “massive retaliation” toward a policy known as “flexible response” that would provide NATO with a graduated response to a non-nuclear crisis, rather than the blunt instrument of massive retaliation; 5. They focused instead on balancing a wider range of core tasks, including dialogue, cooperation, consultation, collective defense, crisis management, conflict prevention, partnerships, and cooperative security. Please see: Sean Monaghan, “Resetting NATO’s Defense and Deterrence: The Sword and the Shield Redux.”



Figure 8. Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping in February 2022

Source: Wikipedia, “China–Russia relations,” August 23, 2022, Accessed, *Wikipedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%E2%80%93Russia_relations>.

2. Future Responses of China and Russia

The NATO 2022 strategic concept has challenged Russia and China. Both countries have signed a “Joint Statement of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China on the International Relations Entering a New Era and the Global Sustainable Development” and lamented the new cold war between the U.S.-led international order and the China-Russian alliance.²⁰ China has opposed any unilateral or multilateral sanctions against Russia and urged Russia and Ukraine to negotiate under the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs. In return for China’s

²⁰ “The partnership has also been described as based on three do’s and three don’ts: do be good neighbors, good partners, and good friends; don’t enter into an alliance, oppose each other, or take action against a third party.” Please see: Ted Snider, “Breaking down that Putin-Xi joint statement on a ‘new era,’” *Responsible Statecraft*, February 12, 2022, <<https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2022/02/12/breaking-down-that-putin-xi-joint-statement-on-a-new-era/>>.

supporting attitude on Ukraine, Russia has advocated for Beijing's "one China" principle and stated its opposition to any outside interference in cross-Strait relations and on the matter of Taiwan's independence.

In light of the strategic threats that China and Russia pose to global security, NATO should:

1. Establish a communication and cooperation mechanism with the U.S.-led Indo-Pacific framework such as the QUAD and AUKUS in peacetime and maintain contact with multilateral security organizations, including the SCO, Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);
2. Encourage member states to increase their defense budget to at least 2% of GDP in order to strengthen capabilities for collective defense;
3. Increase and deepen military exercises with the U.S.-led Free and Open Indo-Pacific region, such as RIMPAC, Pacific Dragon, Exercise Malabar or bilateral drills among European and Asian countries;
4. Enhance strategic cooperation with non-NATO member-states within the Indo-Pacific region, especially with Taiwan, given its important role within the strategic global supply-chain and location within the "choke point" of the First Island Chain.

3. NATO's Asian Linkage: Taiwan's Options

In light of China-Russia collaboration against the U.S.-led NATO and the NATO 2022 Strategic Concept, Taiwan should increase its contributions toward peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific area, but also play a constructive role by engaging in global security. This can be accomplished by:

1. Boosting Taiwan's study of NATO's strategic thinking, military mechanisms, joint combat doctrine and preparedness in peace and war time;
2. Increase interactions and activities between Taiwan's representatives in Europe and with civilian personnel at NATO, through joint research programs, wargaming, and workshops on the PLA;

3. Establish liaison groups between Taiwan's Institute for National Defense and Security Research and NATO to exchange information and intelligence. Both sides can share their knowledge of the PLA.

