

Transatlantic Focus

A USNATO Public Affairs Newsletter



UNITED STATES MISSION TO
NATO



NATO Enlargement - The Door is Wide Open

Since NATO was created in 1949, the Alliance has gone through five different rounds of enlargement. Originally composed of 12 nations, NATO has grown to 26 members, today. Enlargement is an on-going, dynamic process that is based on Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, which states that membership is open to any "European State in a position to further the principles of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area". The most recent enlargement was in 2004, and included Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The U.S. strongly supports NATO enlargement. In his [testimony to Congress](#) in April, Assistant Secretary Fried said, "NATO's enlargement has been one of the most successful U.S.-led initiatives in the post-Cold War era, and it remains a driving force for aspirant nations to undertake difficult reforms. The United States will continue to provide leadership in enlarging the Alliance."



At the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, Croatia was one of the countries invited to join the Alliance and, in his [address to the Croatian people](#) just after the Summit, President Bush said, "Today the people of Europe are closer than ever before to a dream shared by millions: A Europe that is whole, a Europe that is at peace, and a Europe that is free."

NATO



Albania and Croatia Sign Membership Agreement with NATO On July 9, Albania and Croatia took the next step towards NATO membership by signing the formal Accession Protocols. NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer described the event as an "historical achievement for these two countries and for the entire Atlantic community of nations." The Secretary General also commented that "the door of NATO remains open to other democracies who are ready and willing to foster the goals of the Washington Treaty" and emphasized that "Albania and Croatia should serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement" to other aspirants. The U.S. has been a strong supporter of Albania and Croatia joining NATO and, at the NATO Summit, President Bush stated that both nations are "ready for the responsibility NATO brings, and they will make outstanding members of this alliance." Full NATO membership for Albania and Croatia must now be ratified by all 26 NATO members. [more](#)



MAP Helps Prospective NATO Members The road to NATO membership requires significant reform in many areas, including political, economic, defense, and legal. To help countries along that road, NATO created the Membership Action Plan (MAP) program in 1999. MAP incorporates the lessons learned from the accession process of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, which joined the Alliance's first post-Cold War round of enlargement that same year. Through the MAP process, the Alliance positively engages with aspirant countries and helps them strengthen their democracies. MAP participant countries benefit from on-going meetings and workshops with NATO civilian and military experts, and annual individual meetings with the North Atlantic Council to assess progress. [more](#)

Currently, there are three countries in the MAP program: Albania, Croatia and Macedonia. Albania, joined MAP in 1999, and Croatia in 2002. Both countries were invited to become NATO members at the Bucharest Summit and have recently signed membership agreements. The membership agreements must now be ratified by all 26 NATO members. [NATO Relations with Albania](#), [NATO Relations with Croatia](#)

Macedonia entered into the MAP program in 1999. At the Bucharest Summit, Allies recognized the hard work and commitment demonstrated by Macedonia to NATO values and Alliance operations. They agreed that an invitation to Macedonia will be extended as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the issue over the country's name has been reached with Greece. [NATO Relations with Macedonia](#)



Ukraine and Georgia Aspire to Join NATO The leadership of Ukraine and Georgia have both signaled their nations' desire to join the Alliance. In a historic decision documented in the [Bucharest Summit Declaration](#), all 26 NATO Allies agreed that Ukraine and Georgia will one day become NATO members.

Afghanistan



Donors Pledge \$21 Billion for Afghan Aid In June, Secretary Rice praised the "tremendous progress" that Afghanistan has made since the removal of the Taliban. She also noted that the achievements are still fragile and Afghanistan needs international support to sustain and build-on its progress. It was for that purpose that nations came together in Paris for an International Conference in Support of Afghanistan and raised \$21 billion in aid for Afghanistan. "We are determined to achieve our goal of a safe, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan," says Henrietta Fore, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "We are consciously making a decision to invest in the future of Afghanistan." [more](#), [Special Briefing on Conference Secretary Rice Remarks at Conference](#)



Afghanistan's Army Opens Forward Operating Base "Hero" Enabling Afghan National Security Forces to provide for Afghanistan's own security is an important part of U.S., NATO and Afghan strategy. Steady progress is being made in training the Afghan National Army (ANA) and a milestone was reached when the ANA designed, built, manned and patrolled Forward Operating Base (FOB) "Hero," the first FOB of its kind in Helmand province. Local communities may be threatened by the Taliban if they cooperate with ISAF or Afghan security forces and the local population was initially wary of the FOB. However, after rejecting Taliban threats, the community now accepts and supports the FOB and even requested another FOB be built in the area. "This demonstrates not only the Afghan National Army's desire to provide their own security, but also the willingness of the people to support their own legitimate security forces." said an ISAF spokesperson. [more](#)



NATO Soldiers Train Afghan Police As the Afghans continue preparations to take the lead in security in their country, it's not just the Afghan Army that is receiving training but also the Afghan National Police (ANP). An example of the on-going training is the Logar Police Academy, which is led by a U.S. Police Mentoring Training team. Training the ANP is a multi-national effort and soldiers from the Czech Provincial Reconstruction Team Logar cooperate daily with the academy in teaching groups of cadets. Each group attends a three-week course which includes first-aid treatment, tactics, patrolling, weapons training, vehicle-check-point procedures and many other police-related subjects. This training prepares the ANP cadets for the daily duty of service to their country. [more](#)

Kosovo



International Community Shows Commitment to Kosovo With its new constitution coming into effect in June, it is a critical time for Kosovo as it



Currently, Ukraine and Georgia are in a phase of intensified engagement with NATO on defense and security-related issues and reforms. Participation in MAP would be the next step toward membership, and the first assessment of Ukraine's and Georgia's progress toward MAP will be made by NATO Foreign Ministers at a formal meeting in December.

In his [Bucharest speech](#), President Bush made clear the U.S. position: "NATO should welcome Georgia and Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan. And NATO membership must remain open to all of Europe's democracies that seek it, and are ready to share in the responsibilities of NATO membership."

[NATO-Ukraine Relations](#), [NATO-Georgia Relations](#)



North Atlantic Council Visits Ukraine On June 16-17, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and the 26 NATO Permanent Representatives traveled to Ukraine for a series of high-level meetings on NATO-Ukraine relations. The possibility of

Ukraine membership in NATO is a vigorously debated issue in Ukraine and there are many public misperceptions about what NATO membership entails. To address this, the Secretary General and Ambassadors participated in a number of outreach activities in several cities to engage with the public and provide accurate information about the benefits and obligations of NATO membership. [more](#)



strengthens its democratic institutions and rebuilds its economy and infrastructure. At a conference in Brussels, on July 11, the international community showed its support for Kosovo, Europe's newest democracy, with pledges of \$1.2 billion in aid. The U.S. pledged over \$400 million and the EU offered \$789 million to help the country over the next four years. The U.S. funding will help relieve Kosovo's debt, build the capacity of its judicial system, enhance its business climate, improve the education system and increase access to potable water. [more](#)



Kurt Volker is New USNATO Ambassador

Ambassador Volker was sworn in as U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO on July 2, 2008, and will assume duties in August. He is a career foreign service officer with over 20 years experience working on European political and security issues under four U.S. Administrations. Before coming to NATO, Ambassador

Volker served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs from July 2005 until June 2008. [Full Bio](#)

[Remarks from Swearing in Ceremony](#)

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