

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 491

Commending the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's adoption of regional plans and encouraging allies to align resources.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 7, 2023

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. COONS, Mr. KING, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. ROUNDS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RICKETTS, and Mr. BOOKER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Commending the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's adoption of regional plans and encouraging allies to align resources.

Whereas the 31-member North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is the world's preeminent military alliance, accounting for more than half of global defense expenditure and deploying the world's most advanced military capabilities;

Whereas, at the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, NATO allies adopted the Wales Defense Investment Pledge, agreeing to halt any decline in defense expenditure and move toward committing a minimum of 2 percent of their GDP on annual defense spending and allocating at least 20

percent of defense budgets on major equipment, including related research and development, within a decade;

Whereas, following the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, defense spending within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has increased for nine consecutive years, resulting in additional defense expenditures of approximately \$450,000,000,000 in real terms since 2014;

Whereas, while three members of NATO met the 2 percent of GDP defense spending target in 2014, NATO reports that as of July 2023, 11 allies met the 2 percent target, and all 31 allies met the goal to allocate at least 20 percent of defense expenditure to major new equipment;

Whereas 19 NATO allies have a plan to meet or exceed NATO's 2 percent of GDP defense spending target by 2024, and an additional seven members reportedly have plans in place to meet the target between 2025 and 2030;

Whereas, at the 2023 NATO Summit in Vilnius, allies unanimously adopted new regional defense plans and force structure requirements, which NATO military authorities characterize as the Alliance's most comprehensive since the end of the Cold War;

Whereas NATO allies, in order to resource those plans and requirements, reaffirmed the commitment to invest at least 2 percent of GDP annually on defense, affirming that in many cases, expenditure beyond 2 percent of GDP will be needed in order to remedy existing shortfalls and meet requirements across all domains;

Whereas allies have committed to further enhance NATO's defense and deterrence posture by aligning defense

spending increases with NATO’s new defense plans and force structure requirements;

Whereas NATO allies have made these additional contributions to collective security despite sharp inflation and record-high energy costs;

Whereas European countries have taken in over 4,000,000 Ukrainian refugees as a direct result of the Russian Federation’s unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the European Union has designated \$18,000,000,000 in support for refugees, and European NATO members collectively have additionally allocated \$4,600,000,000 to support refugees;

Whereas NATO’s defense posture and military capabilities were enhanced with the April 2023 accession of Finland, which exceeds 2 percent of GDP defense spending and possesses one of Europe’s largest and most capable armed forces; and

Whereas the ratification of Sweden as the newest member of the NATO alliance would add critical air and maritime capabilities to the collective security of Europe and North America, bring almost the entire Baltic coastline into the alliance, and expand the alliance’s expertise in the Arctic and undersea environments: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the implementation of regional de-
3 fense plans adopted at the 2023 Vilnius Summit to
4 align forces and resources with NATO’s Strategic
5 Concept adopted at the 2022 Madrid Summit;

6 (2) urges swift implementation and resourcing
7 of these plans in support of the collective defense of

1 Europe and encourages NATO allies to align defense
2 spending and resource allocation in accordance with
3 these plans;

4 (3) supports the commitment of NATO for
5 members to meet or exceed 2 percent gross domestic
6 product defense spending in support of collective de-
7 fense of Europe and North America;

8 (4) commends those allies that have reached the
9 2 percent gross domestic product defense spending
10 and encourages all members of NATO to maintain
11 progress to meet this commitment;

12 (5) recommends the next Secretary General of
13 NATO be selected from a member country that has
14 met, or has a robust plan to meet, the 2 percent de-
15 fense spending commitment;

16 (6) commends NATO allies for harboring and
17 caring for millions of refugees fleeing Russian Presi-
18 dent Putin's aggression;

19 (7) welcomes Finland's accession to the NATO
20 alliance; and

21 (8) urges Turkiye and Hungary to swiftly ratify
22 Sweden as a full member of the North Atlantic
23 Treaty Organization.

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