The end of the Cold War and the 2001 terrorist attacks in the USA changed the face of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The alliance has developed, with interventions both within and outside Europe (the Balkans, Afghanistan, the African Horn, and Sub-Saharan Africa). More recently, the alliance has increasingly organised exercises in Europe, in order to reassure its members in the face of military build-up to the East of its borders.

**NATO presence and exercises within and outside Europe**

In the last 10 years, NATO has developed its operations both within and outside Europe. It currently maintains two long-term peace operations – the Kosovo Force and the Resolute Support Mission (and its predecessor ISAF) – and deploys two naval missions, one in the Mediterranean Sea and one off the Horn of Africa. It also provides assistance to its members through various types of deployment. The 2016 Warsaw NATO summit will focus on territorial defence and deterrence in the face of challenges in Ukraine and the Middle East.
Since the 1990s, NATO has developed new security dimensions, such as cybersecurity, and military missions outside Europe. Nevertheless, growing threats in NATO’s neighbourhood, in Ukraine, Syria, or Libya, push NATO members to reinvest in the field of territorial protection.

**NATO cooperation with non-NATO countries**

After the end of the Cold War, NATO developed a network of partnerships with 22 non-NATO countries in the fields of military cooperation, exchange of information and joint training and operations through the Partnership for Peace. To date, the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan remains the largest joint operation between NATO and its partners.

In addition to NATO and the Partnership for Peace, countries contributing troops to missions and operations include some additional partnerships. Australia, Mongolia and New Zealand figure among NATO’s global partners, while Morocco is a Mediterranean Dialogue partner.

**NATO budget**

During the 2014 Wales Summit, NATO members pledged to halt the decline in defence budgets, aiming for a 2% expenditure of their gross domestic product (GDP) on their respective defence budgets by 2024, as well as a target to spend 20% of that amount on procurement and programme-specific research and development. For the first time in many years, 2015 saw a small increase in NATO defence expenditure. For the future, the alliance decided to focus not only on overall defence expenditure, but also on the efficiency of this spending.

In 2015, only the United States, Greece, Poland, the United Kingdom and Estonia (in that order) surpassed the 2% guideline for defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP; whilst Luxembourg, Poland, the United States, Turkey, France, the United Kingdom, Norway, and Lithuania met the target to spend 20% or more of defence expenditure on equipment.