The 2016 Warsaw Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will convene on 8-9 July, bringing together Member States’ heads of state and heads of government in order to facilitate dialogue and establish new policies and strategies for the Alliance. The main issues on the agenda will include balancing the Alliance’s policies towards the East and the South; EU-NATO relations; and ensuring that Allies are fulfilling their defence budget commitments. In the face of emerging and complex security threats in the European security environment, the challenge for NATO is to maintain and project a cohesive, united and effective vision for transatlantic security. Since the first NATO Summit in Paris in 1957, 26 summits have occurred at key junctures in the history of the Alliance.

The 2016 NATO Summit in Warsaw. Expectations and priorities
Briefing by Elena Lazarou, June 2016
Although NATO has not released an agenda of events and topics to be discussed at the summit, there are several recurring subjects, which can be anticipated as this year’s themes for prioritized policies and strategic improvement. These include strengthening NATO’s presence in the eastern part of the Alliance; enhancing collective defence; projecting stability and strengthening partnerships; reviewing and reconfirming defence investment pledges; enhancing NATO-EU relations. A big challenge will be to reconcile demands from Eastern and Southern members and their concern with security challenges in their respective regions.

NATO in figures – ahead of the Warsaw summit
At a Glance (Infographic) by Christian Dietrich and Philippe Perchoc, July 2016
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, it 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. This Infographic provides numbers and maps on the current situation and challenges of the Alliance.

NATO strategic communications - An evolving battle of narratives
Briefing by Naja Bentzen, July 2016
For decades, NATO focused mainly on hard power, while information aspects played a complementary but less visible role in its activity. However, the failure of the NATO forces to generate public support in Afghanistan highlighted the limitations of traditional military operations and set the Alliance on the road to developing a strategic communications (StratCom) concept. Russia’s hybrid warfare against Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea forced NATO to respond to a new reality and sparked a number of questions about its current approach. Meanwhile, the NATO-accredited Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, established in 2014, contributes to the Alliance’s communication efforts and works as a ‘hub for debate’ across various StratCom disciplines.

Russia-NATO: A difficult relationship
At-a-glance note by Martin Russell, May 2016
NATO-Russia relations have never been easy, but hit a new low in 2014 following Russian annexation of Crimea. Since then, both sides have stepped up military activity in their shared eastern European neighbourhood. A return to cooperation in the near future seems unlikely. This note describes some of the ups and downs in relations between the two sides and looks at the issues dividing them.
Ukraine-NATO partnership in a time of crisis
At-a-glance note by Naja Bentzen, June 2016
Sandwiched between Russia in the East and an expanding NATO in the West, Ukraine’s relations with NATO are closely interlinked with the country’s ties to Russia — and Russia’s ties to NATO. Ukraine’s NATO aspirations remain a key sticking point in this tense geopolitical threesome. This note outlines the cornerstones in the Ukraine-NATO relationship and explains how Russia's March 2014 annexation of Crimea and its hybrid war against Ukraine marked a turning point in Europe's security order and pushed Kyiv further towards the Alliance.

Russian military in Eastern Partnership countries
At-a-glance note by Martin Russell, May 2016
A strong military presence helps Russia to maintain control over the ex-Soviet republics of eastern Europe, which it sees as its legitimate sphere of influence. Some troops are stationed in agreement with the country concerned, whereas others operate in pro-Russian separatist territories in defiance of the internationally recognised authorities. The main recent changes are the military build-up in the occupied territory of Crimea and an alleged Russian presence in the Donbass. This note summarises the troops and weapons Russia has in each Eastern Partnership country, and explains the reason for their presence.

Montenegro: Towards full NATO membership
At-a-glance note by Velina Liliyanova, June 2016
Since the 1990s, NATO had been an important factor for stability and peace in the Western Balkans and has consistently sought to establish closer ties with the region. Its 'open door policy' resulted in Montenegro signing its accession protocol with NATO in May 2016, thus entering the final phase of becoming the Alliance’s 29th member. Formal membership will be a fact once the accession protocol is ratified by all 28 NATO members and Montenegro itself, expected to happen by mid-2017. In the meantime, however, Montenegro will participate in all NATO meetings, including as an invitee in the Warsaw summit in July 2016.

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