NOTE

NATO Missile defence

Missiles pose an increasing threat to Allied populations, territory and deployed forces. Over 30 countries have or are acquiring missiles that could be used to carry not just conventional warheads, but also weapons of mass destruction. The proliferation of these capabilities does not necessarily mean there is an immediate intent to attack NATO, but it does mean that the Alliance has a responsibility to protect its populations.

In early 2010, NATO acquired the first phase of an initial capability to protect Alliance forces against missile threats. At the upcoming NATO Summit in Lisbon, 19-20 November, NATO’s leaders will decide whether the Alliance should build a missile defence for Europe in order to protect its territory and populations.

NATO’s work on missile defence started in the early 1990s in response to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, including missiles. Initial focus was on protecting deployed NATO troops (Theatre Missile Defence), but work was expanded in 2002 to include considerations of protection of population centres and territory (Territorial Missile Defence).

Components of the policy

The Alliance is conducting three missile defence related activities:

1. The Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence System (ALTBMD) capability

The aim of this capability is to protect NATO-deployed forces against short- and medium-range ballistic missile threats up to 3000-kilometer range. In order to manage the risk associated with development of such a complex capability, it will be fielded in several phases.

The completed capability will consist of a multi-layered system of systems, comprising low and high-altitude defences (also called lower- and upper-layer defences), including battle management, communications, command and control (BMC3I), early warning sensors, radars and various interceptors. NATO member countries will provide the sensors and weapon systems, while NATO will develop the BMC3I segment and facilitate the integration of all these elements into a coherent and effective architecture.

In 2005 the North Atlantic Council (NAC) established the NATO Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence Programme Management Organization (ALTBMD PMO) to oversee the ALTBMD Programme. The NATO Consultation, Command and Control Agency (NC3A) and the NATO Air...
Command and Control System Management Agency (NACMA) are other key NATO bodies involved in the Programme.

The initial activities were focused mainly on system engineering and integration work and on the development of an Integration Test Bed hosted at the NC3A facilities in The Hague. The Integration Test Bed is essential to validate the development work.

The next step was the fielding in early 2010 of the first operational capability, called Interim Capability Step 1, which provides the military planners with a planning tool to build the most effective defence design for specific scenarios or real deployments. A more robust version of that capability, called Interim Capability Step 2, will be fielded by the end of 2010, and will provide additional planning tools and shared situational awareness. The complete lower-layer and upper-layer capability will be fielded in the 2018 timeframe.

In addition to developing the ALTBMD capability, the Project Management Organization is providing technical support to policy discussions of broader missile defence questions relating to the protection of NATO territory and population centers. At the June 2010 meeting of Ministers of Defence, it was agreed that, should Allies decide at the Lisbon Summit to develop a missile defence capability for NATO, an expanded Theatre Missile Defence programme could form the command, control and communications backbone of such a system.

2. Missile Defence for the protection of NATO territory

A Missile Defence Feasibility Study was launched after the November 2002 Prague Summit to examine options for protecting Alliance forces, territory and populations against the full range of missile threats. The study was executed by a transatlantic, multinational industry team, which concluded that missile defence is technically feasible. The results were approved by NATO’s Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) in April 2006, and have provided a technical basis for ongoing political and military discussions regarding the desirability of a NATO missile defence system.

In this context, at the April 2008 Bucharest Summit, the Alliance also considered the technical details and political and military implications of the proposed elements of the US missile defence system in Europe. Allied leaders recognized that the planned deployment of European-based US missile defence assets would help protect Allies, and agreed that this capability should be an integral part of any future NATO-wide missile defence architecture.

Options for a comprehensive missile defence architecture to extend coverage to all Allied territory and populations not otherwise covered by the US system were developed and reviewed at the Bucharest Summit, and the Allies also encouraged Russia to take advantage of US proposals for cooperation on missile defence. They also stated their readiness to explore the potential for linking US, NATO and Russian missile defence systems at an appropriate time.

At the April 2009 Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, the Allies tasked several NATO senior bodies to provide political, military, technical and financial advice to inform the missile defence discussion
at the upcoming NATO Summit in Lisbon. That ongoing work takes into account the US plans to
deploy the “Phased Adaptive Approach” in NATO-Europe.

3. Theatre Missile Defence cooperation with Russia

In 2003, under the auspices of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), a study was launched to assess
possible levels of interoperability among theatre missile defence systems of NATO Allies and
Russia.

Together with the interoperability study, several computer assisted exercises have been held to
provide the basis for future improvements to interoperability, and to develop mechanisms and
procedures for joint operations in the area of theatre missile defence.

NATO and Russia are also examining possible areas for cooperation on territorial missile
defence. At the Lisbon Summit, NATO nations will decide whether to expand the system, beyond
protection of our deployed troops, to include protection of European populations and territories,
and at the same time to invite Russia to cooperate with this system and to share in its benefits.

Mechanisms

The Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) is the senior NATO committee which
acts as the tasking authority for the theatre missile defence programme. The ALTBMD
Programme Management Organization, which comprises a Steering Committee and a
Programme Office, directs the programme and reports to the CNAD.

The NRC Ad Hoc Working Group on Missile Defence is the steering body for NATO-Russia
cooperation on missile defence.

Evolution

Two key policy documents provide the framework for NATO’s activities in the area of missile
defence: NATO’s 1999 Strategic Concept and the Comprehensive Political Guidance which was
endorsed by Allied leaders at the November 2006 Riga Summit.

The Strategic Concept recognizes the need for missile defence to counter nuclear, biological and
chemical threats. It states that “the Alliance's defence posture against the risks and potential
threats of the proliferation of NBC weapons and their means of delivery must continue to be
improved, including through work on missile defence. The aim in doing so will be to further
reduce operational vulnerabilities of NATO military forces while maintaining their flexibility and
effectiveness despite the presence, threat or use of NBC weapons.”

The Comprehensive Political Guidance sets out the priorities for all Alliance capability issues,
planning disciplines and intelligence for the next ten to 15 years. The CPG also provides an
overview of the strategic environment within the same timeframe and identifies the spread of
weapons of mass destruction as one of the principal threats to the Alliance.
Key milestones

**Theatre Missile Defence (TMD)**

**May 2001**
NATO launches two parallel feasibility studies for a future Alliance TMD system.

**June 2004**
At the Istanbul Summit, Allied leaders direct that work on theatre ballistic missile defence be taken forward expeditiously.

**March 2005**
The Alliance approves the establishment of a Programme Management Organization under the auspices of the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD)

**September 2006**
The Alliance awards the first major contract for the development of a test bed for the system.

**February 2008**
The test bed is opened and declared fully operational nine months ahead of schedule.

**Throughout 2008**
The system design for the NATO command and control component of the theatre missile defence system is verified through testing with national systems and facilities via the integrated test bed; this paves the way for the procurement of the capability.

**March 2010**
The Interim Capability (InCA) Step 1 is fielded.

**June 2010**
NATO signs contracts for the second phase of the interim theatre missile defence capability. This will include the capability to conduct a real-time theatre missile defence battle.

At the June 2010 meeting of NATO Ministers of Defence, it was agreed that, should Allies decide at the Lisbon Summit to develop a missile defence capability for NATO which would provide protection to European Allied populations and territory against the increasing threat posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles, an expanded Theatre Missile Defence programme could form the command, control and communications backbone of such a system. The United States’ Phased Adaptive Approach would provide a valuable national contribution to this capability.

**July 2010**
InCA 2 passes key tests during the Dutch Air Force Joint Project Optic Windmill 2010 exercise.

**December 2010**
At the end of 2010, all InCA 2 components – including missile defence sensors and shooters from NATO nations – will be linked and tested in an ‘ensemble’ test prior to handover to NATO’s military commanders.
Territorial missile defence

November 2002
At the Prague Summit, Allied leaders direct that a Missile Defence Feasibility Study be launched to examine options for protecting Alliance forces, territory and populations against the full range of missile threats.

The study concludes that missile defence is technically feasible within the limits and assumptions of the study. The results are approved by NATO’s Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD).

April 2006
An update of a 2004 Alliance assessment of missile threat developments is completed.

2007
At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, Allied leaders agreed that the planned deployment of European-based US missile defence assets should be an integral part of any future NATO-wide missile defence architecture. They called for options for a comprehensive missile defence architecture to extend coverage to all Allied territory not otherwise covered by the US system to be prepared in time NATO’s next Summit in 2009.

April 2008
Options for extending missile defence coverage to all Allied territory not otherwise covered by the US system are delivered to NATO’s Conference for National Armaments Directors, in preparation for the discussions at the next Summit.

December 2008
At the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, Allies recognized that a future United States’ contribution of important architectural elements could enhance NATO elaboration of this Alliance effort, judged that missile threats should be addressed in a prioritised manner that includes consideration of the level of imminence of the threat and the level of acceptable risk and tasked the NAC to present recommendations comprising architecture alternatives, drawing from the architectural elements already studied, for consideration at the next Summit and to identify and undertake the policy, military and technical work related to a possible expanded role of the Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence (ALTBMD) programme beyond the protection of NATO deployed forces to include territorial missile defence.

April 2009
The US announced its plan for a “Phased Adaptive Approach”.

September 2009
**NRC TMD project**

- **2003**
  - A study is launched under the NRC to assess possible levels of interoperability among TMD systems of NATO Allies and Russia.

- **March 2004**
  - An NRC TMD command post exercise is held in the United States.

- **March 2005**
  - An NRC TMD command post exercise is held in the Netherlands.

- **October 2006**
  - An NRC TMD command post exercise is held in Russia.

- **January 2008**
  - An NRC TMD computer assisted exercise takes place in Germany.