

Beat: Politics

## **Stoltenberg: Our decisions “will ensure that NATO continues to preserve peace”**

### **NATO Secretary General**

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**USPA NEWS** - The NATO Summit in Madrid drew to a close on Thursday June 30, 2022, with decisions to transform and strengthen the Alliance. Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said: “The decisions we have taken in Madrid will ensure that our Alliance continues to preserve peace, prevent conflict, and protect our people and our values. Europe and North America, standing together in NATO.”

Stoltenberg said NATO leaders signed off on key decisions, including a fundamental strengthening of NATO's deterrence and defence, an invitation to Finland and Sweden to join NATO and long-term support to Ukraine. “We agreed NATO's new Strategic Concept. We agreed to step up in the fight climate change. And to establish a new one billion Innovation Fund. We agreed to invest more in NATO and to increase NATO's common funded budgets. And we agreed to deepen our relationships with some of the Alliance's closest partners, not least in the Indo-Pacific. Our final session at the Madrid Summit focused on threats and challenges from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Sahel. Insecurity in these regions has a direct impact on the security of all Allies. And our new Strategic Concept identifies terrorism as one of the main threats to our security,” he said.

“The decisions we have taken in Madrid will ensure that our Alliance continues to preserve peace, prevent conflict, and protect our people and our values. Europe and North America, standing together in NATO,” Stoltenberg added. In his final press conference, the NATO Secretary General talked about the Ukrainian war, answering to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who suggested that Sweden and Finland joining the Alliance would require some kind of response from the Russian government. He said that if there were NATO weapons systems placed in those two countries that would precipitate a direct response from his government: “President Putin's brutal war against Ukraine is absolutely unacceptable. It's causing a lot of death, damage for the Ukrainian people, but it also has ramifications over the whole world, not least because of the increase in food prices. So it's President Putin that should withdraw its forces and end this war immediately by stopping attacking a democratic sovereign nation and causing so much suffering in Ukraine,” Stoltenberg said.

About Sweden and Finland, NATO Secretary General considered that this both countries “are sovereign nations and they have the right to choose their own path and to join NATO. We have welcomed them into our Alliance. We are, of course, prepared for any eventuality. But at the same time, I think what we see now in Ukraine demonstrates that Russia is now fully focused on that war, and therefore, also...” NATO will do the formal signing of the Accession Protocol on Tuesday, with the presence of Swedish and Finnish Foreign Ministers.

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