

The contrast between the Ankara Summit Declaration's ringing commitment to allied unity and comments by Trump before on the sidelines of the summit - assailing European allies over defence spending and their lack of support for his war in Iran, renewing his demands to take control of Greenland from NATO-ally and threatening to halt all trade with leftist-governed Spain - undermines the message of NATO deterrence. Once again, the President hinted he could pull all US troops out of Europe, then turned on a dime and said he had experienced "tremendous love" in the short three-hour NATO working session. Trump's threats to resume war with Iran overshadowed the summit, crowding NATO's carefully tailored messaging out of media headlines.

The Ankara Summit Declaration

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This is 1 minute longer than last year's Hague Declaration, which was the shortest in NATO history. However, there is no return to the past long communiqués that committed NATO to nuclear and conventional arms control and surveyed a wide range of regional and global conflicts.

This text, finalised the week before the summit and issued despite President Trump's anti-NATO tirades, is one paragraph longer than the 2025 Hague Declaration, adding a crucial paragraph on support for Ukraine, reinforced by Trump's agreement to allow Kyiv to produce US Patriot missile interceptors in Ukraine

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Alliance, have gathered in Ankara to reaffirm **our ironclad commitment to our collective defence under Article 5** of the Washington Treaty and to the transatlantic bond. An attack on one is an attack on all. Our unity, solidarity and collective strength remain the foundation of peace, security, and prosperity for the one billion citizens in our **Alliance of free and democratic nations**. We remain committed to our 360-degree approach to deterrence and defence.

Almost identical language to The Hague Summit Declaration in 2025, reassuring to European allies

Ironic that this phrase, absent from The Hague Declaration, was added at a summit hosted by Turkey amid a heightened crackdown on democratic opposition, civil society and media critical of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

2. To counter the long-term threat Russia poses to Euro-Atlantic security and stability, and the persistent threat of terrorism, **Allies are delivering on The Hague defence commitment. In 2025, European Allies and Canada increased their investments in core defence requirements by more than \$139 billion.** Our investments are delivering the capabilities we need while strengthening our industrial base and resilience. Today in Ankara, we announce more than \$50 billion in new procurements and **commit to expanding collective manufacturing capacity and working with industry to accelerate innovation.** We will continue our work to eliminate **defence trade barriers among Allies** and leverage NATO's partnerships to maximise defence industrial depth and cooperation.

The recognition that "allies are delivering" on the commitment to raise defence spending to 5% of GDP by 2035 contrasts with Trump's public bashing of the Europeans on arrival in Ankara for allegedly failing to meet their spending commitments.

Increasing defence industrial capacity was a core objective of the summit. However, the phrasing on defence trade barriers is ambiguous - it can be interpreted by the US as warning against EU efforts to promote "buy European" to strengthen the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base, and by Europeans as a warning to Washington to ease its technology sharing restrictions.

3. We are building the future: **a stronger Europe in a stronger NATO** - a modernised Alliance. European Allies and Canada, working with the United States, are assuming greater responsibility for the Alliance's defence. NATO's deterrence and defence rest on an appropriate mix of **nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities, complemented by space and cyber assets.** We are committed to

This slogan, coined by NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, stops short of embracing US demands that the Europeans take primary responsibility for the conventional defence of Europe.

A key reminder that NATO is a nuclear alliance, legitimizing the policies of its three nuclear powers - the US, France and the UK

maintaining our combat advantage. We are investing in our ability to deploy, enable and sustain our armed forces and deliver our capability targets in all domains, **including in deep precision strike, integrated air and missile defence, uncrewed systems, cutting edge technologies, and intelligence capabilities.** We are developing an **interoperable transatlantic warfighting cloud and adopting powerful AI models.**

New phrasing intended to signal deterrence and technological superiority over Russia.

This is intended to rebut critics who say NATO's defence planners are preparing to fight the last war, with lumbering heavy-metal platforms, and not adapting sufficiently to the drone revolution in military affairs visible on the battlefields in Ukraine and Iran.

4. **Ukraine contributes to transatlantic security, and Allies stand united in our unwavering support for Ukraine in defending its freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.** European Allies and Canada now finance the vast majority of security assistance to Ukraine through bilateral and multilateral means. Allies underscore that this support must be equitable, predictable, and sustainable in the long-term. For 2026, Allies pledge €70 billion in military equipment, assistance and training for Ukraine and affirm their sovereign commitments to sustaining at least equivalent levels in 2027. To this end, we welcome the European Union's decision to provide multi-year funding to Ukraine through the Ukraine Support Loan.

Much stronger supportive language on Ukraine than the Trump administration was previously willing to accept. It suggests the US now recognised that Ukraine has the technological upper hand against Russian aggression, and contains big headline numbers for 2026 and 2027, underlining a sustained commitment to Kyiv. The explicit recognition of the EU's Ukraine Support Loan highlights improving EU-NATO cooperation.

5. **The Alliance continues to respond and adapt to the strategic competition, pervasive instability, hybrid threats and recurrent shocks that define our broader security environment. Allies reiterate that Iran must never have a nuclear weapon and call on Iran to fully respect freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.**

This paragraph, added since The Hague Declaration, is intended to address Trump's criticism that NATO did not help during the US-Israeli war on Iran without explicitly endorsing the military action.

6. We express our appreciation for the generous hospitality extended to us by Türkiye. **We look forward to our next meeting.**

No mention of either the date or venue of the next NATO summit. This responds both to US pressure for fewer high-level alliance meetings, and to European worries that each encounter with Trump is like an unpredictable game of Russian roulette, where a single presidential bullet could be fatal for NATO. Albania has offered to host the next meeting, but it may not happen until the end of Trump's term.