

Beat: News

## NATO Secretary General thanks President Obama for strong US leadership

Washington D.C.

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**USPA NEWS** - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and US President Barack Obama discussed the Alliance's response to key security challenges at the White House in Washington D.C. The Secretary General thanked President Obama for strong leadership in uncertain times.

"you have provided leadership at a critical moment, and continue to provide significant resources" to the Alliance. Mr. Stoltenberg highlighted the European Reassurance Initiative as a "significant contribution to transatlantic security".

Mr. Stoltenberg underlined the vitality of the trans-Atlantic bond, saying "wherever I go, I meet US servicemen and women. Their presence sends a clear message: America stands with Europe.

Europe and America stand together. NATO will defend all Allies against any threat. At the same time, he said, European Allies are stepping up their contribution, volunteering to lead NATO's new high readiness Spearhead Force, and contributing to new command and control units in Central and Eastern Europe. "Together we are implementing the biggest reinforcement of our collective defence since the Cold War," the Secretary General said.

The two leaders discussed what more the Alliance can do to meet challenges from the Middle East and North Africa. Mr. Stoltenberg noted that all Allies contribute to the US-led coalition to counter ISIL, while NATO has bolstered its support for Jordan, is preparing to assist Iraq with defence capacity building, and stands ready to assist Libya once security conditions permit. The Secretary General also stressed that NATO will stay engaged in Afghanistan beyond the current training mission.

The Secretary General and President Obama also focused on Russia's aggressive actions in Ukraine. They agreed that the full implementation of the Minsk agreements is the "path to peace", and urged all parties to work towards this in good faith. Mr. Stoltenberg stressed that NATO is strengthening Ukraine's ability to defend itself, and affirmed that the Alliance is committed to supporting its other partners across Europe.

Against the background of challenges from both east and south may, the Secretary General said NATO needs to adapt, and Allies need to redouble efforts to invest in security. As NATO prepares for the Warsaw Summit in July 2016, he said that the key to the Alliance's success remains unity between Europe and North America.

Source: Daren Frankish Media | NATO HQ, Blvd Leopold III, 1110 Brussels, Belgium

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