



What is NATO's Role in Energy Security?

What will be the Next Steps?

First and foremost, NATO members consult on energy developments that could have a security dimension. These consultations can also include partner countries. NATO provides analyses of global energy developments, and it organises workshops on sharing best practices on critical energy infrastructure protection that include other institutions, think tanks and the private sector. The Alliance also implements activities to improve the security of energy infrastructure. NATO's navies provide surveillance of maritime routes and choke points, while NATO's anti-piracy operations help to increase the security of commercial shipping lanes. Energy efficiency among the military is also attracting increasing interest.

In order to more systematically define NATO's role in energy security, the Alliance will intensify its dialogue with other institutions, such as the EU, the International Energy Agency, the OSCE and the Energy Charter, as well as with the private sector. Discussions between the North Atlantic Council with individual partner countries or groups of partners ("28+n") on energy security could also become a more regular part of NATO's political agenda. Upon request, NATO could also set up training and defence reform teams for the protection of critical infrastructure. Such steps would correspond to NATO's core competencies and underline the Allies' determination to regard energy security as part of a comprehensive approach to security.

NATO's Role in Energy Security



Why is Energy Security Important?

In the coming years, Europe's dependency on oil and gas will be growing. Rising powers such as China and India will require an ever greater amount of energy. Some fossil fuels will become ever harder and more expensive to access. Other factors are the intensifying debate on climate change and on the future of nuclear power, and armed threats to energy supplies, be they through terrorist attacks or piracy. Energy supply systems are increasingly interconnected by computerised transmission networks which are vulnerable to cyber attacks. Finally, the political instability in many energy-producing states remains a source of concern.

Why does Energy Security Matter to NATO?

"All countries are increasingly reliant on the vital communication, transport and transit routes on which international trade, energy security and prosperity depend. They require greater international efforts to ensure their resilience against attack or disruption, for example by terrorist groups. Moreover, some NATO countries will become more dependent on foreign energy suppliers and in some cases, on foreign energy supply and distribution networks for their energy needs. As a larger share of world consumption is transported across the globe, energy supplies are increasingly exposed to disruption."
(NATO's Strategic Concept)

What is NATO's Added Value?

NATO brings together North America and Europe, including European nations that are not members of the EU; it offers a continuum of political consultation and decision-making, military planning and military action; it has elaborate intelligence sharing mechanisms; it promotes scientific cooperation through its Science for Peace and Security Programme; and it offers an ever expanding partnership network that includes energy producers and transit countries. This unique combination of political and military features enables NATO to address energy security on various levels.

For further information about energy security:
http://www.nato.int/cps/natolive/topics_49208.htm
Emerging Security Challenges Division and Public Diplomacy Division
1110 Brussels - Belgium
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