



NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE L'OTAN

THE PRESIDENT
LE PRÉSIDENT

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATO PA

6 January 2022

Dear colleagues,

I wish you all a happy New Year and want to thank you for the thoughtful season's greetings I have received over the last weeks. Even as we continue to do all we can to stay safe and healthy, I hope the holiday season has brought you and your loved ones peace, joy and happiness.

We enter a decisive year for our transatlantic Alliance of democracies. As I write, Russia continues to intimidate our valued partner Ukraine and seeks to extract unacceptable concessions from NATO. As NATO and Russia reengage in dialogue in the NATO-Russia Council next week, Allied nations must speak with one voice, standing firm on our values and principles, our unshakable commitment to defend all Allies and our support for Ukraine. China, too, pursues its path to undermine the rules-based international order we have helped build and defend. Neither the leadership in Moscow nor in Beijing shares our democratic values.

The new 2022 Strategic Concept must adjust the Alliance to this strategic reality, rooted in NATO's enduring commitment to its foundational, immutable values. Crucially, Allies must make clear what NATO stands for by placing shared democratic values at the very center of the new Strategic Concept, including by establishing a Democratic Resilience Center at NATO Headquarters. I have been encouraged that, in his recent public addresses, Secretary General Stoltenberg listed "protecting our values" as number one of five elements which should be at the heart of the next Strategic Concept. I am convinced the Assembly's sustained focus on shared democratic values has played its part in this.

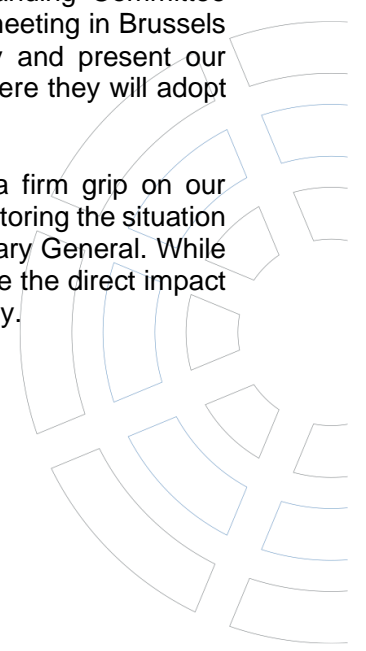
Asserting the Assembly's role in helping shape NATO's adaptation for the next decade remains one of my Presidential priorities. I therefore very much welcome that NATO continues to actively consult the Assembly on the priorities for the next Strategic Concept. To prepare our written contribution to the new Concept, I will soon share with the Standing Committee a draft set of recommendations, based upon our recent policy recommendations and internal discussions. I am looking forward to discussing this first draft with Standing Committee members online on 1 February and to adopting a revised version for our meeting in Brussels on 22 February. In June, I will be honored to represent the Assembly and present our recommendations to Allied Heads of State and Government in Madrid, where they will adopt the 2022 Strategic Concept.

As you are all too aware, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a firm grip on our societies, but I hope that 2022 will see the last waves of the virus. I am monitoring the situation on an ongoing basis, in close coordination with the Bureau and our Secretary General. While further adaptation of the program is likely, I sincerely hope we can minimize the direct impact on the Assembly's program of work, which remains highly relevant politically.

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In particular, the upcoming Spring Session in Kyiv will provide an important opportunity to, once again, demonstrate the Assembly's solidarity with Ukraine, its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as the Ukrainian people's fundamental right to determine their own path.

I wish you a successful start into what will likely be a busy year for all of us.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald E. Connolly
President

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