



News Brief Update 27

11 September 2022

Contact: Dr. Ian Davis
Email: idavis@natowatch.org
www.natowatch.org

Russia's war with Ukraine

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine entered its 200th day, Ukrainian officials were claiming that their forces had inflicted a tactical [defeat](#) on Moscow in a surprise counter-offensive in the north-east Kharkiv region that began on 6 September. After suffering a series of battlefield defeats, the Russian army was forced to pull back thousands of troops. Ukraine appeared to have regained control of the two key cities of Kupiansk and Iziurm. The Russian Ministry of Defence [confirmed](#) the withdrawal of its troops from Iziurm, the major base for Moscow's forces in Kharkiv, claiming they were being "regrouped" so that efforts could be stepped up in Donetsk. Retaking Iziurm is perhaps Ukraine's most significant success in pushing back the Russians since the beginning of the invasion. The Ukrainian flag has also been raised in the city of Balakliya, [according](#) to the Kharkiv regional governor.

While the Kharkiv counter-offensive was initially thought to have been part of much broader southern counter-offensive that started on 1 September, it is now [reported](#) that this southern offensive was a disinformation campaign to distract Russia from the real one being prepared in the Kharkiv region. The breakthrough in Kharkiv may mark a turning point in the war, [according](#) to Reuters, and in a video [address](#) on 10 September President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukrainian forces had liberated about 2,000 sq km of territory so far. However, despite the gains made by Ukraine's armed forces, the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken [said](#) the war was entering a critical period and he urged Ukraine's western backers to keep up their support through what could be a difficult winter.

IAEA releases its report on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station

Fighting [continued](#) around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. A 14-member International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) [expert mission](#) had finally arrived at the nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine on 1 September, following months of diplomatic negotiations and [obstacles](#). However, all but two of the IAEA mission members have now left the site [according](#) to Energoatom, Ukraine's state enterprise operating all four nuclear power stations in the country. Fighting in and around the plant since the beginning of August raised concerns about the potential for a [nuclear accident](#) (see NATO Watch [update 23](#), [update 24](#) and [update 25](#)). Russia and Ukraine have [accused](#) each other of attacking the plant, which has been controlled by Russia since March.

In a [report](#) released on 6 September the IAEA recommended the immediate establishment of a nuclear safety and security protection zone around the plant. The IAEA director, Rafael Mariano Grossi, said, "The physical attack, wittingly or unwittingly, the hits that this facility has received and that I could personally see and assess, together with my experts, is simply unacceptable. We are playing with fire, and something very, very catastrophic could take place. ... A specific recommendation in my report that the operator should be allowed to return to its clear and routine line of responsibilities and authorities and that an appropriate work environment must be reestablished, including with proper family support for the staff".

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres also [called](#) for a demilitarised zone around the plant. “An agreement on a demilitarised perimeter should be secured,” he said. “Specifically, that will include the commitment by Russian forces to withdraw military personnel and equipment from that perimeter and the commitment by Ukrainian forces not to move in”. Russia’s UN ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told reporters ahead of the UN Security Council meeting, “if we demilitarise then the Ukrainians will immediately step in and ruin the whole thing”.

On 9 September the IAEA [said](#) that conditions at the plant were increasingly precarious and repeated its call for a demilitarized zone around it to prevent a nuclear accident. Grossi added that there was minimal chance of re-establishing reliable offsite power lines to the plant and that its Ukrainian operator was considering shutting down the only remaining operating reactor.

Stalled diplomacy

Negotiations between Ukraine and Russia took place for several months following the invasion, but they did not stop the war, and talks have been stalled for months. There has been some [speculation](#) that a tentative [fifteen-point peace plan](#) to end the war was close to being agreed at the end of March, but that the UK and USA reportedly urged President Zelensky to break off the talks with Russia. Before that, negotiations on Donbas had lasted for more than seven years with French and German participation; but despite signed agreements and a ceasefire, the conflict was never resolved. Each side blames the other for a lack of progress and there appears to be no real prospect for any diplomatic breakthroughs or ceasefires in the near future. Positions between the two sides remain incompatible: Ukraine insists on full sovereignty over all Ukrainian territory as it existed when Ukraine became independent in 1991, while Russia claims sovereignty over Crimea and recognition of independence of the Donbas separatist republics. Moreover, Russia has recognized the independence of the Donbas republics on the whole administrative territory

of the Donbas, even though some of that territory remains in Ukrainian hands and is the focus of current fighting.

France and Germany lead a NATO bloc favouring negotiations, while the US and UK lead a bloc that favour continuing to send more advanced weapons. One of the potential frameworks for a negotiated settlement is a four-point Italian proposal, calling for Ukraine committing to neutrality and not joining NATO, security guarantees for Ukraine, and negotiations between Ukraine and Russia on Crimea and the Donbas (see [NATO Watch Update 16](#)).

For options of what a possible settlement for Ukraine might look like, see Cambridge University’s [Ukraine Peace Settlement Project](#).

Military and financial assistance to Ukraine

Ukraine continues to rely heavily on international military and financial support from Western states. Most of the military assistance has come in the form of bilateral arms transfers, training and other support, which is being coordinated by the US-led Ukraine Defence Contact Group, which meets on an ad hoc basis and involves Ministers of Defence and senior military officials from Western-aligned states from around the world. The latest meeting of the Group took place on 8 September at the US Ramstein Air Base in Germany. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg [participated](#) in the meeting, where he underscored the need for more military aid to be sent to Ukraine.

In addition, NATO agreed at its June [Madrid Summit](#) to strengthen a 2016 [Comprehensive Assistance Package](#) for Ukraine. The additional elements to the package include both short-term assistance (ranging from fuel, protective equipment to portable anti-drone systems and secure communications) and longer-term support (to help modernize the Ukrainian armed forces to NATO interoperability standards and strengthen its defence and security institutions).

Since the start of the war, the United States has [pledged](#) about \$25 billion in military aid to Ukraine—more than four times Ukraine’s 2021 defence budget. America’s partners in Europe and beyond have [pledged](#) an additional \$12 billion, according to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy. During a visit to Ukraine, the US Secretary of State Antony [unveiled](#) nearly \$2.7 billion in new military support to Ukraine and other European countries threatened by Russia. He approved \$2 billion in foreign military financing under a programme in which the US offers loans or grants to other nations to buy US-produced weapons. That amount is in addition to another \$675 million in military assistance [announced](#) by the US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, and reportedly includes High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, artillery ammunition and military vehicles. Austin’s announcement marked the 20th time the United States has withdrawn from Defense Department stockpiles to assist Ukraine since the start of Russia’s invasion.

Norway [announced](#) on 8 September that it would donate about 160 Hellfire missiles to Ukraine as well as launching pads, guidance units and night-vision equipment.

External military support to Russia is limited to a handful of states. According to US intelligence reports, Russia has received [Iranian-built combat drones](#) and newly declassified US military intelligence this week claimed that Russia is [purchasing](#) significant amounts of artillery shells and rockets from North Korea to support its military operations in Ukraine. This move suggests that international sanctions against Russia may be succeeding in cutting off more reliable weapon and dual-use supplies to Russia.

For further details on arms transfers to Ukraine, see, the [Forum on the Arms Trade](#). And for a timeline of every US arms shipment to Ukraine that has been announced since the war began, see [here](#).

EU finance ministers [supported](#) a €5 billion loan for Ukraine to help maintain the country’s schools, hospitals and other needed

operations. The loan, agreed on 9 September, will be backed by guarantees of EU member states and is part of an overall €9 billion package announced in May.

Humanitarian consequences of the war

Exact figures for the number of war fatalities, both military and civilian, are difficult to verify and confirm. [Undercounting and manipulation](#) of the data is common in war. Ukraine [claims](#) to have killed more than 51,000 Russian soldiers in the war to date. Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhny, commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed forces, [said](#) on 22 August at a public forum that nearly 9,000 Ukrainian military personnel have been killed in the war. This was the first time Ukraine has revealed the scale of its military losses since the war began, previously protected as a tightly guarded secret - although in early June, a senior Ukrainian presidential aide [told](#) BBC News 100-200 Ukrainian soldiers were dying in the Donbas region every day. In April, Russia [said](#) it had killed about 23,000 Ukrainian troops.

According to [data collected](#) by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), as at 4 September, 5,718 civilians have died since Russia invaded Ukraine in February, including 372 children. The actual figures are likely to be considerably higher, as the receipt of information from some locations where intense hostilities have been going on has been delayed and many reports are still pending corroboration. According to [Action on Armed Violence](#) the number of casualties from explosive violence in the Ukrainian conflict reached 6,845 people by 9 September. From this number, 2,763 were killed and 4,082 were injured across 978 incidents. Ninety-five per cent (6,502) of civilian casualties have occurred in populated areas.

Activities in occupied parts of Ukraine

The UN humanitarian office, OHCHR, has accused Moscow of forcing Ukrainians into detention camps and even prisons via a Kremlin-directed “filtration” programme and removing children from the war zone to hand over to adoptive parents inside Russia. “We are concerned that the Russian authorities have

adopted a simplified procedure to grant Russian citizenship to children without parental care, and that these children would be eligible for adoption by Russian families,” Ilze Brands Kehris, Assistant UN Secretary-General for Human Rights, told the UN Security Council in a [briefing on Ukraine](#) on 7 September. The US Ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, [told](#) the Council that estimates indicate authorities have “interrogated, detained, and forcibly deported” between 900,000 and 1.6 million Ukrainians to Russia since late February in an attempt “to prepare for an attempted annexation”. The UK’s permanent representative to the UN, Dame Barbara Woodward, said in a [statement](#) that the deportation of people from Ukraine has “chilling echoes from European history” and that the “appalling term ‘denazification’” was a “cover for obliterating Ukraine from the map”. Meanwhile, Ukraine’s southern offensive has prompted Kherson separatists to “[pause](#)” a planned referendum on whether to become part of Russia.

Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Valeriy Zaluzhnyi [claimed](#) responsibility on 7 September for an attack on Russia’s Saky airbase in Crimea last month – the first official acknowledgment from Kyiv that it was behind the strike, which destroyed at least nine Russian aircraft.

Further reading:

On outcomes and consequences of the war

[NATO calls on allies to supply winter uniforms for Ukrainian army](#), Reuters, 9 September 2022

[US, NATO note Ukraine army gains but see war dragging on](#), Associated Press, 9 September 2022

Jeffrey D Sachs, [Stoltenberg’s cheerleading does Ukraine no favours](#), Letter, Financial Times, 9 September 2022

[NATO Secretary General highlights need for more support to Ukraine](#), NATO News Release, 9 September 2022

[NATO chief warns of hard winter for Ukraine and its backers](#), Associated Press, 8 September 2022

[U.S. Preparing for Russia to Bring War to NATO Countries](#), Newsweek, 8 September 2022

[Nuclear Experts: Demilitarized Zone at Zaporizhzhia Plant Needed to Avoid Chernobyl-Level Catastrophe](#), Democracy Now, 8 September 2022

Medea Benjamin and Nicolas J.S. Davies, [Peace Talks Are More Essential Than Ever As War Rages On In Ukraine](#), Foreign Policy in Focus, 8 September 2022

Connor Echols, [US military trained Ukrainians days before they sank two Russian ships](#), Responsible Statecraft, 7 September 2022

Jane Harman, [What will NATO do if radiation from Zaporizhzhia reaches its members?](#) The Hill, 6 September 2022

[Ukraine’s partisans won’t win war but can ‘wreak havoc’: Analysts](#), Al Jazeera, 6 September 2022

[NATO Secretary General attends Ukraine Defense Contact Group meeting](#), NATO Press Release, 6 September 2022

Connor Echols, [When God’s diplomat meets a hellish war](#), Responsible Statecraft, 5 September 2022

George Beebe, [Our narrowing options in Ukraine](#), The Hill, 4 September 2022

François Diaz-Maurin, [IAEA arrives at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant for its riskiest mission in history](#), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2 September 2022

Attila Aszódi, [A nuclear safety expert’s view on the crisis at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant](#), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2 September 2022

François Diaz-Maurin, [A Ukrainian expert assesses the possible impact of a military attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant](#), Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 2 September 2022

Timothy Snyder, Yulia Kazdobina and Olexander Scherba. [Is a Peace Deal Possible with Putin? On the problems of peacemaking in the Russian war on Ukraine](#), Conflict and Civiness Research Group, LSE IDEAS, The London School of Economics, Policy Brief, 29 July 2022

On investigations of war crimes in Ukraine and other legal processes

The ICC in the Hague opened an investigation into possible war crimes in Ukraine just days after Moscow's forces invaded and it dispatched dozens of investigators to the country to gather evidence. On 14 July, 45 countries [agreed](#) at a conference in the Hague to coordinate investigations into suspected war crimes in Ukraine. However, Ukraine's major western allies are apparently unwilling to establish a tribunal to try Russian President Vladimir Putin and his inner circle for the [crime of aggression](#), wanting to leave space for future relations with Russia, [according](#) to Ukraine's top officials. "It's big politics. On the one hand, countries publicly condemn the aggression but on the other, they are putting their foot in the closing door on relations with Russia so that it doesn't close completely," said Andriy Smyrnov, deputy head of Ukraine's presidential administration. "They are attempting to keep some space for diplomatic manoeuvres ... agreements with Russia are not worth the paper they are written on".

The body of a British aid worker Paul Urey who was [captured](#) by Russian proxies in April has been handed to Ukraine with "possible signs of unspeakable torture", [according](#) to the country's foreign minister, Dmytro Kuleba. Along with another captured Briton, Dylan Healey, the two men were charged with "mercenary activities" by the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, but in July the Russian proxy authorities [announced](#) that Urey had died as a result of "illness and stress".

On the risk of nuclear war

NATO's annual Nuclear Policy Symposium got underway in Brussels on 7 September 2022 with discussions on issues including Russia's nuclear threats and weapons development, China's rapid nuclear build-up and strategic arms control. Held annually since 1992, the Symposium brings together experts, diplomats and senior officials mainly from across the NATO alliance.

[NATO nuclear experts discuss global nuclear challenges](#), NATO News Release, 7 September 2022

Lewis Dunn, [The Disarmament, Arms Control, and Non-Proliferation Implications of the Invasion of Ukraine – and What Next for Reducing Global Nuclear Dangers](#), UNIDIR, 24 August 2022

On sanctions against Russia and post-war reconstruction in Ukraine

Russia's invasion of Ukraine galvanized the US, UK and EU, and a handful of other Western-aligned countries, to unleash a series of sanctions meant to punish Vladimir Putin's government and pressure him to pull his forces back. While the sanctions lists are sometimes difficult to interpret, the EU has [sanctioned](#) 1,158 individuals and 98 entities—an approximate doubling of its entire sanctions portfolio across the dozens of sanctions regimes it implements; the UK also roughly doubled its portfolio (excluding the UN listings it is obligated to implement) having [imposed](#) sanctions on over 1,000 individuals and over 100 businesses; and the US has [sanctioned](#) more than 1,000 individuals or organizations since the invasion. The numbers, and the pace of the rollout, dwarf the sanctions lists for the likes of Iran, North Korea, Libya, the thematic counterterrorism lists, and all others.

However, rather than dissuading the Kremlin as intended, the penalties appear instead to be exacerbating inflation, worsening food insecurity and punishing ordinary Russians more than Putin or his allies. Moreover, Russia has claimed (see NATO Watch [Update 17](#) and [Update 18](#)) that it is getting more revenue from its fossil fuel sales now than before its invasion of Ukraine, despite (or partly because of) Western sanctions.

Finance ministers from the Group of Seven (G7) nations [announced](#) on 2 September that they plan to implement a price cap on Russian oil. In a [statement](#), the ministers said the cap was designed to reduce "Russia's ability to fund its war of aggression" and that they would "urgently work on the finalisation and implementation" of the measure, but left out

key details of the plan. Prior to the G7 announcement, Russia [said](#) imposing the price cap would trigger Russian retaliation. Gazprom announced an indefinite shutdown of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline on 2 September (see below).

Poland and the Baltic states have announced they will temporarily restrict access for Russian citizens holding EU visas. The prime ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland said in a [statement](#) on 8 September that the move had been taken to address “public policy and security threats” arising from the “substantial and growing influx of Russian citizens” into the EU. The measures were expected to come into force by 19 September and would “restrict the entry into the Schengen area for Russian citizens travelling for tourism, culture, sport and business purposes”. The next day, the European Commission [urged](#) all EU states to reassess the terms on which they grant visas to Russian travellers and to root out applicants that pose a security threat. “We should not be naive, Putin’s aim is to destroy the EU and he would like to attack us where we are weakest,” the EU home affairs commissioner, Ylva Johansson, said on 9 September.

US president Joe Biden’s administration has [rejected calls](#) from Ukraine to brand Russia a “state sponsor of terrorism,” saying it would have “unintended consequences” to Ukraine and the world. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the designation would hamper aid delivery to Ukraine or prevent aid groups and companies from participating in the international grain deal brokered by the UN and Turkey (see below).

On international food security and Ukrainian grain exports

The [announcement](#) on 22 July of a grain deal between Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and the UN – which could allow Ukraine to export up to 22 million tons of grain stuck in its ports via the Black Sea – was a rare ray of light. The resumption of food exports is crucial for Ukraine's economy as well as global food security, but will rely on a fragile truce in the Black Sea (on international food security and Ukrainian grain exports, see NATO Watch

[Update 17](#), [Update 18](#), [Update 20](#) and [Update 21](#)). The resumption of grain exports is being overseen by a Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) in Istanbul where Russian, Ukrainian, Turkish and UN personnel are working. However, President Putin has threatened to tear up the fragile Ukraine grain deal. During a bellicose [speech](#) at an economic conference in Vladivostok, on 7 September, he said he would speak with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan about “limiting the destinations for grain exports”, claiming that only two of 87 ships leaving Ukraine with grain had gone to developing countries. Data from the UN showed the claim was false by a factor of at least 10.

On energy security in Europe

Gas shortages are occurring across Europe, raising the prospect of energy rationing as governments push to develop alternative supplies. The West accuses Russia of restricting energy supplies to boost prices in retaliation for sanctions imposed after Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Russia denies it is to blame, and instead attributes responsibility to Western sanctions and various technical problems. Russia [stopped](#) the flow of gas via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Europe on 31 August, citing the need to carry out repairs. The German government rejected the claim, calling it a “pretence”. It said Nord Stream was “fully operational” and that there were no technical issues. Although the stoppage was due to last for three days, the Russian energy company Gazprom [announced](#) on 2 September that it would not restart on schedule the next day, citing turbine damage. Russia [said](#) on 5 September that it will not resume in full its gas supplies to Europe until the west lifts its sanctions against Moscow. Speaking to journalists, Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin’s spokesperson, blamed sanctions for Russia’s failure to deliver gas through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline. “It is these sanctions imposed by the western states that have brought the situation to what we see now”.

During the confrontational [speech](#) in Vladivostok on 7 September (see above), President Putin also threatened to cut off all

deliveries of gas, oil, and coal to Europe if they imposed a price cap on Russian energy imports. “Will there be any political decisions that contradict the contracts? Yes, we just won’t fulfil them. We will not supply anything at all if it contradicts our interests,” he said, [according](#) to a Reuters translation of his remarks. “We will not supply gas, oil, coal, heating oil – we will not supply anything.” Recalling a Russian fairytale, he said that Europeans could “freeze like the wolf’s tail”.

The EU is working on [unprecedented measures](#) in the coming days to address the energy price shock, including the controversial gas price cap. European energy ministers tasked the European Commission with drawing up legal texts that will include emergency funding for consumers struggling to afford soaring bills. The German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, [said](#) on 4 September his government had been planning for a total halt in gas deliveries in December, promising measures to lower prices and tie social benefits to inflation. “Russia is no longer a reliable energy partner,” Scholz told a news conference in Berlin. In response, former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev accused Germany of being an enemy of Russia. “In other words, it has declared a hybrid war on Russia,” he said.

On developments within Russia

On 5 September President Putin [approved](#) a new foreign policy doctrine to “protect, safeguard and advance the traditions and ideals of the Russian World”. Enshrined in a 31-page “humanitarian policy,” the doctrine centres on the concept of a “Russian World,” stating that the Russian Federation will provide support to “compatriots,” wherever they may live, in order to preserve the Russian cultural identity and protect their interests. Conservative ideologues in Russia have used this notion to justify intervention abroad in support of Russian-speakers.

A Russian court [sentenced](#) journalist Ivan Safronov to 22 years in prison on trumped-up treason charges, a record sentence that has shocked those who gathered to protest against his imprisonment. Safronov, a former defence

reporter for the Kommersant and Vedomosti dailies, was tried on secret evidence. It is reported that he may have been targeted for revealing plans for a sale of 20 Su-35 fighter jets to Egypt for a reported sum of \$2bn. The deal was soon aborted and, according to the secret evidence, Safronov’s article resulted in complaints from the Egyptian military leadership to Russia. A court in Moscow also [stripped](#) the independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta of its print media licence, effectively banning the newspaper from operating inside Russia. Editor-in-chief, Dmitry Muratov, said the ruling was “a political hit job, without the slightest legal basis”. He said the paper would appeal.

Alec Dubro, [Just Say Nyet: Russia Faces Dissent In The Military](#), Foreign Policy in Focus, 6 September 2022

On China’s position on the war

China has refused to condemn Russia’s invasion and its president, Xi Jinping, told Putin it would support Russia’s “sovereignty and security”. NATO’s new [Strategic Concept](#) asserts that there is a “deepening strategic partnership” between China and Russia. On 1 September Russia and China [launched large-scale military exercises](#) involving several allied nations in a show of growing defence cooperation. The Russian defence ministry said the Vostok 2022 (East 2022) exercise would be held until 7 September in Russia’s far east and the Sea of Japan and involve more than 50,000 troops and 5,000 weapons units, including 140 aircraft and 60 warships. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping are expected to [meet](#) in Uzbekistan at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in the city of Samarkand on 15 September.

On developments within NATO

In a [statement](#) on 8 September NATO condemned the recent cyberattack on Albania’s information infrastructure, which Tirana and other NATO allies attributed to Iran, and pledged support for the country to strengthen its cyber defence capabilities. Albania cut diplomatic relations with Iran on 7

September, when Prime Minister Edi Rama accused Iran of committing the July attack and gave its diplomats 24 hours to close the embassy and leave the country.

The war of words between Turkey and Greece has continued to escalate. On 3 September President Erdoğan [accused](#) Athens of militarising what should be demilitarised Eastern Aegean islands, threatened to “do what was necessary”, and warned of a “heavy price” should Greece harass Turkish F-16 fighter jets. The latter warning follows Ankara’s accusation that Greece in August used the Russian-supplied S300 air defence system to lock on to Turkish jets in the region. In addition to the dispute over the sovereignty and alleged militarisation of islands close to Turkey, the two countries are also at odds over irregular migration flows and Ankara’s energy exploration activities around Cyprus.

Thousands gathered in Prague on 4 September to [protest](#) at soaring energy bills and demand an end to sanctions against Russia over the war in Ukraine. About 70,000 people, including far-right and extreme-left elements, coalesced at a “Czech Republic First” rally to call for a new agreement with Moscow over gas supplies and a halt to the sending of arms to Ukraine.

Canadian Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland has been at the centre of speculation about her possible appointment as successor to the current NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who has been in the job since 2014. Stoltenberg’s term was supposed to end this month but in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine it was extended to 2023.

[Press conference](#) with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the US Secretary of State, Antony J. Blinken, 9 September 2022

Barin Kayaoglu, [NATO gaffe sign of bigger strife between Turkey, Greece](#), Al-monitor, 9 September 2022

[Statement](#) by the North Atlantic Council concerning the malicious cyber activities against Albania, NATO Press Release, 8 September 2022

[Greece complains to NATO and United Nations over Turkey’s remarks](#), Reuters, 7 September 2022

[Government wants to boost ties with NATO](#), Swiss.info, 7 September 2022

[NATO chief : European countries will ‘pay a price’ this winter for Ukraine support](#), The Hill, 7 September 2022

Sarah Neumann, [NATO Covert Feuds Disguised Beneath A Veneer Of Optimism And Solidarity](#), Eurasia Review, 7 September 2022

[Freeland says she is focused on her 'really big job,' but does not deny rumour she's eyeing top NATO role](#), National Post, 7 September 2022

[Chrystia Freeland has a 'legitimate shot' at top NATO job, expert says](#), CBC News, 7 September 2022

Henrik Larsen, [NATO’s Strategic Concept: Tempered Ambitions](#), CSS Analyses in Security Policy, No.309, September 2022

Aylin Matle, [A New Strategy for NATO and Germany](#), Internationale Politik Quarterly, 6 September 2022

[NATO investigates after criminals claim to be selling its stolen missile plans](#), The Register, 5 September 2022

[First German NATO brigade troops arrive in Lithuania](#), NATO News Release, 5 September 2022

[Summit prepares ground for ‘NATOisation of Europe’ and continues collision course with China and high levels of military spending](#), NATO Watch Briefing No.96, 6 July 2022

On Finland and Sweden joining NATO

Finland and Sweden were invited to join NATO, after a [trilateral memorandum](#) with Turkey agreed on the eve of the NATO Madrid Summit assuaged Ankara’s previous objections. The two Nordic countries will become NATO members after the Accession Protocol is ratified by all 30 member states. The invitation to Finland and Sweden represents a major geopolitical shift in Europe as the two countries move away from neutrality. However, ratification by Turkey is still by no means certain. The trilateral agreement could still falter on implementation, especially regarding Turkish extradition requests. To

date, 24 NATO member states have ratified the decision, with the Czech Republic the most recent to do so. Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Turkey are the six member states where parliaments have not yet been asked to vote on Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO.

Sweden has [said](#) it is on “high alert” for outside intervention in its upcoming election amid increased tensions with Russia. The Scandinavian country’s recently re-established psychological defence agency said it had seen heightened activity from foreign sources after its application to join NATO and it was prepared for the possibility of “something exceptional” in the lead-up to polling day on 11 September.

Eemeili Isoaho, Niklas Masuhr and Fabien Merz, [Finland’s NATO Accession](#), CSS Analyses in Security Policy, No.310, September 2022

[Russia's neighbors are close to creating a 'NATO sea' that could deter Russia and help Ukraine, Estonia's defense minister says](#), Business Insider, 6 September 2022

[Türkiye, Sweden, Finland continue talks on two Scandinavian countries' NATO bid](#), Anadolu Agency, 6 September 2022

[The end of neutrality - Finland joins NATO](#), Deutsche Welle, 5 September 2022

For further details see:

[Murky trilateral agreement results in Turkey lifting objections to Finland and Sweden’s NATO application](#), NATO Watch News Brief, 29 June 2022

[Should Finland and Sweden hold a referendum on NATO membership?](#) NATO Watch Briefing no. 93, 6 May 2022

DONATE NOW PLEASE

NATO Watch is a small non-profit organisation that provides **independent oversight and analysis** of NATO. **If you share our vision for a transparent and accountable NATO** please donate whatever you can afford to help NATO Watch thrive. Click on the picture below to find out how you can make a donation.

