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NATO Declares Russia 'Long-Term Threat' to Its Security

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2025 NATO Summit in The Hague. **NATO / flickr**

The NATO military alliance on Wednesday declared Russia a "long-term threat" to its collective security in a joint summit statement that pledged increased defense spending and reaffirmed "enduring" support for Ukraine.

NATO's 32 member states said they stood "united in the face of profound security threats and challenges, in particular the long-term threat posed by Russia to Euro-Atlantic security." They committed to spending 5% of GDP annually on defense and security by 2035.

The alliance argued that the boost is necessary to counter what they described as Russia's growing aggression, as well as to help keep U.S. President Donald Trump engaged in NATO, as he has long criticized European nations for spending too little on defense.

Russian President Vladimir Putin last week dismissed NATO's plans, saying Moscow "will no doubt counter all threats that arise."

Putin has portrayed his full-scale invasion of Ukraine as part of a broader confrontation with the West, demanding written guarantees that NATO will not expand further east. Ukraine has rejected any such concessions and continues to seek security guarantees from the West.

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In a declaration adopted at a summit in The Hague, NATO leaders reaffirmed their "enduring sovereign commitments to provide support to Ukraine, whose security contributes to ours," and said new spending targets could help fund military aid to Kyiv.

Still, this year's language was more cautious than in previous declarations and stopped short of directly blaming Russia for the full-scale invasion.

Trump had added uncertainty to the summit by appearing to question NATO's collective defense clause — known as Article 5 — telling reporters on his way to The Hague that it "depends on your definition. There's numerous definitions of Article 5."

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, however, said Trump remained "totally committed" to the clause, which was reaffirmed in the summit's final statement.

AFP contributed reporting.

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