

Beat: Politics

## **NATO STRENGTHENS ITSELF AGAINST CHINA'S ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER**

### **BEIJING IS THE NEXT ENEMY**

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**USPA NEWS** - "America is in a better position than it has ever been to lead the world," said U.S. President, Joe Biden, at the end of the NATO Summit held in Madrid (Spain) on June 29 and 30. A Summit that consolidated the economic and military leadership of the United States among the countries of the Alliance, and identified the threats of all kinds that the West will face during the next decade.

"The Euro-Atlantic area is not at peace," NATO affirms in the document that designs its strategy for the coming years. The war in Ukraine is the immediate danger that threatens Europe. "The Russian Federation has violated the norms and principles that contributed to a stable and predictable European security order," adds the Atlantic Alliance. "We cannot discount the possibility of an attack against Allies' sovereignty and territorial integrity."

For the Allies, the next threats are "global and interconnected." The most immediate is Ukrainian war, whose effects are felt worldwide. Europe, but not only, is facing an unpredictable winter without grain or gas. More, "terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, is the most direct asymmetric threat to the security of our citizens and to international peace and prosperity," NATO says. "Conflict, fragility and instability in Africa and the Middle East directly affect our security," added. And pointed the violence against civilians, including conflict-related sexual violence, that "contributes to forced displacement, fuelling human trafficking and irregular migration."

And China, the next enemy. The People's Republic of China (PRC) "stated ambitions and coercive policies challenge our interests, security and values," said the new NATO's Strategic Concept document. "The PRC employs a broad range of political, economic and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up," document added. "The PRC's malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security."

China seeks to control key technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure, and strategic materials and supply chains, NATO denounces. "It uses its economic leverage to create strategic dependencies and enhance its influence," says the NATO's Strategic Concept. And added: "It strives to subvert the rules-based international order, including in the space, cyber and maritime domains. The deepening strategic partnership between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to our values and interests."

### **Euro-Atlantic area looks to China**

China's economic and military power is a concern in the West. In particular, NATO is concerned about the axis formed by China and Russia. But the Atlantic Alliance does not close the door to the Beijing Government. "We remain open to constructive engagement with the PRC, including to build reciprocal transparency, with a view to safeguarding the Alliance's security interests," NATO said. And explained that "we will work together responsibly, as Allies, to address the systemic challenges posed by the PRC to Euro-Atlantic security and ensure NATO's enduring ability to guarantee the defence and security of Allies." And warn that the West will protect himself "against the PRC's coercive tactics and efforts to divide the Alliance." More, the China's military use of technology worry NATO. "Strategic competitors and potential adversaries are investing in technologies that could restrict our access and freedom to operate in space, degrade our space capabilities, target our civilian and military infrastructure, impair our defence and harm our security," says the Alliance.

"Emerging and disruptive technologies bring both opportunities and risks," NATO added. In his opinion, "they are altering the character of conflict, acquiring greater strategic importance and becoming key arenas of global competition."

For the Euro-Atlantic area, the erosion of the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture "has negatively impacted

strategic stability.” The Russian Federation’s violations and selective implementation of its arms control obligations and commitments “have contributed to the deterioration of the broader security landscape,” pointed the Strategic Concept document by NATO. “The potential use of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear materials or weapons against NATO by hostile state and non-state actors remains a threat to our security,” explained. And refers Iran and North Korea as states with nuclear and missile programmes. Also Syria, North Korea and the Russian Federation, along with non-state actors, with chemical weapons. And finally, “the PRC is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal and its developing increasingly sophisticated delivery systems, without increasing transparency or engaging in good faith in arms control or risk reduction,” NATO said.

Faced with all these risks, NATO wants to be prepared. Born as a defensive organization, its participation in the Balkan wars (90’s) and the support it provides to Ukraine in its war against Russia are changing it towards an offensive organization. It’s about taking the initiative. And the first goal is to identify the risks. Risks not only military but also hybrid: demographic, such as the massive migrations directed by governments for political purposes; environmental, because the climate change endangers agriculture and water reserves; cyber, in the fight against disinformation and hackers; political, such as terrorism; and military. In this sense, the next front is located in Asia.

The world “has changed dramatically” since NATO agreed its previous Strategic Concepts at the Lisbon Summit in 2010. “Our security environment has become contested and unpredictable,” says the Atlantic Alliance. In the next ten years, NATO wants to continue adapting “in a more dangerous and competitive” world. Russia and China “are developing a strategic partnership and are at the forefront of an authoritarian pushback against the rules-based international order,” NATO denounces. What is at stake, basically, is the new distribution of power in the world.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD  
483 Green Lanes  
UK, London N13NV 4BS  
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com  
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