

TESTIMONY
JAMES C. O'BRIEN, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS

THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE:
SUBCOMMITTEE EUROPE & REGIONAL SECURITY COOPERATION
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Chairwoman Shaheen, Ranking Member Ricketts, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the future of Europe. Your request comes at a pivotal time for the region and on the heels of a hugely successful NATO 75th Anniversary Summit that further strengthened Transatlantic unity. I am deeply appreciative of the role that you and Members of this Committee played during the Summit, and for your continued support for U.S. policy in the region as a whole.

President Biden remarked that this was one of the most successful Summits he has seen in his public service career, and I could not agree more. Together with our Allies and under the leadership of outgoing Secretary General Stoltenberg, the Summit delivered four critical achievements:

First, by holding the Summit in Washington, DC, the site of the signing of the Treaty 75 years ago, we celebrated and underscored the leadership roles the United States and the Alliance played in bringing the world out of the tragedy of the Second World War and creating the modern rules-based international system, which remains the foundation for peace and security today.

Second, we achieved extraordinary unity among the 32 NATO Allies on a slate of practical and skillful solutions to some of the peace and security challenges we face. Defense spending among Allies is at an all-time high: at the beginning of this Administration, only nine Allies had met the 2% of GDP

targets. After considerable diplomatic engagement, at the close of the Summit, 23 Allies had reached this target, with more anticipated to reach this goal. Allies agreed to collectively review NATO's strategic approach to Russia, and, for the first time since 1989, to implement and resource NATO's new regional defense plans to deter threats and defend every inch of NATO territory. And critically, we met for the first time at 32 Allies with the addition of Sweden in March, and reached consensus on a new NATO leader.

Third, by welcoming the attendance of Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea, we intensified NATO cooperation with our Indo-Pacific partners, including agreeing on practical approaches to address shared concerns about the growing cooperation between the PRC and Russia.

And finally, we unequivocally demonstrated our support for Ukraine by ensuring that Ukraine has the ability to fight back against Russia. We just concluded two months of high-level, high-intensity diplomacy that has underscored U.S. and Allied commitment to Ukraine's fight and improved the international narrative on the war, culminating in a NATO Summit that demonstrated long-term support for Ukraine across a huge spectrum of Allies and partners. Within the Alliance, Allies agreed NATO will stand up a new command to provide security assistance and training support to Ukraine, deepen Ukraine's political relationship with NATO, and announced long term financial support for Ukraine to prevail. In addition to historic donations of air defense equipment and F-16 fighters, President Biden and 25 other leaders signed the Ukraine Compact: a mutually reinforcing framework that brings these countries together in a unified, coordinated, and comprehensive architecture to support Ukraine not just for now but for years in the future. As you've heard President Biden say, these elements constitute a bridge to NATO for Ukraine: a clear pathway leading to eventual membership as Ukraine continues to implement domestic reforms. This Compact is a central piece of that clear, strong, and well-lit bridge. As Russia is clearly not ready to pursue peace, the United States and our Allies and partners must ensure that Ukraine has the military capacity, a viable energy

grid, and a functioning economy to rebuff Russian aggression. And it's working. Earlier this month, the last Russian patrol boat left the Black Sea Fleet base in Crimea. Combined with the G7 commitment to a loan of \$50 billion secured by profits from immobilized Russian sovereign assets, Ukraine can continue its fight effectively. This confidence is the quickest route to peace. The Summit demonstrated the NATO Alliance is now stronger, larger, and more fit for purpose than before Putin's devastating war on Ukraine.

Across Europe, there has been a series of consequential elections that will shape both the future of the region and our future relations with Europe. We have a new government in the UK that is eager to work with us, a new slate of elected EU leaders in Brussels who are focused on security and prosperity, and a European parliament of changed composition and political alliances, but one that I believe we can work with in the coming months. We continue to actively facilitate conclusion of a just and durable peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and are working to foster deeper cooperation among the Black Sea states.

But there remain challenges to democracy in some quarters, where backsliding is a significant concern. We must maintain our focus on countries like Georgia, working with likeminded partners to promote measures that strengthen democracy and incentivize a return by these governments to a Euro-Atlantic path.

In Russia's periphery, we seek to help those countries that have struggled between the pull of EU accession and the pressure of Russia's autocracy, and work with those leaders to get them out of the 'grey zone' and into western-style democracies. We are building a path for countries in the Western Balkans, Moldova, and the Caucasus independent of malign influence from the PRC and Russia. Some elites in that periphery are bucking against making the hard reforms needed to join the EU and NATO. We must work together to ensure those reforms are done.

Looking ahead, I will strive in the coming months to solidify the gains we made at the NATO Summit; support Ukraine to win the war and be in a position of strength if it chooses to negotiate with Russia; create opportunities for EU accession for those countries whose citizens want to turn to the West and away from autocracy; and, strengthen the gains we've made with our European allies and partners these past three and a half years to ensure that our largest collective trading partners can bring about and sustain peace and prosperity.

Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today and I look forward to your questions.