

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 831

Calling on the United States Government to uphold the founding democratic principles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and establish a Center for Democratic Resilience within the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 2, 2021

Mr. CONNOLLY (for himself and Mr. TURNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling on the United States Government to uphold the founding democratic principles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and establish a Center for Democratic Resilience within the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Whereas the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is the world's preeminent political and military alliance committed to democracy and the collective defense of its members;

Whereas the preamble of NATO's founding North Atlantic Treaty, signed in Washington, DC, on April 4, 1949, declares the alliance is "founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law";

Whereas democracies across the alliance face external threats from authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China and internal threats from proponents of illiberalism;

Whereas Russia launched a full-scale invasion of sovereign and democratic Ukraine on February 24, 2022, placing it on the frontlines in the contest between democratic values and autocracy.

Whereas in his address to Congress, President Zelensky remarked, "Right now, the destiny of our country is being decided. The destiny of our people, whether Ukrainians will be free, whether they will be able to preserve their democracy."

Whereas Vladimir Putin's unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine has united the NATO alliance;

Whereas there is a broad agreement within the alliance of the need to strengthen the democracies of NATO members, partners, and aspirant countries;

Whereas, in April 2020, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg appointed an independent Reflection Group tasked with supporting a forward-looking reflection process meant to strengthen the political dimension of the alliance;

Whereas the Reflection Group's report, "NATO 2030: United for a New Era", included analyses and recommendations for the alliance to address " 'democratic recession,' the global erosion of democratic norms, and the rise of authoritarianism", including—

(1) "A shared democratic identity is what distinguishes the Alliance from the principal threats and challenges it faces.";

(2) "NATO should reassert its core identity as an Alliance rooted in the principles of democracy.";

(3) "Any commitment to strengthening NATO's political cohesion therefore has to be orientated toward those shared values and ideals, grounded in democracy, rule of law and individual liberty."; and

(4) recommending the establishment of a Center of Excellence for Democratic Resilience in order to strengthen NATO democracies against external threats;

Whereas the Brussels Summit Communiqué issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Brussels on June 14, 2021, stated—

(1) "NATO is the strongest and most successful Alliance in history. It guarantees the security of our territory and our one billion citizens, our freedom, and the values we share, including individual liberty, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.";

(2) "State and non-state actors challenge the rules-based international order and seek to undermine democracy across the globe."; and

(3) "We reaffirm the Alliance's shared democratic principles as well as our commitment to the spirit and the letter of the North Atlantic Treaty.";

Whereas in Brussels the Allies also committed to updating NATO's Strategic Concept;

Whereas NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has reiterated that one of the primary purposes of updating the Strategic Concept must be a recommitment to the founding values of the alliance;

Whereas the NATO Parliamentary Assembly supports a new Strategic Concept that reaffirms that the support and strengthening of democratic institutions is foundational to the collective security of Allies; and

Whereas Russia's full-scale invasion of sovereign and democratic Ukraine underscores the importance of placing shared democratic values at the heart of NATO's Strategic Concept.

Whereas the NATO Parliamentary Assembly has endorsed and advanced a proposal to establish a NATO Center for Democratic Resilience within NATO headquarters for the purposes of monitoring and identifying challenges to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law and facilitating democracy and governance assistance to member, partner, and aspirant states, when requested: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) reaffirms its unequivocal support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as an alliance founded on democratic principles;
- (2) urges NATO to continue to provide unwavering support to the people of Ukraine as they fight for their sovereignty, territorial integrity and a democratic future.
- (3) calls on the President to use the voice and vote of the United States to adopt a new Strategic Concept for NATO that is clear about its support for shared democratic values and committed to enhancing NATO's capacity to strengthen democratic institutions within NATO member, partner, and aspirant countries; and
- (4) calls on the President to use the voice and vote of the United States to establish a Center for Democratic Resilience within NATO headquarters.