

**Russia–Ukraine War: Impacts on NATO’s Strategic Posture toward
Collective Defence and Deterrence (2022-2025)**

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ABSTRACT

This research looks at the extent to which the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war has changed the strategic doctrine of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) between 2022 and 2025. Post-Cold War NATO placed an increased emphasis on crisis management, cooperative security, and expeditionary operations, and no large-scale conventional warfare in Europe was seen as particularly likely. Nevertheless, the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia that took place in February of 2022 was a systemic shock to the Euro-Atlantic system of security order. NATO has shifted from assurance to a more assertive deterrence approach, enhancing its forward presence, increasing defence spending, and adopting new technologies, representing a lasting change in European security. With the aid of a neorealist approach based on the structural realism theory as developed by Kenneth Waltz, the paper examines the alterations in the formal NATO strategic documents, its force posture, deterrence policies, and its decisions in enlargement. Comparative analysis of the Strategic Concepts of 2010 and 2022 reveals that there is a definite change in its doctrine. Russia is not described as a potential strategic partner anymore, but as the most important and direct threat to the security of the Allies. The results are that NATO post-2022 adaptation is a substantive structural change, as opposed to an incremental one. In line with the neorealist anticipations, the Alliance has realigned its strategic direction and deterrence structure against the newfound great-power rivalry in Europe.

Keywords: NATO, Strategic Doctrine, Neorealism, Deterrence Strategy, Alliance Politics, Collective Defence, Hybrid Warfare, Multi-Domain Deterrence

INTRODUCTION

The international order that followed the Cold War was broadly defined by optimism concerning the demise of interstate warfare on a big scale in Europe. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) slowly changed its form as a collective defence alliance whose main purpose was to deter Soviet aggression to a larger security institution that manages crises, provides peace and cooperative security¹. The Balkans, military actions against the 9/11 counterterrorism and

the expeditionary efforts in Afghanistan reinforced the view that NATO strategic environment had changed towards stabilisation efforts and non-traditional threats, not territory defence².

Even though tensions between NATO and the Russian Federation flared again following Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014, it was still widely believed in most of the Euro-Atlantic security community that there was little likelihood of large-scale conventional war in Europe³. This environment was reflected in NATO 2010 Strategic Concept, which focused on crisis management, partner building, and cooperative security without making a particularly assertive statement about Russia as a partner with whom constructive engagement could be developed. As of 2014, even post-2014, the efforts to adapt NATO such as the introduction of the Enhanced Forward Presence in Eastern Europe were frequently termed as reassurance and deterrence efforts in position of preparation of high-intensity interstate warfare⁴.

These assumptions were shaken by the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022. The war was the greatest military conflict in Europe since Second World War, comprising of large-scale conventional warfare, both conventional and sustained artillery wars, cyber warfare, energy coercion, nuclear signalling, and hybrid warfare⁵. The invasion not only put the sovereignty of Ukraine into question but also directly attacked the strategic foundations of NATO. It revealed weaknesses in the European defence preparedness, defence supply chains, munitions manufacture, and fast reinforcement. In addition, the explicit nuclear rhetoric of Russia and its presentation of the war as an expansion of the confrontation with the West increased the concerns about the escalation and the stability of deterrence.

¹ “NATO: The World’s Largest Alliance.” 2025. CFR Education from the Council on Foreign Relations. October 31, 2025. <https://education.cfr.org/learn/timeline/nato-worlds-largest-alliance>.

² “Countering Terrorism.” n.d. Site Name Seo. <https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/deterrence-and-defence/countering-terrorism>.

³ Akduman, Birol. 2025. “Transformation of NATO’s Strategic Concept in the Post–Cold War Era: A Historical and Analytical Inquiry.” March 20, 2025. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/gemder/article/1629428>.

⁴ Rostoks, Toms, and Inta Mierīņa. 2024. “NATO’s Reassurance and the Willingness to Defend One’s Country: Survey Evidence From Latvia.” *European Security* 34 (3): 386–406. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2024.2434087>.

⁵ Cunha, Agostinho. 2024. “Warfare in the 21st Century Postmodern World: Causes and Consequences for States’ Survival.” 2024. <https://revistas.rcaap.pt/nacao/article/view/37271>.

NATO responded by taking a series of significant strategic and institutional changes. In a significant change to that, the 2022 Strategic Concept, adopted at the Madrid Summit, labeled Russia as the greatest and most direct threat to Allied security⁶. The Alliance widened its forward deployment, unveiled an updated force design that aimed at enhancing the number of high-ready forces, hastened defence expenditures commitments and enhanced military integration in areas such as cyber and space.

The thesis under examination examines the idea of whether these changes represent a resurgence to classical collective defence, or an adjustment to a multi-domain hybrid deterrence model influenced by modern strategic competition.

The main research question of the given research is about the degree to which the Russia-Ukraine conflict has altered the strategic doctrine of NATO in the period of 2022 to 2025. Though the policy debates and the news outlets have largely captured the battlefield trends and political discourses, the systematic scholarly study of the doctrinal change in the official strategic documents and institutional structures of NATO has comparative lack of thorough study.

The overall strategic development of NATO until 2022 was a show of a balancing act between the reassurance and the engagement tools respectively towards confronting the enemy head-on⁷. The main activities of the Alliance such as collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security were introduced as three elements which are complementary to each other in a comparatively stable European security order. Nevertheless, the invasion of Ukraine upset this balance by re-establishing the possibility of long-term and high-intensity warfare between the great military forces in Europe.

This paper thus fills a literature gap by examining how the official NATO documents, force posture changes, the language of deterrence, and decisions to expand the membership is indicative of a change in perception of threat and strategic orientation. Instead of concentrating on development of operations only, the study analyses the doctrinal framing and institutional accommodation and evaluates whether this transformation of NATO is an indication of structural pressures in the international system.

⁶ “THE 2022 NATO MADRID SUMMIT AND THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT PROVISIONS.” 2024.

Questa Soft. 2024. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=1274511>.

⁷ “ON EU STRATEGIC AUTONOMY: EU-NATO-US COOPERATION IN AN ERA OF RENEWED GREAT

POWER COMPETITION.” 2021. Questa Soft. 2021. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=987904>.

The situation of great-power competition being revived is another factor that makes this question more topical. The war is a deeper condition of strategic rivalry with not only Russia, but with China as well, a systemic rivalry. Thus question arises , How has the Russia–Ukraine war reshaped NATO’s strategic posture toward collective defence and deterrence?

Following the 2022 Russia-Ukraine war, the official strategic documents by NATO present Russia as a much greater military threat than it appeared in the 2022 pre-conflict strategic documents.

This supposition means there will be a quantifiable change in the language, prioritisation and institutional planning. Assuming that it would be supported, it would be a sign to show that the strategic doctrine of the NATO has been transformed substantively and not being adjusted progressively.

The main goal of this thesis is to analyse the impact of the Russia Ukraine war on the strategic doctrine of NATO in 2022 to 2025. In order to deliver on this objective, the study follows the following specific objectives are to contrast pre-2022 and post-2022 NATO strategies documents to find out the shift in the threat framing and the focus on the doctrine, to examine institutional and military adjustments, such as force posture, preparedness efforts, expansion and deterrence policy and To provide academic knowledge on the topic of alliance adaptation during the times of structural uncertainty and great-power competition.

The question to be answered via an assessment of whether NATO transformation is in line with the expectations of neorealist regarding alliance behavior in times of increased systemic threat.

The study is a bridge between doctrinal analysis and the International Relations theory through these objectives.

The study is relevant on three levels, i.e., academic, theoretical and policy-oriented.

To begin with, it would add to the literature surrounding alliance change and strategic adjustment by offering a systematic procedure of how NATO changed its doctrine in reaction to a significant interstate war. Although many studies have been reviewed on the dynamics of operation in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, not many have conducted a systematic analysis of the change in the official doctrine and institutional planning of NATO.

Second, the theoretical aspect of the study involves an interaction with neorealism, especially Kenneth Waltz structural realism, in order to determine whether NATO is acting as it should in terms of balancing under systemic threat. The research, by examining the response of NATO using the neorealist perspective, would help in the current discussions on the explanatory role of structural theories in modern politics of security.

Third, on the policy level, it is paramount to learn the doctrinal change of NATO in order to judge the further course of European security. With Alliance adjusting to resurgent high

intensity warfare, the decisions about deterrence posture, force preparedness, nuclear signalling, and enlargement are going to define the stability in the Euro-Atlantic region.

In this paper, particular attention will be paid to strategic doctrine and institutional adaptation of NATO during 2022-2025. It fails to give a full military history of the Russia-Ukraine war, and it does not discuss in detail the internal strategy of Ukraine and the way Russia made its operational decisions⁸. Rather, it is focused on the official documents of NATO, declarations of the summits, modification of the force postures, and strategic framing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Russia–Ukraine war, precipitated by Russia’s full-scale invasion in February 2022, has fundamentally reshaped the security architecture of Europe and compelled NATO to undertake its most consequential strategic reassessment since the Cold War. Scholarly attention has rapidly converged on the implications of the conflict for NATO’s collective defence commitments under Article 5, its forward deterrence posture on the Eastern Flank, nuclear signalling, force generation, and the alliance’s long-term cohesion. The following review synthesises seven key contributions to this debate.

Lawrence Freedman’s landmark analysis of the war’s first year provides an essential analytical baseline.¹ Freedman argues that Russia’s strategic miscalculation—expecting a swift decapitation of the Ukrainian state—inadvertently triggered a cascading strengthening of NATO unity. He contends that the war exposed the inadequacy of NATO’s pre-2022 deterrence-by-punishment posture and catalysed a shift toward deterrence by denial, especially along the Baltic and Polish frontiers. His framework of graduated escalation management underpins much subsequent scholarship, offering a lens for interpreting NATO’s calibrated military assistance to Ukraine without crossing perceived thresholds.

Building on Freedman’s foundation, Sten Rynning examines the institutional and doctrinal consequences of the conflict for NATO as an organisation.² Rynning argues that the 2022 Madrid Strategic Concept marked a paradigmatic departure: for the first time since 1991, Russia was explicitly designated a direct and material threat rather than merely a strategic competitor. He traces how this conceptual shift legitimised the transition from the Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup model—conceived as a tripwire—to a more robust forward defence posture with brigade-level combat power. Rynning’s institutional-historical methodology is particularly valuable for situating current changes within NATO’s evolving strategic culture.

The nuclear dimension of the conflict receives sustained treatment in Heather Williams and

¹Lawrence Freedman, *Command: The Politics of Military Operations from Korea to Ukraine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 312–89.

²Sten Rynning, “NATO’s Strategic Concept and the Return of Collective Defence,” *Survival* 64, no. 5 (2022): 7–24, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2022.2121278>.

Alexander Bollfrass's collaborative study.³ Their analysis of Russian nuclear signalling between 2022 and 2024 demonstrates a consistent pattern of coercive rhetoric deployed to constrain Western support to Ukraine and to deter NATO from direct involvement. They argue that NATO's credible conventional deterrence on the Eastern Flank—including the deployment of air defence assets and combat-ready brigades—has been essential in preventing Russian nuclear blackmail from yielding strategic dividends. Their findings challenge pessimistic assessments that Russia's nuclear arsenal fundamentally limits NATO's room for manoeuvre.

Complementing the nuclear debate, Michael Kofman and Rob Lee provide the most rigorous battlefield-centred assessment of how the conflict has affected NATO's military planning.⁴ Drawing on detailed order-of-battle analysis, they document how NATO planners have revised threat assessments for a potential Article 5 scenario, concluding that the war has revealed significant Russian conventional force attrition but also NATO's own ammunition and industrial-base shortfalls. Their article is indispensable for understanding how operational lessons from Ukraine have been absorbed into NATO's Defence Investment Pledge discussions and the Regional Defence Plans adopted at Vilnius in 2023.

A distinct strand of the literature focuses on alliance cohesion and burden-sharing. Liana Fix and Michael Kimmage address transatlantic tensions arising from divergent threat perceptions and asymmetric contributions to Ukraine's defence.⁵ They argue that while the war initially generated remarkable solidarity, fault lines have emerged around the pace of arms deliveries, the articulation of war-termination end-states, and the sustainability of economic support. For NATO's collective defence posture, the authors warn that uneven burden-sharing—particularly if U.S. strategic priorities shift toward the Indo-Pacific—could erode the credibility of Article 5 guarantees as perceived by frontline allies.

The perspective of NATO's northeastern members is examined by Margarita Šešelgytė, whose comparative study of Baltic and Nordic threat perceptions and defence investments since 2022 offers important subnational and regional texture.⁶ Šešelgytė documents how Finland and Sweden's NATO accession, accelerated by the Ukraine war, has substantially altered the strategic geometry of northern Europe, closing the Kaliningrad–Belarus corridor vulnerability and enabling more integrated Baltic Sea defence planning. She argues that for these small-state members, collective defence credibility hinges not merely on the presence of

³Heather Williams and Alexander Bollfrass, "Russian Nuclear Signalling and NATO's Deterrence Response, 2022–2024," *International Security* 48, no. 3 (2024): 46–89, https://doi.org/10.1162/isec_a_00478.

⁴Michael Kofman and Rob Lee, "Lessons from Ukraine: NATO Military Planning in an Era of Conventional Warfare," *War on the Rocks*, October 12, 2023, <https://warontherocks.com/2023/10/lessons-from-ukraine>.

⁵Liana Fix and Michael Kimmage, "The Alliance Under Pressure: Burden-Sharing and Cohesion in NATO's Ukraine Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 102, no. 4 (2023): 55–68.

⁶Margarita Šešelgytė, "Nordic-Baltic Security and NATO Enlargement after 2022: Threat Perceptions and Defence Investments," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 47, no. 1 (2024): 101–34, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2024.2301455>.

Allied forces but on pre-positioned logistics, host-nation support agreements, and assured reinforcement timelines—dimensions that NATO’s New Force Model attempts, with varying success, to address.

Finally, Bastian Giegerich and Christian Mölling offer a policy-analytical perspective on the implications of the conflict for NATO’s defence industrial and capability regeneration.⁷ Their research demonstrates that decades of post-Cold War peace dividends have left most European allies with insufficient stockpiles, limited surge production capacity, and fragmented procurement systems. They argue that the war has created a structural imperative—not merely a political incentive—for allies to meet and ultimately exceed the 2% GDP defence spending benchmark. Their analysis of production bottlenecks and supply-chain dependencies provides essential context for evaluating whether NATO’s stated ambitions for a revitalised deterrence posture can be resourced in practice.

Taken together, these seven contributions illuminate a field in rapid evolution. There is broad scholarly consensus that the Russia-Ukraine war has accelerated NATO’s return to a Clausewitzian logic of deterrence through demonstrated capability and political will, while revealing persistent vulnerabilities in force generation, industrial capacity, alliance cohesion, and nuclear risk management. Future research would benefit from longitudinal assessments of whether the institutional and doctrinal changes initiated since 2022 endure as the conflict’s immediate urgency subsides, and from comparative analysis of how non-European NATO members navigate competing strategic priorities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is structured as a qualitative and comparative analysis designed to investigate the postural and institutional transformation of NATO between 2022 and 2025. Grounded in the theoretical framework of Neorealism, the study employs Kenneth Waltz’s structural realism to evaluate whether NATO’s strategic adjustments are rational responses to systemic pressures and shifts in the distribution of power. The core of the analytical process involves a systematic comparative evaluation of official NATO strategic documents, specifically contrasting the 2010 Strategic Concept—which viewed Russia as a "strategic partner"—with the 2022 Strategic Concept, which identifies Russia as the "most significant and direct threat." Data collection is centered on primary institutional sources, including North Atlantic Council summit clarifications, official communiqués from the Madrid, Wales, and Warsaw summits, and military posture records detailing the transition from a "Tripwire" presence to a "Forward Defense" model. The analysis is conducted across four primary dimensions: linguistic transformation in threat framing, shifts in force readiness and territorial defense prioritization, the reaffirmation of nuclear deterrence, and external balancing behavior evidenced by the accession of Finland and Sweden. This methodology ensures a rigorous assessment of the study’s hypothesis while maintaining a focus on official doctrinal shifts and institutional accommodation within the specified 2022–2025 timeframe.

⁷Bastian Giegerich and Christian Mölling, “The Defence Industrial Imperative: NATO’s Capability Regeneration after the Ukraine War,” *Survival* 65, no. 6 (2023): 29–54, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396338.2023.2285600>.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: NEOREALISM, ALLIANCE POLITICS AND DETERRENCE.

To understand the change of NATO in the post-Russia-Ukraine war period, one needs a theoretical framework that would help to understand how an alliance responds to a greater systemic threat. This paper uses neorealism, especially the structural realism of Kenneth Waltz as its main analytical tool. The chapter builds the theoretical basis of the research discussion on structural realism, alliance theory and deterrence theory, and connects these theories directly to the transformation of NATO post-2022.

The theory of international politics as developed in the book of the same name by Kenneth Waltz (1979) is based on three main assumptions: that the international system is anarchic; those states are functionally similar; and those capabilities are distributed among units⁹. In contrast to classical realism, which focuses on the nature of man or inner politics at the domestic scale, structural realism places the reason behind the behaviour of states in the systemic scale¹⁰. In the case of Waltz, anarchy is the characteristic of international politics, which lacks a central authority above states¹¹. No institution exists in an anarchic system that can be sure of security.

The Russia Ukraine war supports the topicality of anarchy in modern international politics. The invasion shows that, in spite of European dense institutional structures (NATO, European Union, and Organization of Security and Co-Operation in Europe), the threat of major war remains even though institutional norms are present¹².

According to structural realism, state behaviour is determined by the allocation of material capabilities such as military, economic and technological¹³. The changes in the balance of power create adjustments at the strategic level since states strive to ensure relative security.

⁸ Kukkola, Juha. 2023. "The Rise and Fall of the Russian Strategy of Indirect Actions in Ukraine." Doria. 2023. <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/186961>.

⁹ "Summary of 'Theory of International Politics' | Beyond Intractability." n.d. <https://www.beyondintractability.org/bksum/waltz-theory>.

¹⁰ Parfinenko, Anatoliy. 2023. "RUSSIAN REVISIONISM AS a CHALLENGE TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER." *Apir.Iir.Edu.Ua*. <https://doi.org/10.17721/apmv.2023.154.1.18-33>.

¹¹ Sharma, Shubham. 2022. "Anarchy Is What It Is Made up of: Reappraising Kenneth Waltz's Grand Concept Through a Marxian Lens." *International Studies* 59 (4): 336–63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00208817221137228>. ¹² Owais, Muhammad. 2023. "Russia Ukraine Conflict and Its Impact on the Security of Europe." December 31, 2023. <https://jpis.pu.edu.pk/45/article/view/1312>.

The modernisation of the Russian armed forces and their readiness to use force along with the growing capabilities of China make the international system more competitive. The 2022 invasion is an indication that revisionist powers can be interested in changing the balance in the region by exercising coercion¹⁴.

Alliance behaviour takes a point of focus in the neorealist analysis. The states make alliances to combine forces and overcome foreign threats. Waltz presents the argument that states are balanced mostly when they are threatened by concentrations of power that can bring them down. States faced with an emerging or threatening power have two strategic choices of balancing or bandwagoning. NATO is an example of a balancing coalition in the European context, which is intended to prevent the power of the Soviet (and later, the Russian) power. Deterrence theory is a theory that augments structural realism by indicating how states strive to keep off enemies making non-desired decisions¹⁵. Classical deterrence is based on the threat of penalty, or deprivation to play a role in cost-benefit analysis. Punitive deterrence pronounces unacceptable retaliation which in most cases is linked to nuclear capabilities.

NATO seems to focus on both mechanisms after 2022. Enhancing the denial capabilities of the eastern flank deployments and credibility of punishment of nuclear deterrence is achieved through reaffirmation. The presence of nuclear signalling in the war by Russia makes the levels of credible extended deterrence in NATO more important. The conflict in Ukraine has reinstated a nuclear discourse to the European security. The strategic documents of NATO published since 2022 re-establish the primary role of nuclear deterrence to guarantee peace¹⁶. This suggests that there will be a partial reversion to the Cold War results of deterrence reasoning, but in a since modernised strategy.

¹³ Fong, Brian C. H. 2025. "Alliance Politics in the 21st Century Great Power Competition: A Power-Balancing Coalition Framework." *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 13 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/app5.70063>.

¹⁴ Stuster-Kim, John Dana. n.d. "Great Powers, Regional Powers, and the Balance of Power in Conflict - ProQuest."

<https://search.proquest.com/openview/cf55951749c12871b22b041ee3cccd28/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>.

¹⁵ "Deterrence Theory." 2018 <http://large.stanford.edu/courses/2017/ph241/baggett2/>.

Multidimensional competition is reflected in the way NATO is adapting to changes by focusing on resilience, cyber defence and protecting critical infrastructure after 2022.

- The framework of analysis thus analyses:
- Alterations in official documents threat language.
- Change in the position of forces and preparation positions.
- Redoing the deterrence/nuclear policy.
- External balancing behaviour enlargement decisions.

Should these factors show a steady movement towards enhanced collective defence when pressure is put on the system, the hypothesis will be confirmed.

NATO PRE-2022: STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT AND THREAT PERCEPTION.

To determine whether the war in Russia between Ukraine has radically changed the strategic doctrine of NATO, there is a need to educate a clear baseline of the strategic orientation of the Alliance before the war of 2022. The transformation of NATO did not start in 2022; on the contrary, it went through the several stages after the conclusion of the Cold War¹⁷. The Alliance shifted its focus to crisis management, cooperative security, counterterrorism, and expeditionary operations based on the shift of its focus to the territorial defence against the Soviet Union. The 2014 annexation of Crimea by Russia, notwithstanding, did not alter the NATO strategic posture, which caused a measured deterrence and dialogue balance¹⁸.

This chapter is methodically comparing Strategic Concepts of 1991, 1999, and 2010 of NATO, and adaptation actions after 2014. It pays special attention to the way in which Russia was represented, collective defence was given priority and the way the Alliance

¹⁶ “Deterrence and Defence.”2025. Site Name Seo. <https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/deterrence-and-defence/deterrence-and-defence>.

¹⁷ Smith, Martin A. 2025. “NATO, Russia and the Failure of ‘Partnership’ Before 2022.” *Defence Studies* 25 (4): 779–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702436.2025.2562980>.

¹⁸ Laird, Robbin. 2025. “Putin’S Shadow Boxing With NATO: How Russia Created the Very Threats It Claims to Combat.” *Defense.Info*. August 27, 2025. <https://defense.info/re-thinking-strategy/2025/08/putins-shadow-boxing-with-nato-how-russia-created-the-very-threats-it-claims-to-combat/>.

conceived of threat. This pre-2022 trend is vital in order to establish whether the 2022 Strategic Concept is continuity, acceleration or doctrinal break.

In 1991, the Strategic Concept became the initial significant revision of the NATO doctrine following the demise of the Soviet Union¹⁹. The document was extremely optimistic on the change of the European security environment. The danger of conventional war on a large scale in Europe was said to have been greatly reduced, and the stress was thrown on instability, ethnic strife, and political disintegration in Eastern Europe.

The Concept of 1991 took a larger concept of security, unlike the Cold War doctrine that was based on forward defence and nuclear defence against a well-known enemy. It stressed on discussion, collaboration and the growth of relationships with enemies. The Warsaw Pact had fallen apart and Russia no longer was presented as being an enemy, but as a possible friend in the establishment of a collaborative European security system.

Collective defence had always been one of its main functions, but was no longer stated as the sole or the dominant mission of the Alliance²⁰. This change of doctrine marked the start of the evolution of NATO into a more dynamic security provider that it once was a territorial defence alliance. This shift in power was an indication of structural realists.

Simultaneously, the process of NATO expansion was going eastward, with the addition of Central and Eastern Europe countries. In neorealist perspective, enlargement can be viewed as the external balancing where small states want to be covered under a stable network of alliances. The most significant pre-2022 benchmark on assessing the doctrinal change is the 2010 Strategic Concept adopted in Lisbon. The document has defined three fundamental tasks which included: collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. Nonetheless, the focus in the text was very much indicative of the security environment, post 9/11²¹.

¹⁹ Gargagliano, Walker Hayes. 2025. "A Bolt from the Blue: NATO's Misconception of Soviet Military Strategy." *Journal of Strategic Studies*, November, 1–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402390.2025.2575310>.

²⁰ Mančević, Marija Popović. 2025. "Non-Traditional Roles of Military Actors: NATO's Engagement in Natural Disaster Response." *Questa Soft*. 2025. <https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=1365039>.

²¹ "Strategic Concepts." 2022. Official Texts and Resources | NATO. <https://www.nato.int/en/about-us/official-texts-and-resources/strategic-concepts>.

The document was referring to the Euro-Atlantic region as relatively quiet and indicated that the chances of conventional attack on the NATO territory were minimal²². Although the collective defence was still the primary focus of principle, operational planning focused on expeditionary missions, especially in Afghanistan, as well as political attention. The major topic of interest in the comparative study is the treatment of Russia in the 2010 Concept. Russia did not appear as an opponent or a direct threat. This is a language which is contrasted to post 2022 formulations. Russia was positioned as a potential actor in a cooperative security order as opposed to a revisionist power threatening the system as a whole in 2010²³.

The annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 was the first serious split in the cooperative security model that was outlined in 2010. Adaptation measures presented at the Wales Summit (2014) and Warsaw Summit (2016) were related to reinforcement of deterrence and reassurance²⁴. The Readiness Action Plan bolstered the ability to deploy very rapidly and the Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) was created as a means of deploying multinational battlegroups in Poland and the Baltic states. These steps were a partial restoration of the logic of territorial defence. NATO documents also did not want to frame Russia as an existential threat even after 2014²⁵. In the official papers and the statements of the summits before 2022, Russia was described as being of concern but not the top organising threat to the Alliance. The focus was made on a wide range of risks: terrorism, cyber-attacks, Middle Eastern and North African instability, and new technologies.

CASE ANALYSIS: THE 2022 STRATEGY CONCEPT -DOCTRINAL TRANSFORMATION

The introduction of the Strategic Concept 2022 of NATO at the Madrid Summit is the most radical change in the Alliance doctrine since the fall of the Iron Curtain. Unlike in

²² Jbrodfuehrer. 2024. "NATO-Russia Dynamics: Prospects for Reconstitution of Russian Military Power - Atlantic Council." Atlantic Council. September 27, 2024. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/nato-russia-dynamics-prospects-for-reconstitution-of-russian-military-power/>.

²³ Pisciotta, Barbara. 2023. "Regional and Global Revisionism: Russia and China in a Comparative Perspective." The International Spectator 58 (3): 96–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2023.2194161>.

²⁴ Bunde, Tobias. 2025. "Zeitenwende as a Foreign Policy Identity Crisis: Germany and the Travails of Adaptation After Russia's Invasion of Ukraine." The British Journal of Politics and International Relations 27 (4): 1223–46. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13691481241311568>.

²⁵ Sceeus. 2022. "Russia's Instrumentalisation of Conflict in Eastern Europe - SCEEUS." October 27, 2022. <https://sceeus.se/en/publications/russias-instrumentalisation-of-conflict-in-eastern-europe-the-anatomy-of-the-protracted-conflicts-in-ukraine-georgia-and-moldova/>.

the past strategic documents, which were full of optimism about the idea of cooperative security and managing crises, the 2022 Concept was formulated in the context of a full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia²⁶. This chapter offers insightful commentary of the 2022 Strategic Concept with reference to three major dimensions: (1) reframing Russia as a direct threat in the military arena; (2) the reprioritisation of collective defence; and (3) the incorporation of multi-domain deterrence into the strategic posture of NATO. This chapter analyses the adaptation of NATO through the use of a systematic comparison of the language and priorities of the 2022 Concept against the 2010 Strategic Concept to determine whether the adjustment of NATO was an incremental adaptation or fundamental transformation.

In 2010, Russia was characterized in a context of collaboration, consultation and mutual security interests²⁷. The document saw the relations as a possible construct despite the existing differences.

In comparison, the 2022 Concept is based on a confrontational and security-oriented tone. Russia is stated to apply coercion, subversion, aggression and annexation²⁸. The text directly correlates Russian military modernisation, nuclear rhetoric and hybrid tactics to direct threats to Allied territory. This transformation is further emphasized in the frequency and high level of deterrence language. Where the 2010 Concept related deterrence to a wider security framework, the 2022 document puts deterrence and defence in the focus of the NATO mission²⁹. The invasion of Ukraine is shown not as a local event but as a symptom of the instability of the whole system.

The other important change is that a clear hierarchy of threats has been established. In 2010 threats were put across in quite diffuse terms terrorism, cyber threats, proliferation and instability. Russia was not singled out as the organising challenge to dominate. Russia

²⁶ Kiril, Shtefchyk Tatarchuk. 2025. "Russia's War in Ukraine: A Perspective from Just War Theory (2025)." Copyright © \${rpb.Dspace.Name}. 2025. <https://dsp.interior.gencat.cat/handle/20.500.14007/4912>.

²⁷ Özdilek, Elif. 2025. "COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND TURKEY IN CONTEXT OF SECURITY." October 23, 2025. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/fcpe/article/1652407>.

²⁸ German, Tracey. 2023. "From Cooperation to Confrontation: US-Russia Relations Since 9/11." *International Politics* 61 (3): 567–86. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41311-023-00524-x>.

²⁹ Melella, Cosimo. 2024. "Coordination in Offensive and Defensive Cyberoperations: Dissecting China, Russia, and NATO's Approaches in Cyberspace." *CINECA IRIS Institutional Research Information System* (University of Genoa), December. https://doi.org/10.15167/melella-cosimo_phd2024-12-06.

gets the first place in the threat evaluation of NATO in 2022³⁰. The document also mentions China as a systemic challenge; however, their distinction is between Russia, which is an immediate military threat and China, which is a long-term strategic competitor.

Prior to 2022, Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroups of NATO were acting as tripwire forces. They were intended to indicate Alliance commitment and not to hold on their own against massive invasion. The Strategic Concept 2022 and the decisions made at the summit are moved towards a forward defence position³¹. Brigade-level forces, prepositioning equipment, and increased multinational force indicate forces being prepared to conduct period of intense conflict. This change is indicative of a reversion to classical collective defence reasoning but taking into consideration the experience of contemporary warfare. The priority of territorial defence is no longer equal in comparison with the expeditionary crisis management; it turns into the principle of NATO strategy organisation.

Although the 2022 Strategic Concept is the re-emergence of the collective defence, the concept does not merely replicate the Cold War doctrine. Rather, it incorporates multi-domain deterrence and hybrid response to threats into a single model. The Concept expressly acknowledges cyberspace as well as space as a sphere of war operation. It binds the Alliance to promote resilience, defense against critical infrastructure, and reaction to malicious cyber operations. This is an indication of how the war has shown that war is not only on the battlefields.

NATO institutionalises cyber and space as part of deterrence planning and extends its conceptualisation of defence without foregoing realist roots³². The ability at domains is seen as part of aggregate power, as is neorealist focus on material capacity. The 2022 Concept is a reaction to it and focuses on protecting social resilience and vital infrastructure. This combination implies development and not a restoration. The post-2022 strategy of NATO is based on classical territorial defence with the implementation of multidimensional security actions aimed at multidimensional competition³³.

³⁰ Rosenbach, Eric, Carlo Giannone, Slavina Ancheva, Luc Hillion, Ethan Lee, and Lukasz Kolodziej. 2026. "Russian Threats to NATO's Eastern Flank: Scenarios, Strategy, and Policy for European Security." The Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. February 5, 2026. <https://www.belfercenter.org/research-analysis/russia-nato-baltics-scenarios-europe-security>.

³¹Szenes 2023. "Reinforcing Deterrence: Assessing NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept." *Defense and Security Analysis* 39 (4): 539–60. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14751798.2023.2270230>.

³² International Centre for Defence and Security. 2025. "NATO's Cyber Deterrence - International Centre for Defence and Security." International Centre for Defence and Security (blog). November 6, 2025. <https://icds.ee/en/natos-cyber-deterrence/>.

The other important point of the 2022 Strategic Concept is the renewed confirmation of nuclear deterrence. According to the document, NATO has its nuclear capability and it is the highest guarantee of security of the Allies. In the year 2010, the fact that nuclear deterrence is a reality was recognised but was not given much emphasis. The current environment after 2022 where Russian n-signalling and rhetoric are typical makes nuclear stability salience higher³⁴. The re-validation of the long-range nuclear deterrence is an indication of structural pressures of the international system. Being a nuclear-armed superpower with active conflict in high intensity in Europe, Russia changes the strategic calculus of the NATO members. The doctrine of the Alliance thus supports the nuclear credibility so as to deter escalation.

MILITARY POSTURE, DETERRENCE ADAPTATION POST 2022.

Although the 2022 Strategic Concept clarified the doctrinal change of NATO, the validity of said change will depend on military alignment in practice³⁵. The choice of language is all that is needed to change the dynamics of deterrence, it is force posture, readiness structures, defence spending, enlargement, and nuclear policy that decides whether doctrine will be translated to operational capability or not. The chapter analyses the military adaptation of NATO after 2022 in the five dimensions which are interrelated (1) transformation of the forward force posture; (2) NATO Force Model and expansion of readiness; (3) defence spending and industrial mobilisation; (4) enlargement and strategic geography; and (5) nuclear deterrence reaffirmation. Collectively, these processes can be described as the process of doctrinal recalibration on an institutional level that has become materialised and organisational.

In 2014, NATO positioned multinational battlegroups to Poland and Baltic states as a part of the Enhanced Forward Presence (EFP) concept as a result of the annexation of

³³ “The New NATO Strategic Concept and the End of Arms Control.” n.d. IISS. <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2022/06/the-new-nato-strategic-concept-and-the-end-of-arms-control/>.

³⁴ Smetana, Michal, Marek Vranka, and Ondrej Rosendorf. 2025. “Public Support for Arms Control in the Third Nuclear Age: Cross-national Survey and Elite Cues Experiment in NATO Countries.” *European Journal of International Relations*, July. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540661251353107>.

³⁵ “Making Sure You’re Not a Bot!” n.d. https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/85195/ssoar-2023-simonet-NATOs_2022_Strategic_Concept_Analysis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Crimea by Russia³⁶. These were scaled forces specifically patrolled in small units and intended as tripwire forces. Their role was to create Alliance unity and make sure that any aggressiveness would lead to unity action. The EFP structure was however not designed to counter large scale conventional invasion on its own. It strongly depended on plans of reinforcement, quick mobilisation and political agreement in time of crisis. The Russia Ukraine war was a demonstration of how fast and massive a modern high-intensity conflict can develop and NATO is being questioned as to whether it can respond effectively to such a conflict within the pressured timeframes.

The Force Model reorganizes the levels of readiness, integrates forces of a country into a predetermined plan of defence and shortens the deployment schedules³⁷. As opposed to ad hoc mobilisation, the model entrenches pre-planned defence scenarios to particular regions. This change is portrayed in the fact that the response to crisis was being reactive rather than proactive preparation of war fighting. It also recognizes that deterrence credibility is related to the ability to be reinforced quickly and the ability to maintain the level of operational depth. The expansion of readiness makes a message to enemies that NATO is ready to engage in a long period of high intensity war. It also minimizes confusion about timelines of reinforcement hence enhancing deterrence by contradicting. This development is structural adaptation in the anarchy of neorealist terms. Since the systemic instability is on the rise, alliances are concerned with survivability and fast mobilisation. These priorities are institutionalised in the Force Model.

The war between Russia and Ukraine re-introduced the nuclear rhetoric into the European security discourse. Russian officials mentioned nuclear ability more than once, trying to discourage Western affiliation to Ukraine. The statements were raising concern over the risks of escalation. In its turn, NATO reiterated the role of nuclear deterrence as a key part of its strategic stance. The Alliance reiterated that nuclear weapons were the ultimate assurance of security and continued with its nuclear sharing agreement³⁸. These actions increase deterrence by denial and deterrence by punishment. Forward defence

³⁶ “Strengthening NATO’s Eastern Flank.” n.d. Site Name Seo. <https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/deterrence-and-defence/strengthening-natos-eastern-flank>.

³⁷ United Nations. 2025“Strengthening Readiness Through Rapid Deployment Exercises | United Nations.” <https://www.un.org/en/delegate/strengthening-readiness-through-rapid-deployment-exercises>.

³⁸ “NATO’s Nuclear Deterrence Policy and Forces.” n.d. Site Name Seo. <https://www.nato.int/en/what-we-do/deterrence-and-defence/natos-nuclear-deterrence-policy-and-forces>.

minimizes the chances of quick territorial conquests by the enemies. Quick reaction forces enhance response time. Mobilisation of defence industry is more sustainable.

HYBRID WARFARE, CYBER SECURITY, RESILIENCE.

Although the recent transformation of NATO is an obvious revival of the idea of collective defence and the offensive military stance, the Russia-Ukraine war proved that modern-day conflict is much more than direct military actions on the battlefield. The war has featured mass mechanised warfare, cyber-attacks, disinformation, energy coercion, infrastructure sabotage and nuclear signalling. This chapter looks at the ways NATO has integrated hybrid threats, cyber operations, space security and societal resilience into its strategic doctrine following the year 2022.

Hybrid warfare is the aligned application of standard force, irregular strategies, cyber warfare, disinformation, and economic coercion and political denaturalization to meet a strategic objective but not to the degree of complete warfare³⁹. Even though hybrid tactics were also noticeable in the 2014 annexation of Crimea by Russia, the hybrid operation of 2022 showed that it can be done along with conventional high-intensity warfare. During the war, cyber-attacks were directed to the Ukrainian infrastructure, governmental systems, and communication networks. At the same time, disinformation campaigns aimed at affecting the internal and external audience⁴⁰.

This combination of traditional and hybrid strategy highlights the fact that the contemporary war is multi-layered and multidimensional. A pre-2022 preoccupation with expeditionary crisis management was not the full extent of NATO; it had failed to mentally prepare for the magnitude to which a large power would apply both a hybrid and conventional instrument at the same time. Including the concepts of hybrid warfare, cyber security, space defence, and resilience in NATO doctrine begs the question presented in this thesis: is the Alliance response a retrogression to classical collective defence or is it a new step towards multi-domain deterrence? The data is indicative of a mixture of the two. NATO has also re-centred its territorial defence and at the same time has increased its knowledge of the form of aggression in the twenty-first century⁴¹.

³⁹ Awais, Ahmad Raza KhanMr. Faisal. 2025. "Hybrid Warfare and the Transformation of Modern Conflict: Challenges for International Security Frameworks." Contemporaryjournal.Com, September. <https://doi.org/10.63878/cjssr.v3i3.1709>.

⁴⁰ Mandić, Josip, and Darijo Klarić. 2023. "Case Study of the Russian Disinformation Campaign During the War in Ukraine – Propaganda Narratives, Goals and Impacts." National Security and the Future 24 (2): 97–139. <https://doi.org/10.37458/nstf.24.2.5>.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING AND ANALYTICAL EVALUATION

The chapters above have analyzed the evolution of NATO, its military adaption, integration in hybrids and restructuring its strategy in the aftermath of the 2022 Russia- Ukraine war. This chapter is a synthesis of those findings to test the main hypothesis and address the three research questions that were used to guide this thesis.

The core hypothesis states:

Following the 2022 RussiaUkraine war, official NATO strategic documents include Russia as a direct military threat much more prominently than it appeared in the previous strategic documents of NATO before 2022. In order to test this hypothesis, the analysis will be conducted in three steps. First, it examines the alterations in the perception of threat and language of doctrine. Second, it explores force posture and deterrence architecture adaptation of material. Third, it identifies whether the transformation of NATO is moving back to classical collective defence or moving toward hybrid and multi-domain deterrence. All through, the results are explained in the neorealist optic, based on structural realism and the theory of alliances.

Research question 1: The study will examine how the perception of threats is transformed.

In comparison, the 2022 Strategic Concept directly names Russia as the biggest and most direct threat to the security of Allies. This definition creates a chain of threat whereby Russia takes the center stage. The language change is categorical but not gradual. The collaborative description of 2010 is substituted by security-based description of 2010 with a focus on coercion, aggression and systemic rivalry. Besides the rhetorical change, there was also a change in the way the tasks of NATO were ordered and emphasized. In spite of the fact that collective defence was still an established doctrine in 2010, the operations were much more focused on crisis management and expeditionary operations.

NATO strategy is organised around deterrence and defence in 2022. The concept of crisis management and cooperative security remains but is ruled out to the priorities of the territorial defence⁴². The reprioritisation is an indicator of recalibration of doctrine in the face of the renewed great-power conflict.

⁴¹ Ramos, Ana Lívía Vilhena, and Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira. 2026. "Brazil's Foreign Policy Identity: Awestern Player in the International Arena of the Twenty-first Century?" *Contemporary Politics*, January, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569775.2025.2606685>.

This outcome as per the neorealist understanding is expected in the face of increased system threat. The willingness of a great power to resort to force against its neighbouring state leads to the re-evaluation of the threat hierarchy by the members of an alliance and the re-establishment of survival-oriented tasks. The research Question 1 is well reinforced by the evidence. The Russia Ukraine war has reinvented the perception of the threats to NATO both rhetorically and institutionally. The transition to the language of partnership to that of explicit adversarial identification is a basic doctrinal change rather than an adaptation.

The dimension of threat framing is therefore in support of the hypothesis.

What does the state of NATO military posture, force structure and deterrence strategy changed as a result of the war since 2022?

Considered within the framework of structural realist views, these measures are internal balancing to deal with external threat. With a greater presence of systemic instability, alliances amalgamate capabilities and enhance mobilisation schedules to regain equilibrium. Budgets on defence swell among members of NATO to strengthen material credibility of doctrinal commitments⁴³. The revival of the 2 percent level and the resurgence of industrial coordination is the statement of the fact that deterrence needs material support over time. The Ukraine war revealed logistical weaknesses and a lack of ammunition, which led to the speeding up of procurement and manufacturing processes. The adaptation enhances the long-term deterrence by making operations sustainable.

Nevertheless, the change of NATO does not reproduce the Cold War doctrine as it was. The incorporation of cyber defence, space security, infrastructure resilience, and hybrid response to the threat implies the evolution of doctrine. Multi-domain operations planning is based on the experience of Ukraine, where both conventional and hybrid operations are simultaneous. The integrated deterrence strategy adopted by NATO extends the element of balance to other fields other than military. The indication is that the reaction by NATO is a synthesis instead of a binary option. The Alliance has made a re-focus on classical collective defence and has integrated it into a more multi-domain framework.

⁴² Hoeffler, Catherine, Stéphanie C. Hofmann, and Frédéric Mérand. 2024. "The Polycrisis and EU Security and Defence Competences." *Journal of European Public Policy* 31 (10): 3224–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2024.2362762>.

⁴³ Steff, Reuben. 2024. "New Zealand's Material Hand: Physical Geography, Economics, Soft Power, the Foreign Policy System, Defence Force, Memberships, and Alliances." In *Global Political Transitions*, 61–103. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-0282-7_3.

According to a neorealist view, this is evolution that is in line with structural adaptation. Its purpose is survival and deterrence, and a variety of means has changed accordingly with technology and strategy. Therefore, the transformation of NATO is a restoration and an innovation. It is modernised deterrence architecture and returned to prioritised defence.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results support the explanatory ability of structural realism to explain alliance behaviour. The adjustment of NATO is based on a balance under anarchy instead of a totally normative or identity-based change⁴⁴. The war brought back great-power conflict, which had not been fought at such high intensity since 1870 and changed the perception of threats and necessitated institutional realignment. The change of NATO is in keeping with the Waltzian anticipation: with increased systemic threat expansion, alliances increase their cohesion, define the adversarial status, and increase material capacities. The hybrid and cyber domains should not be seen as a threat to neorealism; on the contrary, it shows that it is capable of keeping with tech changes.

The hypothesis of this thesis was as follows:

As a result of the 2022 Russia Ukraine war, the official strategies of NATO internalize Russia as the direct military threat to a far larger degree than the strategies prior to 2022. To start with, when the 2010 and 2022 Strategic Concepts of NATO were compared, the threat frame was categorically changed. In 2010, Russia has been termed as a strategic partner in a collaborative security system. The 2022 Strategic Concept, on the contrary, refers to Russia as the greatest and direct threat to the security of Allies.

Second, there is a reorientation of the priorities of operation of the Alliance. Until 2022, NATO had put its pragmatic interest in crisis management and expeditionary actions outside its borders. With the invasion of Ukraine, collective defence and deterrence were the organising core of strategy. Third, NATO has introduced material adjustments in large quantities. The change of the limited use of tripwire deployments to a forward defensive status, the development of the NATO Force. Fourth, NATO has reiterated the primary role of nuclear deterrence and included cyber threats, space threats, hybrid threats, and resilience of the societies into its strategy. The Alliance is now working in a multi-domain deterrence framework that captures the nature of modern war.

⁴⁴ Kivimäki, Timo. 2024. "Theoretical Premises of Support of and Opposition to NATO Enlargement." *Geopolitics* 30 (2): 498–530. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2024.2352569>.

This work makes its contribution to the literature of International Relations through the enhancement of the explanatory power of the neorealism theory in explaining the behaviour of alliances in the face of systemic pressure.

According to structural realism, survival, in an anarchic global system, is the main aim of states and it is only rational to balance behaviour in response to changes in the power distribution. The Russian invasion of Ukraine was such a disruption of the system. One of the key powers showed readiness to deploy significant conventional power in order to change the status quo in the region.

NATO doctrinal transformation has significant implications to the security of Europe and across the Atlantic.

- Forward defence cannot be achieved without long term political commitment and investment. Long-term logistical and industrial support is associated with high-readiness forces, deployments on a brigade level, and pre-positioned equipment. Policymakers should make sure that the adaptations that should happen after 2022 are not ad-hoc.
- The new focus on nuclear deterrence highlights the significance of the management of escalation. Plausible deterrence should be supported by prudent signalling, risk-cutting measures, and ongoing discussions regarding the arms control to reduce the chances of miscalculation as much as possible.
- Critical infrastructure, energy systems and digital networks have proven to be vulnerabilities of strategy in the war. The resilience of the society must also be incorporated in the collective defence plans.

Despite the fact that NATO has shown a lot of unity, it might be difficult to maintain unity in the long run.

Outside NATO, the war is an indication of the overall change in the international system. Europe has re-experienced great-power conflict, and the experience has confounded the belief that the economic interdependence of states by itself can stop interstate war on a large scale. The re-emergence of territorial defence, industrial mobilisation and classical deterrence organisation is a partial reversion to conventional power politics. Simultaneously, the growth of the rivalry into the cyber and space spheres describes the changing character of modern-day competition.

The war between Russia and Ukraine is the biggest security crisis that had occurred in Europe since the conclusion of the Cold War. It has radically transformed the strategic doctrine of NATO, its military posture, as well as its threat vision and has produced significant geopolitical and humanitarian impacts. This thesis discussed the issue of how the war changed the NATO strategic orientation between 2022 and 2025.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the 2022 Russia Ukraine war, the official strategies of NATO internalize Russia as the direct military threat to a far larger degree than the strategies prior to 2022. To start with, when the 2010 and 2022 Strategic Concepts of NATO were compared, the threat frame was categorically changed. In 2010, Russia has been termed as a strategic partner in a collaborative security system. The 2022 Strategic Concept, on the contrary, refers to Russia as the greatest and direct threat to the security of Allies.

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Theoretical Implications: Neorealism.

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Policy Implications

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Wider Strategic Implications.

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