

Beat: Politics

WE WILL DELIVER FOR AMERICAN PEOPLE REAFFIRMING&REVITALIZING AMERICA'S ALLIANC

ANTONY BLINKEN US SEC OF STATE SAID

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USPA NEWS - Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State, as he traveled to Brussels, (Belgium), NATO's new headquarters. From the NATO Headquarters Agora, Mr Blinken, addressed a statement, as regard of the reaffirming and reimagining America's Alliances, « I said that a key way we will deliver for the American people is by reaffirming and revitalizing our alliances and partnerships around the world. » We publish the full text of Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State's lengthy statement. Source: Source: US State of Department

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY OF STATE BLINKEN AT NATO HEADQUARTERS AGORA 24 MARCH :

« Good afternoon. A few weeks ago, not long after becoming Secretary as State, I spoke directly to the American people. I said that my number one job is to ensure that America's foreign policy delivers for them "" that it makes their lives more secure, creates opportunities for their families and communities, and addresses the global challenges that are increasingly shaping their futures. And I said that a key way we will deliver for the American people is by reaffirming and revitalizing our alliances and partnerships around the world.-----

That's why I've come to Brussels this week. I'm speaking to you now from the headquarters of NATO, the treaty alliance that has defended the security and freedom of Europe and North America for nearly 75 years.

Now, Americans disagree about a few things, but the value of alliances and partnerships is not one of them. According to a recent poll by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, nine in ten Americans believe that maintaining our alliances is the most effective way to achieve our foreign policy goals. Nine in ten. It's not hard to see why. They look at the threats we face "" like climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, economic inequality, an increasingly assertive China "" and they know that the United States is much better off tackling them with partners, rather than trying to do it alone. And all our allies can say the same. Now, the world looks very different than it did decades ago, when we forged many of our alliances "" or even than it did four years ago. Threats have multiplied. Competition has stiffened. Power dynamics have shifted. Trust in our alliances has been shaken "" trust in each other and trust in the strength of our commitments. Across and even within our alliances, we don't always see eye to eye on the threats we face or how to confront them. Our shared values of democracy and human rights are being challenged "" not only from outside our countries, but from within. And new threats are outpacing our efforts to build the capabilities we need to defend against them. Yet none of this changes the fact that we need alliances "" now as much and maybe even more than ever. The challenge we face is to adapt and renew those alliances so that they can meet today's threats, and continue to deliver for our people now, as they have in the past. Today, I'll make the case for how to do that. I'll first define the common threats we face. Next, I'll speak to what we need to do to reaffirm and revitalize our alliances so they cannot only defend against these threats, but also protect our shared interests and values. And finally, I'll set out what our allies can expect from the United States, and what we in turn expect of our allies. It starts by identifying the most urgent threats we face today. As I see it, there are three categories...

THE 1ST IS MILITARY THREATS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES-----

« The first is military threats from other countries. We see this in China's efforts to threaten freedom of navigation, to militarize the South China Sea, to target countries throughout the Indo-Pacific with increasingly sophisticated military capabilities. Beijing's military ambitions are growing by the year. Coupled with the realities of modern technology, the challenges that once seemed half a world away are no longer remote. We also see this in the new military capabilities and strategies Russia has developed to challenge our alliances and undermine the rules-based order that ensures our collective security. These include Moscow's aggression in eastern Ukraine; its build-up of forces, large-scale exercises, and acts of intimidation in the Baltic and Black Sea, the Eastern Mediterranean, the High North; its modernization of nuclear capabilities; and its use of chemical weapons against critics on NATO soil. And beyond China and Russia, regional actors like Iran and North Korea are pursuing nuclear and missile capabilities that threaten U.S. allies and partners.

THE 2nd CATEGORY IS NON-MILITARY THREATS FROM MANY OF THESE COUNTRIES-----

« The second category is non-military threats from many of these same countries "" the technological, economic, and informational tactics that threaten our security. These include the use of disinformation campaigns and weaponized corruption to fuel distrust in our

democracies, and cyberattacks that target our critical infrastructure and steal intellectual property. From China's blatant economic coercion of Australia, to Russia's use of disinformation to erode confidence in elections and in safe, effective vaccines " these aggressive actions threaten not only our individual countries, but also our shared values.-----

And the third category are global crises like climate change and COVID-19. These aren't threats posed by specific governments " they're global. Higher temperatures, rising sea levels, and more intense storms affect everything from military readiness to human migration patterns to food security. As the COVID-19 pandemic has made abundantly clear, our health security is intertwined, and only as strong as our weakest link. We also face global terrorism, which often cuts across these categories. While we have significantly degraded the threat of terrorism, it remains significant, especially when groups and individuals enjoy support and safe harbor from governments, or find havens in ungoverned spaces. Now, many of these threats weren't front of mind when our alliances were formed. Some didn't exist at all. But that's the great strength of our alliances: they were built to adapt " to keep evolving as new challenges emerge. So here's how we can adapt them today. First, we must recommit to our alliances " and to the shared values that sustain them.

THAT'S A VOW I REAFFIRMED TO OUR ALLIES AT NATO THIS WEEK -----

"When America was attacked on 9/11, our NATO Allies immediately and unanimously invoked Article 5 " an attack on one is an attack on all. This is still the only time in history that Article 5 has been invoked " and it was to protect the United States. We will never forget it. And our allies can expect the same from us today. As President Biden said to the Munich Security Conference last month, you have our unshakable vow: America is fully committed to NATO, including Article 5.

That's a vow I reaffirmed to our allies at NATO this week.-----

And Secretary of Defense Austin and I expressed that same commitment to our allies in Japan and South Korea, where we recently concluded negotiations on burden-sharing agreements that will help maintain peace and prosperity in a free, open Indo-Pacific for years to come.-----

Our alliances were created to defend shared values. So renewing our commitment requires reaffirming those values and the foundation of international relations we vow to protect: a free and open rules-based order. We've got our work cut out for us on this front. Virtually every democracy in the world is dealing with challenges right now " including the United States. We're up against deep inequities, systemic racism, political polarization, each of which makes our democracy less resilient.

It's on all of us to show what has always been the system's greatest strength " our citizens, and the faith we put in them to improve our societies and institutions. The biggest threat to our democracies isn't that they are flawed " they've always been. The greatest threat is that our citizens lose trust in democracy's ability to fix those flaws " to follow through on our founding commitment to form a more perfect union. What separates democracies from autocracies is our ability and willingness to openly confront our own shortcomings " not to pretend they don't exist, to ignore them, to sweep them under the rug. We also have to hold one another to the values at the heart of our alliances " to confront the democratic recession around the world. We all must speak up when countries backslide from democracy and human rights. That's what democracies do: we deal with challenges out in the open. We also must help those countries move back in the right direction, by strengthening the guardrails of democracy " like a free and independent press; anti-corruption bodies; and institutions that protect the rule of law.

WE MUST MODERNIZE OUR ALLIANCES-----

« This, too, is what it means to recommit to our alliances. Second, we must modernize our alliances. That begins with improving our military capabilities and readiness, to ensure that we maintain a strong and credible military deterrent. For example, we must ensure that our strategic nuclear deterrent remains safe, secure, and effective, particularly in light of Russia's modernization. That's critical to keeping our commitments to our allies strong and credible, even as we take steps to reduce further the role of nuclear weapons in our national security. We'll also work with our Indo-Pacific allies to address a wide range of complex security challenges in the region. We've got to broaden our capacity to address threats in the economic, technological, and informational realms. And we can't just play defense " we have to take an affirmative approach.-----

We've seen how Beijing and Moscow are increasingly using access to critical resources, markets, and technologies to pressure our allies and drive wedges between us. Of course, each state's decision is its own, but we must not separate economic coercion from other forms of pressure. When one of us is coerced, we should respond as allies and work together to reduce our vulnerability by ensuring our economies are more integrated with each other than they are with our principal competitors. That means teaming up to develop cutting-edge innovations; ensuring that our sensitive supply chains are resilient; setting the norms and standards that will govern emerging technologies; imposing costs on those who break the rules. History tells us that, when we do, more countries will opt for the open and secure spaces that we build together.

And we must expand our ability to address transnational threats " especially climate change and pandemics like COVID-19. These

challenges are so vast "" and the measures needed to address them so far-reaching "" that tackling them must be integrated into virtually everything we do and coordinated across a wide array of partners

THIRD WE MUST WEAVE TOGETHER BROADER COALITIONS OF ALLIES AND PARTNERS-----

« Third, we must weave together broader coalitions of allies and partners. Too often, we put our alliances and partnerships into siloes. We don't do enough to bring them together. But we should. Because the more that countries with complementary strengths and capacities can unite to achieve shared goals, the better. That's the idea behind the group of countries we call "the Quad" "" Australia, India, Japan, and the United States. President Biden recently hosted the Quad's first ever leader-level summit. We share a vision of a free, open, inclusive, and healthy Indo-Pacific region, unconstrained by coercion, and anchored by democratic values. We make a good team. And our cooperation will strengthen parallel efforts to ensure security in the East and South China Seas and to expand safe, affordable, and effective vaccine production and equitable access.-----

Deepening NATO-EU cooperation is another example. Greater collaboration on issues like cybersecurity, energy security, health security, and safeguarding critical infrastructure will help build our resilience and preparedness against present-day threats. It also makes us stronger when we stand up for our values.-----

Consider the sanctions that the United States just imposed in unity with Canada, the European Union, and the United Kingdom on individuals engaged in the atrocities being committed against Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The retaliatory sanctions that China then imposed on members of the European Parliament and the EU's Political and Security Committee, academics, and think tanks make it all the more important that we stand firm and stand together, or else risk sending the message that bullying works. This includes sticking by our non-NATO partners in Europe, many of whom continue to stand firm with us on the alliance's front lines.-----

And we'll look beyond national governments to the private sector, civil society, philanthropies, cities, and universities. Diverse, broad-based cooperation is essential to protecting the global commons "" those resources that all people have a right to share and benefit from, and which are now being encroached upon by our adversaries. Consider 5G, where China's technology brings serious surveillance risks. We should bring together tech companies from countries-----like Sweden, Finland, South Korea, the United States, and use public and private investment to foster a secure and trustworthy alternative. We've spent decades developing relationships with countries that share our values in every part of the globe. This is why we invested so much in these partnerships "" so we can come together in innovative ways to solve new challenges like these.-----

To any who doubt what we can achieve when we work together in this way, I'd point to the unprecedented cooperation by scientists who shared hundreds of viral genome sequences across institutions and borders "" research that was indispensable to the discovery of several safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines, in record time. The very first of those vaccines to be approved by the World Health Organization was pioneered by a doctor born in Turkey, who grew up in Germany, and who co-founded a European pharmaceutical company that partnered with an American counterpart to produce the vaccine.

IT IS A KEY PART OF THE FOREIGN POLICY IN THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION-----

« Now, America's allies and partners may be listening to my words today and saying, "We need to know what we can expect from you." Because as I said, trust has been shaken to some degree over the past few years. So let me be clear about what the United States can promise to our allies and partners. When our allies shoulder their fair share of the burden, they'll reasonably expect to have a fair say in making decisions. We will honor that. That begins with consulting our friends early and often. This is a key part of the foreign policy in the Biden-Harris administration, and it's a change our allies already see and appreciate.-----

We'll treat the efforts of our allies to develop greater capacity as an asset, not a threat. Stronger allies make for stronger alliances. And as the U.S. develops our capacities to address the threats I've outlined today, we'll make sure they remain compatible with our alliances "" and that they contribute to strengthening our allies' security. We'll ask the same of our allies in return. The United States won't force our allies into a "us or them" choice with China. There's no question that Beijing's coercive behavior threatens our collective security and prosperity, and that it is actively working to undercut the rules of the international system and the values we and our allies share. But that doesn't mean that countries can't work with China where possible, for example, on challenges like climate change and health security.-----

We know that our allies have complex relationships with China that won't always align perfectly. But we need to navigate these challenges together. That means working with our allies to close the gaps in areas like technology and infrastructure, where Beijing is exploiting to exert coercive pressure. We'll rely on innovation, not ultimatums. Because if we work together to make real our positive vision for the international order "" if we stand up for the free and open system that we know provides the best conditions for human ingenuity, dignity, and connection "" we're confident that we can outcompete China or anyone else on any playing field.-----

We will always pull our weight, but we'll also recognize when our allies are pulling theirs. And let me be frank: This has often been a contentious issue, particularly in the transatlantic relationship. We recognize the significant progress many of our NATO allies have made in improving defense investments, including progress toward meeting the Wales commitment of spending two percent of GDP on defense expenditures by 2024. The full implementation of these commitments is crucial. But we also recognize the need to adopt a more holistic view of burden sharing. No single number fully captures a country's contribution to defending our collective security and interests, especially in a world where a growing number of threats cannot be confronted with military force. We must acknowledge that because allies have distinct capabilities and comparative strengths, they will shoulder their share of the burden in different ways. Now, that doesn't mean abandoning the targets we've set for ourselves or doing less. In fact, the common threats we face demand that we do more.

THE USA WILL BE JUDICIOUS ABOUT OUR USE OF POWER PARTICULARLY MILITARY POWER-----

« We need to be able to have these tough conversations "" and even to disagree "" while still treating one another with respect. Too often in recent years, we in the United States seem to have forgotten who our friends are. Well, that's already changed. The United States will be judicious about our use of power, particularly our military power, as a means of addressing conflicts abroad. We will avoid imbalances between our principled ambitions and the risks we're willing to take to achieve them, in no small part because when we're overextended, we hamper our ability to focus on other challenges that can have the biggest impact on the lives of the American people.-----

Finally, some of our allies are wondering whether our commitment to their security is a lasting one. They hear us say "America is back" [?] and they ask "" for how long? It's a fair question. So here's my answer. There's a reason the vast majority of the American people "" from both political parties "" support our alliances, even if they're divided along party lines on many other issues. It's the same reason why Republicans and Democrats in Congress have consistently reassured our allies that our commitments are resolute. It's because we see our alliances not as burdens, but as a way to get help from others in shaping a world that reflects our interests and our values. But to keep that support strong, we who have the privilege of representing the United States on the world stage have to make sure that our alliances deliver for the American people. We can't lose sight of this. We must demonstrate not only what our alliances defend against, but also what they stand for, like the right of all people everywhere to be treated with dignity and have their fundamental freedoms respected. Just because we make our foreign policy to reflect the world as it is does not mean we have to give up on shaping the world as it might be "" a world that's more secure, more peaceful, more just, more equitable, a world with greater health, stronger democracies, and more opportunity for more people.-----

In short, we need to have a positive vision that can bring people together in common cause. That's something our adversaries can't offer. It's one of our greatest strengths. This is where our interest in being trustworthy allies is bound up in fulfilling the needs of our citizens. We can't build a foreign policy that delivers for the American people without maintaining effective alliances. And we can't sustain effective alliances without showing how they deliver for the American people.-----

Seventy years ago, a U.S. Army private training at Fort Dix in New Jersey sent a letter to Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was then serving as the very first supreme commander of the Allied Forces in Europe. In his letter, the private asked Eisenhower whether there was anything more to his service than to "" quote "" "kill or be killed." [?]-----

Eisenhower was a seasoned realist. He'd seen up close the devastation of war. He was clear-eyed about the life-and-death consequences of putting American lives on the line to defend our allies. Yet he still believed, as he responded in a letter to that soldier, that "" quote "" "True human objectives comprise something far richer and more constructive than mere survival of the strong." [?] The United States and its allies, he wrote, had to work together to build a system rooted in shared values. And these words were not so different from the values that guided our everyday life in the United States "" as Eisenhower put it, "Attempting to solve in decency, in fairness, and in justice the multitude of problems that constantly present themselves to us." [?] That doesn't mean trying to solve every problem in the world. Rather, it means that when we must address a problem, we do not lose sight of our values, which are simultaneously a source of our strength and humility. Eisenhower told the soldier that he hoped his words would provide "a small bit of optimism and faith." [?]-----

Now, Eisenhower couldn't have imagined many of the challenges we face today. But he knew that whatever new threats emerged, we would want to face them with partners who shared our values. The last year has been one of the most challenging times in the history of our nations, and still we've not emerged from the crisis "" even if we see real reason for hope. But our cooperation with allies and partners provides us with more than a small bit of optimism and faith. It shows us the way forward: together, rooted in our shared values, and committed not only to rebuilding our alliances and partnerships, but to building them back better. If we do this, there are no challenges we cannot and will not overcome. Thank you very much. » Source: US State of Department

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