

AMBITION STATEMENT

BY THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OF NATO ALLIES

The business community and defense industry from all Allied nations stand ready to contribute to the security of the Alliance, at this pivotal moment. Together, we can build a future where our Transatlantic economic and industrial base is equipped to face any challenge with resilience and strength. The geopolitical security landscape directly poses challenges to NATO, threatening Western security and society and our economic prosperity. NATO needs to heavily invest in deterrence and defence.

As highlighted by the fast-changing international security landscape, NATO is and will be confronted with both conventional as well as hybrid and asymmetrical warfare. After years of peace, NATO and its allies need to prepare for a new geopolitical reality in which security is no longer guaranteed.

NATO's deterrence and defence relies on its strong transatlantic economic base, its defence industrial cooperation, and the innovative and entrepreneurial strengths of the business community. The transatlantic business community, represented by VNO-NCW, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and BusinessEurope, presents this ambition statement in support of the 'NATO Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge' that was announced at the NATO Summit 2024 in Washington D.C.

Together we envision a future where we continue to foster a highly innovative, competitive, and sustainable industry across Europe and North America. We aim to deliver the required capabilities to support NATO's defence plans by accelerating the growth of NATO's defence industrial capacity and production across the entire Alliance. As business federations covering all sectors, we furthermore aim to contribute to the prosperity, security and resilience of the Transatlantic economy and society as a whole.

We aim to do so by supporting the implementation of the objectives from the 'NATO Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge' in the following areas:

- **Collaborative research and innovation:** promoting joint R&I initiatives to leverage the vast and diverse expertise within the Alliance, and strengthening coordination and synergies between national, European, and NATO R&I initiatives.
- **Standardisation and interoperability:** stimulating the interoperability and cybersecurity of defence technologies and systems across member states, facilitating seamless cooperation during joint operations.
- **Sharing key requirements:** enhancing transparency and supporting industrial production planning by sharing via secure platforms and in full respect of (national) security considerations future defence needs with industry partners to align production capabilities with strategic demands and provide industry with a longer-term perspective for investment purposes.
- **Enhanced technological edge:** leveraging the Alliance's role as a standard setter and aggregator, we will invest in new critical technologies including cybersecurity technologies and harness the potential of small and medium-sized enterprises to maintain NATO's technological superiority.
- **Supply chain resilience:** we will continuously take action to foster responsiveness, strengthen the resilience and security of our supply chains through diversification, to reduce vulnerabilities.
- **Public-private partnerships:** encouraging partnerships between governments and private sector to drive innovation and efficiency in defence production.
- **Facilitating access to capital:** we will work to remove barriers that hinder the flow of capital into dual-use and defence industry within NATO. This includes advocating for policies that encourage investment in dual-use and defence industries and collaborating further with financial institutions.
- **Sharing risk:** joint investment initiatives should be promoted between governments, international organisations and private sector entities to pool resources and reduce risks with the aim of enhancing the overall financial sustainability of the NATO defence industry.
- **Support workforce development:** invest in training and education programs to build a highly skilled workforce capable of operating and maintaining advanced defense systems. This includes initiatives to attract and retain top talent in engineering, cybersecurity, and other critical fields, and stimulate national policies to incentivize the young generations to engage in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics).

With this ambition statement, we recognize and underline the importance of collaboration between established defence contractors, SMEs and emerging start-ups. This synergy will drive innovation and enable the swift adaptation and adoption of new solutions to address the increasing needs of our defence. As we orient our industrial base more towards a prepared economy, we are committed to supporting domestic innovation and production to strengthen our resilience.