

8. Membership Action Plan (MAP)

24 APRIL 1999

1. The door to NATO membership under Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty remains open. The Membership Action Plan (MAP), building on the Intensified, Individual Dialogue on membership questions, is designed to reinforce that firm commitment to further enlargement by putting into place a programme of activities to assist aspiring countries in their preparations for possible future membership. It must be understood that decisions made by aspirants on the basis of advice received will remain national decisions undertaken and implemented at the sole responsibility of the country concerned.

2. The programme offers aspirants a list of activities from which they may select those they consider of most value to help them in their preparations. Active participation in PfP and EAPC mechanisms remains essential for aspiring countries who wish to further deepen their political and military involvement in the work of the Alliance.

3. Any decision to invite an aspirant to begin accession talks with the Alliance will be made on a case-by-case basis by Allies in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Madrid Summit Declaration, and the Washington Summit Declaration. Participation in the Membership Action Plan, which would be on the basis of self-differentiation, does not imply any timeframe for any such decision nor any guarantee of eventual membership. The programme cannot be considered as a list of criteria for membership.

Implementation

1. The Membership Action Plan, which is a practical manifestation of the Open Door, is divided into five chapters. These chapters are:

- I. Political and Economic issues
- II. Defence/Military issues
- III. Resource issues
- IV. Security issues
- V. Legal issues

Within each, the MAP identifies issues that might be discussed (non-exhaustive) and highlights mechanisms through which preparation for possible eventual membership can best be carried forward.

The list of issues identified for discussion does not constitute criteria for membership and is intended to encompass those issues which the aspiring countries themselves have identified as matters which they wish to address.

2. Each aspiring country will be requested to draw up an annual national programme on preparations for possible future membership, setting objectives and targets for its preparations and containing specific information on steps being taken, the responsible authorities and, where appropriate, a schedule of work on specific aspects of those preparations. It would be open to aspirants to update the programme when they chose. The programme would form a basis for the Alliance to keep track of aspirants' progress and to provide feedback.

3. Meetings will take place in a 19+1 format in the Council and other bodies and in NATO IS/NMA Team formats as appropriate.

4. Feedback and advice to aspirants on MAP issues will be provided through mechanisms based on those currently in use for Partners, 19+1 meetings and NATO Team workshops. These workshops will be held, when justified, to discuss particular issues drawn from the MAP.

5. The NATO Team will normally be headed by the appropriate Assistant Secretary General, Assistant Director of the International Military Staff, Head of Office or his representative. The NATO Team will liaise closely with the appropriate NATO bodies regarding advice to aspirants. Relevant procedures will be refined over time as experience is gained. Aspirants should make requests in writing for workshops to ASG/PA. He will be responsible for the implementation of the Membership Action Plan and the scheduling of meetings under the overall direction and coordination of the SPC(R).

6. Each year the Alliance will draw up for individual aspirants a report providing feedback focused on progress made in the areas covered in their annual national programmes. This document would form the basis of discussion at a meeting of the North Atlantic Council with the aspirant country. The report would help identify areas for further action, but it would remain at the aspirant's discretion to commit itself to taking further action.

I. Political and Economic Issues

1. Aspirants would be offered the opportunity to discuss and substantiate their willingness and ability to assume the obligations and commitments under the Washington Treaty and the relevant provisions of the Study on NATO Enlargement. Future members must conform to basic principles embodied in the Washington Treaty such as democracy, individual liberty and other relevant provisions set out in its Preamble.

2. Aspirants would also be expected:

- a. to settle their international disputes by peaceful means;
- b. to demonstrate commitment to the rule of law and human rights;
- c. to settle ethnic disputes or external territorial disputes including irredentist claims or internal jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means in accordance with OSCE principles and to pursue good neighbourly relations;
- d. to establish appropriate democratic and civilian control of their armed forces;
- e. to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN;
- f. to contribute to the development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions and by promoting stability and well-being;
- g. to continue fully to support and be engaged in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace;
- h. to show a commitment to promoting stability and well-being by economic liberty, social justice and environmental responsibility.

3. Moreover, aspirants would be expected upon accession:

- a. to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security;
- b. to maintain the effectiveness of the Alliance through the sharing of responsibilities, costs and benefits;

- c. to commit themselves to good faith efforts to build consensus on all issues;
- d. to undertake to participate fully in the Alliance consultation and decision-making process on political and security issues of concern to the Alliance;
- e. to commit themselves to the continued openness of the Alliance in accordance with the Washington Treaty and the Madrid and Washington Summit Declarations.

Implementation

4. Aspirants will be expected to describe how their policies and practice are evolving to reflect the considerations set out above (in paragraphs 1-2 above), and to provide their views on, and substantiate their willingness and ability to comply with other parts of the NATO “acquis”, including the NATO Strategic Concept, the development of the European Security and Defence Identity within the Alliance, the NATO-Russia Founding Act and the NATO-Ukraine Charter.

5. Aspirants would be expected to provide information on an annual basis on the state of their economy, including main macro-economic and budgetary data as well as pertinent economic policy developments.

6. Aspirants would be asked to provide a written contribution to the NATO Team, which would then be passed directly on to the Allies for their comments. After appropriate consultation in the Alliance, the NATO Team would then convene a meeting to discuss the contribution provided and relevant political issues. Such meetings would be held yearly; additional meetings could be convened upon mutual agreement.

7. An annual Senior Political Committee (Reinforced) meeting will be held to provide direct feedback from Allies to individual aspirants.

II. Defence/Military Issues

1. The ability of aspiring countries to contribute militarily to collective defence and to the Alliance’s new missions and their willingness to commit to gradual improvements in their military capabilities will be factors to be considered in determining their suitability for NATO membership. Full participation in operational PFP is an essential component, as it will further deepen aspirants’ political and military ties with the Alliance, helping them prepare for participation in the full range of new missions. New members of the Alliance must be prepared to share the roles, risks, responsibilities, benefits and burdens of common security and collective defence. They should be expected to subscribe to Alliance strategy as set out in the Strategic Concept and as laid out in other Ministerial statements.

2. Aspirants would be expected upon accession:

- a. to accept the approach to security outlined in the Strategic Concept;
- b. to provide forces and capabilities for collective defence and other Alliance missions;
- c. to participate, as appropriate, in the military structure;
- d. to participate, as appropriate, in the Alliance’s collective defence planning;
- e. to participate, as appropriate, in NATO agencies;
- f. to continue fully to support PFP and the development of cooperative relations with non-NATO Partners;
- g. to pursue standardization and/or interoperability.

Implementation

3. The following measures are designed to help aspirants develop the capabilities of their armed forces, including by enhancing interoperability, to be able to contribute to the effectiveness of the Alliance and thus demonstrate their suitability for future membership. The measures build where possible on extant initiatives.

A. Aspirants will be able in accordance with existing PIP procedures to request tailored Individual Partnership Programmes to better focus their participation in PIP directly on the essential membership related issues. Within each IPP, certain generic areas would be marked as being essential for aspirants, and aspirants would be invited to give due priority to those areas of cooperation.

B. Annual Clearinghouse meetings for aspirants in a 19+1 format would be developed to help coordinate bilateral and multilateral assistance and maximise their mutual effectiveness to better assist them in their preparations for membership.

C. Within the general framework of the expanded and adapted PARP and in accordance with PARP procedures, planning targets specifically covering areas most directly relevant for nations preparing their force structures and capabilities for possible future Alliance membership will be elaborated with aspirants. Aspirants will undergo a review process on their progress in meeting these planning targets.

D. These planning targets will be established on the basis of consultations between each aspiring country and NATO and may be applied to any component of their force structures, rather than solely to their PIP-declared forces.

E. PARP Ministerial Guidance will include approaches and specific measures which aspirants might adopt, in the context of the MAP, to prepare their forces for possible future NATO membership.

F. The PARP Survey will be used for aspirants to seek more information and data in a number of areas, for example, general defence policy, resources, and present and planned outlays for defence.

G. As a sign of transparency, and in accordance with PARP procedures: aspirants will be encouraged to circulate individual PARP documents to other aspirants in addition to circulating them to NATO Allies; and aspirants will be encouraged to invite, in particular, other aspiring countries to participate in the review process on planning targets.

H. Aspirants will be invited to observe and participate in selected, clearly defined phases of NATO-only exercises when Council decides to open these in accordance with current procedures. Priority consideration will be given to ensuring exercise effectiveness.

I. Any future NATO facilities established for the assessment of Partner forces for NATO-led peace support operations and of Partner performance in NATO/PIP exercises and operations will be used to assess the degree of interoperability and the range of capabilities of aspirants' forces. If these assessment facilities are extended to encompass forces beyond those for peace support operations, they will be used to assist aspirants.

J. Appropriate use may be made of simulation technology for training forces and procedures.

III. Resource Issues

1. New Alliance members would be expected to commit sufficient budget resources to allow themselves to meet the commitments entailed by possible membership. National programmes of aspirants must put in place the necessary structures to plan and implement defence budgets that meet established defence priorities and make provision for training schemes to familiarise staff with NATO practices and procedures in order to prepare for possible future participation in Alliance structures.
2. Aspirants would be expected upon accession:
 - a. to allocate sufficient budget resources for the implementation of Alliance commitments;
 - b. to have the national structures in place to deal with those budget resources;
 - c. to participate in the Alliance's common-funded activities at agreed cost shares;
 - d. to participate in Alliance structures (permanent representation at the NATO HQ; military representation in the NATO command structure; participation, as appropriate, in NATO Agencies).

Implementation

3. Through existing mechanisms, including those within PfP, possible internships and training sessions, and NATO Team workshops, aspirants upon request will be:
 - a. provided advice on their development of national structures, procedures and mechanisms to deal with the above issues and to ensure the most efficient use of their defence spending;
 - b. assisted in training the staff needed to man those structures and work in and with NATO.

IV. Security Issues

1. Aspirants would be expected upon accession to have in place sufficient safeguards and procedures to ensure the security of the most sensitive information as laid down in NATO security policy.

Implementation

1. Appropriate courses may be made available, on request, to aspiring countries on Personnel, Physical, Document, Industrial Security and INFOSEC. Individual programmes for aspirants may be developed as warranted. The NATO Security and Special Committees may wish to meet with aspirants, whenever they judge it necessary or useful.

V. Legal issues

1. In order to be able to undertake the commitments of membership, aspirants should examine and become acquainted with the appropriate legal arrangements and agreements which govern cooperation within NATO. This should enable aspirants to scrutinize domestic law for compatibility with those NATO rules and regulations. In addition, aspirants should be properly informed about the formal legal process leading to membership.

- a. New members, upon completion of the relevant procedures, will accede to:
The North Atlantic Treaty (Washington, 4th April 1949)
- b. Upon invitation, new members should accede to:
 - (i) The Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty regarding the status of their forces (London SOFA) (London, 19th June 1951)
 - (ii) The Protocol on the status of International Military Headquarters set up pursuant to the North Atlantic Treaty (Paris Protocol) (Paris, 28th August 1952)
- c. It is expected that new members accede to the following status agreements:
 - (i) The Agreement on the status of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, National Representatives and International Staff (Ottawa Agreement) (Ottawa, 20th September 1951)
 - (ii) The Agreement on the status of Missions and Representatives of third States to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Brussels Agreement) (Brussels, 14th September 1994)
- d. It is expected that new members accede to the following technical agreements:
 - (i) The Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty for the Security of Information (Brussels, 6th March 1997)
 - (ii) The Agreement for the mutual safeguarding of secrecy of inventions relation to defence and for which applications for patents have been made (Paris, 21st September 1960)
 - (iii) The NATO Agreement on the communication of technical information for defence purposes (Brussels, 19th October 1970)
- e. For possible eventual access to ATOMAL information, new members would be expected to accede to:
 - (i) the “Agreement for Cooperation Regarding Atomic Information” (C-M(64)39 - Basic Agreement);
 - (ii) the “Administrative Arrangements to Implement the Agreement” (C-M(68)41, 5th Revise);
- f. Domestic legislation of aspirants should, as much as possible, be compatible with the other arrangements and implementation practices which govern NATO-wide cooperation.

Implementation

2. NATO Team workshops will provide for briefings on legal issues and discussions on the steps that would have to be taken. Aspirants could provide information on existing legal arrangements and the steps that would have to be taken to accede to the agreements, including whether or not there are any constitutional/legal barriers to doing so.

3. Aspirants might also provide information on whether and how domestic legislation might impede immediate and full integration into Alliance activities. Exchange of information and experience on this issue could take place with all aspirants as appropriate.
