

Nato summit essay

[Parts of the World, Asia](#)



NATO SUMMITThe North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, is an alliance of 26-member countries from North America and Europe. The goal of the alliance is primarily to ensure the freedom and security of the member nations through both political and military means. On April 2, 2008, NATO held a summit on Bucharest, Romania to discuss, among other things, the requests made by Georgia and Ukraine to participate in alliance's Membership Action Plan and the missile defense system for Europe proposed by the United States. At the summit, NATO agreed to the proposal of the United States to put a missile defense system around Europe despite opposition from Russia.

The US had earlier declared said that the missile defense will not be employed against Russia but instead on the danger posed by Iran. Russian president, Vladimir V. Putin, however said that implementing such a system could likely ignite a new arms race. Although the approval of the missile defense system was considered a triumph, the US failed to convince other member nations, particularly, Spain, France and Germany, to approve the membership of Georgia and Ukraine. The move to disallow Georgia and Ukraine's membership, according to some, was done to placate Russia. The two countries' plea for membership however will again be on the agenda when foreign ministers of NATO member nations meet this coming December. Some countries however expressed the belief that the outcome could still be the same.

(Erlanger & Myers, 2008, p. A12). Although the cold war is long over, Russia had the right to be scared on the idea of putting a missile defense system on countries that were part of the former Soviet Union. It seems that President

Bush has taken his “ war on terror” as step further and managed to convince other countries of its importance. The idea of putting a defense system around Europe is largely based on the fact the Iran is going ahead with its nuclear program.

In its proposal, the United States said that it had already deployed a similar system in the Pacific area in order to defend against possible dangers from Northeast Asia. The US further said that by having a defense system in Europe, NATO member nations can have protection against the danger posed by Middle East countries. Although NATO has asked Russia to join in the development of the system, we have to see what Russia will eventually do. On the issue of Georgia and Ukraine’s membership, the United States has always followed the policy of supporting countries that practice democracy. One reason for this is that countries that formerly were part of the Soviet Union had always been open to whatever plans the US had. By not agreeing to their membership, the US received a wake-up call that even if it thinks it rules over the alliance, it cannot dictate what it wants to other members.

The foreign policy of the United States will likely be tested in the coming months especially with the presidential elections looming. Members of NATO are still unsure of how much the foreign policy of the United States will change with a new president. The attitude of the United States in dealing with issues affecting NATO has been seen as somewhat inconsistent.

On the one hand, it acts as master mediator and makes use of politics in order to settle issues. On the other, it flexes its military superiority in order to get what it wants. Whatever policy the United States decides to follow in

dealing with NATO, it should always keep in mind that this alliance is an important one and that keeping good relations with the other member nations is of the highest priority. References Erlanger, S., & Myers, S. L. (2008, April 4).

NATO Endorses Europe Missile Shield. The New York Times. The White House. (2008, April 2). Fact Sheet: 2008 NATO Summit.

Retrieved April 10, 2008, from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/04/20080402-1.html>