

Spain celebrates 40 years as a member of NATO at a crucial moment for the organization and its allies and hosting in June the NATO summit. Here, in Madrid. Peace and security of the Euro Atlantic space is seriously threatened by Russia and its policy of aggression and attack on international order. Spain will be hosting the NATO summit in Madrid in June, the allies will be adopting the strategic concept of the organization and must respond to the threats, traditional and emerging, that our security is facing. The meeting was already a crucial milestone in defining the alliance's future and the invasion of Ukraine and the attack on the rule based international order makes our response as allies even more urgent and necessary. Unity must be at the heart of this response and this is the concept on which Spain will hold the summit. The use of force and war, along with the emerging threats, like the utilization of migrant people or the energetic pressure on our populations is unacceptable. Over the last 40 years Spain has provided the alliance with loyalty to the principles and values of the Washington treaty, a proactive attitude and a high level of commitment to the organization's mission in any domain or space, be it land, sea, air, or east, west, north and south. Spain has deployed more than 125.000 man and women of our armed forces in allies' operations. Today, almost 1100 deployed in Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Along with this commitment to the objectives of the organization I would like to highlight two particular contributions of Spain to the development of the 21 century NATO. First, our special sensitivity and concerns for the threats coming from the south, which require attention, even under the current circumstances. Secondly, the need to work on achieving greater coordination and collaboration between NATO and the European Union. The complementarity has been demonstrated in the response to the Russian aggression to Ukraine. Spain will continue to work under this principle of coordination and synergies between both institution and our presidency of the Council in the second semester of 2023. All of this, for many of us, are good reasons to celebrate the 40th anniversary of our entry into the Atlantic Alliance and the celebration of the summit in our country, in Spain. The most successful political and military alliance in history, but mostly, an alliance of democracies.