North Atlantic Treaty Organization - UPSC Notes

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is an intergovernmental military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed in 1949. This article talks about NATO and its importance for the IAS Exam.

International organisations and groupings are an important part of the **International Relations** section of the General Studies paper-2 in the UPSC Syllabus. International relations is a very dynamic part and is crucial for multiple papers in Prelims and Mains. Students preparing for UPSC 2020 and other Government Exams must be aware of the topic.

What is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?

- NATO stands for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which is also called the North Atlantic Alliance.
- It is an intergovernmental military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed on 4 April 1949.
- The organization constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by a non-member external party.
- NATO's headquarters are located at Boulevard Leopold III in the city of Brussels, Belgium, where the Supreme Allied Commander resides.

Why was NATO formed?

The organisation was formed as means to ensure collective security in western Europe. Even though World War 2 had come to an end, the deteriorating relations between two former allies, the United States and the USSR would eventually lead to the Cold War. The USSR sought to expand its influence in Europe through the spread of communism, while the US saw the ideology of the USSR as a threat to its way of life. Hence it saw the need to form NATO.

NATO Members

NATO has 29 member countries with Montenegro as its newest member. It became a part of NATO in 2017.

NATO Member Countries

Albania (2009)	Greece (1952)	Poland (1999)
Belgium (1949)	Hungary (1999)	Portugal (1949)
Bulgaria (2004)	Iceland (1949)	Romania (2004)
Canada (1949)	Italy (1949)	Slovakia (2004)
Croatia (2009)	Latvia (2004)	Slovenia (2004)
Czech Republic (1999)	Lithuania (2004)	Spain (1982)
Denmark (1949)	Luxembourg (1949)	Turkey (1952)
Estonia (2004)	Montenegro (2017)	The United Kingdom (1949)
France (1949)	Netherlands (1949)	The United States (1949)
Germany (1955)	Norway (1949)	

UPSC Questions related to NATO

What is the purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is established as an intergovernmental military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed on 4 April 1949. NATO's essential

and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means. Collective defence is at the heart of the Alliance and creates a spirit of solidarity and cohesion among its members.

Is India a NATO ally?

In September 2011, the NATO alliance invited India to be a partner in its ballistic missile defence (BMD).

Which country recently joined NATO?

Montenegro became NATO's latest member in the year 2017. North Macedonia is expected to enter the alliance as the 30th member in the first quarter of 2020. Spain has still yet to ratify the accession protocol.