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COLLECTIVE DEFENCE - ARTICLE 5



The principle of collective defence is at the very heart of NATO's founding treaty. It remains a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance.

Highlights

- Collective defence means that an attack against one Ally is considered as an attack against all Allies.
- The principle of collective defence is enshrined in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.
- NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States.
- NATO has taken collective defence measures on several occasions, for instance in response to the situation in Syria and in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine crisis.
- NATO has standing forces on active duty that contribute to the Alliance's collective defence efforts on a permanent basis.

Article 5

"The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.

Any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."