

NATO's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, NATO continues to deliver credible and effective deterrence and defence. Our ability to conduct operations has not been undermined, our forces remain ready, and our crucial work goes on.

From the start of the outbreak, NATO has implemented robust measures to limit the spread of the virus and minimise risks to our personnel and the communities they serve. NATO military medical staff remain vigilant and are monitoring for any impact on NATO forces deployed on operations.

NATO is also a platform for sharing information and best practice among Allies. As part of NATO's work to strengthen resilience, we have been working with Allies for years to enhance preparedness across the whole of government, including in the health sector.

Allies continue to stand together and support each other in this pandemic, through different NATO arrangements, as well as bilaterally. Allied armed forces across the Alliance are also playing an essential role in supporting national civilian efforts.

NATO and Allied Measures

- **Allied armed forces** are playing a vital role in supporting national civilian responses across the Alliance. This support includes logistics and planning, field hospitals, the transport of patients, disinfection of public areas, and at border crossings.
- **NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC)** is an important tool helping to provide relief to Allies. It is NATO's principal civil emergency response mechanism in the Euro-Atlantic area. The Centre operates on a 24/7 basis, coordinating requests from NATO Allies and partners for help, as well as offers of assistance to cope with the consequences of major crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. **For example**, in response to Spain and Italy's requests for assistance made through the EADRCC, the Czech Republic bilaterally provided both countries with medical supplies, including 10,000 protective medical suits each. Through the same mechanism, Turkey is providing Italy and Spain with medical supplies such as masks, personal protection equipment and disinfectants.
- The **NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA)** has a leading role in responding to the crisis. The NSPA provides logistics support and the organisation of transport of key supplies and equipment to Allies, partners and other international organisations. **For example**, the NSPA has helped Luxembourg increase its hospital capacity by providing field hospital tents, mobilising equipment in less than 24 hours.
- NATO supports the **Strategic Airlift International Solution (SALIS) programme**. The programme enables participating Allies to charter commercial transport aircraft. **For example**, the Czech Republic and Slovakia have used SALIS to import planeloads of medical supplies, including facemasks, surgical gloves and protective suits.



Medical equipment from the Czech Republic is unloaded in Milan, Italy.



A C-17 military aircraft arrives at Bucharest Airport in Romania with 45 tons of medical supplies.

- As part of the **Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC)**, participating Allies and partner countries jointly own and operate three C-17 Globemaster heavy cargo aircraft, sharing flying hours and costs. **For example**, Romania has used the capability to import 100,000 protective suits.
- **NATO's Rapid Air Mobility** initiative has simplified procedures for military relief flights, by using a NATO call sign and expediting Air Traffic Control clearances. The initiative is made possible by close cooperation between NATO and EUROCONTROL.
- **Bilateral assistance between Allies** continues to be an important part of the international response, showing the strength of NATO solidarity. **For example**, the German air force flying Italian and French patients for treatment, and doctors from Poland and Albania travelling to help their Italian colleagues;
- **Cooperation with partner countries and international organisations** continues to be essential for NATO. We are coordinating with the World Health Organization, the United Nations, and the European Union. In particular, NATO and EU staffs are cooperating to counter disinformation about COVID-19. We also remain in close contact with the ICRC and the OSCE.



10,000 protective medical suits donated by the Czech Republic arrive at Torrejón Airbase in Spain.

More information: <https://www.nato.int/covid19>

Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC):

https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_117757.htm

NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA):

<https://www.nspa.nato.int/en/index.htm>

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