

## SPEECH BY NATO SECRETARY GENERAL LORD ROBERTSON AT THE SEPTEMBER 11TH COMMEMORATION

NATO headquarters  
Brussels, Belgium

September 11, 2002

Anniversaries are times to remember, to mourn or to commemorate, and to take stock.

This September 11th, we remember the fanatical and pitiless brutality unleashed a year ago against innocent and defenceless men and women in New York, Washington, and in the air over Pennsylvania.

We mourn the loss to the United States, to all the countries whose citizens died in the attacks, and to the world.

But we also commemorate and salute the bravery of the rescue services and ordinary people who risked their lives to save others. Their sacrifice will never be forgotten.

We commemorate too and welcome the coming together of the international community, first of all in common outrage and grief, then in solidarity against terrorists and their backers. We celebrate the successes of the international coalition against terrorism over the past year to counter this, the first great challenge of the 21st century.

Finally, we take stock. Together we have achieved a huge amount. The terrorists did not succeed in their aim. Instead of a clash of civilisations, the whole world united against a common threat as never before. But we have not yet won our war. The civilised world must now follow the example of previous generations in their battles against totalitarianism and be prepared for a long haul.

In the face of terror, we must preserve our new found unity and protect the values which the terrorists seek to destroy.

We must also be ready to confront the threat of weapons of mass destruction, which give terrorists and rogue regimes the capacity to wreak even greater horror on our people.

Throughout the world, people of good will are today commemorating the awful events of September 11, 2001. Here at NATO Headquarters, we join with

them to mark an attack on the American people which was also an attack on all nineteen of NATO's member countries.

When, on September 12, the North Atlantic Council invoked Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, our common commitment to collective defence, those 19 countries were making the strongest possible expression of transatlantic solidarity.

A day later, 27 other countries across the Euro-Atlantic area, NATO's partners in security cooperation, followed with their total support.

Since those fateful days, NATO has been at the core of the campaign against terror. In the skies over American cities. In the Balkans. In the Mediterranean. In support of operations in Afghanistan. And in developing the new military capabilities needed to deter, protect against and defeat terrorism and other unconventional threats.

For half a century, NATO spanned the Atlantic in response to a Cold War threat that neither Europe nor North America could meet alone.

In 2002, NATO still spans the Atlantic to defeat today's threats, indispensable to its members, and indispensable to security and stability in our region and beyond.

A year ago, we watched in horror as terrorism struck at the heart of a NATO member country. Today, we in NATO re-commit ourselves to maintaining the transatlantic partnership between Europe and North America.

We take heart from the international response to terrorism and the contribution made to it by NATO and its members.

Most importantly, we remember those who died so tragically. They will remain in our thoughts forever.

Source: United States Department of State  
<https://2001-2009.state.gov/coalition/cnr/13451.htm>