

Beat: Politics

## **NATO Foreign Ministers will hold a meeting to discuss the response to the Corona**

**First time, by videoconference**

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**USPA NEWS** - NATO Foreign Ministers will hold a meeting by secure videoconference on Thursday April 2, 2020 to address the Alliance's response to the coronavirus and other key issues for the Alliance. "This is a global health crisis," the Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told a press conference ahead of the one-day meeting, the first such gathering in the Alliance's history held by videoconference.

"NATO is doing its part to help in this common fight against an invisible enemy," the Secretary General said, citing examples including the airlift of medical equipment, US and Turkish medical donations and Germany taking in French and Italian patients.

Across the Alliance, allied armed forces are responding to the pandemic, including with field hospitals, transport of patients, disinfection of public spaces and securing border crossings. "We are in this crisis together and when we respond together, our response is more effective," the Secretary General said.

Ministers will also discuss NATO's role in the fight against international terrorism, including the Alliance's training mission in Iraq. On Afghanistan, the Secretary General said that Ministers would discuss NATO's continued commitment to long-term peace and stability in the country. "The situation remains difficult," the Secretary General said, calling on the Taliban and all political actors to play their part and honour their commitments to ensure intra-Afghan negotiations can start.

Ministers are also expected to agree a new package of support for Georgia and Ukraine and address how to further strengthen NATO's political dimension, following the appointment by the Secretary General of a group of ten experts to support the process.

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**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

United Press Association, Inc.  
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168  
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA  
(702) 943.0321 Local  
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile  
[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)  
[info@gna24.com](mailto:info@gna24.com)

[www.gna24.com](http://www.gna24.com)