

## CORPORATE OFFICE

### Delhi Office

706 Ground Floor Dr. Mukherjee  
Nagar Near Batra Cinema Delhi -  
110009

### Noida Office

Basement C-32 Noida Sector-2  
Uttar Pradesh 201301

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

**Date:** 27 January 2024

## SWEDEN TO JOIN NATO (NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANISATION)

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "SWEDEN TO JOIN NATO". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

A significant obstacle was removed from Sweden's NATO membership bid when the Turkish parliament approved it. All of the current members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) must consent to a new member joining. Sweden's joining has been resisted by Turkey and Hungary for virtually the entire time.

### REASON WHY SWEDEN WANTS TO JOIN NATO?

- Sweden remained neutral during the two World Wars and the Cold War, and has not engaged in combat for the past 200 years. Although it cooperated with NATO and joined the European Union in recent years, it never made it clear that it intended to join the military alliance.
- However, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, this neutrality had to be given up. Sweden and Finland submitted applications for membership in NATO in 2022 as the general public's support for joining the alliance grew.
- Finland's proposal was approved, but Sweden faced strong opposition from Hungary and Turkey.

### TURKEY'S OPPOSITION TO SWEDEN'S BID

- **Protests burning Qurans were held in Sweden:** The government claims that laws pertaining to freedom of speech protect it. This made their relationship with Turkey even more strained.
- **Assistance to a terrorist Kurdish group:** Sweden, according to Turkey, has been softer on organisations that it considers terrorists, including the militant Kurdish militia.
- **US consents to provide Ankara with 40 F-16 fighter aircraft:** Experts have connected the US's agreement to supply 40 F-16 fighter jets to Ankara, the capital of Turkey, with

Turkey's backing of Sweden. The transaction is now anticipated to proceed, even though the US had not stated that the agreement would be contingent on Turkey's conduct in Sweden.

### **BENEFITS TO NATO AFTER JOINING OF SWEDEN**

- Nearly the whole Baltic Sea coastline—aside from the portion under Russian authority—will be a part of NATO if Sweden joins.
- This will simplify supply lines, give the alliance strategic locations near Russia, and facilitate the defence of maritime assets.
- Despite its small size, Sweden's military is up to date and has experience from previous NATO missions. Its superior aircraft and submarine capabilities are noteworthy.

### **ABOUT NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)**

- NATO is a **security alliance** of 31 nations from North America and Europe, which was established in 1949 following the signing of the **Washington Treaty**. Finland became the alliance's 31st member in April of 2023.
- NATO's **primary objective** is to use both military and political methods to protect the freedom and security of its members.
- It is an arrangement of **collective defence** in which sovereign member states consent to defend one another against external attacks.
- An attack on one ally is an attack against all, according to **Article 5 of the Washington Treaty**. The pledge of mutual defence found in this article serves as the foundation of the Alliance.
- **Functions:**
  1. In order to address concerns, foster trust, and ultimately avert conflict, NATO **encourages democratic values** and provides members with the opportunity to communicate and work together on defence and security-related matters.
  2. NATO is dedicated to **resolving conflicts amicably**. If diplomatic attempts prove fruitless, it possesses the military might to carry out crisis management actions.

### **PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION**

**Q1) Consider the following statements regarding NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization):**

- 1) NATO was established in response to the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War.
- 2) The North Atlantic Treaty, which founded NATO, was signed in 1949.
- 3) Article 5 of the NATO treaty stipulates that an attack against one member is considered an attack against all.

**How many of the above statements is/are correct?**

1. a) One
2. b) Two
3. c) Three
4. d) None

ANSWER: C

**MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION**

Q1) Explain the significance of Article 5 in the NATO treaty. How does the principle of collective defense operate within the alliance?

**Himanshu Mishra**



**Yojna IAS**  
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