The NATO Summit in Istanbul
Introduction

On 28 and 29 June 2004, the seventeenth NATO Summit of Heads of State and Government took place. The 26 NATO leaders gathered in Istanbul, Turkey, to discuss a great number of issues in various forums. It was the first summit that included the seven new members that acceded to the Alliance this Spring. A number of important decisions were made in Istanbul. The participants agreed, among other things, to expand the Alliance’s presence in Afghanistan and to assist Iraq with the training of its security forces. Moreover, a new partnership initiative was launched, which concentrates on countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Finally, the participants adopted measures to improve NATO’s operational capabilities. Another important purpose of the Istanbul Summit was to heal the transatlantic wounds that were inflicted as a result of the Iraq crisis.

On the eve of the Istanbul Summit (on 17 June), the Netherlands Atlantic Association organized a conference that dealt with some of the most pressing issues on NATO’s agenda. Among the topics that were discussed were of course the current strained transatlantic relationship, but also the NATO Response Force, and possible roles of NATO in the Greater Middle East. More than 100 participants listened to a number of speakers in ‘Sociëteit De Witte’ in The Hague, while various experts took part in the discussions that were chaired by Jackson Janes from the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies of the Johns Hopkins University in Washington D.C.

In this special section of Atlantisch Perspectief, three of the speeches that were given during that day are reproduced. On the following pages you will find the (slightly adapted) introductions of Dutch Minister of Defence Henk Kamp, Jan Willem Honig and Alexander Moens. Moreover, this section contains the speech that NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer gave on Monday, 5 July to members of the Netherlands Atlantic Association in the Old Plenary Hall of the Dutch Parliament. It was the first official speech that the Secretary General gave after the Summit in Istanbul.