

## Rubio Stresses U.S. commitment to NATO and calls for increased defense spending



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BRUSSELS, April 3 (Xinhua)—U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirmed the United States' strong commitment to NATO during his first meeting with the alliance's foreign ministers in Brussels. He emphasized the importance of greater defense spending in Europe to strengthen the alliance's capabilities.

“We are committed to NATO, and President Trump has made it clear that we will remain a steadfast member,” Rubio stated. “For NATO to grow stronger, it is essential that its members, particularly European nations, invest more in their defense.”

Rubio urged NATO members to increase defense spending to 5 percent of their GDP, significantly higher than NATO’s current target of 2 percent. He acknowledged that achieving the 5 percent goal would take time but stressed the need for a clear path forward to ensure NATO’s resilience in the face of emerging global threats.

“NATO’s strength lies in its collective defense, and our allies must take tangible steps to bolster their capabilities,” Rubio added.

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte supported Rubio’s call, noting that defense spending by Europe and Canada has seen significant increases since the Cold War. However, Rutte emphasized that meeting future security challenges would require defense expenditures to rise beyond 3 percent of GDP for European and Canadian allies.

As NATO faces evolving security threats, the U.S. continues to advocate for stronger defense investments to maintain the alliance’s effectiveness and readiness in an increasingly complex global landscape