

Nor CHOD Opening remarks Saturday morning – MCC

Rekkefølge: Bauer, Kristoffersen, and Gram

Adjusted after the opening remarks

- Thank you, Admiral Bauer, for your wise words.
- It is my sincere pleasure to host the NATO Military Committee Conference here in Oslo, Norway.
- We started yesterday with a opening ceremony, and today we start the Military Committee Conference.
- I am very pleased to have both Finland and Sweden here. Finland as our newest member and Sweden which will soon become one. The integration of all Nordic countries in the NATO alliance is good for Norway and our neighboring countries and a strengthening for NATO. In the years to come we will develop new ways to defend and deter NATO's northern flank together.
- We meet here during times of war. Our Ukrainian friends are fighting for their homeland, for their freedom, for democracy, and for peace. Values we all share and hold very high.
- There is a saying in Norwegian: Never again 9th of April.
- Norway was attacked by Hitlers forces on the 9th of April in 1940. The attack took us by surprise, and we promised ourselves that we should learn. Two important lessons were drawn: Firstly, one should never take peace, freedom and democracy for granted. Secondly, one needs friends and allies to be able fight back, and secure peace. Allies are so much more than friends, something which is evident in NATO.
- NATO is the cornerstone of Norwegian security policy and the foundation upon which we have built our Armed Forces. We are very grateful to be part of the world's strongest military alliance.
- NATO is more united than ever. Our neighbor Russia and President Putin wanted to drive a wedge into our Alliance. By attacking Ukraine and the rule based international world order, he accomplished the opposite.
- Ukraine's resistance and the will and capacity to fight back is has impressed us all. In Norway we have always placed much emphasis on the importance of the people's will to defend itself. That is exactly what

we see the Ukrainian people do right now. And we stand by our Ukrainian friends.

- During the last two years, the Military Committee has played a very important role in NATO's military response to Russia's attack on Ukraine.
- I would like to sincerely thank Admiral Rob Bauer, the Chair of NATO's Military Committee. Rob, your leadership have brought together the Chiefs of Defense's in finding the best military options and responses that our political leaders have demanded of us.
- Thank you and welcome.