

# Debating “War and Peace” behind Closed Doors: NATO’s Riga Security Conference

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)  
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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*“And what an immense mass of evil must result, and indeed does result, from allowing men to assume the right of anticipating what may happen.” Leo Tolstoy*

On the 28th of November, [heads of State and heads of government from the 26 States](#) together with Ministers of Defense and senior military brass of the “enlarged” Atlantic Alliance (NATO) will be meeting in Riga, Latvia.

The venue is being held in a former Soviet Republic, regrouping for the first time all 26 members of the enlarged NATO, including countries previously in the geopolitical orbit of the Soviet Union: Poland, Roumania, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Slovakia, the Czech republic. ([Complete List](#)) The Venue directly challenges Moscow’s influence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It signifies to Moscow that NATO enlargement is proceeding on Russia’s doorstep.

Although Israel will not be represented at the Summit, NATO has developed in the last two years a close working relationship with Tel Aviv, which in practical terms provides Israel with a “de facto associate membership” within the Atlantic Alliance. The NATO Riga Summit will launch NATO’s Rome based training program for its Mediterranean partner countries and members of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). The latter includes a number of Arab countries as well as Israel.(see map below)



From a US standpoint, this meeting will be used to build a European consensus on America’s “long war”. The purpose of the meeting is to rally support (e.g. in European political circles and in the military-industrial complex) for the US led military adventure in the Middle East and Central Asia, which is intimately related, from a strategic standpoint, to the battle for oil and oil pipeline corridors.

The US-NATO military build-up in the Persian Gulf and the Eastern Mediterranean as well as Washington’s “New Middle East” will be on the agenda.

In parallel with the Summit, a major Security Conference (“The Riga Conference”) starting on November 27, will bring together politicians, top military brass, corporate CEOs, defense and foreign policy analysts, “top feeder” media pundits, policy advisers and New World Order academics. (See list of participants below). In many regards, this parallel activity organized by the George Marshall Fund’s Transatlantic Center is more important from a strategic standpoint than the official Summit venue. Headed by Ronald D. Asmus, a former deputy assistant secretary of state in the Clinton administration, the Transatlantic Center’s

task on behalf of NATO is to foster “transatlantic dialogue” between Europe and America as well as actively seek European “cooperation in the broader Middle East and Black Sea regions”.

The Conference is intent upon building a consensus within Europe, regarding America’s military agenda in the broader Middle East.

The European military-industrial complex will be represented by key figures from the Franco-German aerospace conglomerate EADS, Italy’s Finemecanica. Lockheed Martin’s European President Scott Martin, among others will also be attending. Several members of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), the US Senate, will be in Riga for the conference together with representatives from major foundations including Soros, Carnegie, Konrad Adenauer and Robert Schuman.

Among the participants are several key figures, who are known to play a behind a scenes role in international affairs, including Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security adviser and the author of [The Grand Chessboard](#), former Mayor of New York Rudolph Giuliani, Uzi Arad, formerly Mossad Director of Intelligence and foreign policy adviser to (former) Prime Minister Netanyahu, Marc Grossman, now with the Cohen Group, who was Under Secretary of State in GWB’s first term in office (2001-2005), Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg of the German Bundestag’s Foreign Affairs Committee, adviser to Chancellor Angela Merkel and a staunch supporter of Israel, Bruce P. Jackson, who heads the US Committee on NATO and sits on the Board of Directors of the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), the Washington based think tank which formulated the Neocons’ “long war” doctrine.

Among the major themes of the Riga Conference are NATO’s role in the Middle East, the broader issue of “Energy Security” as well as the “enlargement” of NATO to eventually include the Ukraine and Georgia. Both of these former Soviet republics on Russia’s doorstep are increasingly within the US-NATO geopolitical orbit. They are part of GUUAM, a 1999 military cooperation agreement with NATO. They play a strategic role in the structure of oil pipeline and transport corridors out of the Caspian sea basin.

Held in Latvia on Russia’s immediate border, the venue is a slap in the face not only to Russia’s Vladimir Putin but also to Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko. Key figures of the Belarus political opposition are also part of the gathering.

Participants from the NATO’s Mediterranean partners in the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) (including Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Israel) are also on the list of invitees.

In addition to the formal sessions, which will be covered by the media, the Conference is to hold several behind closed doors [Night Owl sessions](#) focusing on three related strategic issues.

Night Owl Session 1: Energy Security: What Role for NATO and EU?

Night Owl Session 2: Ukraine and Georgia: Credible Candidates for NATO Membership?

Night Owl Session 3: Does NATO have a Role in the Middle East?

One would also expect that in addition to the announced behind closed doors sessions, a number of other behind the scenes meetings and consultations will be held, which have a direct bearing on the US-UK-NATO-Israel military agenda in the Middle East and Central Asia.

## **ANNEX**

### **Full List of Participants The Riga Conference as of 26 November 2006**

[\(word\)](#)

[http://www.rigasummit.lv/nfil/Riga\\_Conference\\_Participant\\_List\\_26\\_Nov\\_06.doc](http://www.rigasummit.lv/nfil/Riga_Conference_Participant_List_26_Nov_06.doc)

or [\(pdf\)](#)

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Michel Chossudovsky is the author of the international best [America's "War on Terrorism" Second Edition, Global Research, 2005](#). He is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Center for Research on Globalization.

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Michel Chossudovsky is an award-winning author, Professor of Economics (emeritus) at the University of Ottawa, Founder and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal, Editor of Global Research. He has taught as visiting professor in Western Europe, Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. He has served as economic adviser to governments of developing countries and has acted as a consultant for several international organizations. He is the author of 13 books. He is a contributor to the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His writings have been published in more than twenty languages. In 2014, he was awarded the Gold Medal for Merit of the Republic of Serbia for his writings on NATO's war of aggression against Yugoslavia. He can be reached at [crgeditor@yahoo.com](mailto:crgeditor@yahoo.com)

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