

Beat: Politics

Mark Rutte takes office as NATO Secretary General

At the NATO Headquarters in Brussels

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USPA NEWS - On Tuesday, the former Primer Minister of the Netherlands Mark Rutte took office as the NATO Secretary General. He was welcomed to NATO Headquarters in Brussels by the outgoing Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, whose term ends after ten years. Rutte and Stoltenberg laid a wreath during a ceremony at the NATO Memorial to the Fallen.

At a special session of the North Atlantic Council, Jens Stoltenberg formally handed over to Secretary General Mark Rutte. "It is a great honour to be here and to take up the position of NATO Secretary General," Mark Rutte said before thanking Allies for entrusting him with the responsibility of guiding the Alliance in the coming years.

Secretary General Rutte outlined his three priorities for the Alliance. "The first is to keep NATO strong and ensure our defenses remain effective and credible, against all threats," he began. "My second priority is to step up our support for Ukraine and bring it ever closer to NATO, because there can be no lasting security in Europe without a strong, independent Ukraine," he continued, adding that his "third priority is to strengthen our partnerships" in a more interconnected world.

The Secretary General also paid tribute to his predecessor describing his tenure as "exemplary" and adding that "today NATO is bigger, NATO is stronger and is more united than ever, that is in large part because of your leadership."

In his farewell remarks Jens Stoltenberg commended Mark Rutte's pragmatism and consensus-building skills while noting that "you don't compromise on our values and principles." He also praised his successor's "personal commitment to our transatlantic bond. And your unwavering support for Ukraine." The handover was marked by the ceremonial passing of an historic gavel.

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