STUDY NOTES · BASIC CONCEPT

Will the NATO be dissolved after US recent moves on Greenland and Canada?

International Relations

26 Jan 2021

BACKGROUND

The future of NATO in early 2026 appears precarious amid escalating tensions over US President Donald Trump's push to acquire Greenland, which has triggered what experts call the alliance's gravest crisis since its founding. Trump's imposition of 10% tariffs (rising to 25% by June) on eight European allies—Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK—for opposing the move and deploying troops to Greenland has sparked fears of a transatlantic rupture, potential trade wars, and even military confrontation that could invoke Article 5 and dissolve the pact.

Former NATO officials like Anders Fogh Rasmussen warn it's "at stake," while analysts predict a weakened or "dormant" NATO if US unreliability persists, pushing Europe toward independent security frameworks. However, some NATO sources remain cautiously optimistic, viewing the standoff as a "miscommunication" that could de-escalate through diplomacy, such as updating the 1951 US-Denmark agreement or Arctic cooperation at Davos. Ultimately, NATO's survival hinges on de-escalation, with long-term shifts toward European self-reliance likely regardless.

WHAT DO THE EXPERTS SAY?

Expert opinions on NATO's future in early 2026 are deeply divided and pessimistic due to US President Trump's aggressive push for Greenland, including tariff threats on European allies and refusal to rule out force. Many analysts view this as NATO's most severe crisis since 1949.

1. Former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen calls it the biggest challenge in the alliance's history, warning the future of NATO is "at stake" and urging Europe to stop flattering Trump and prepare strong economic retaliation via the EU's Anti-Coercion Instrument.

2. Chatham House and other think tanks (e.g., Atlantic Council) argue a US military move on Greenland (a NATO ally's territory) would end collective defense credibility under Article 5, making recovery "hard to see" and risking the alliance's dissolution.
3. Danish PM Mette Frederiksen and experts like Jamie Shea (former NATO official) state any US attack on Greenland would spell the end of NATO, violating core principles of sovereignty and mutual defense.
4. TIME and The New York Times analyses describe Trump pushing the transatlantic alliance to the brink, with Europe pondering life without full US commitment—potentially leading to a "dormant" or fractured NATO.
5. Some NATO sources remain cautiously optimistic that tariffs stem from "miscommunication" over troop deployments and could de-escalate via diplomacy (e.g., updated 1951 US-Denmark agreement with stronger NATO Arctic role), avoiding catastrophe.
6. Critics like Ivan Krastev (TIME) suggest Europe must prepare for a world without the Atlantic alliance, accelerating independent defense capabilities amid reduced US reliability.

Based on the the above conclusions, it can be concluded that NATO is facing an existential crisis as on today and if USA's Greenland acquisition is complete, the NATO would indeed be over.

BECOME IAS
AI-Powered UPSC Preparation by ZINKPOT