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## The Path to A Stronger Tomorrow

As time has passed, political figures from various countries have come together to protect each other in the event of a physical attack, ensuring the provision of supplies and assistance. However, since the world has become more technologically advanced, the government and citizens have become vulnerable in more situations in the physical realm, and now in cyberspace. These advances have introduced complex challenges that many countries have never encountered, nor are prepared to actively address. With online shopping, political affairs, and social interactions on the rise, world leaders have had to ensure they can create ways to successfully protect their citizens in cyberspace as well. The cybersecurity policy I will be researching is NATO's cyber defense policy, to explore a deeper understanding of the government's efforts towards ensuring and maintaining a safe cyberspace. This policy interests me most due to its ability to prepare my mindset for my future career aspirations in a federal government job, highlighting the differences between various government's impacts on cybersecurity and cyberwarfare, as well as NATO's importance of the unification of countries when it comes to protecting the world peace regarding cyber-attacks and cyberspace as a whole.

NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a political-military alliance of European and North American countries, established in 1949. They were initiated to provide solutions for defense and security issues, defend together against attacks from third-party countries, and encourage democratic values and diplomacy. The members in the NATO alliance consist of 32 different countries. Government officials, along with private organizations assist

NATO to create protection mechanisms for a plethora of issues. Ever since 2007, after the “Estonian cyber crisis,” NATO began taking “serious strategic steps” to strengthen its cyber defense policy (Kovács, 2018). As cyber-attacks began to increase after that the policy was innovating and adapting, to meet “current and future threats” showing strength in new “policies”, “structures”, and “collective defense” (What Is NATO?, n.d.). In the year of 2011, the Cyber defense policy was adopted into effect. With this in place, NATO has high expectations to keep the peace among many nations, as well as uphold their responsibility of stability and security.

The NATO cyber defense policy was created to “improve its capabilities to detect, assess, prevent, defend, and recover” against any cyber-attacks, against important systems that belonged to any of their members (NATO, 2010, Article 40). One of the key functions of the policy is to assist the CCDCOE, the Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence, which is used to study internationally regarding cyber warfare and how applicable the law is within those matters, which later released the Tallinn Manual exploiting their findings in 2013. This policy also declared in 2016 that cyberspace is an “operational dimension”, meaning that it is an important place that is crucial for the world to function and must be protected just as effectively as physical areas concerning the military, like the Navy, Airforce, and such (Kovács, 2018). The policy also corresponds with the EU Cyber Security Strategy’s five principles, consisting of “achieving cyber resilience, drastically reducing cybercrime, developing cyber defense policy and capabilities related to the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), develop the industrial and technological resources for cyber security, and establish a coherent international cyberspace policy for the European Union and promote core EU values” (European Commission, 2013, p.4). NATO also requires their forces, both “military and civilian assets” to be “well prepared” for the event of any incident both technologically and logically (Efthymiopoulos, 2019). With the core

principals, training, and acknowledgment of the importance of how dangerous cyberspace can be NATO's ever-evolving cyber defense policy is a key element to keeping a plethora of countries safe against cyberwarfare.

As the world becomes progressively reliant on the use of technology, in regarding shopping, commerce, social views, or political progression there will always be a need for rules and regulations to help protect against any form of cybercrime. Especially on a grand scale, where cyber-attacks and cyberwarfare could become scathing issues for governments and nations, disrupting the general need for world peace and unity. With NATO's cyber defense policy, the people of nations will be allowed to have security from the government concerning an attack, be able to receive knowledge and training on the ability to protect themselves for personal reasons against cybercrime, while still being able to experience the benefits and peaceful usage of cyberspace. NATO's efforts in creating their cyber defense policy is only the first step to creating a safer cyberspace for everyone, leading towards a stronger tomorrow for their alliance.

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