

France ends four-decade rift with NATO

■ **Apr 4, 1949:** U.S., Canada and 10 West European states – including France – sign treaty creating **North Atlantic Treaty Organisation**

■ **1966:** President **Charles de Gaulle** (right) pulls French forces out of NATO's military command at height of Cold War and expels alliance's HQ from Paris in protest at dominance of U.S. commanders

■ **1992:** France and Germany set up joint corps of 35,000 troops with aim of turning it into nucleus of future European army

■ **1993:** France sends planes to Bosnia as part of NATO force. Since then, it has participated in most NATO missions – including Kosovo and Afghanistan

■ **1994:** France attends NATO defence meeting for first time in 28 years

■ **1995:** Aircraft from seven allied countries begin first NATO exercise in France since 1966 withdrawal

■ **1996:** Paris announces it will re-establish permanent military mission to NATO

■ **Feb 2003:** France and Belgium temporarily block U.S. move to offer military support to Turkey in event of war in Iraq. U.S. Secretary of Defence **Donald Rumsfeld** calls opposition a “disgrace”

■ **Oct:** U.S. ambassador to NATO says Franco-German plan to set up independent European military planning HQ is threat to NATO's future. EU leaders

say European defence policy intends to complement, not rival, NATO



■ **Mar 2009:** President

Nicolas Sarkozy says France will rejoin NATO's military command. Move to be formalised ahead of NATO's 60th anniversary in April

