

## **US official: A new event “might surprise you the way 9/11 surprised us”**

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, October 18, 2010

America.gov 12 October 2010

Theme: [Terrorism](#)

excerpts from: U.S. Official on Upcoming NATO Ministerial Meetings in Brussels

America.gov, 12 October 2010

Foreign Press Center briefing with Jim Townsend JR., Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Policy

Preview of the upcoming NATO Ministerial

The Washington Foreign Press Center, Washington, D.C., 12 October 2010

[http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2010/October/2010101312051\\_8su0.9436718.html?CP.rss=true](http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2010/October/2010101312051_8su0.9436718.html?CP.rss=true)

**Rossiyskaya Gazeta: [...] According to the numerous reports, Article 5 of Washington Treaty (\*) could be put into force if, for instance, some NATO member country is under cyber attack. Does it mean that NATO could respond to a cyber attack with military force? [...]**

**DASD Townsend: [...] In terms of cyber in Article 5, that's a great philosophical issue. What constitutes Article 5 these days? And the great example, obviously, is 9/11. NATO invokes Article 5 for the first time in its history, and it was invoked in a way unexpected by the signers of the North Atlantic Treaty. Who would have thought Article 5 would have been invoked based on an attack on the United States by terrorists? [...]**

**But I think the important point is that Article 5 and how**

**the alliance reacts to an event, whether it invokes Article 5 or not, is something that isn't known until it happens, and the nations meet around the table and decide. And we'll just have to wait until that event happens before we know what might trigger it. It might surprise you the way 9/11 surprised us. [...]**

**So whether it's cyber, whether it's WMD, whatever it might be, we have to be ready in the alliance to handle these new threats.**

(\*) Article 5 of The North Atlantic Treaty (1949) states that an attack on any North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member country is an attack on all of NATO.

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