

# Finland officially joins NATO; Russia calls it a threat

April 4 (UPI) — Finland officially became a member of NATO on Tuesday, enlarging the European military alliance to 31 countries while drawing threats from Russia.

Finland's 832-mile border with Russia brings the defensive military bloc to Russia's front doorstep like never before. Finland and Sweden applied for admission into NATO after Moscow ordered the invasion of Ukraine, which is now in its 13th month.

"Finland has today become a member of the defense alliance NATO," Finland's President Finland's Sauli Niinisto said on Twitter. "The era of military non-alignment in our history has come to an end. A new era begins.

"Membership of the alliance provides security for Finland. Finland, on the other hand, provides security for the alliance. Finland, committed to the security of all NATO member states, will be a reliable ally that strengthens regional stability."

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