A guide to Trump's past comments about NATO

By Jonathan Landay
WASHINGTON (Reuters)

President Donald Trump met on Wednesday with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in a bid to reassure European countries he has grown less protective of them and wants more such allies to contribute more to common defense.

Despite words of praise for NATO at their meeting, Stoltenberg said Trump has repeatedly questioned NATO's purpose and value to the United States, which has helped defend United States's ally in Europe for 70 years.

Here's a comprehensive look at Mr Trump's past comments about the military alliance.

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Trump has long voiced his view that NATO was an up where he thinks it was a rich country anyone. We're a poor country. We're paying for a lot of this money. NATO is coming as a fortune and yes, we're paying a lot of money. We're paying a lot of money. Number one, I think the distribution of costs has changed. I think NATO is a great thing for Europe. It is as good as it was when it offered protection.

(Reuters, 11 Jan. 2016) Participants in a CNN town hall just the same day, he's said NATO was obsolete. NATO was not built for Bill Clinton, and again, this the costs to the United States.

CNN's Blitzer: Do you think the United States is obsolete without U.S. involvement in NATO?

Trump: No, because it's not. It's so much money. And Europe, they're not paying their share. They're paying disproportionately. It's so much. And Kuwait's it's a wealthy country. Kuwait's a wealthy country. Saudi Arabia. And everybody get together.

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March 26, 2016 – Trump is interviewed on NBC's Meet the Press. He compares NATO to a country club, but adds he's only a recent study NATO's mission.

"I said here's the problem with NATO is nobody pays. It's a country club. And nobody pays. It's a country club. And I'm saying, I'm a recent study NATO's mission. And I'm saying, I'm a recent study NATO's mission. And I'm saying, I'm a recent study NATO's mission