

Ambassador to Chicago: Be Proud to Host Summits

By [Phil Rogers](#)

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The man who is the face of the United States in NATO says Chicago should be proud of hosting the alliance, and that he is confident world leaders will be safe when they come here in May.

"This is a terrific opportunity for Chicago to demonstrate what it is," said Ivo Daalder, speaking to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. "This is a town that represents America in its truest form."

Daalder, who carries the rank of Ambassador, is the United States' permanent representative to the alliance. He said that during the weekend in May, the U.S. and its NATO allies will define the next chapter of their transition from Afghanistan, but will also concentrate on solidifying the missile defense of Europe, and maintaining ties to non-NATO nations who have been assisting in conflicts around the world.

It is that last chapter which brings the leaders of so many countries, possibly as many as 80, to Chicago.

"I think Chicago will be a celebration of the success of the alliance," Daalder said. "We saw in Libya that it is possible for the alliance to come together and launch a military operation and bring about a positive result."

Bringing that many world leaders to one city also brings an invitation for tens of thousands of dissenters who disagree with those nations' policies. Daalder said he was confident there was no significant threat to public safety.

"The city is perfectly capable of making sure that this summit comes off without a hitch," he said. "We are coming here to talk business, to talk policy, to make sure that the security of the United States and other countries is enhanced."

There was a moment in the ambassador's presentation which was, perhaps, a harbinger of things to come, as a supporter of Lyndon Larouche interrupted the question and answer period of the presentation. For several minutes the evening ground to a halt as the man heckled Daalder from the audience.

Thousands of demonstrators are expected to crash Chicago's weekend in the world spotlight as well. But Daalder said he was confident security would be maintained.

"The United States is hosting this summit, and therefore the United States, as the host, will be responsible for making sure there is security for all that we have invited," he said.

Source: <http://www.nbcchicago.com/blogs/ward-room/chicago-nato-g8-ambassador-daalder--141134553.html#ixzz1o0N4jGUE>