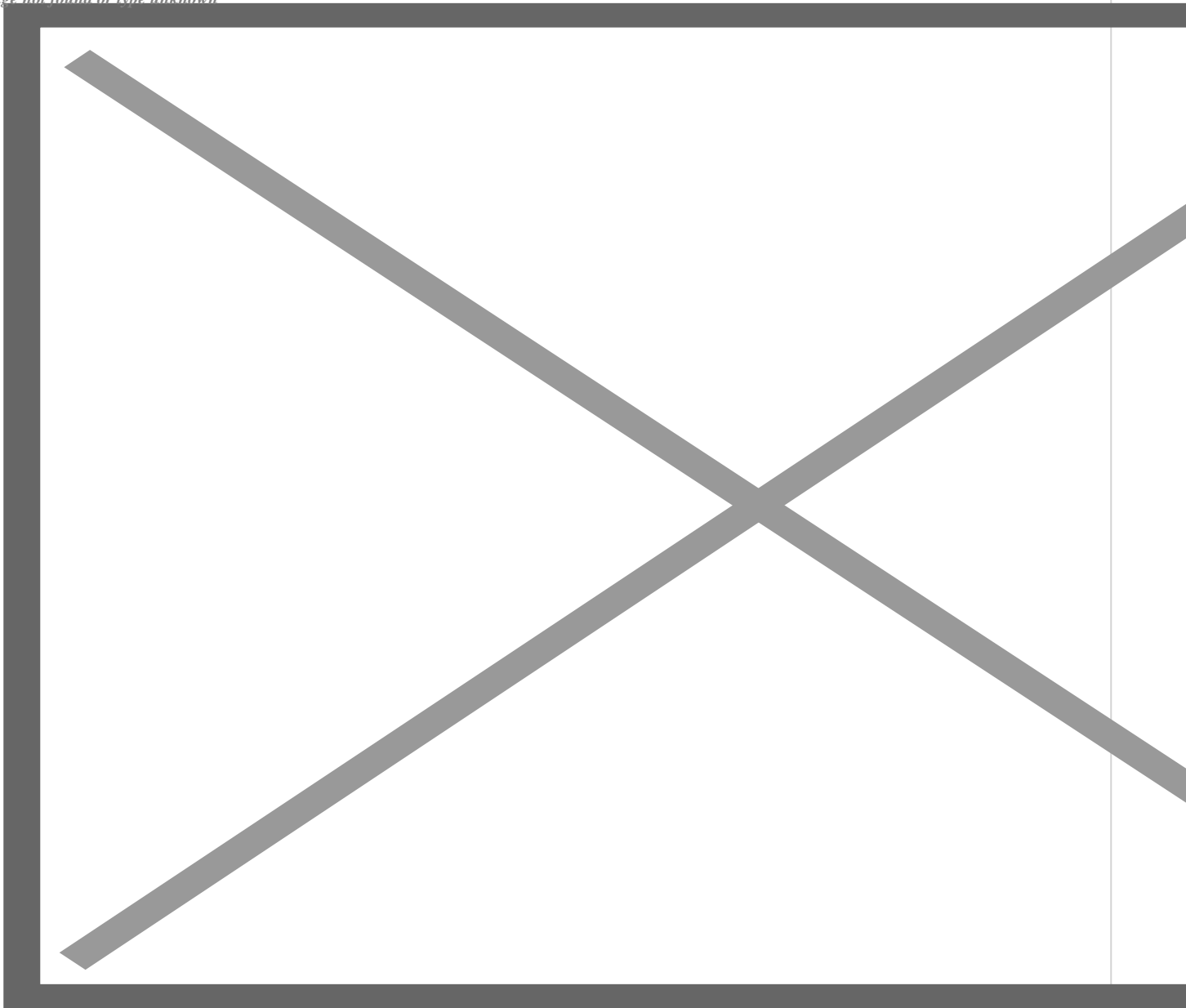


Thousands rally in Madrid against NATO Summit

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?Thousands have gathered in Madrid to protest the NATO summit, opposing military spending by NATO members and calling for U.S. troops to withdraw from Europe.

Madrid, June 27 (RHC)-- Thousands have gathered in Madrid to protest the NATO summit, opposing military spending by NATO members and calling for U.S. troops to withdraw from Europe.

Amid tight security, leaders of the NATO member nations will meet in Madrid on Wednesday and Thursday, the 29th and 30th. They will consider, among other issues, the request by Finland and Sweden to join the military alliance.

"Tanks yes, but of beer with tapas," sang demonstrators, who said an increase in defense spending in Europe urged by NATO was a threat to peace.

Another protester, Concha Hoyos, a resident of Madrid, told reporters: "I am fed up (with) this business of arms and killing people. The solution they propose is more arms and wars and we always pay for it. So, no NATO, no (army) bases, let the Americans go and leave us alone without wars and weapons."

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