

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
OF THE BALTIC DEFENCE COOPERATION MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE
27 May 2022
Saaremaa, Estonia

The Minister of Defence of the Republic of Estonia, the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, as the Ministerial Committee (MC),

Having met on 26-27 May 2022 in Saaremaa, Estonia,

1. Condemned in the strongest terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustifiable full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Expressed heart-felt solidarity with the Ukrainian people.
2. Reaffirmed the unwavering support and commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders as the only viable prerequisite for a long-lasting peace.
3. Noted the substantive and timely military assistance of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and other Allies as a significant factor in helping Ukraine to defend its national sovereignty. Pledged to continue military and non-military aid to Ukraine and seek further ways of support. Called upon other Allies and partners to make a maximum effort in providing long-term military assistance to Ukraine.
4. Highlighted the unprecedented Western unity on tightening of the sanctions regime against Russia as a response to the invasion of Ukraine. Agreed on the further need for sanctions targeting Russia's energy export sector as the most effective way to obstruct Russia's capacity to continue the aggression and war.
5. Reminded that Russia's aim of undermining the Western unity, dismantling NATO and reconstructing imperialistic spheres of influence, as unveiled in Russia's unwarranted demands to NATO in December 2021, have remained unchanged. Together with its aggressive military posture in the Western Military District, this constitutes the most acute and serious long-term threat to Euro-Atlantic security. Underscored that the full integration of Belarus into Russia's military system poses a critical military threat to regional security.
6. Agreed in principle on the Baltic States' Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement as an important step towards taking the Baltic States' defence cooperation to a new strategic level by enabling the provision of military assistance to each other in a speedy and seamless manner in peacetime, crisis and conflict. Agreed to finalize respective national coordination processes in order to sign the Agreement as a matter of priority.
7. Highlighted the decisions of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian Governments to increase the defence budgets of the Baltic States to at least a level of 2.5 percent of GDP in the coming years in order to rapidly accelerate the implementation of national defence development plans and be better prepared for any possible contingency.

8. Underlined the importance of facilitating the Baltic States' capacity to use national capabilities together for enhancing the Baltic States' defence as part of a wider NATO deterrence and defence posture adaptation. Reiterated the commitment to move forward with developing regional interoperable Long Range Rocket Artillery capability.
9. Reaffirmed the irreplaceable value of comprehensive defence cooperation with the United States and emphasized the Baltic States' steadfast commitment to strong Allied relations.
10. Underlined the importance of the United States' assistance for accelerated capability development in the Baltic States through the Baltic Security Initiative, and expressed appreciation for the United States' decisions to allocate additional funding for the development of Baltic military capabilities.
11. Welcomed the timely decisions that Allies have taken to strengthen the security in the Baltic region as a response to the fundamentally changed security situation. Commended NATO and Allies for their increased contribution to the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) battlegroups and the NATO Baltic Air Policing Mission (BAP), and bilateral deployments as a demonstration of Allied unity and solidarity.
12. Stressed the importance of the new NATO Strategic Concept to adequately reflect and respond to the long-term strategic environment whereby Russia is the most dangerous and immediate military threat to the security of the Alliance. Emphasized that collective defence is the most important core task of NATO.
13. Stressed the need for a shift in the NATO's deterrence and defence posture, especially in the Eastern part of the Alliance, by moving from Forward Presence to modern Forward Defence. Agreed that substantial decisions must be taken at the NATO Summit in Madrid, based on a tailored and flexible approach that addresses regional specificities.
14. Highlighted that a modern Forward Defence posture in the Baltic States would require more sizable in-place forces in land, air and sea domains. Allied force should build around three combat ready divisions ready to fight from day zero, with one division headquarters for each of the Baltic States and forward-deployed enablers, allocated for a collective defence operation and able to command National Home Defence Forces, Allied in-place forces and reinforcements. Allied forward presence in each of the Baltic States should include a forward deployed combat ready Allied brigade in line with nations specific requirements with necessary enablers built upon strengthened eFP battlegroups.
15. Welcomed and whole-heartedly supported the future accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO as a development that would significantly increase the security of all Allies.
16. Welcomed the adoption of the EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence. Underlined that a stronger and more capable EU in security and defence has to contribute positively to global and transatlantic security and has to be complementary to NATO, which remains the foundation of collective defence for its members.

17. Welcomed the EU's decision to support the Ukrainian Armed Forces with 2 billion euros from the European Peace Facility (EPF). Called for continued EPF support to Ukraine and other beneficiary countries in order to strengthen their military and defence capacities and increase their resilience.
18. Highlighted the need to reduce defence capability shortfalls and in this regard welcomed the EU initiatives to assist Member States' efforts in replenishing their capability needs.
19. Emphasized importance of improved military mobility for boosting collective defence and deterrence, and agreed to coordinate actions in the EU aiming to achieve increased EU funding and immediate acceleration of implementation of military mobility projects in the region.

Kalle LAANET

Dr. Artis PABRIKS

Dr. Arvydas ANUŠAUSKAS



Minister of Defence
Republic of Estonia
27 May 2022

Deputy Prime Minister,
Minister of Defence
Republic of Latvia
27 May 2022

Minister of National Defence
Republic of Lithuania
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