



Government Offices of Sweden

JEF Defence Ministers Statement

3 October 2022

The defence ministers from the countries within the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) defence cooperation met virtually on 3 October 2022, and gave the following statement.

Following the deliberate damage caused to the Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea, today Defence Ministers of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) met virtually to share assessments of the blatant and irresponsible attacks against critical civilian infrastructure.

The JEF condemns in the strongest terms the reckless sabotage in the Baltic Sea. It is discussing security responses, including increased maritime presence and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance activities.

It will seek to deter further such acts, reassure allies and demonstrate collective commitment to the security and stability of the region. Ministers discussed increasing shared intelligence assessments to ensure common situational awareness, as well as cooperation to secure critical infrastructure. The JEF will ensure complementarity, alignment and transparency with NATO as well as the investigation led by Danish, Swedish and German authorities.

The JEF is a group of like-minded nations – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom. The nations share the same purpose, values and a common focus on security and stability in the JEF core regions of the High North, North Atlantic and Baltic Sea region.

The JEF provides a responsive, capable, and ready military force that undertakes integrated activities at sea, on land and in the air, across northern Europe. These activities are preventative and proportionate and demonstrate solidarity, capability, and resolve to stand together for security and stability

in the JEF core regions.

Published 03 October 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint statement by the Nordic Ministers of Defence 30 September 2022

The Nordic defence ministers convened for a virtual consultation on 30 September 2022 and gave the following statement.

We, the Nordic Ministers of Defence, are deeply concerned about the damage to the Nord Stream pipelines in international waters in the Baltic Sea. All information currently available points to a deliberate act of sabotage close to the national borders of Denmark and Sweden. It cannot be ruled out that this is a reckless attack on Europe's energy infrastructure and an attempt to destabilise the already tense security situation. The leaks from the pipelines are causing risks to civilian sea-traffic and substantial environmental damage.

Finland, Iceland and Norway stand ready to support Denmark and Sweden by any means possible in the investigation of the incident. We are in close contact with each other regarding the incident and the overall security situation in the Baltic Sea region and beyond.

Furthermore, the Nordic countries are determined in our support to Ukraine. We will not recognise the results of the illegal referenda or annexations.

Published 30 September 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint Statement from the ministers of defence from Sweden, Finland and Norway 25 August 2022

Joint Statement from Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist, Finland's Minister of Defence Antti Kaikkonen and Norway's Minister of Defence Bjørn Arild Gram after a meeting 25 August 2022 in Finland.

The security situation has deteriorated following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Russia has proved that it does not respect international law and has upended the European security order.

The security in northern Europe has been adversely impacted by this development. A crisis in our region affects us all. Therefore, we must be ready and able to act together in peace, crisis and conflict.

The increased military presence and activity in northern Europe underlines the importance of avoiding incidents. At several occasions, we have seen irresponsible and unprofessional Russian behaviour.

The North Calotte and adjacent areas are of strategic importance to the defence of our countries in the event of a crisis or war. Enhanced cooperation between our countries is therefore of utmost importance. Through increased cooperation we can achieve a more efficient defence of our countries. One of our major objectives is to coordinate and develop military operations planning between Finland, Sweden and Norway.

Our trilateral initiative facilitates such an enhanced cooperation. We can engage in preparing and conducting operations in the event of a crisis or conflict. We can take common responsibility and create prerequisites for, e.g., the protection of lines of communication as well as security of supply.

All together, this cooperation provides an opportunity to reduce

vulnerabilities and increase the common security in the northern parts of our countries. This is a vital interest for Finland, Norway and Sweden and contributes to increased security in the entire region.

Published 25 August 2022



JEF defence ministers' statement: Finland and Sweden's application for NATO membership

The ministers of defence of the countries participating in the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) met in Oslo, Norway on 15 June 2022, and gave the following statement.

Today, the Defence Ministers of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) – comprising Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK – met in Oslo.

JEF Defence Ministers discussed current security challenges, including the implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and considered the future development of the JEF to ensure it continues to make an effective contribution to security and stability in its core region of the High North, North Atlantic and Baltic Sea.

JEF Defence Ministers also took part in a table-top exercise to practise the JEF's role in responding to an escalating crisis, including the relationship between the JEF and NATO in such a scenario.

All JEF Defence Ministers strongly welcome Finland's and Sweden's applications for NATO membership. Each country has made its sovereign decision to join NATO after a clear, open and democratic process; they share the Alliance's values and are modern, highly capable defence and security partners with whom together we will enhance our collective, transatlantic security.

The allied JEF Partners will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Finland and Sweden in a spirit of solidarity through their accession to NATO membership. We shall work closely with our NATO Allies to integrate both Finland and Sweden into the Alliance as soon as possible.

The JEF shall engage in multi-domain activity across our core regions to provide enhanced levels of assurance to our Finnish and Swedish friends as they complete the process of joining NATO. This is in addition to the series of integrated activities and exercises in northern Europe that JEF Defence Ministers agreed at their meeting at Belvoir Castle on 21–22 February 2022.

We reaffirm the shared purpose and common resolve of the JEF to work together to enhance security and stability in northern Europe and be ready to respond to a wide range of contingencies, both in peacetime and at times of crisis and conflict; all in a way which is coherent with, and complementary to, the role of NATO.

Published 15 June 2022



Joint statement by the ministers of defence of the Northern Group, 8 June 2022

The ministers of defence of the Northern Group met in Reykjavík, Iceland, on 8 June, and gave the following statement.

Today we, the Ministers, discussed the implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which we condemn in the strongest possible terms. Russia's invasion has inflicted immeasurable destruction and suffering on the Ukrainian people, and is a threat to the security of Europe and the North Atlantic area. We stand with Ukraine and will continue to support Ukraine both militarily and politically against Russia's brutal and illegal aggression.

Today we also discussed the implications of global challenges to security in the northern regions, including the High North. We underline our strong political unity and cohesion in the face of threats to the security of our region. We will continue to strive to protect our common values of democracy, rule of law, freedom and human rights. We underline that the sanctity of internationally recognised borders is a bedrock principle of international relations. Any erosion of this principle represents a grave danger to a system that is based on international law and rules-based order.

The Ministers of Defence of the Northern Group warmly welcome the sovereign decisions by Finland and Sweden to apply for NATO membership. This will improve our collective defence and enhance security and stability in Northern Europe. Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, and the United Kingdom welcome Finland and Sweden's applications and will work for fast national ratification processes



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement by Nordic Ministers of Defence on Nordic Defence Cooperation 24 May 2022

The Nordic defence ministers or their representatives met on 24 May 2022 on the island of Bornholm, Denmark, and gave the following statement. At the meeting, Sweden was represented by Jan-Olof Lind, State Secretary to Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist.

The Nordic Ministers of Defence warmly welcome the sovereign decisions by Finland and Sweden to apply for NATO membership. Denmark, Iceland and Norway welcome Finland and Sweden into the Alliance and will work for fast national ratification processes.

As we enter a new era of deeper defence relations, we, the Nordic Defence Ministers, remain committed to the Nordic defence cooperation (NORDEFECO). We share common interests concerning the complex and demanding security challenges in our region, including the Baltic Sea and the High North. These regions constitute a single area of operations and coordinated or joint operational planning among the Nordic countries is therefore key.

Finland and Sweden's decision will improve our collective defence, enhance security and stability, and strengthen the alliance in Northern Europe. We will continue the political and military dialogue that is already well underway.

Today the Nordic Ministers and representatives met on Bornholm to discuss the security situation in our region. During the coming months we will strengthen our Nordic defence cooperation. As the Prime Ministers of Denmark, Iceland and Norway already have stated, Denmark, Iceland and Norway stand ready to assist Finland and Sweden by all means necessary, should they be the victim of aggression on their territory before obtaining

NATO membership. Nordic military presence in our region will be enhanced through joint exercises, training and visits. These assurance activities underline our well-founded ability to operate together.

We have tasked our ministries to adapt NORDEF CO in light of the developments in Finland and Sweden.

Published 24 May 2022



Nordic defence ministers joint statement on strengthening Nordic defence cooperation

The Nordic defence ministers met on 11 May 2022 in Kirkenes, Norway and gave the following statement.

The war in Ukraine has fundamentally changed European defence and security policy. In light of the ongoing crisis, Nordic solidarity and defence cooperation is more important than ever.

The Nordic countries share fundamental values and security interests. We share a strategically important location. Closer defence cooperation between the Nordic countries strengthens our military capabilities and promotes regional security and stability. Combined, our armed forces represent a considerable defensive force.

Our ability to cooperate during peacetime is a foundation for our ability to act during crisis and conflict. Hence, our armed forces train and exercise together regularly, including exercise Cold Response, the biennial Nordic air defence exercise Arctic Challenge Exercise, as well as regular Cross Border Training conducted between our Air Forces. In addition, we are in the process of deepening our operational cooperation, enabling us to improve our interoperability, deterrence and territorial defence.

As we face increasingly complex security challenges in our region and beyond, we must cooperate through a whole-of-society approach. Recent experiences from the Covid-19 pandemic have demonstrated the necessity of international cooperation and resilient societies. We have a strong tradition for total defence within the Nordic countries, and we aim to strengthen civil-military cooperation across our borders.

We, the Defence Ministers of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden and Foreign Affairs Minister of Iceland, remain committed to further deepening our defence cooperation with regards to operational cooperation and total

defence.

Published 11 May 2022



Defence Ministers of Finland and Sweden took part in a scenario-based exercise

Finland's Minister of Defence Antti Kaikkonen and Sweden's Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist met today 14 March 2022 in Helsinki and took part in a scenario-based exercise. The Ministers made the following joint statement:

Sweden and Finland give high priority to the continued development of our bilateral defence cooperation. We are prepared to act together in peacetime and beyond it. We have bilateral operation plans and contingency measures, enabling us to coordinate our actions in times of crisis and war.

During our meeting today we discussed the international security situation and deepening our bilateral defence cooperation.

One element of our bilateral defence cooperation is table top exercises. The Swedish and Finnish Defence Ministers had such an exercise on 14 March. Chiefs of Defence from Sweden and Finland, too, took part in the exercise. The exercise was based on a fictitious scenario of a conflict in the Baltic Sea Region. Its objective was to practice political decision-making and procedures for joint action.

Table top exercises and other similar exercises reinforce the defence capability of our countries and increase our understanding of the possibilities and potential challenges of joint military operations.



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement by the Nordic Ministers of Defence regarding Russia's invasion of Ukraine

The Nordic Ministers of Defence today discussed Russia's actions in Ukraine and gave the following statement.

The Nordic countries strongly condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Nordic ministers of Defence call on Russia to immediately cease its military action and withdraw its military forces from in and around Ukraine. Russia's attack on Ukraine is a serious violation of international law.

The Nordic Ministers of Defence stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. The ministers reaffirm their support to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Russia's military attack on Ukraine is a threat to the security of all of Europe. The Nordic Ministers of Defence remain in close contact regarding the situation and continue to consult with NATO and EU allies and partners.

Published 24 February 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint statement by Defence Ministers of the Joint Expeditionary Force

Meeting in the UK, Defence Ministers from the ten Joint Expeditionary Force nations have issued a joint statement on the situation in Ukraine.

Today the ten Defence Ministers of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) met at Belvoir Castle in England: the UK, together with Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.

We reaffirm the importance of the JEF as a group of like-minded and proactive nations, with shared purpose and values, and a common focus on security and stability in the High North, North Atlantic and Baltic Sea region. Ten nations that are stronger when working together, the JEF gives us the ability to act collectively in an agile and responsive way to meet the variety of security challenges we face, however they arise, in that part of Europe we call home. The JEF is designed from first principles to be complementary to NATO's Deterrence and Defence posture.

Never has the JEF been more important and relevant than it is today. During the course of our meeting the Russian Federation has recognised Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions as independent states, breaching Minsk agreements and international law. All ten Defence Ministers are united in our condemnation of that unjustified act, the build-up of Russian forces on the border with Ukraine, and further incursion in the Donbas region.

We strongly support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and reiterate the right of all sovereign nations to choose their own path, their own security arrangements and their own alliances, free from external aggression and coercion, as a fundamental principle of the European security order. We call on Russia to de-escalate and encourage them to engage in transparent dialogue, including through the OSCE and the NATO-Russia Council, in

order to reduce tensions. We also condemn the instrumentalization of migration flows and other hybrid activity towards Latvia, Lithuania and Poland by the Belarussian regime.

We have reviewed the progress we have made in the development of the JEF as an agile, capable, and ready force, and today agreed to undertake a series of integrated military activities across our part of northern Europe – at sea, on land and in the air. For example, we will shortly conduct an exercise demonstrating JEF nations' freedom of movement in the Baltic Sea. These and subsequent activities will remain preventative and proportionate. In acting together, we shall demonstrate the JEF's solidarity, capability, and resolve to stand together for security and stability in our region.

Published 22 February 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement by the Nordic Ministers of Defence regarding the situation in and near Ukraine

The Nordic Ministers of Defence met virtually on 21 January to discuss the deteriorating situation in and around Ukraine. The ministers monitor the security situation in Ukraine closely, and continue to consult with each other through the NORDEFSCO Crisis Consultation Mechanism.

The ministers agree on the gravity of the situation, and the need to seek a diplomatic solution to the current situation. The ministers call on Russia to de-escalate through halting and reversing their ongoing military build-up in the region and engage in dialogue.

The ministers reaffirm their support to Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and its right to decide its own foreign and security policy, free from outside interference. The fundamental principles underpinning the European security order remain non-negotiable.

The Nordic countries welcome dialogue on European security issues in relevant fora, including the EU, NATO, OSCE and the UN. The Nordic countries welcome the United States' efforts in engaging Russia in resolving the current crisis.

Published 21 January 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint statement by the Nordic Ministers of Defence on Ukraine

We, the Nordic Ministers of Defence, follow the recent developments in and around Ukraine with great concern. Recent Russian military activity, especially the exceptional military build-up along Ukraine's borders, is a worrying development, which may have a destabilising effect on our shared security environment.

Transparency, refraining from the use of military force, and adherence to both the letter and the spirit of the OSCE commitments and principles and the Vienna Document 2011 is paramount.

We continue to follow the situation in and around Ukraine closely. In 2019 the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) established a Crisis Consultation Mechanism, facilitating rapid consultations on any urgent matter of common concern. We recently had a Ministerial consultation to discuss the current situation close to Ukraine's border, and we will continue to keep close contact.

The Nordic countries continue their firm support to Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and right to decide its own foreign and security policy course free from outside interference. We reject the notion of spheres of influence in Europe.

The Minsk agreements and political dialogue remain the basis for solving the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

Published 21 December 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Comment from Minister for Defence on Finland's decision regarding acquisition of fighter aircraft

We regret that Finland did not choose Gripen and GlobalEye.

We are convinced that Gripen and GlobalEye would have been very good choices also for Finland, combining highly capable aircraft systems with low costs and high availability. The systems are tailor-made for our common security challenges as well as the harsh Nordic environmental conditions.

Having said that, we fully respect the Finnish decision. Our excellent defence cooperation will of course continue. Finland will continue to be our closest security and defence policy partner. Over a long period of time the relationship has been based on common geostrategic interests and common views on security challenges.

The geographic and military-strategic realities underscore the need for continued and deepened defence cooperation and we will continue the work on creating prerequisites for combined joint military operations in peace, crisis and war.

Published 10 December 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint Statement European Intervention Initiative Meeting of the Ministers of Defence

24 September 2021, Stockholm, Sweden

Since the launch of the European Intervention Initiative in 2018, it has grown to include thirteen European states who share the aim to develop a common strategic culture to meet the challenges facing Europe. These challenges are becoming more severe and urgent than in decades.

Today, Ministers of Defence, or their representatives, of Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom met in Stockholm, Sweden, to exchange views on current security and defence challenges.

The Ministers or their representatives shared important lessons so far identified after the withdrawal from Afghanistan, including views on the implications for European coordination and capability requirements, and for transatlantic cooperation.

The Ministers or their representatives were briefed by France on the security situation in Mali. They underlined the importance of the political transition in Mali and that elections are held within the agreed time frame. They also expressed serious concern over possible cooperation between Malian authorities and foreign mercenaries. Furthermore, they discussed their continued commitment to the fight against global and regional terrorism and the contribution EI2 can make through exchange of information and analysis.

The Ministers or their representatives received a timely update by Portugal on the situation in Cabo Delgado, and the process of launching the European Union training mission in Mozambique and took note of the initial positive results.

The Ministers or their representatives were briefed by Sweden on the Russian-Belarusian military exercise Zapad-21, and by Finland on the first results of the Working Group on Disinformation.

Lastly, the Ministers or their representatives discussed the future of EI2 cooperation, and how to strengthen its capacity to tackle current and future security challenges and deliver concrete outputs by streamlining the flow of information between its various components.

Published 24 September 2021



Joint statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström and Minister for Defence Peter Hultqvist

A treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons was adopted at the UN General Assembly in July this year. Sweden has long been active on the issue of nuclear disarmament. This is why it is important for the Government to support the UN's work on a treaty of this kind. We will soon appoint an inquiry to look into all of the consequences of the treaty, including for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Sweden's defence policy cooperation. The forms for this inquiry will be presented shortly.

Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves us well. National defence capability will be strengthened while our defence and security policy cooperation continues to be developed. Our foreign and security policy works through diplomacy, mediation, conflict prevention and trust-building measures. This increases Sweden's ability to promote détente and stability both in our neighbourhood and globally.



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint Statement on Regional security challenges discussed by the Nordic defence ministers meeting in Copenhagen 30-31 March

The Nordic ministers of defence met at Frederiksberg Palace and had a good and open dialogue on Nordic defence and security matters. Furthermore, the ministers strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Brussels on 22 March.

In relation to the terrorist attacks last week the ministers stated:

Last week Brussels – the heart of Europe – was hit by callous terrorist attacks. Attacks not only on Belgium, but on all the values we share and promote. We strongly condemn the attacks and stand in solidarity with the Belgian people against the violent, cynical and fanatic terrorists behind these attacks. We are resolute in our determination to prevent and defeat terrorism and to fight ISIL, and we discussed this during the meeting. We will do this by standing even closer together – as the free democracies we are.

The ministers also stated:

Nordic defence cooperation is progressing well. In recent years we have seen an increased cooperation taking place and priorities to find effective solutions to our security and defence needs. Implementation of secure communication between the Nordic ministries of defence and military headquarters will be operational this year. Furthermore, we decided that the Nordic countries will provide air transport to the UN operation in Mali. This will create much needed sustainability and predictability for the UN, and will provide a useful model for enhanced Nordic cooperation in future UN

operations.

We also discussed current security challenges in our region. Closer cooperation among the Nordic countries and the Baltic States contributes to enhanced security in our region. We remain concerned with the military activities in the Baltic Sea Region and follow these activities closely. Therefore, we urge Russia to be transparent and predictable when conducting military activities. Furthermore, we reiterate our position that the Russian aggression against Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea are violations of international law and other international agreements.

Within the framework of NORDEFECO, the ministers meet twice every year to discuss areas of ongoing and potential cooperation. The following ministers participated in the meeting:

Danish Minister of Defence Peter Christensen, Swedish Minister of Defence Peter Hultqvist, Norwegian Minister of Defence Ine Eriksen Søreide, the Finnish Minister of Defence Jussi Niinistö and Director of Department for Security and Defence for Iceland Arnor Sigurjónsson.

Published 31 March 2016



Government Offices of Sweden

Joint statement on the Situation in Ukraine by the Swedish and Lithuanian Ministers of Defence

Statement by the Swedish Minister of Defence Peter Hultqvist and the Lithuanian Minister of Defence Juozas Olekaz. We have had a constructive meeting with defence minister Poltorak discussing the military situation in Eastern Ukraine, the ongoing Russian aggression and the relations between our countries. For us as defence ministers of Lithuania and Sweden this visit is an important way of showing our solidarity with Ukraine and our resolute support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In a few weeks' time, two years will have passed since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. Today the world's eyes are turning to the crisis in Syria and other parts of the world. But no matter how grave other crises are, they must not serve as an excuse for forgetting about Crimea. It is unacceptable that a powerful neighbour uses military force, deception and disinformation to change borders in Europe in the 21st century.

We stand firmly by the side of Ukraine in that respect.

The fighting in eastern Ukraine continues. Despite persistent Russian denials we know that regular Russian troops are present in Donbass. It continues to support the separatists with equipment, training and advice and to control them for its purposes. Numerous ceasefires have been negotiated and agreed. None has been fully respected. (Over the last 24 hours there have been 47 shootings.) The ceasefire must be respected, Russian troops and weaponry must leave Ukrainian territory and Ukrainian control of its state border must be restored.

The Minsk agreement remains the key to reach a solution to the conflict. We do understand, however, that the absence of Russian delivery on its Minsk commitments presents Ukraine with a domestic challenge to implement its own Minsk obligations.

In general, we commend Ukraine for its progress of democratic and economic reforms achieved so far. At the same time we recognise the extent of the work that remains to be done. Considering the challenges ahead, no time must be lost and it is important that the Ukrainian leadership remains united and focused on the reform process. Successful reforms are indeed the best response to the Russian aggression.

In the sphere of foreign policy, Ukraine, as any sovereign country, has the right to make her own choices on security policy and make other fundamental choices about its own future. We cannot accept that another country interferes with that right. We will not accept any attempts to undermine the sovereignty of Ukraine.

Our presence here today is a sign of our determination to support Ukraine and stand by her side.

18 February 2016, Kyiv

Published 18 February 2016