

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
OF THE BALTIC DEFENCE COOPERATION MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE

23 January 2025

Vilnius, Lithuania

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 22-23 January, in Vilnius, Lithuania,

1. Reiterated the importance of close Baltic States' cooperation in security and defence to further strengthen collective deterrence and defence in the region.
2. Emphasised that Russia remains a long-term threat to Europe and to the Alliance as a whole.
3. Agreed that the primary interest for the NATO Summit in The Hague is to reaffirm the transatlantic bond and the commitment to accelerate the modernisation of NATO's collective defence.
4. Underlined the urgent need to increase defence spending in EU and NATO countries and to set a new benchmark of at least 3% of GDP to strengthen collective defence, and stressed the need to take urgent action to develop NATO's overall capabilities to meet the requirements of NATO's defence plans.
5. Expressed the importance of NATO's Capability Targets to ensure executability of NATO defence plans.
6. Welcomed the new US Administration and look forward to further strengthening the US-Baltic strategic cooperation while emphasising the US leadership and military presence in the Baltic States.
7. Reaffirmed the importance of the Baltic Security Initiative for strengthening the interoperability of forces, bolstering defence readiness and warfighting capabilities of the Baltic States as well as building industrial cooperation.
8. Stressed the need to work together with the US and jointly contribute to the security of the Indo-Pacific region.
9. Stressed the need for Allies to further support the victory of Ukraine.
10. Reaffirmed the commitment of each Baltic State to allocate at least 0.25% of GDP annually to the security and defence of Ukraine.
11. Welcomed the progress made in supporting Ukraine through the IT, Demining and Drone Coalitions and reaffirmed the commitment to lead the aforementioned coalitions. Underlined the necessity and benefit of an international coordination mechanism to support Ukraine.
12. Emphasised that the Baltic Defence Line is a key framework for securing NATO and EU's eastern flank, with initial actions already in place and further regional development planned, while stressing the need to seek EU's financial support to enhance regional security.
13. Agreed on further discussions and consultations in regard to the Ottawa Convention.
14. Emphasised the need for urgent coordination to protect critical undersea infrastructure, highlighting the need to share best practices and find a common legal framework required to prevent and respond to damage.

15. Underlined the importance of a stronger, continued NATO military presence in the Baltic Sea and welcomed the on-going multi-domain activity of Baltic Sentry to protect critical undersea infrastructure.
16. Stressed the need for strengthening cyber security and defence, enhancing cooperation against cyber threats and ensuring resilient digital infrastructure in line with international law and NATO-EU commitments.
17. Recognised the progress made in enhancing NATO's forward defence, including the increased presence of Allied forces in the Baltic States.
18. Underlined the importance of enhancing the Integrated Air and Missile Defence at the NATO Hague Summit.
19. Reaffirmed the importance of NATO's Rotational Air Defence model and encourage Allies to contribute Air Defence systems and units.
20. Emphasised the importance of investing in the infrastructure required for military mobility as well as further coordinating efforts with NATO and the EU.
21. Agreed to further strengthen cooperation between the Special Operations Forces of the Baltic States.
22. Underlined the need to work with the new European Commission and High Representative to promote defence priorities in the Baltic region and support EU's efforts to increase defence investments, including through a common borrowing mechanism.
23. Expressed the common interest of the Baltic States in the acquisition of the HIMARS Precision Strike Missile (PrSM) by signing the Joint Statement. The acquisition of long-range precision strike missiles is in line with the strategic objectives of the Baltic States and will significantly enhance our defence preparedness.
24. Agreed to continue the Baltic States coordination and cooperation on ISTAR capability development.
25. Committed to further strengthening national and joint capability development to ensure operational capability and interoperability within the Baltic States and to identify new potential joint capability projects.
26. Agreed on the importance of Baltic States' common efforts and wider regional cooperation in maritime and air domains.
27. Expressed their gratitude to Lithuania for the Chairmanship of the Baltic Defence Cooperation in 2024 and welcomed Estonia as the new Chairman in 2025.

Hanno PEVKUR

Dovilė ŠAKALIENĖ

Andris SPRŪDS

Minister of Defence
Republic of Estonia
23 January 2025

Minister of National Defence
Republic of Lithuania
23 January 2025

Minister of Defence
Republic of Latvia
23 January 2025