

**Statement by the Kingdom of the Netherlands  
As delivered by Ambassador Christophe Kamp  
90<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent  
Council, 21 February 2024  
Agenda item 2 - Any other Business**

Thank you Chair,

I deliver this statement on behalf of Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, The Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, as well as invitee Sweden.

Madame Chair, Mr. Chair,

NATO exercise Steadfast Defender 24 officially started on 24 January 2024.

It is the principal NATO multi-domain exercise for 2024, comprised of 13 NATO, national and multinational exercises conducted across various geographical locations within Europe.

Steadfast Defender 24 will run until May 31, 2024, divided into two parts:

- 24 JAN – 15 MAR 2024: the focus will be on the reinforcement of the Alliance defence at sea, from across the Atlantic and the Arctic to continental Europe. Part I will be led by NATO's Joint Force Command Norfolk. Associated exercises include: MARCOM LIVEX; JOINT WARRIOR; and NORDIC RESPONSE.
- 12 FEB – 31 MAY 2024: focus will be on using deployed reinforcements across all domains, and across continental Europe. Part II will be led by NATO's Joint Force Command Brunssum, in coordination with national exercise leads. Associated exercises during part 2 include: NATO's exercise BRILLIANT JUMP; DRAGON; TROJAN FOOTPRINT; CRYSTAL ARROW; DEFENDER 24 series (including SABER STRIKE; IMMEDIATE RESPONSE, and SWIFT RESPONSE); BRAVE WARRIOR; SPRING STORM; and GRAND QUADRIGA.

Spread across those NATO and various national and multinational exercises, STEADFAST DEFENDER 24 will see the participation of approximately 90,000 personnel; more than 50 naval assets, 80 air platforms and more than 1,100 combat vehicles from 31 Allies and invitee Sweden.

STEADFAST DEFENDER 24 follows a fictitious Article 5 scenario. Activities will occur during a simulated emerging conflict scenario with a near-peer adversary.

STEADFAST DEFENDER 2024 is designed to provide valuable insights for enhancing NATO's defence plans, improving interoperability, efficiency, and resilience.

STEADFAST DEFENDER 24 will show that NATO can conduct and sustain complex multi-domain operations over several months, across thousands of kilometers, from the High North to Central and Eastern Europe, and in any conditions.

STEADFAST DEFENDER 24 aims to demonstrate NATO's commitment to collective defence and send a robust message about its readiness to protect every inch of Alliance territory.

NATO exercises are planned and published in advance. The schedule of upcoming exercises is available on the SHAPE website.

NATO exercises are defensive, transparent and proportionate, and conducted in respect of our international obligations.

Thank you Chairs