

Framework Arrangement for Estonian-Finnish Defence Cooperation
between
the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Estonia
and
the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Finland

1. Introduction

Estonia and Finland have strong cultural and historical ties. Both countries have pursued mutually beneficial defence cooperation and established close relationship between the defence forces since the restoration of Estonia's independence in 1991. Both Estonia and Finland belong to the European Union and cooperate in the Nordic-Baltic format. Estonia is a NATO member and Finland is an active NATO partner. Estonia and Finland share the same geostrategic environment, which enables our countries to cooperate in a comprehensive and focused way.

This Framework Arrangement between the Ministry of Defence of Estonia and the Ministry of Defence of Finland aims to guide the bilateral defence relationship and set the objectives in most important fields of cooperation. The Estonian-Finnish defence relations will be promoted and coordinated through regular high level visits and talks on both political and military level. Annual cooperation activities will be coordinated and reviewed at regular staff talks. The activities and points of contact are listed in the Defence Cooperation Action Plan, which is a living document and updated when necessary.

This framework paper will be reviewed as deemed necessary.

2. Objective

The main objectives of Estonian-Finnish defence cooperation are to:

- discuss and strive for a common understanding of strategic defence policy issues;
- exchange information and raise situational awareness regarding regional security;
- develop defence capabilities in order to increase operational effectiveness and quality of national defence forces; and
- seek possibilities to cooperate in joint procurements, logistics, and life-cycle support of materiel and services for defence purposes.

3. Fields of cooperation

Policy and Strategic Development

- cooperate within the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and within the NATO framework;
- strengthen Nordic-Baltic defence cooperation;
- seek possibilities to cooperate within the Northern Group;
- introduce national strategic documents and cooperate in the field of strategic planning; and
- conduct bilateral defence policy discussions once a year.

Exchange of Information

- exchange information regarding regional security;
- exchange information on national defence arrangements;
- cooperate on observation flights, inspections and evaluation visits in the framework of the Open Skies Treaty and the Vienna Document;
- discuss and exchange experiences on arms control issues, crisis management and other areas of cooperation;
- cooperate in the multinational framework of ASDE (Air Situation Data Exchange) and SUCBAS (Sea Surveillance Cooperation Baltic Sea); and
- enhance cooperation for strengthening situational awareness.

Capability development

- discuss and exchange expertise and information to support capability development;
- exchange expertise and information on national plans;
- cooperate in the area of Research and Development;
- cooperate in the field of cyber defence;
- exchange information in order to seek possibilities for joint procurements, logistics, life-cycle support, and research and development.

Human resources and education

- continue to enable participation in each other's educational institutions - the Baltic Defence College and Finnish National Defence University;
- cooperate between Estonian National Defence College and Finnish National Defence University;
- continue Estonian officers' participation in advanced military training courses and seminars in Finland; and
- cooperate in the area of veteran affairs.

Training and exercises

- participate in or observe national and multinational military exercises, identified for example in the current Combined Joint Nordic Baltic Exercise plan (CJNBEP);
- participate in NATO, and in the future potentially EU exercises, including crisis management exercises;
- facilitate joint use of each other's training areas for field exercises;
- cooperate between voluntary defence organisations; and
- seek possibilities to develop bilateral training and exercise cooperation.

Operations

- exchange information and cooperate with regard to crisis management, within UN, NATO and EU frameworks;
- cooperate through participation in military crisis management operations of mutual interest.

4. Status

This Framework Arrangement is not a legally binding commitment between the Ministry of Defence of Estonia and Ministry of Defence of Finland under international or national law. It is not intended to supersede national law or international obligations by which the Ministry of Defence of Estonia and Ministry of Defence of Finland are bound.

Signed in two copies on 18 January 2017 in Helsinki

For the Ministry of Defence
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