

UK-Finland Framework Arrangement on Enhanced Defence Co-operation

On 7 June in Reykjavik, Ben Wallace and Antti Kaikkonen, the UK and Finnish Defence Ministers, signed a bilateral Framework Arrangement on Enhanced Defence Co-operation.

The agreement reflects the UK and Finland's long-standing and strong defence relationship based on shared values and a desire to work together on common security challenges. It will further strengthen our defence co-operation, our common understanding of the security environment and practical co-operation at all levels. Our aim is to be able to form common situational awareness; plan and coordinate actions; and act together operationally, including in times of crisis. In particular, the UK and Finland are committed to enhance our bilateral Defence co-operation in the following five areas:

- *strategic dialogue, shared assessments, and high-level discussions;*
- *the development of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and the Northern Group, including JEF intelligence-sharing and strategic communications;*
- *the High North (including the Arctic and North Atlantic) and Baltic Sea regions;*
- *countering hybrid threats; and*
- *greater interoperability across all military domains.*

The Framework Arrangement on Enhanced Defence Co-operation builds on the Joint Statement signed by the UK Prime Minister and the Finnish President in Helsinki on 11 May 2022. This statement affirmed that should either country suffer a disaster or an attack, the UK and Finland will, upon request from the affected country, assist each other in a variety of ways, which may include military means.

Finland's aspiration to become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will, after the completion of the accession process, transform our defence relationship into one between NATO Allies, which will provide further opportunities for even deeper co-operation in the field of defence. The UK is committed to support Finland in the membership process.