

Fact Sheet

STEADFAST DEFENDER 24

With war in Europe, increased global rivalry, and instability in world hotspots, the NATO alliance faces the most dangerous and unpredictable security situation in decades. This security situation demands that the Danish Armed Forces, in collaboration with NATO, continuously train their ability to defend Europe and Denmark's neighboring areas.

In spring 2024, NATO will be conducting Exercise Steadfast Defender 24, the largest exercise NATO has undertaken since the Cold War.

About Steadfast Defender

Steadfast Defender 24 consists of a series of NATO exercises and operations across Europe in spring 2024. The purpose of the exercise is to train the alliance's updated defense plans and demonstrate to any potential aggressor that NATO can stand together, move its units collectively, and defend itself as a unified force. The exercise focuses on an Article 5 scenario, where a member of the alliance is attacked and must be defended.

Facts

Approximately 90,000 personnel from all 32 allied nations are participating in the NATO exercise Steadfast Defender 24.

The Danish Defence plans to participate with up to 1,200 soldiers from all services and the Special Operations Command.

In total more than 50 Naval Assets, 80 Air Platforms, and 1,100 Combat Vehicles participate in Steadfast Defender 24.



In the first part of Steadfast Defender 24, reinforcement of Europe is practiced as large forces are moved across the Atlantic from the USA and Canada. The operation aims to demonstrate that the transatlantic link remains strong.



Steadfast Defender 24 encompasses the following activities:

- Movement of large forces from North America to Europe (US Defender 24).
- Underlying US-led Exercises Saber Strike, Immediate Response, and Swift Response conducted from April to June 2024, which see North American forces training alongside European allies in 13 different countries.
- British-led Maritime Exercise Joint Warrior held in late February 2024.
- Norwegian-led Exercise Nordic Response 24, which took place in the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, and Finland in early March 2024. This exercise allowed NATO and the Nordic countries - with Sweden and Finland as NATO members - to strengthen their defense capabilities in the northern region.
- National exercises in Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, etc.
- Steadfast Defender covers all five military domains - air, sea, land, cyber, and space - demonstrating NATO's ability to operate effectively in diverse environments.

The exercise's scope and complexity necessitated years of planning among NATO member countries. It follows a three-year cycle, with the next iteration scheduled for 2027.

Danish Participation

Denmark's involvement in Steadfast Defender 24 underscores our commitment to standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies against any external threats to NATO alliance territories.

- The Danish Armed Forces participated with the frigate Niels Juel in Exercises Joint Warrior and Nordic Response. In Nordic Response we also participated with contributions from the Special Operations Forces and the Air Force, as well as staff support from Defence Command Denmark.
- Denmark is contributing to Steadfast Defender with Host Nation Support, to enable American helicopters and other equipment to advance through Denmark and onwards to Sweden. This equipment will be utilized in the US-led exercise Swift Response.
- In May 2024, the Danish Army will commit a larger contingent of soldiers to the exercise Spring Storm, while Danish units will also participate in the exercise Flaming Sword. The exercises provide Danish troops with the opportunity to train interoperability with allied forces in new and unfamiliar terrain.

Spokespersons

- Deputy Head of Joint Operations, Defence Command Denmark: Brigadier General Poul Ebstrup.
- Commander of the Danish Army's 2nd Brigade: Brigadier General Brian Nissen.
- Deputy Commander in the Special Operations Command: Colonel Nicolai Stahlfest Møller.

Press contact

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Learn more about Steadfast Defender 24 on NATO's website:
<https://shape.nato.int/stede24>