

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace's message to the UK Carrier Strike Group on their homecoming

News story

Upon the return of the UK Carrier Strike Group, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace sent a message to personnel.



Merlin Mk2 Helicopter takes off from the flight deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth for the final time during CSG21. MOD Crown Copyright

The UK Carrier Strike Group have returned home following a historic seven-month global deployment.

3,700 personnel from nine ships, a submarine, five air squadrons and a company of Royal Marines have arrived home in time for Christmas having departed the UK in early May on the historic deployment.

The Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I wish to express my gratitude to the men and women of the United Kingdom Carrier Strike Group upon the completion of your historic first deployment.

Although you have travelled great distances, we at home have followed your journey at every stage. The past seven months have been a muscular and majestic demonstration of British power and commitment at sea, in the skies and over the land. With our United States and Netherlands allies by your side, you have persuasively demonstrated our shared resolve to protect the rules and freedoms upon which peace and prosperity depend. Through your programme of exercises and engagements you have immeasurably strengthened UK partnerships within NATO and far beyond.

To have done all this against the challenges of Covid is remarkable. This has not always been easy for you or your families, but you have approached the task with the skill and professionalism which are the hallmark of the British armed forces.

The foundations you have laid on this deployment will serve those who follow in your wake for years to come. My admiration and gratitude for your dedication is shared across the government. Each of you has done your duty and done it well. The nation cannot ask for more.

I wish you a happy and restful Christmas with your families. Bravo Zulu.

Published 9 December 2021