

Defence Secretary meets NATO Allies to reaffirm UK commitment to European security

News story

Ben Wallace met with defence counterparts in Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia to strengthen the Allied response to tensions on Ukraine's border with Russia



Ben Wallace and Mario Banžić sign an agreement between the UK and Croatia

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has met with NATO Allies and defence counterparts in Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia to strengthen the Allied response to the unfolding crisis on Ukraine's border with Russia and the wider implications for European security.

His meetings follow on from a series of diplomatic talks last week in The Hague, Brussels and Germany where concerns over the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine were raised.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

In Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia this week I have met with my defence counterparts and NATO Allies to discuss ways to strengthen European security and reaffirm our resolve to support the sovereignty of Ukraine.

We now need to see continued dialogue and de-escalation and an end to the build-up of Russian forces on the border of Ukraine. An invasion will be met with severe consequences.

In Budapest on Monday, the Defence Secretary laid a wreath at the Memorial Stone of Heroes in Heroes Square before his meeting with Hungarian Defence Minister Dr Tibor Benkő.

The Defence Secretary held meetings with his counterpart Defence Minister Mario Banožić in Zagreb, Croatia, on Tuesday where he signed a new Strategic Partnership Commitment (SPC).

The SPC builds on the Memorandum of Understanding agreed five years ago, and comes as the UK and Croatia celebrate 39 years of diplomatic relations. The Defence Secretary also met Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenković in Zagreb for talks about our nations' shared approach as NATO Allies to stand up for the sovereignty of Ukraine.

In Slovenia, the Defence Secretary met with Defence Minister Matej Tonin. Like Croatia, the UK and Slovenia are marking 30 years of diplomatic relations.

The Prime Minister yesterday (Tuesday) [travelled to Ukraine](#) for talks with President Zelenskyy as the UK announced £88 million of new funding to help Ukraine clamp down on corruption and reduce the nation's reliance on Russian energy supplies.

Britain is [considering](#) reinforcing NATO's defences through new and bolstered deployments which underpin the UK's support to European allies.

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