

# News story: Defence Secretary: Britain committed to leading European security

Sir Michael told the annual Munich Security Conference that while Britain is leaving the European Union, the UK would not be stepping back from its role in European security.

Britain's leadership this year is demonstrated by two new major commitments to the NATO Alliance:

- Leading NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, otherwise known as the 'spearhead force'. This UK-led NATO Brigade is ready and willing to respond to any threat the Alliance faces and shows how NATO is strengthening its collective defence and deterrence.
- Deploying a battle group of around 800 personnel to lead in Estonia NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence, another way in which NATO is stepping up to deter threats. Britain will deploy as part of the battle group the United States is leading in Poland, with over 100 troops.

The Defence Secretary also met with his German counterpart, Ursula von der Leyen, where he discussed the unprecedented level of cooperation between the two countries. Sir Michael also welcomed Germany's commitment to increase its defence spending.

Sir Michael, along with the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, yesterday [launched](#) Britain's new strategy for engaging more internationally in defence activity.

The International Defence Engagement Strategy is the way in which all defence activity, short of combat operations, work abroad to prevent conflict, build stability and gain influence internationally.

Speaking at the Munich Secretary Conference, Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Britain is committed to Europe's security, and we're stepping up our engagement internationally. Whether defeating Daesh in Iraq and Syria, deploying with our NATO Allies to deter threats, or engaging globally to help countries develop their security, Britain is playing a major role – and will continue to do so.

The Defence Secretary also confirmed that Britain would keep the momentum up in the fight against Daesh. In Iraq and Syria, the RAF are flying day and night to defeat Daesh.

The RAF hit over 300 targets as part of recent operations to liberate eastern Mosul, and is now focussing efforts on the approaches to the west of the city, where it is expected the liberation operation will begin within days.