

PM's speech to British troops in Tapa, Estonia: 21 December 2019

My mission is very simple, it is to say thank you. Because of course in the next few days everybody in our country is going to spend Christmas with their families, and you are going to be here. A long way away, in a pretty cold place, at Christmas, in the Baltic States in Estonia.

And what you are doing is incredibly important because the reason everybody in our country can have Christmas in peace and security is because of what you are doing here.

Quite literally what you are doing is showing that NATO works, and that NATO is an alliance to which we in this country are absolutely committed.

And the idea of NATO is very, very simple. It's all for one and one for all. And that means that when our Estonian friends want a commitment by the British Army we make that commitment with this Enhanced Forward Presence.

And they love it. It does fantastic things for the local community and I talked earlier on to Prime Minister Jüri Ratas and he says that the contribution of British troops is fantastic and all the engagement with the local population is wonderful.

But it's about much more than that. It's a demonstration by our country that we are committed to the security and stability of the whole of Europe, and you are the most vivid and powerful possible symbol and expression of that support and commitment.

And that is why one billion people are protected by the NATO alliance. The most successful military alliance in history.

And that is why we have peace and security and stability in Europe, and peace and stability in Europe for seventy years.

And it is an incredible thing for me to come to Estonia and think that when I was a kid, when I was your age actually, Estonia was part of the Soviet Union and we are now here helping to protect Estonia and to guarantee its security.

It is a fantastic thing, it is a deeply moving thing for someone of my generation.

Thank you all very much for what you are doing. Happy Christmas.