

Press release: UK deepens defence cooperation with Germany

Gavin Williamson, alongside his German counterpart Ursula von der Leyen, signed a Joint Vision Statement today deepening the already strong UK-German relationship and increasing defence cooperation across a range of areas, from tackling violent extremism to building new military capabilities.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Although we are preparing to leave the EU, our commitment to European security is resolute.

The statement signed today strengthens UK-German ties and bolsters the defence of two key NATO partners. This is an alliance we both hold dear.

The Defence Secretary also attended a demonstration from UK and German personnel who form part of the combined river crossing capability in Minden – a capability vital to NATO operations. The visit comes after the announcement that the British Army will be permanently based in the country beyond 2020.

The events in Germany followed a meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Brussels, in which Mr. Williamson stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Allies in condemnation of reckless and indiscriminate Russian cyber-attacks.

At NATO HQ, he discussed the importance of the alliance being ready to respond not only to the threats from the East but also from the South. He announced that the British Army would be deepening cooperation with partners through linking 1 Div HQ, which leads overseas military capacity building, to NATO's emerging Defence Capacity Building initiatives.

He also attended NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), consulting with counterparts to ensure the alliance has the necessary tools and procedures in place to respond to a nuclear crisis.