Ministry of Defence

SUMMARY

A STRONGER NETHERLANDS, A SAFER EUROPE

INVESTING IN A ROBUST NATO AND EU

DEFENCE WHITE PAPER 2022

JUNE 2022

PREFACE

We present this Defence White Paper at a tipping point in European history. A large-scale war is raging at the very heart of Europe. In this new reality, it is important that we take responsibility. The Netherlands and Europe must become stronger in order to be able to protect our freedom, security and prosperity, today and in the future. That is the starting point for this Defence White Paper.

The threat assessment has grown in scale and complexity over the past years, and this instability is expected to continue. In view of the challenges we face, the Ministry of Defence will be called upon with increasing frequency in the future. Whether defending our own territory and that of our allies, promoting the international rule of law or providing relief in a crisis: the Netherlands armed forces always step up to the plate. Thanks to the personnel of our organisation.

Building the armed forces of the future therefore begins with our people: regular military personnel, civilians and reservists. We will invest in good conditions of employment, education and training, and a safe working environment. Good employment practices also entail creativity and flexibility in the recruitment and retention of our people. And good facilities for our veterans. The Defence organisation will become a modern organisation that does not only serve society, but is also at the very heart of it. Sustainability, transparency, inclusivity and diversity are standard elements in our plans.

We are resolutely working to make up arrears. Operational readiness, combat power and agility will be increased. In addition, we are taking a targeted and efficient approach to our investment in new domains and in innovation. This includes strategic choices. For that reason, the Defence organisation is committed to a long-term programme of intensive collaboration and further development of specialisms. But we cannot do this alone.

Reinforcement of the European security architecture starts with a strong NATO and a strong EU. Together, we will improve the coordination of investments in national armed forces, paying particular attention to Europe's strategic deficiencies. Through collaboration we will improve the quality, quantity and efficiency of our own armed forces and those of our partners. The Netherlands will play a leading role in this.

We will expand and intensify collaboration with our partners. We will also do so with knowledge institutes, the business community and other security partners. Moreover, we will maintain internal communication across all branches and levels of the armed forces about what is needed and how we can best shape the transition of our organisation.

Our freedom, security and shared values are precious. Before you lies an ambitious yet realistic plan for the future of our armed forces, underpinned by the most substantial investments in the Defence organisation since the end of the Cold War. Swift action is needed to achieve concrete results, yet recovery and restructuring also take time. Multi-annual political commitment remains essential for the long-term realisation of the changes that have been initiated.

We are pushing hard to implement the plans, together with our personnel and our partners. This is how the Defence organisation will protect what we value.

Minister of Defence
Kajsa Ollongren

State Secretary for Defence
Christophe van der Maat

SUMMARY

DEFENCE WHITE PAPER 2022: A STRONGER NETHERLANDS, A SAFER EUROPE

European countries are joining forces to protect Europe's current and future security. They are intensifying Defence collaboration and increasing defence spending. An increase in collective defence capabilities will allow Europe to better defend itself and counter any threats. This is a matter of urgency, as demonstrated by Russia' s invasion of Ukraine. The Netherlands, too, will invest heavily in defence in the coming years. The government will invest an additional 14,8 billion euros between 2022 and 2025. With these funds, the armed forces will become a future-proof organisation embedded within NATO, the EU, and Dutch society. The Defence organisation will take significant steps in the coming years to make the Netherlands stronger and Europe safer.

MAIN MEASURES

1 Strong support
- Replenish stocks such as ammunition, fuel and equipment
- Tackle materiel maintenance backlogs
- Strengthen support for special forces, air defence, fire support and national tasks
- The Netherlands as the gateway for military mobility in Europe

2 A good employer, embedded in society
- Improve conditions of employment with a new salary structure, allowance scheme and flexible HR model
- Diversity, inclusiveness and social and physical safety
- Concentrate, renew and increase sustainability of real estate

3 Strengthening of specialisms
- Strengthen air and missile defence at land, sea and in the air
- Expand and arm unmanned reconnaissance aircraft
- Reinforce measures to counter enemy drones

4 More European cooperation
- Expand and intensify collaboration with European partners
- Boost European development of defence capabilities
- Increase contribution to the existing European headquarters
- The Netherlands continues to strive towards better interoperability and increased standardisation within NATO and the EU

5 New domains and the ability to innovate
- Investment in research with knowledge institutes throughout Europe
- Development of our own technological and industrial base in the Netherlands
- Investment in the space domain and development of our own small satellites

6 Information-driven organisation and operations
- Improve IT infrastructure
- Reinforce intelligence capabilities
- Purchase new sensors
- Expand defensive and offensive cyber capabilities

COURSES OF ACTION

- Strong support
- A good employer, embedded in society
- Strengthening of specialisms
- More European cooperation
- New domains and the ability to innovate
- Information-driven organisation and operations

EFFECTS

HIGHER READINESS AND DEPLOYABILITY

The Defence organisation must be able to act more rapidly, more frequently and for longer periods of time. The current diverse and complex threats demand it.

TARGETED IMPROVEMENT OF COMBAT POWER

The armed forces must be capable of fighting and winning. That is a deterrent. The Defence organisation is reinforcing a number of specific capabilities.

MORE AGILE

The armed forces must be capable of adapting to threats and crisis situations rapidly, scaling up or down quickly, and taking a customised approach, all on the basis of a solid foundation.

OBJECTIVES

Future-proof armed forces, embedded in NATO, the EU and Dutch society

INTRODUCTION

Countries around the world are facing various and increasing threats. The shifting balance of power, climate change and technological advances all play a significant role in this. Russia's invasion of Ukraine demonstrates how threats can turn into actual violence with far-reaching consequences, even on the European continent. NATO countries are therefore taking additional measures to bolster their defences. Within the European Union, too, there is momentum for jointly strengthening the security architecture. European countries want to improve their ability to protect their populations. For the first time in years, the Netherlands is investing heavily in defence in order to be able to defend our freedom together with our allies.

By reinforcing its defence cooperation, Europe will become a stronger partner in the transatlantic relationship and a more credible player in the geopolitical field. Now is the time to work with our allies on joint development, procurement and maintenance of materiel, and the training and education of personnel. More standardisation helps improve interoperability. After all, military cooperation is heavily dependent on the ability of our systems and units to operate together smoothly.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine may be foremost in our minds, but it is by no means the only type of threat that is looming. Increasingly, hybrid power struggles are involved: disinformation affects our democracies on a daily basis and frequent cyber-attacks pose an ongoing threat to critical infrastructure and processes. The development of China as a superpower means that the US is shifting its focus from Europe to Asia. At Europe's borders, climate change and inadequate public policies are fuelling instability and extremism. Within our own Kingdom, organised crime groups are undermining the rule of law and causing more extreme violence on our streets. In the Caribbean, the situation in neighbouring Venezuela is causing geopolitical tensions. In addition, the effects of extreme weather conditions are noticeable throughout the Kingdom.

The armed forces serve the Netherlands in order to protect our freedom, our security and our prosperity. The diversity and complexity of threats clearly demonstrate the need for armed forces that can be deployed rapidly and effectively in a variety of scenarios, often at several locations at once, as part of international alliances, and in variable circumstances. We cannot limit our focus to one type of threat or one type of operation.
This demands a great deal from our people, and the quality of our people is our greatest strenght. They are always ready, at home and abroad, whenever and wherever they are called upon. By making additional funds available, the government has committed to building future-proof armed forces. We will invest in our personnel by providing better conditions of employment, good colleagues and sufficient staffing levels, opportunities for development, and modern equipment to allow them to do their jobs safely.

SELECTED AREAS OF FOCUS

The Defence organisation will be transformed into a modern, high-tech organisation with the ability to respond more rapidly, with greater adaptability and combat power; an organisation that acts on the basis of the best information. The Netherlands cannot protect its freedom, security and prosperity on its own. And it does not need to. As member of NATO and the EU, we are embedded in two powerful and complementary alliances together with countries that share our values. In terms of our investments in the Defence organisation, we are therefore selecting capabilities that provide added value within those alliances. Because they match our qualities and because they meet the needs of NATO and the EU. Together we stand strong in the face of the dangers that lie ahead.

We have established specific areas of focus in order to guide our choices. First, we will reinforce the foundation of our armed forces. This is the quickest way to increase our readiness, deployability and agility. In concrete terms, this means improving conditions of employment, bolstering business operations and reinforcing operational support for combat units, for example by:

- increasing deployment stocks;
- reinforcing the air transport capability;
- reinforcing the medical chain;
- expanding fire support capabilities;
- expanding intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities;

Besides the foundational layer, combat power will also be reinforced. The emphasis in this regard is on multidomain operations: achieving effects collectively. For example, integrated air and missile defence will be strengthened with additional ground-based air defence and additional fighter aircraft, and with the procurement of long-range and precision-guided weapon systems that can also be deployed from frigates and submarines. To enable a rapid response in times of crisis, army and navy special operations forces will be reinforced with supporting units and resources such as special helicopters. Furthermore, the Defence organisation will expand the capabilities that contribute to national security, including the protection of critical infrastructure and processes.
The specific consequences for the Defence elements in short:

- For the **Navy** and the **Air Force**, the focus is on attaining greater striking power, which will enable them to make greater contributions to international joint deterrence and operations at the highest end of the spectrum of force.
- For the **Army**, the focal point is further integration with the German army and the increase of collective striking power. We will invest in the necessary support so that battalions can operate more rapidly and autonomously across the entire spectrum of force.
- For the **Marechaussee**, the focus is on information technology, training opportunities, and providing support for land operations and national tasks. This also allows the Defence organisation to meet increasing demand for support to civilian authorities.

BUILDING THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FUTURE

It takes time to build future-proof armed forces. After earlier cutbacks, the current growth demands a great deal from our people and processes. The Defence organisation understands like no other the need to achieve this growth quickly and responsibly, and is fully committed to doing so. In the coming years, the Defence organisation will achieve the following effects:

1. Higher levels of readiness and deployability: Units must be at full strength, trained and current, and provided with the right support and sufficient supplies so that they can be deployed more rapidly, more frequently, and for longer periods of time. This requires, among other things, investment in the people who form the core of the organisation. They deserve appropriate remuneration and a safe and pleasant environment in which they can focus on their unique work.

2. Targeted improvement of combat power: The armed forces must be capable of fighting and winning. This acts as a deterrent and contributes to preventing armed conflict.

3. More agility: The Defence organisation must be capable of adapting rapidly, independently and in an international context when threats and crisis situations arise suddenly. In this regard, innovation is crucial in order to keep up with the constantly changing playing field.

The transition of the armed forces will be subject to changes in our environment. Regardless of whether these changes concern the security situation, the labour market, the climate or modern technology: the Defence organisation will adapt in order to shape the armed forces of the future. Stronger ties to society and creative solutions, for example with regard to recruitment and retention, will help us deal with the changing circumstances. The Defence organisation must also carry out necessary modernisations. That requires commitment across the board to information-driven operations, automation and robotisation, cyber and cyber security, electronic warfare, and (presence in) space. Sustainability measures are already part of our business operations and will continue to be included.

A STRONGER NETHERLANDS, A SAFER EUROPE

As a result of the ambitions and the associated investments of the current government, the Netherlands will meet the NATO standard of spending 2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defence in 2024 and 2025. The structural increase in defence spending amounts to EUR 5 billion. After 2025, the Netherlands will fall below that standard, but it will reap the benefits of the initiated change of direction. A stronger Netherlands in terms of defence contributes to a safer Europe, of which we are an integral part.

SERIOUSLY DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION

Countries around the world are facing increasing threat levels due to a shifting balance of power. For years, potential opponents have been strengthening their armed forces. Hybrid conflict is increasingly common: disinformation is affecting our democracies, and cyber-attacks are threatening our critical infrastructure. Space is becoming militarised and scarce natural resources increasingly lead to conflict. The objective is always the same: to undermine stability in order to gain influence and power.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

KINGDOM

Within our own Kingdom, organised crime groups are undermining the rule of law and causing more extreme violence on our streets. In the Caribbean, the situation in neighbouring Venezuela is causing geopolitical tensions. In addition, the effects of extreme weather conditions are noticeable throughout the Kingdom.

EUROPE'S BORDERS

Climate change and inadequate public policies are fuelling instability and extremism, resulting in armed conflict, oppression and irregular migration. Proxy wars are being fought in Syria, Libya, Yemen and elsewhere.

RUSSIA

The security situation in Europe is deteriorating due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The consequences are barely comprehensible. The integrity of the allied territory is under real threat. Russia has violated numerous treaties and conventions. Russian intelligence officers do not shy away from using nerve agents on NATO territory. Even nuclear threats are not shunned.

CHINA

China as a superpower is developing rapidly, also militarily. The country is adopting a more assertive stance. This is also contributing to the American shift of focus from Europe to China. China has a wide range of military and non-military resources at its disposal, which it can deploy in isolation or together to gain power and influence.

OBJECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION

OBJECTIVE

Europe must improve its ability to defend itself and its own security interests. Europe needs to become more self-reliant. The countries of Europe, including the Netherlands, must therefore become stronger together. This will be accomplished through NATO, the EU, and international cooperation.

The Defence organisation will become **a future-proof organisation embedded within NATO, the EU, and Dutch society.**

The Defence organisation will reinforce its foundation and transform itself into a high-tech organisation that is responsive and highly adaptive, prepared for the challenges of today and tomorrow.

The Defence organisation must be able to fight when necessary and, together with partners, be able to protect common interests. Below the threshold of armed conflict, the Defence organisation must also be ready for a wide range of deployment options. The Defence organisation will focus on the capabilities where the Netherlands has the greatest added value in relation to our partners. The technological, social and ecological developments that affect society and the Defence organisation will be taken into account. Those developments range from the consequences of climate change to trends in the labour market.

EFFECTS

Strengthening the foundation and getting the most out of the existing organisation will increase the operational relevance of the Defence organisation and the stability of its finances. This will allow the organisation to focus on its core task: the deployment of the armed forces nationally and internationally. Meanwhile, the Defence organisation will be transforming itself into a smarter, more high-tech organisation with the ability to respond more rapidly, with greater adaptability and combat power; an organisation that acts on the basis of the best information.

To that end, the Defence organisation will achieve the following effects:

1. **Higher levels of readiness and deployability: The Defence organisation must be able to act more rapidly, more frequently and for longer periods of time. The diverse and complex threats that exist simultaneously across multiple domains demand it.**

The armed forces must be able to step up when our security is under threat. Firstly, this requires that we reinforce operational support and increase deployment stocks. These are currently significant bottlenecks that mean we cannot make maximum use of our armed forces and often have to deny requests from partners. With investments in fire support and air defence, supply, medical units, operational IT, ammunition and spare parts, the Defence organisation will make more deployment possible. Investments in materiel and exercises also contribute to increased readiness and deployability. Furthermore, the Defence organisation is investing in its personnel: we are providing our people with enough flexibility, challenging and meaningful work, career perspective, and appropriate remuneration. As a result, the Defence organisation will become and remain attractive to a greater target group. With enough people with the right skills, the Defence organisation can fight when necessary.

2. **Targeted improvement of combat power: The armed forces must be capable of fighting and winning. This is a deterrent. We have opted to reinforce a number of specific capabilities.**

The Defence organisation, together with its partners, must be able to respond to threats in any domain. Opponents are modernising their weapon systems, continuously increasing their impact. The Defence organisation must therefore also have high quality capabilities at its disposal. These act as deterrents that can help prevent conflict. However, if conflict does arise, the armed forces fight to win. Because the Netherlands cannot do everything in isolation, the Defence organisation has , on the basis of our strengths and geographic location, made a targeted selection of capabilities that add significant value for our partners. This is how the Defence organisation contributes to the collective combat power of NATO and the EU. With the investments by the current government, the Defence organisation is therefore reinforcing the intelligence chain, cyber capabilities, special operations forces, fire support, and integrated air and missile defence.

3. **More agility: The Defence organisation must be capable of adapting rapidly when threats and crisis situations suddenly arise. This requires the ability to scale up or down quickly and to take a customised approach, all on the basis of a solid foundation.**

In crisis situations, such as the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 crisis, the armed forces must be able to adapt rapidly. That is why the Defence organisation is investing in support capabilities, in cooperation with partners, and in reservists and their employers. Furthermore, the Defence organisation will have faster access to better and more reliable information. Investments in knowledge and innovation also provide agility: the armed forces must also be able to win tomorrow's battle.

The most pressing problems have been solved, but there is more to do. Our IT infrastructure and real estate require further investment, as do physical and social safety. That, too, makes us more agile. In addition, we will simplify our own regulations in order to speed up procedures. Government-wide rules and policies will take account of the special position of the Defense organisation.

COURSES OF ACTION

The effects described above constitute the central theme for the plans during the current government's term of office. The Defence organisation intends to achieve these effects through six courses of action, which also determine the structure of this Defence White Paper:

1. **Strong support:** investing in combat support, combat service support, and deployment stocks will enable the Defence organisation to act more rapidly, more frequently, and for longer periods of time. The Defence organisation will participate in military exercises more often, in multiple domains and with international partners.

2. **A good employer embedded in society:** personnel of the Netherlands Ministry of Defence deserve appropriate remuneration, development opportunities, and a safe working environment. The Defence organisation is therefore investing in employment conditions, a modern personnel policy, healthy business operations, and a healthy working environment. This also includes putting our real estate in order.

3. **Strengthening of specialisms:** the Netherlands Ministry of Defence is making targeted investments in specific capabilities and skills where we add significant value. As a result, combat power and the effectiveness of deployment will increase. The Defence organisation works closely together with our allies with regard to our specialisms, thus contributing significantly to safety in Europe.

4. **Increased European collaboration:** cooperation is essential to guarantee our security. We are stronger when working with partners, multilaterally and bilaterally. The Netherlands will play a leading role in this collaboration. A stronger EU in the area of common security and defence means a stronger NATO.

5. **New domains and the ability to innovate:** with the current rate of technological development, failing to innovate means falling behind. Therefore, the Netherlands Ministry of Defence will continue to take the lead in research and development, as well as in the exploration of new domains. Innovation often creates opportunities for Dutch knowledge institutes and businesses in other industry sectors.

6. **Information-driven operations:** Better access to, and use of, data and information will improve the quality of decision-making and increase the effectiveness of operations in all domains (including the cyber domain). In addition to a robust IT infrastructure, the Netherlands Ministry of Defence is therefore investing in further integration and reinforcement of sensor, weapon and C2 systems; in capabilities for improved and more rapid information processing; and in defensive and offensive assets in the information environment. Information-driven operations take place within the applicable legal frameworks. Furthermore, improvements to information management allow the armed forces to be more transparent towards politics and society.

MORE EUROPEAN COOPERATION

The Defence organisation cooperates with many allies and partners, for example in the context of NATO and the EU. This cooperation takes place at three levels: the politico-strategic level, the operational level, and the materiel-related level.

Specifically, this involves collaboration in the fields of training and exercises, missions and operations, the procurement of materiel and systems to promote interoperability, and standardisation.

Like the Netherlands, other European countries are increasing their defence spending. Germany, for example, is investing significantly in its armed forces. This is therefore the time to work together in a smarter way.

The Netherlands will play a leading role and will thus contribute to achieving increased collective operational readiness more quickly, to combating fragmentation and to reinforcing the European security infrastructure. This will make the Netherlands stronger and Europe safer.