

New military diplomacy training to upskill specialists in negotiation and languages, as part of new Defence Diplomacy Strategy

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UK military personnel will be put through their paces as part of a new diplomacy training program - upskilling specialists in negotiation and languages as part of the UK's first Defence Diplomacy Strategy.

- Military personnel will learn from diplomats and language experts in a new training program.
- First UK Defence Diplomacy Strategy reinforces Defence's role as an engine for growth by putting exports and industrial collaboration at its heart.
- Strategy published today delivers on Strategic Defence Review commitment to strengthen key partnerships while protecting UK influence across the globe.

The strategy will boost warfighting readiness by training alongside allies, upskilling international-facing personnel through a new Defence Diplomacy Cadre, and providing world-class military education to students from over 100 countries.

The Defence Diplomacy Strategy published today [24 March] steps up the UK's engagement as part of the new contest for influence, expanding world-class military education, and making defence an engine for economic growth.

The Strategy will support delivery of the SDR's priorities and NATO First vision, through strong European partnerships, the UK's leading role in the JEF coalition and the UK-EU Security and Defence Partnership - while maintaining vital relationships across the Euro-Atlantic, Middle East, Indo-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and our Overseas Territories.

It is backed by the largest sustained increase to defence spending since the end of the Cold War - hitting 2.6% of GDP from 2027.

Defence Secretary, John Healey MP said:

In this new era of threat, now is the era for hard power, strong alliances and sure diplomacy.

Since we entered office, our government has strengthened the UK's relationships with our key allies and partners. We've got new defence agreements with Norway, Germany, France, and the EU. We've delivered record defence export deals. And I'm proud that the UK is leading on international support for Ukraine.

This strategy is critical for delivering security for people at home, boosting NATO's collective deterrence and making defence an engine for jobs and growth.

Key elements of the Strategy include:

- A new Defence Diplomacy Cadre, with over 200 civilian policy professionals trained in

diplomacy and negotiation skills.

- Enhanced intelligence sharing, with the new Military Intelligence Services to recommend by end of 2026 how sharing can reinforce NATO First and enhance UK influence.
- Strengthened alumni networks, nurturing long-term relationships with graduates now in senior positions, including Czech President Petr Pavel and New Zealand's Vice Chief of Defence Force, Rear Admiral Mat Williams.
- Expanded international military education, with almost 600 students from over 100 countries receiving world class UK military training.
- Overseas defence exports personnel brought into Defence's global network to boost sales, grow industry capacity and support UK jobs.

Minister of State for Defence, Lord Coaker, said:

The threats we face are more serious and less predictable than at any time since the Cold War. NATO First does not mean NATO only – security in the Euro-Atlantic is indivisible from security in the Middle East and Indo-Pacific. This first ever Defence Diplomacy Strategy ensures the UK remains fully committed to working with our global allies and partners on shared priorities.

The strategy embeds 18 months of international successes, including securing strategic agreements with Germany, France and Norway, strengthening our national security and making defence an engine for growth. It also marks a record year for defence exports, including the biggest fighter jet deal in a generation Türkiye the largest ever warship deal in our history with Norway.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-military-diplomacy-training-to-upskill-specialists-in-negotiation-and-languages-as-part-of-new-defence-diplomacy-strategy>