

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

between

The Ministry of Resilience and Preparedness of Denmark,

The Ministry of the Interior of Estonia,

The Ministry of the Interior of Finland,

The Federal Ministry of the Interior of Germany

The Ministry of Justice of Iceland,

The Ministry of Interior of Latvia,

The Ministry of the Interior of Lithuania,

The Ministry of Justice and Public Security of Norway,

The Ministry of the Interior and Administration of Poland,

and

The Ministry of Defence of Sweden

On

Cooperation on the protection of the civilian population

Background

In recent years Europe has experienced a deteriorating security environment. Increased hybrid threats, violations of airspace, suspected sabotage of critical underwater infrastructure and natural and man-made disasters highlight the need for strengthened regional cooperation. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine continues to affect the stability of the region. Enhancing our preparedness is an urgent matter.

Through NATO membership and our geographical proximity, we are interconnected and mutually dependent on our individual and collective security. This document expresses a shared intention to deepen cooperation in order to address these challenges effectively.

Through joint planning, we strengthen our collective capacity to safeguard the civilian population during severe crises, as well as in the event of an armed attack or the threat thereof against any of our countries.

Purpose

The Participants express their intention to cooperate in planning and enabling the implementation of cross-border evacuations and ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people in our part of Europe. The cooperation will primarily focus on evacuation and uncontrolled movement of people, while not being limited to these areas, should there subsequently be a shared political will to broaden its scope.

The cooperation will be based on NATO's revised Baseline Requirements for resilience and be conducted in accordance with international law including international human rights law and, when applicable, international humanitarian law, applicable EU legislation, and relevant NATO frameworks.

Definitions

Evacuation – Planned or ad hoc relocation of a large number of civilians from a risk area to safer areas, including across national borders.

Uncontrolled movement of people – Rapid, unpredictable cross-border movement of people without state-level operational coordination.

Areas of Cooperation

The Participants will establish and maintain common planning principles and coordinated procedures for effective management of uncontrolled movement of people and cross-border evacuations, including the exchange of information necessary for their implementation, subject to appropriate security safeguards.

The Participants intend to jointly assess, inter alia, transport capacity and transport infrastructure capacity, identify evacuation corridors, border crossings and potential transit and accommodation points, and promote coordination between civilian and military actors as well as public-private partnerships. The efforts will support the requirements for reception, registration, and onward movement of people in need of protection, with particular attention to vulnerable groups.

The joint planning for managing uncontrolled movement of people and of conducting cross-border evacuations will be based on the current threat assessment.

The Participants agree to share the information necessary for planning procedure for each evacuating country.

A more detailed Annex to this memorandum will be jointly prepared on an operational level by the relevant ministries, departments, and agencies on behalf of the governments of the

respective countries. A list of the categories of data to be shared, point(s) of contact for each country and their role in coordinating the implementation of the memorandum, as well as the mechanism of information sharing at the operational level will be included in the Annex.

The Participants will ensure the use of secure communication tools and compliance with the relevant security procedures to facilitate the sharing of sensitive information.

The Participants are strongly encouraged to establish cooperation mechanisms for public information, warning, alerting, information sharing and joint research projects.

Coordination and follow up

Cooperation at the political level will be conducted within the framework of established regional formats, or within any other appropriate forum on an ad hoc basis. The Participants also recognize the value of coordinating efforts with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and NATO structures. Ministers are convened for strategic decision-making.

The responsible ministers of the participating countries have formally endorsed this Memorandum of Understanding. The execution of the signing process will be facilitated through the embassies of the participating countries in Stockholm.

Each ministry will appoint a Point of Contact for the implementation of this MoU. The Point of Contact will be the primary coordination mechanism to enhance efficiency, avoid duplication and for the development of the Annex. The Points of Contact will meet at least once a year and report back to the ministers responsible.

Operational work will be carried out in consultation between relevant ministries, departments, and agencies in each country.

Nature and Principles

This MoU is legally non-binding, is not meant to constitute an international treaty or to create any rights or obligations under international law and does not affect the existing rights or obligations of the Participants under international law, applicable Union law, or national law. The cooperation will be guided by principles of human safety, non-discrimination, and respect for human rights.

This MoU may be amended at any time by mutual written consent of all Participants.

Each participating country may end cooperation under this MoU at any time. It should inform all Participants in writing of its intention to end cooperation at least six months prior.
