

**DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT BY THE MINISTERS OF DEFENCE OF  
GERMANY, THE NETHERLANDS AND FINLAND  
IN THE FIELD OF 'EU BATTLEGROUPS'**

Germany, the Netherlands and Finland are strongly committed to the development of the European Security and Defence Policy and the realisation of the Headline Goal 2010. We recognise the need to strengthen European military capabilities, in particular to be able to respond with rapid and decisive action to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations covered by the Treaty on the European Union and the European Security Strategy. The 'EU Battlegroups', intended to operate at very short notice, will contribute significantly to this capability.

The signing of a Letter of Intent between Germany and the Netherlands at the informal meeting in Noordwijk, clearly marked and underlined our intentions to enhance the EU Battlegroup co-operation. Since then, Germany, the Netherlands and Finland have considered the possibilities to make available and substantially contribute to a rapidly deployable framework force package, associated with pre-identified deployment, support, logistic assets and C2, at the required readiness of 5-10 days, as being identified in the EU Battlegroups Concept.

We hereby express our strong political will to commit dedicated parts of our armed forces and military capabilities to join and effectively co-operate in a German-Netherlands-Finnish coherent Battlegroup force package, fully adherent to the political intentions and military characteristics of the EU Battlegroups. We are confident that this co-operation will meet the requirement of the European Council decision for a rapid and decisive political and military response.

The German-Netherlands-Finnish Battlegroup (GNF BG) will therefore be capable to rapidly deploy its full operational capabilities, from January 2007 onwards for a duration of 6 months and in future rotations as well.

We, the Ministers of Defence of Germany, the Netherlands and Finland, wish to emphasise that the German-Netherlands-Finnish co-operation in the field of the 'EU Battlegroups', will strengthen both our expeditionary capacities as well as the European capabilities in the area of rapid response considerably.

Brussels, 22 November 2004.

ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE FOR GERMANY,  
THE PARLIAMENTARY STATE SECRETARY OF DEFENCE,

MR. W. KOLBOW

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE FOR THE NETHERLANDS,

MR. H.G.J. KAMP

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE FOR FINLAND,

MR. S. KÄÄRIÄINEN