



# NORDEFSCO ANNUAL REPORT 2016

"Promoting security through cooperation"





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The Danish Minister of Defence  
Claus Hjort Frederiksen

## FOREWORD

When Denmark assumed the chairmanship of the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFECO) in January 2016 it was with an ambitious agenda. During the past year, the Nordic countries have demonstrated the ability and intention to enhance and further deepen Nordic cooperation. The goal throughout has been to find joint solutions to shared problems.

In November 2016, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden signed the "Easy Access" agreement enabling our countries' armed forces to gain easier access to each other's air, land and sea territories in peacetime. The agreement addresses the shared need to increase our ability to move and operate effectively and rapidly in our region – and with fewer resources. Furthermore, we have continued the work on an arrangement enabling the Nordic countries to share radar data in the Nordic region in order to enhance situational awareness. This work will be developed further in 2017.

The Nordic countries have also set an example to be followed with regards to ensuring long term contributions to the UN. The rotational arrangement of a tactical air transport capability to the UN mission in Mali will ensure this capability to the mission until the end of 2018. The arrangement also shows that Nordic defence cooperation is open for countries outside the Nordic region, in this case Belgium and Portugal.

At the same time, the Nordic-Baltic cooperation has been deepened, both within the framework of NORDEFECO and bilaterally. We have developed guidelines on how we engage and develop concrete areas of cooperation in a Nordic-Baltic context and are actively engaged in projects in Georgia and Ukraine, supporting defence capacity building efforts in the defence sector.

These are some of the main achievements during this year's work and a great example of how concrete results are achieved when we apply political will and common sense.

The state of Nordic defence cooperation is strong and the Nordic countries continue to intensify our practical and political cooperation over a wide range of issues. This is to a large extent made possible by the fundamental and shared values and interests on defence and security issues that the Nordic countries enjoy. The future will require us to intensify cooperation in both the practical, political and operational domain. Strengthening the Nordic Defence Cooperation will not only benefit the Nordic region, but also promote stability and inspiration beyond our borders.

2016 was a very productive and fruitful year for Nordic cooperation. When the leaders from the Nordic countries met with the American president in April 2016 it was a clear demonstration of the significance of Nordic cooperation. The summit reaffirmed the pledge for a deep and sustainable commitment on key international issues related to security and defence in a challenging security environment.

As the Danish Minister of Defence, the NORDEFECO achievements in 2016 have left me proud and optimistic on behalf of our Nordic defence cooperation, and I look forward to the coming year under Finnish leadership.



Danish Minister of Defence  
Claus Hjort Frederiksen



Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway sign the Easy Access Memorandum of Understanding on 9 November 2016. Photo: Danish Ministry of Defence

## NEW NORDEFCO INITIATIVES 2016

### ✓ **Easy Access Declaration**

- Signed by Nordic Defence Ministers at the ministerial meeting in Copenhagen in November 2016

### ✓ **Follow-up on regional security challenges**

- Nordic defence ministers and policy directors have discussed regional security challenges in the Baltic Sea area, the North Atlantic and the High North. Future discussions and information sharing on regional security challenges will take place in existing formats and can be facilitated by the new secure communication system between the Nordic countries.

### ✓ **Explore possibilities for Nordic contributions to international military missions**

- In June 2016, a Letter of Intent to contribute with a tactical air transport capability on a rotational basis to the United Nations mission MINUSMA in Mali was signed by Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Belgium and Portugal.

### ✓ **Continue Nordic support to the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF)**

- Nordic Defence Ministers agreed to continue support to the EASF at the ministerial meeting in November 2016 with an emphasis on ensuring local ownership.

## ONGOING NORDEFCO ACTION PLANS AND PROJECTS

✓ **Implement the Secure Communications System in the first half 2016 and explore opportunities to extend the secure communications to the Baltic countries**

- The Secure Communications System was implemented in June 2016.

✓ **Continue to develop cooperation on Air Surveillance (NORECAS)**

- At the defence ministerial on 9 November 2016, ministers decided to continue work on the NORECAS agreement and that NATO should be consulted on the agreement. The work will be continued under Finnish Chairmanship in 2017.

✓ **Develop work on Alternate Landing Base exploring the possibility to extend to armed aircraft and include Iceland.**

- Denmark, Norway and Sweden have agreed to allow unarmed military aircraft to access each other's air bases. Finland and Iceland are expected to sign the agreement in near future, after which the possibility to extend the agreement to armed aircraft will be explored.

✓ **Continue to develop the concept of a possible Northern Flag Exercise with the precondition of the US support and contribution**

- Ministers agreed at the defence ministerial on 9 November to approve the plan to develop the Norwegian Arctic Challenge Exercise into a flag level exercise on a step-by-step basis.

✓ **Continue to exchange experiences and best practices, and develop cooperation within international operations**

- At meetings between ministers and policy directors, current and potential international operations were discussed with a focus on the exchange of experiences and best practices.

✓ **Follow-up to the Nordic-Baltic Declaration concerning areas of enhanced cooperation between the Nordic and the Baltic countries**

- The Military Coordination Committee has developed guidelines on how we engage and develop concrete areas of cooperation in a Nordic-Baltic context. Furthermore, a declaration concerning the Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme (NBAP) was signed in September and will ensure continued Nordic-Baltic cooperation on defence capacity building in third countries.

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2016

The Danish chairmanship set out a double aim for the work in 2016: the launch of a number of new initiatives, and to ensure continued progress on ongoing projects from previous NORDEFCO chairmanships. Furthermore, a number of supportive Nordic initiatives have been undertaken, e.g. potentials for capacity building, including areas where resources can be saved through joint procurement, etc.

In addition to concrete activities and projects, the Danish chairmanship facilitated a constructive and open dialogue on the

security situation in the Nordic region with special focus on the Baltic region, the North Atlantic and the High North. These discussions have taken place at different levels, including between the Nordic Defence Ministers.

In 2016 it was also identified that there was a need for establishing a process to ensure a more efficient transfer of tasks and projects between the chairing countries.



Nordic flags at Frederiksberg Palace during the meeting of Nordic Chiefs of Defence on 1 February 2016.



On 3 March 2016, the policy directors of the Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEF) met at Frederiksberg Palace in Copenhagen with the director of the Secretariat of Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF), Ambassador Chanfi Issmail.



On 1 February 2016, the Chiefs of Defence of the Nordic Defence Cooperation met at Frederiksberg Palace in Copenhagen.

## Areas of Nordic defence cooperation in the near region

### *Policy and Operations*

A key priority under the Danish chairmanship was to explore the possibility of flexible military access at sea, land and in the air, to each other's territories via the **Easy Access Agreement**. The agreement was signed by Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland at the Defence Minister's Meeting in Copenhagen on 9 November 2016 and allows for the Nordic countries to navigate in each other's territories at sea, land and in the air with military capabilities in peacetime with as few administrative procedures as possible.

In 2016, the Nordic countries further explored options for enhancing information sharing through the Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance (**NORECAS**) specifically by sharing radar data in the Nordic region. The main purpose of which is to enhance the situational awareness in the Nordic region. This will further qualify the Nordic countries' assessment of developments in the security environment. The further work on the NORECAS project will be continued under the Finnish Chairmanship in 2017.

The NORDEFECO principle of non-exclusivity makes it possible for countries to enter into an agreement at a later point in time. On this basis, Iceland chose to enter the agreement on **Cross Border Training** in 2016 on par with the other Nordic countries. This increases options for exercise and joint training among the Nordic countries and several non-member countries.

By the end of 2015, Nordic Defence Ministers agreed to launch initiatives to facilitate practical cooperation with the three Baltic States in a number of areas. In 2016, the Military Coordination Committee has developed guidelines on how

we engage and develop concrete areas of cooperation in a Nordic-Baltic context. Furthermore, a declaration concerning the Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme (NBAP) was signed in September and will ensure continued **Nordic-Baltic cooperation** on defence capacity building in third countries.

### *Capabilities*

The Nordic countries have drafted an agreement on **secure communications**, which allows the Nordic countries to communicate through secured communication lines (on telephone, video telephone conference or computer) directly between the defence authorities and between ministries. The system was implemented in June 2016. Iceland is not currently part of the secure communications system, but is expected to implement the system when possible.

During 2016, Denmark, Sweden and Norway entered the **Alternate Landing Base** agreement, which allows unarmed military aircraft to land on each other's air bases, for instance in case of poor weather conditions. Finland and Iceland are expected to sign the agreement in near future, after which the possibility to extend the agreement to armed aircraft will be explored.

### *Armament*

In 2016, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland signed a technical agreement, the **Nordic Combat Uniform**, establishing joint purchase of uniforms. Collaboration in this area is expected to increase the quality at the existing price.

## Areas of Nordic defence cooperation on international engagements

### *Policy and Operations*

A central priority for the Danish NORDEF-  
CO chairmanship in 2016 was to establish  
a rotational system to ensure Nordic con-  
tributions to the United Nations sustained  
over time. In June 2016, the UN Amba-  
sadors from Denmark, Sweden, Norway,  
Belgium and Portugal signed a Letter of  
Intent to make available a tactical air  
transport capability through a **Nordic  
rotational programme** for the UN  
mission MINUSMA in Mali. The system of  
rotation is now applicable for the period  
2016 to the end of 2018. The personnel  
will be accommodated in the Norwegian  
“Camp Bifrost” in Bamako, where Norway  
has committed to maintain and admini-  
ster the camp during the entire rotational  
period.

In addition, the Nordic countries have  
continued the support to the Eastern  
Africa Standby Force (**EASF**) in 2016.  
In the spring of 2016, Denmark invited  
the management of EASF as well as the  
Nordic countries to Copenhagen to discuss  
EASF’s continued development and Nordic  
cooperation with EASF and a Nordic visit  
to the region was carried out in May 2016.  
Based on the discussion with EASF, input  
from the Nordic military advisors in Nai-  
robi and the visit, a report with recommen-  
dations for future Nordic support to EASF  
was presented at the Nordic Defence  
Minister’s meeting in November 2016. The  
Nordic countries decided at this meeting  
to continue to support EASF while focu-  
sing on stronger local ownership.

During 2016, the Nordic-Baltic defence  
capacity building cooperation continued.  
The Nordic-Baltic Assistance Programme  
(NBAP) currently includes projects in  
Georgia and Ukraine, where the Nordic and  
Baltic countries are supporting defence  
capacity building efforts in the defence  
sector. Furthermore, the Nordic and Baltic  
countries signed a declaration regarding  
NBAP in September 2016 which aims to  
ensure continued cooperation regarding  
defence capacity building in third coun-  
tries.

### *Capabilities*

In 2016, the Danish NORDEF-  
CO chairmanship worked on a framework for an  
agreement on Nordic Tactical Air Transport  
(**NORTAT**). This can be used in relation  
to the transportation of troops and equip-  
ment with the aim of saving costs and  
ensuring the optimum utilization of trans-  
port capacity in areas with joint operations  
or missions. The NORTAT agreement was  
signed by Air Chiefs in November 2016.

## Progress report from the military cooperation area **CAPABILITIES (COPA CAPA)**

Cooperation Area Capabilities (COPA CAPA) addresses the Nordic countries' development plans and processes with the aim of identifying areas for co-operation. Based on common needs, COPA CAPA identifies the possibilities of reducing total costs and promoting operational effectiveness.

COPA CAPA conducts an annual screening of national study and development plans, with the aim of finding new potential areas for cooperation.

Ongoing COPA CAPA Projects:

- Nordic Enhanced Cooperation on Air Surveillance (NORECAS)
- Nordic Cooperation on Tactical Air Transport (NORTAT)
- Cyber Defence
- Open Skies
- Computer Training Network (CTN)
- Virtual Battle Space (VBSX)
- Ground-Based Air Defence (GBAD)
- Radio Spectrum
- C3IS in the Arctic region
- Joint Operational Naval Capabilities (Support ships and coastal jaegers)
- Unmanning of systems (Distributed Autonomous Force Components)



Photo: Danish Defence

2016 has brought an intense array of activities for COPA CAPA. The work within the NORECAS project has continued. The NORECAS Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted and staffed at military level and is currently being staffed at political level and a draft Technical Agreement has been produced at military working group level.

Major steps were also been taken within the area of air transport cooperation. Negotiations on a Technical Agreement for NORTAT have been finalised. The Air Chiefs of Denmark, Finland and Norway signed the agreement in November 2016 after which it became operational. Following the signature by Sweden, the agreement will be formalized, with a Steering Committee as the overseeing body and a lead nation on a two year rotation.

One of the newer studies initiated in 2015 that has developed significantly is the Unmanning of systems study, aimed at depicting current developments in unmanned technology with a focus on autonomous systems on land, sea and air. A comprehensive study of mature systems and possible solutions in all fields has been conducted and a final study report will be presented by the end of 2016, pointing out a number of recommendations for joint Nordic projects.

The work in COPA CAPA is progressing well. There is good cooperation on COPA CAPA level and an open approach to voicing specific needs and discussing the full range of developments.



Tactical Air Transport C-130J Hercules aircraft. Photo: Danish Defence

## Progress report from the military cooperation area **ARMAMENTS (COPA ARMA)**

Cooperation Area Armaments (COPA ARMA) in more practical terms aims to achieve financial, technical and/or industrial benefits for all the member countries within the field of acquisition and life cycle support. This is primarily achieved through the screening process in which nations, by transparent and mutual exchange of information on planned national procurement, identify and exploit possibilities for common development programs, procurement and maintenance of existing and emerging capabilities.

COPA ARMA is mandated to initiate, administrate and close working groups in any area that is deemed beneficial for Nordic armaments cooperation. Currently 11 working groups are operating with experts from all Nordic countries' line orga-

nisations, such as Defence Headquarters, Logistics Organisations, Defence Ministries, Services, etc.:

- CBRN protective Masks (CBRN PM)
- Dismounted Arms and Ammunition (DAA)
- Diving Systems (DS)
- Geospatial Systems (GEO)
- Hazardous and Environmental Materials (HAZMAT)
- NATO Codification (NATO CODE)
- SAP (SAP)
- Systematic Sitaware (SITAWARE)
- Soldier Protection, Equipment and Clothing (SPEC)
- Tactical Data Link (TDL)
- Unitized Group Rations (UGR)



Purchase of uniforms. Photo: Danish Defence

This year, nations have offered a total of 76 inputs/projects to the screening process. A number of these inputs were not mature enough for Nordic cooperation at this stage and will be moved to next year's process, and others turned out to be not suitable for cooperation. In addition, some inputs were transferred to non-ARMA cooperation, and others could be handled in existing working groups. Hence, the inputs resulted in six new possible cooperation areas that were sent to the national line organizations (capability managers) for further national staffing:

- Maritime missile decoy systems
- Artillery – benchmarking
- Night vision equipment
- CV90 upgrade/procurement – benchmarking
- MCM vessels upgrade – benchmarking
- 84 mm ammunition

In addition, four possible cooperation areas are expected to be handled in existing COPA ARMA working groups:

- Soldier equipment & clothing (SPEC)
- Soldier digitalization (SPEC)
- Assault rifles and submachine guns (DAA)
- Small arms' ammunition (DAA)

The COPA ARMA screening process has proven to be a valuable tool to facilitate armaments cooperation and produce tangible results. The inherent possibilities and benefits that lie within Nordic armaments cooperation can be further explored.



Photo: Danish Defence

## Progress report from the military cooperation area HUMAN RESOURCES AND EDUCATION (COPA HRE)

The purpose of the Cooperation Area Human Resources and Education (COPA HRE) is to probe, explore and recognize possible common Nordic activities in the field of HR&E to gain operational benefits and optimized resources and to avoid duplication and to achieve cost savings in the long term.

COPA HRE also works as a hub to coordinate and facilitate platforms for experts of different areas to meet regularly and to exchange information and best practices in certain fields of expertise, e.g. Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL), Veteran issues, Diversity and Equality, and Foreign Languages.

Common Nordic basics in education at all levels shall lay a firm foundation for further cooperation in everyday work, work in multinational environment and operations.

During the year 2016 COPA HRE had eight active co-operation projects under its auspices. Several of these have already been implemented and transferred to the line organization, but the COPA HR&E Management Group still actively monitors and gives guidance when needed.

Ongoing COPA HRE Projects:

- Veterans
- Diversity and Equality
- Personnel Safety
- SOF medical training and education
- Advanced Distributed Learning
- Foreign Languages
- Professional Military Education
- Centres of Competence (CBRN, Log/Camp building, Winter Education, Medical Education/training)



Centrally placed officers from the National Guard of Mali participate in a Human Resources seminar. Photo: Danish Defence

During the reporting year the Personnel safety project has been successfully implemented to the line organization and first actual course was held at the Finish Defence Forces International Centre (FINCENT) this October. The Technical Arrangement was signed and the future products of the project include an ADL-course and safety manual.

Advanced distributed learning, veteran issues, diversity and foreign languages continued to function as platforms for experts in the respective fields of expertise. Annual conferences are being arranged and exchange of information continues on a regular basis.

The Professional Military Education project is almost ready to be implemented to the line organisation. The Technical

Arrangement between all participating institutions was agreed on and final preparations are being made for the signature process to begin. First courses have been offered and bi-lateral cooperation has taken place with high hopes of expanding the work in the future.

The COPA HRE work is assessed to be on track. The main focus during the past year has been on getting the new projects such as Professional Military Education and Centres of Competence up and running and in getting a deeper insight on the implemented activities such as ADL and Foreign languages.

In the course of 2016 the COPA HRE has pointed to the value of cross-COPA dialogue in order to pursue common objectives between the COPAs.



Photo: Danish Defence

## Progress report from the military cooperation area **TRAINING AND EXERCISES (COPA TEX)**

Cooperation Area Training and Exercises (COPA TEX) is envisaged to achieve better training for the same resources or to achieve the same level of training for fewer resources. In 2016, the COPA TEX has supported the Military Coordination Committee's action plan and addressed cooperation areas where NORDEFCO engagement could yield effect.

Ongoing COPA TEX activities:

- High Intensity Air Combat Exercise

The aim is to further develop the Arctic Challenge Exercise over the coming years on a step-by-step basis to a flag level exercise. Substantial involvement of the US in a possible Northern Flag exercise is a precondition.



Photo: Danish Defence

- Combined Joint Nordic Baltic Exercise Program

The aim is to formalize the transfer from a NORDEFCO project to the line organisation. COPA TEX tasked the working group to form a standard operating procedure (SOP) to be signed at the appropriate military level. The program has been running in the line organisation for many years and is a practical example of how Nordic defence cooperation can be pursued and developed in a practical way. The development of the SOP is finalized and is currently being circulated for signing.

- Unmanned Aerial Systems

The aim is to assess possibilities for beneficial cooperation within Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) regarding training, courses, acquisition and operations, with the aim of formalizing cooperation in a SOP or Technical Agreement (TA).

Overall, the cooperation within the Training and Exercise domain in the Nordic countries is mature, and the experience is that the line organisations cooperate naturally, both bottom-up and laterally, in the entire range of activities.



Photo: Danish Defence

## Progress report from the military cooperation area **OPERATIONS (COPA OPS)**

Cooperation Area Operations (COPA OPS) shall, based on common Nordic political decisions, coordinate and prepare force contributions, deployment/redeployment and logistics support to operations. COPA OPS shall continue to maintain the Nordic network, keep a tight dialogue in order to create the basis for common contributions leading to operational gains and/or cost-efficient solutions. COPA OPS should, as a prerequisite to the objectives above, function as a think-tank for Nordic Defence cooperation related to operations and exchange best practices.

COPA OPS is able to initiate among the member states the prudent military planning, however, it requires political acceptance in every single case. Therefore, COPA OPS will initiate required activities through the respective countries' military line organizations. These include planning, coordination and preparation of force contributions, subsequent deployments and redeployments, and logistic support to operations.



Cooperation on exercises with EASF in Eastern Africa. Photo: Danish Defence

Ongoing COPA OPS activities:

- NORDEFECO secure Communications and Information System (CIS)

Establishment of the Nordic system for secure communication, NORDEFECO secure CIS, was the highlight of 2016. The NORDEFECO secure CIS enables strategic communication between the NORDEFECO countries at the Ministry of Defence and Defence Command levels. The system was technically operational between four countries in June 2016 and is now actively used.

- Nordic UN contributions

The COPA OPS was tasked to look into the possibilities for the establishment and deployment of Nordic contributions to UN peace missions, in order to accommodate UN capability gaps with a focus on MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali). It followed from this task that the COPA OPS should look into how a Nordic rotation on an air transport capability to MINUSMA (and other missions) can be sustained over time and examine whether

Nordic rotational arrangements could be developed into other relevant areas. A special focus was to be placed on the possibility of establishing smaller Mobile Training/Advisory Teams.

The COPA OPS studied the issue and assessed that a Nordic rotational Special Forces concept, a utility helicopter unit or in-theatre training of UN troops are potential and functional areas that could be researched further.

The COPA OPS is a convenient way to find common solutions to the challenges in the operations abroad. The different political goals can be seen as a limitation, but there is a possibility to find ways and means to cooperate among the Nordic countries. Rarely the solutions to cooperate will involve all nations, but COPA OPS allows the countries to share their ideas and challenges in a closed forum in order to find possible solutions. The COPA OPS also acts as a think tank to create new ways to cooperate in operations. The new solution for exchange of classified information, NORDEFECO secure CIS, enables Nordic operational planners for the first time to communicate in real time.



Photo: Danish Defence

## COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK STATUS

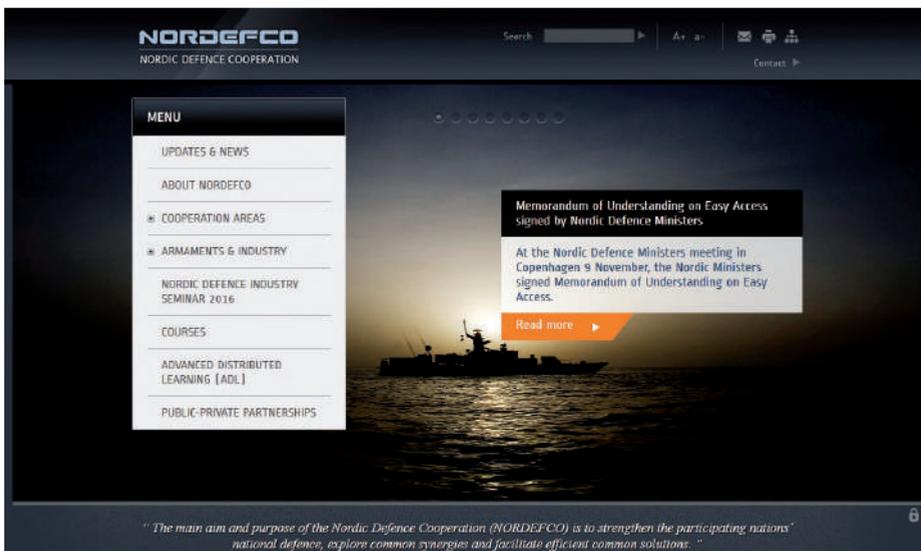
The Communications Network – a combined political and military–strategic level group of Nordic public affairs officers – is part a of the NORDEFECO structure besides the Cooperation Areas.

According to the Military Coordination Committee's Action Plan 2016-2019 the Communications Network tasks include conducting the annual Nordic COMMS plan and updating and developing the NORDEFECO website (www.nordefco.org).

During 2016 a number of articles covering bilateral and multilateral agreements, exercises, and political and military meetings within the Nordic Defence Cooperation have been published on nordefco.org and on national platforms (web pages, social media and internal magazines). External media have also shown interest in NORDEFECO issues.

In addition, the Communications Network has in 2016 focused on:

- Conducting various analysis of the use of nordefco.org (user survey and statistical analysis).
- Developing the NORDEFECO web strategy (will continue into 2017).
- Examining ways to support the use of social media.
- Introducing an internal Newsletter giving an overview of communication activities.



The NORDEFECO website (www.nordefco.org)

## NORDEFECO MEETINGS IN 2016

Date	Meeting	Place
11-12 January	Coordination Staff meeting	Copenhagen
1-2 February	CHOD-MCC meeting	Copenhagen
17-18 February	PSC Secretariat meeting	Copenhagen
3-4 March 2016	PSC meeting	Copenhagen
30-31 March 2016	Ministerial	Copenhagen
13-14 April	Coordination Staff meeting	Helsinki
26 August	CHOD-NAD meeting	Copenhagen
29-30 August	Coordination Staff meeting	Oslo
14-15 September	MCC-3B meeting	Copenhagen
15-16 September	PSC Secretariat meeting	Copenhagen
29-30 September	PSC meeting	Keflavik
24-25 October	Coordination Staff meeting	Stockholm
9 November	Ministerial (NORDEFECO, NB8 and Northern Group)	Copenhagen

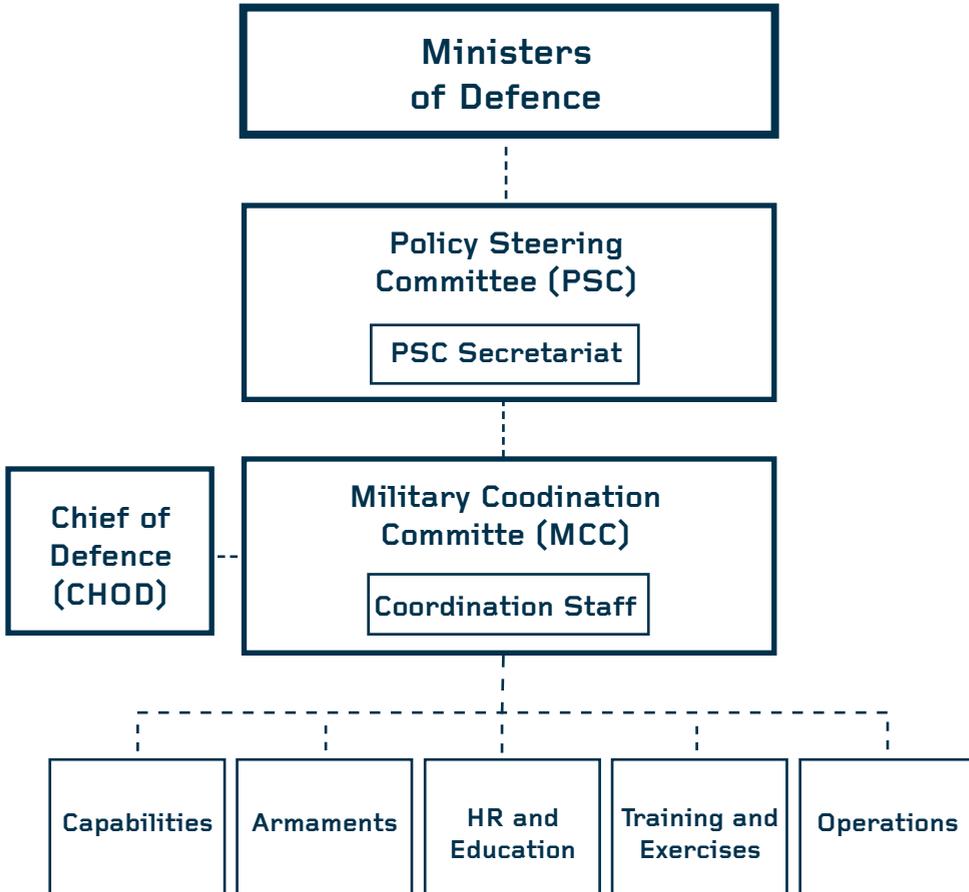
**Footnotes:** MCC: Military Committee, CHOD: Chief of Defence, PSC: Political Directors, 3B: Baltic States, NB8: Nordic-Baltic cooperation, NAD: National Armament Directors.

Meetings of the different NORDEFECO COPAs (military cooperation areas) and VTCs (video teleconference) at various levels are not displayed in the overview.



Northern Group meeting at Frederiksberg Palace, Copenhagen on 9 November 2016.  
Photo: Danish Ministry of Defence

## THE NORDEFCO STRUCTURE





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