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NATO DEFENCE PLANNING CAPABILITY REVIEW 2015/2016

DENMARK

OVERVIEW

1. The Danish Armed Forces are a small, but capable, military force which has provided valuable operational contributions, without caveats, over the years, whether they be for NATO-led operations or others. Continued participation in operations is a priority within the Danish defence organisation and forces will continue to be configured to be able to deploy at relatively short notice. The 2013-2017 Defence Agreement, agreed in November 2012, whilst introducing measures to improve efficiency also included a reduction of the defence budget by approximately 12% of the 2013 budget. As a result, there have been major changes to the structure of the armed forces. A new Defence Agreement will be negotiated before the end of 2017, setting out spending, and the future direction of the armed forces, from 2018 onwards.

2. The aim of Denmark's foreign and security policy is the promotion of national security and prosperity based on core values of freedom, democracy and human rights. NATO remains a cornerstone of Danish security and defence policy. Active engagement in the Arctic/High North is also of strategic importance to Denmark. In the 2013-2017 Defence Agreement, increased funding was allocated to prepare the Danish Armed Forces for future tasks and challenges in the Arctic. In April 2014, a broad political agreement was reached which amended the Defence Agreement, abolished the Danish Defence Command in its previous form, and established a new joint Defence Command Denmark, which stood up in October 2014. The new organisation is expected to result in estimated annual savings of 170 million Danish Kroner (DKK).

3. The army force structure is based upon the national requirement to be able to provide a battalion-sized battlegroup, as part of a multinational effort, on a continuous basis. Consequently, the ability to operate independently at brigade level in a high-intensity environment is not a priority for Denmark, although, as a result of the changed security environment caused by the actions of Russia in Ukraine, options to develop this capability will be explored.



4. Planned procurement includes: armoured personnel carriers; a 120 mm mortar system; engineer equipment, including excavators and counter-improvised explosive devices equipment; night vision, observation and sensor equipment; individual soldiers' equipment, including weapons; communications equipment, including data radios, long-range communications, network communications, and Link 16; maritime demining equipment and smaller vessels; maritime helicopters (MH-60R Sea Hawk); a third Arctic patrol vessel (Knud Rasmussen class); precision guided munitions; land-based long-range radars; Fennec avionic/cockpit/electro-optics update; EH-101 full motion simulator; fixed and mobile SATCOM terminals; new surveillance radars for CL-604 maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft (MPRA); equipment for special operations forces (SOF); and replacement wheeled vehicles for all the services. Furthermore, the process of selecting a new, replacement fighter aircraft is ongoing. In May 2016, the Government announced that its preferred contender was the F-35 combat aircraft, and that 27 aircraft should be procured. A final Parliamentary decision is now expected later in 2016. Replacement of the Danish combat aircraft will, given the size of the investment, be a challenge. However, the planned replacement is part of a long-term acquisition plan aimed at a step-by-step modernisation of the equipment of the Danish Armed Forces. In recent years, priority has been given to the acquisition of naval surface ships. Presently the focus is on major acquisitions for the army.

5. The strength of the Danish Armed Forces at the end of 2015 was some 16,480 military personnel, including conscripts, supported by about 4,740 civilians. Military personnel numbers are expected to reduce slightly to 16,344 by the end of 2018, with the number of civilians reducing to 4,615. Although recruitment is not a problem in general, the armed forces has an annual turnover of about 8% of its overall strength. The Defence Agreement reaffirms the principle of conscription to 2020 at least and 4,200 conscripts will continue to be called up annually. Streamlining and development initiatives have reduced the number of personnel involved in human resource activities and also the number and locations of defence establishments.

6. The Home Guard, separate to the armed forces, remains an important part of Denmark's overall defence organisation. The overall strength of the Home Guard is about 610 permanently employed, 15,500 volunteers in the active structure, and 30,500 in the reserve structure. The Home Guard is used in support of the military in Denmark and civilian services, including the police. Individuals of the Home Guard have been used on a regular basis in Danish Armed Forces' operations overseas.

7. The proportion of GDP devoted to defence has fallen from 1.3% in 2007 to 1.14% in 2015. Under current financial technical projections, this will fall further, in real terms, to 1.05% by 2020, not rising to the 2% of GDP set out in the Defence Investment Pledge. Compared to 2007, GDP was 1.1% lower in 2015 in real terms, whilst defence expenditure in 2015 was 13.3% lower in real terms. Defence expenditure in 2015 was DKK 22,633 million (US\$ 3,364 million), a real decrease of 1.05%, with the projection of an increase of 4.3% in 2016, and a further increase of 1.7% in real terms is projected for 2017, changes thereafter will be dependent upon the next Defence Agreement. Spending on major equipment was 11% in 2014 and 11.5% in 2015. It is projected to be around 12.4% in 2016.

8. Denmark maintained some 4-5% (370-420 personnel) of its total land force strength on operations in 2014 and 2015. Land forces are participating in Operation Inherent Resolve, the Resolute Support Mission (RSM), in KFOR, and also in several UN missions. In 2014, Denmark provided the flagship for the Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 (SNMG1), for a 12-month period. In 2016, for a three-month period, Denmark will provide a containerised mine counter measures module to the Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Group One; Germany will provide the mothership. Furthermore, Denmark will provide one Absalon class flexible support ship to SNMG2 from early September to mid-December 2016. Denmark deployed three transport helicopters to Afghanistan in July 2014, for 14 months. It also provided F-16 combat aircraft in support of the Baltic Air Policing mission in 2014 and four F-16 combat aircraft were deployed in support of the Iceland peacetime preparedness mission in September 2015. Furthermore, Denmark contributed seven F-16s to Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) for the first nine months of 2015 and, in January 2016, Denmark deployed an air surveillance and control unit for a planned deployment period of one year. From July 2016, Denmark intends to make a further contribution to OIR, for six months, of four (plus three spare) F-16 combat aircraft, a 60-man SOF contingent, and also one C-130 transport aircraft to support the SOF contingent. In support of NATO's Assurance Measures, MPRA conducted patrols in the Baltic Region in 2014 and 2015, and one C-130J provided support from January 2015 to November 2015. One frigate and one MPRA were deployed in support of Operation Ocean Shield in 2015. In 2014, Denmark's peace and stabilisation response mechanism/arrangements provided a total of 77 civilian personnel in support of operations and 66 police officers deployed in international missions. In 2015, Denmark 74 civilian experts and 24 police officers were continuously deployed on international missions. Denmark makes regular, significant contributions to the NATO Response Force, including its Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, and has increased its contributions substantially following the reductions in ISAF.

9. The land forces structure is focused on the maintenance of three standing core battlegroups, of which one, on a rotational basis, is at high readiness (30 days notice to move). The core battalions and extra staffs, can generate six battlegroup rotations in order to undertake sustained operations. Combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) are centralised and organised under centres of excellence, responsible for administration, force generation and arms specific training. Deployable task forces are mission tailored and the battlegroups are augmented with CS and CSS as appropriate. Denmark can provide one mechanised battalion group as sought in the Capability Targets, but it cannot provide the requested mechanised infantry brigade. An initiative to revitalise the capacity to stand up a brigade-sized (minus) formation is being explored. Moreover, the brigade and the deployable mechanised infantry battlegroup have some capability shortfalls (lack of ground-based air defence (noting that this capability is, presently, not a NATO Capability Target requirement for Denmark), unattended ground sensors team and brigade-level intelligence, surveillance targeting and reconnaissance, and also some engineer capabilities). One division and two brigade headquarters remain in the structure, primarily to provide force production including force development, general training and mission-tailored training and exercise.

10. A Special Operations Command (SOCOM) was created in July 2015, which incorporates SOF from both the army and the navy. Air special operations capabilities

remain under air force control. The SOCOM is responsible for generating joint SOF capabilities in a flexible, modular and holistic manner. Denmark will provide all the contributions sought by the SOF-related Capability Targets, however, some shortfalls do exist (lack of dedicated or organic CS and CSS). The air force will provide non-dedicated aircraft for SOF training and missions.

11. The transformation of the Danish Fleet's ocean-going capabilities is almost complete and when the third, and last, Knud Rasmussen Arctic patrol vessel enters service (by 2018) the restructuring will be complete. The core of the navy is three 6,600 ton multi-role Iver Huitfeldt class frigates and two 6,300 ton Absalon class flexible support ships, these are supplemented by four 3,500 ton Thetis class and two Knud Rasmussen Arctic ocean patrol vessels that are mainly designed and dedicated to patrolling the Arctic and North Atlantic areas. Denmark fulfils most of the capability requirements for its primary warships, and has taken the political decision to contribute to NATO's ballistic missile defence with a frigate based sensor capability. The ability to provide kinetic effects in high-intensity engagements is, currently, somewhat limited owing to the relatively limited fire power (anti-air warfare and anti-submarine warfare) of the major units.

12. Denmark has a modern, albeit small air force, with combat, transport and maritime capabilities, which meet the majority of NATO's Capability Targets. The combat capability consists of 30 F-16 multirole aircraft with adequate air-to-air and air-to-ground capabilities. When taking a decision on the acquisition of new aircraft, Denmark should consider acquiring an equal number of new, multirole combat aircraft with a suppression of enemy air defence and electronic warfare capability in order to remain operationally relevant and to maintain the capacity to fulfil the range of aerospace missions requested by NATO. The Danish fixed and rotary-wing transport airframes are modern and can also contribute to SOF and aeromedevac missions. However, the range of missions that could be carried out with the C-130 aircraft and Merlin helicopters seems likely to exceed the capacity of the small number of airframes and crews available. In support of the navy, the air force operates three maritime patrol aircraft as well as six old Lynx helicopters, which are to be replaced by MH-60 Seahawk helicopters. The air force has a deployable air C2 capability and a Tactical Air Staff that can make a valuable personnel contribution to an international, deployable Joint Force Air Command. The air force lacks sufficient deployable air base support and protection modules, and will therefore be dependent on other nations to operate from austere locations. Denmark also has no intention of acquiring an air-to-air refuelling (AAR) capability or a long-range intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platform. Denmark should increase its capacity to support air operations from bare-base locations and should consider participation in multinational solutions to acquire AAR and ISR capabilities.

13. Denmark meets all the strategic lift capability requirements as requested by the NATO Capability Targets by a combination of role-specific military assets, participation in many multinational arrangements, and a range of assured and spot contracts. Denmark is capable of providing sufficient reception, staging and onward movement, logistics, and military engineering support to meet its deployable level of ambition. However, Denmark has very limited enabling capabilities to support units above the battlegroup level. Denmark is unable to provide most of the medical capabilities requested. This is exacerbated by

problems with the retention and recruitment of medical specialists for deployed operations. Currently, Denmark is able to deploy a surgical team in support of deployed operations for a period of six months per year. Denmark has plans to enhance its command, control and communication capabilities. In some cases, however, the scope of these plans do not embrace all the forces sought in the Capability Targets. Increased resources have been allocated to cyber defence. Denmark has developed a robust national cyber defence capability to protect its static networks. Furthermore, Denmark is in the process of developing a cyber defence capability in the near future to support deployable networks. In addition to the NATO requirements for cyber defence, after the establishment of a legal framework, it intends to develop a cyber-offensive and exploitation capability.

14. Given the changed security environment, Denmark should look to reintroduce/update rapidly high-end capabilities (e.g. anti-submarine warfare, joint intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, ground-based air defence, artillery, etc.), that will improve its forces' ability to operate in all war-fighting environments. Although Denmark has a well-trained land force at battalion level and below, at present, Denmark cannot operate independently in a high-intensity warfighting scenario against a peer competitor or provide the level of forces NATO desires. Denmark's inability, and seemingly restrained interest, to generate a land surge capability of brigade size at high readiness is of particular concern in the new security environment. Against the background of the obvious military, burden sharing, and other implications, Denmark is encouraged to review its land force structure, manning and training, which is currently optimised to generate a sustainable battlegroup, to ensure it can address the full range and scale of combat missions. Introducing a new fighter aircraft will be a challenge resource-wise, and Denmark should ensure that the procurement does not adversely affect other parts of the armed forces.

15. In light of the new security environment, Denmark can expect the Alliance to reinforce the Capability Targets already allocated and to possibly ask for further forces, including enabling capabilities, fully capable of engaging in high-intensity operations, and at a much higher readiness than is currently the case.