

A new programme of defence co-operation between the UK and France has been announced by British Prime Minister David Cameron and French President Nicolas Sarkozy today, Tuesday 2 November 2010.

The programme is to be delivered through an overarching Defence Co-operation Treaty, a subordinate treaty relating to a joint nuclear facility, a letter of intent signed by Defence Ministers and a package of joint defence initiatives.

The announcement was made by the two leaders following a summit meeting held in London today.

This co-operation is intended to improve collective defence capability through UK and French forces working more closely together, contributing to more capable and effective forces, and ultimately improving the collective capability of NATO and European Defence.

These measures build on commitments made in the recent Strategic Defence and Security Review to create stronger strategic defence relationships with the UK's main allies whose security interests and military capabilities are closest to our own.

The measures agreed between the UK and France today will include:

- ◆ jointly developing a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force (CJEF) as a non-standing bilateral capability able to carry out a range of operations in the future whether acting bilaterally or through NATO, the EU or other coalition arrangements - this concept will be developed over the coming years;
- ◆ building primarily on maritime task group co-operation around the French carrier Charles de Gaulle - the UK and France will aim to have, by the early 2020s, the ability to deploy a UK-French integrated carrier strike group incorporating assets owned by both countries;
- ◆ developing joint military doctrine and training programmes;
- ◆ extending bilateral co-operation on the acquisition of equipment and technologies, for example in unmanned aerial systems, complex weapons, submarine technologies, satellite communications and research and technology;
- ◆ aligning wherever possible our logistics arrangements - including providing spares and support to the new A400M transport aircraft;
- ◆ developing a stronger defence industrial and technology base; and
- ◆ enhancing joint working to defend against emerging security concerns such as cyber security.

Overall, the Defence Co-operation Treaty will enable the strengthening of operational linkages between the French and UK Armed Forces, sharing and pooling of materials and equipment, building of joint facilities, mutual access to defence markets, and increased industrial and technological co-operation.