Federal Ministry
of Defence

# Mission
## National and Collective Defence

BUNDESWEHR

*“THE FEDERATION SHALL ESTABLISH ARMED FORCES FOR THE PURPOSES OF DEFENCE.”*

Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany

## PEACE!

It is 2 December 1989, less than a month after the fall of the Berlin Wall in Germany. On a Russian cruise ship off the coast of Malta, U.S. President George Bush Senior and Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev discuss the future of Germany and Europe as well as economic cooperation and disarmament. During the subsequent press conference, Gorbachev answers the question of whether the Cold War was now over as follows: “We stated, both of us, that the world leaves one epoch of Cold War, and enters another epoch. [...] We are just at the very beginning of our long road to a long-lasting, peaceful period.”

Forty-five years after World War II, Germany is reunited and surrounded by partners, Europe is growing closer, and the Bundeswehr is reduced significantly and transformed into a force focussing on operations abroad. Agreements turn into friendships. Germany strengthens its position as an acknowledged and important partner within the international community. In political, economic, and military terms.

## PEACE?

A quarter of a century after the end of the Cold War was declared, there is another turning point. In March 2014, Russia annexes Crimea, thereby violating international law. It is an aggressive act that does not remain unanswered by NATO. NATO’s Eastern border becomes NATO’s Eastern flank. Little by little, a word we had hoped never to hear again – where the Western world is concerned – is finding its way back into government documents and press coverage: war. Parallel to the developments at NATO’s Eastern flank, we are witnessing the distortion of existing power structures around the world. Instabilities are increasing.

## For Germany’s security, specifically, this means

- Based on its location in the heart of European NATO territory and in its capacity as a hub for Allied troop movements as well as rear area of operations, Germany is a potential target for attacks
- Germany remains within reach of conventional and nuclear weapons
- Rapid technological development harbours new risks for the German population, such as cyber attacks and hybrid threats – even in peace

# NATO POSITIONS ITSELF

*“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all …”*

Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty

## THE ALLIANCE DEMONSTRATES ITS STRENGTH

At the NATO summit in Wales in September 2014, the Alliance responds to the new, old threat from the East. The decision is unanimous. The NATO partners acknowledge the significance of Article 5 and thus affirm their commitment to standing up for one another. This especially includes solidarity with the Allies at NATO’s Eastern border.

This new situation, however, requires essential changes to the NATO command structure, the operational readiness of NATO forces and defence planning. Mainly, the Alliance must be able to flexibly deploy, command and sustainably supply combat-ready mobile forces within the Alliance territory, even at short notice.

A combination of quickly effective, long-term measures for deterrence and defence is adopted and implemented in Wales and during subsequent summit meetings. NATO demonstrates its strength. War must be prevented by all means.

## VJTF – WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH

Part of the existing NATO Response Force (NRF) becomes the rapid reaction force, also known as spearhead force. This Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) can be operational and combat ready at very short notice. Members of the Alliance contribute forces and key capabilities, such as logistics, medical or command and control support capabilities to VJTF.
The large NATO nations, on a rotating basis, command the multinational units for one year each and assume responsibility for maintaining the spearhead force's operational readiness.

## EFP – THE STRONG EASTERN FLANK

For the purposes of permanently securing NATO's Eastern flank in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, NATO uses a battalion-size multinational task force as enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in each country. The United Kingdom, Canada, the United States and Germany each bear responsibility for one country as framework nation.

## JSEC – CENTRAL HUB IN EUROPE

NATO's command and force structure receives personnel reinforcement and is adapted to the new threat situation. This includes the creation of two new operational commands. To facilitate the quick and smooth transportation of troops and materiel and their protection in the event of an Article 5 contingency, the Joint Support and Enabling Command (JSEC) is established in Ulm, Baden-Württemberg. To ensure troop transportation across the Atlantic between North America and Europe, the Joint Forces Command (JFC) is established in Norfolk (Virginia, USA).

Additionally, NATO is increasing Air Policing over the Baltic states and monitoring of the Black Sea region in the southeast of the Alliance territory through tailored Forward Presence (tFP).

## TRAIN AS YOU FIGHT

NATO has conducted numerous exercises since 2014 in order to strengthen cooperation and joint training of multinational NATO major formations and units.
In 2018, approximately 50,000 military personnel from NATO nations practised emergency procedures within the scope of the NATO exercise Trident Juncture, the largest exercise since the end of the Cold War.

### Specific contributions made by the Bundeswehr

- Assumption of responsibility and provision of forces, prepared for the intensity of war, for VJTF as early as in 2015, in 2019 and again in 2023
- Responsibility as framework nation for the eFP battle group in Lithuania
- Establishment and activation of JSEC in Ulm
- Regular participation in Air Policing in the Baltic region
- Navy participation in international exercises and operations to support secure troop transportation across the Atlantic and to show presence

# GERMANY POSITIONS ITSELF

*“Germany is prepared to provide a substantial, decisive and early stimulus to the international debate, to accept responsibility, and to assume leadership.”*

White Paper 2016

## NATIONAL DEFENCE = COLLECTIVE DEFENCE

### WHY?

Alliances mean protection. Alliances mean strength.
Keeping an enemy in check at the border of the Alliance territory and together with partners is better than having to fight him alone in your own country – with all the sacrifices that entails.
This is why participation in alliances of collective security is the central element of maintaining peace and freedom in Germany .

### BUT:

Alliances rely on participation. And alliances mean responsibility.
As part of the European pillar within NATO, Germany and the Bundeswehr assume responsibility and prepare for extensive tasks within the scope of national and collective defence. And it does so not only by serving as area of operations for its own troops: As the geographic centre of European NATO territory, Germany is a transit country for Allied troops and operational base for sea-based and airborne long-range systems.

### For the Bundeswehr, this specifically means

- Peacekeeping tasks performed by operationally ready armed forces
- In the event of an Article 5 contingency, assignment of most German units and formations to NATO
- Support and implement rapid deployment of NATO forces within and through Germany
- Facilitate for the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) defence capability and 360° freedom of operation within his area of responsibility
- Protect war-essential infrastructure such as information transmission or movement control

## HYBRID DEFENCE

Attacks across the board require defence across the board.

War and armed conflicts have never been fought solely by the military. Recent years, in particular, have shown ways in which military and non-military activities are combined in hybrid warfare and target far more than just opposing military forces. Their first and foremost objective is to destabilise the society of a country or alliance.

This means that the defence against those activities is a whole-of-government task involving all ministries. General digitalisation opens up new, dangerous opportunities for hybrid warfare. State and non-state actors increasingly attempt to exploit weak spots in digital systems. Additionally, attacks in the cyber and information domain are easy to conceal, which makes it difficult to attribute them to an enemy.

Also the distinction between war and peace is becoming blurred. Does a large-scale cyber attack on critical infrastructure, like a country's electric power grid, in conjunction with terrorist attacks on various train stations and the simultaneous dissemination of fake news through social media qualify as war? Or can we only speak of war if, in addition, hostile armed drones cross the boundary of an alliance territory?

One thing is certain: Germany is prepared and working hard on constantly being one step ahead of technical and security challenges. As part of overall defence, the Bundeswehr is doing what it does best:

**Externally protecting and defending the Alliance and thus Germany.**

# THE BUNDESWEHR POSITIONS ITSELF

*“To engage in collective defence across all domains with its single set of forces, the Bundeswehr must be able to deploy comprehensive capabilities up to and including larger robust formations at short notice within and at the periphery of the Alliance territory.”*

The Bundeswehr Concept 2018

**THE MISSION:** Defend Germany within the Alliance

**THE REQUIREMENTS:** Deter the enemy on equal footing and be superior in a worst-case scenario – in war

**THE FRAMEWORK:** New threat, larger theatres of operations, digital battlefields, less personnel

Quick, flexible, interconnected. There is no other way. Constantly changing and new operational scenarios and environments require a maximum of precision with respect to the interaction of all forces as well as speed. To this end, capabilities in all domains – land, air, sea, cyber and information domain, and space – must be interconnected even more than they have been to date. Both within the Bundeswehr and with the armed forces of our Allies. Not only in terms of materiel, but also as regards appropriate command and control structures, organisation, understanding, training, and attitude.

## PERSONNEL

A state of defence requires all hands on deck, which is why personnel who in peacetime work for agencies that are not essential during an ongoing war are then integrated into the defence structures.
Most active-duty military personnel will be employed along the borders of the Alliance territory and leave behind gaps in Germany. Therefore, the reserve is more important than ever and an indispensable part of national and collective defence. In case of war, a large part of tasks in Germany will be performed by the reserve.

## ORGANISATION

In case of collective defence, NATO is in command. The Bundeswehr will then mobilise all capabilities and forces and provide the majority to NATO.
To make this feasible, the command and control structure, which has long been aligned with the requirements of an army on operations, must be adapted, starting with the Federal Ministry of Defence and all the way down to the tactical level.

## EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXERCISE

Training for deployment abroad within the scope of international crisis management differs considerably from the scenario for which the Bundeswehr must now prepare.

The capability to engage in combat remains the same, but enemies and environment have changed. If we fail to maintain peace in Europe through deterrence and dialogue and war ensues, that war will take place on our doorstep or even in our country. This could mean that our homes, families and friends are not safe, which only adds stress. Also, there will be no contingents with temporary assignments. Not knowing when there will be an opportunity to catch one's breath is exhausting.

Therefore, education and training for national and collective defence are aligned with the requirements of a high-intensity, prolonged war under adverse framework and environmental conditions.

To consolidate newly acquired skills and identify weak spots, we practise, practise and practise some more. The motto is: "Train as you fight". We fight side by side with our Allies. Thus, participation in NATO exercises at the tactical and operational level is absolutely essential to ensure best possible preparation for a case of emergency.

### This specifically implies

For military leaders

- Leadership requires unity in thought, action, understanding of concepts and values
- "Führen mit Auftrag" (mission command) is essential for the armed forces
- Training adaptable to the expected requirements of warfare
- Comprehensive preparation of future command personnel with respect to practical, intellectual, ethical and moral tools
- Teaching and consolidation of psychological and physical robustness during routine, training and exercise operations

For servicemen and women

- Time-intensive and demanding training to be able to endure war
- Psychological and physical robustness
- Hardships, even during peacetime exercises ("train as you fight")

*"I swear to faithfully serve the Federal Republic of Germany and to bravely defend the right and the freedom of the German people."*

Oath of enlistment

## MATERIEL AND CAPABILITIES

Technological developments have made operating on the battlefield quicker, more precise and more transparent, but at the same time also more comprehensive and complex. This is especially true for the cyber and information domain. The goal of defence procurement planning is superior warfare in all domains. Equipment and materiel must be cutting edge, but mainly robust, operational and sustainable and ensure interoperability with the Allies as far as command and control are concerned. With respect to demographic development, it is particularly important to use technological innovations in a way that requires less personnel for operation. This is no easy task. Bundeswehr procurers, technicians, lawyers and scientists are, day in, day out, committed to ensure that the servicemen and women are well prepared for combat operations.

## HIGH TECH IN HYPERWAR

Artificial intelligence and automation are increasingly used in armaments and warfare. In the war of the future (“hyperwar”), classic battle management will be combined with the use of cyber instruments and weapon systems with autonomous functions. Time will be the crucial factor, because artificial intelligence works many times faster than any human. Humans will continue to make decisions on the battlefields across all domains. Artificial intelligence will support them. The Bundeswehr already has a number of cutting-edge systems.

The Bundeswehr is also working hard to develop options that will be superior in cyberwar. Aircraft that act within a networked cluster, smart tanks that will no longer know complex battlefields, and high-tech warships that can adapt to any situation like a chameleon and are combat ready at the highest level – on the surface and underwater.

## ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY AND SHAPING THE FUTURE NOW

Technology is important. But it is by far not everything ... What the Bundeswehr needs – what Germany needs – are servicemen and women, civil servants and employees who are willing and able to make an effort. For the sake of peace and the freedom of our country.

The Bundeswehr needs to change if it wants to protect and defend Germany. Turning toward national and collective defence under the conditions defined by digitalisation is a major challenge. But we can tackle it if each and everyone of the 250,000 members of the Bundeswehr contributes his or her share. Makes an effort. And becomes part of this great task.

Our credo has not changed:

We. Serve. Germany.

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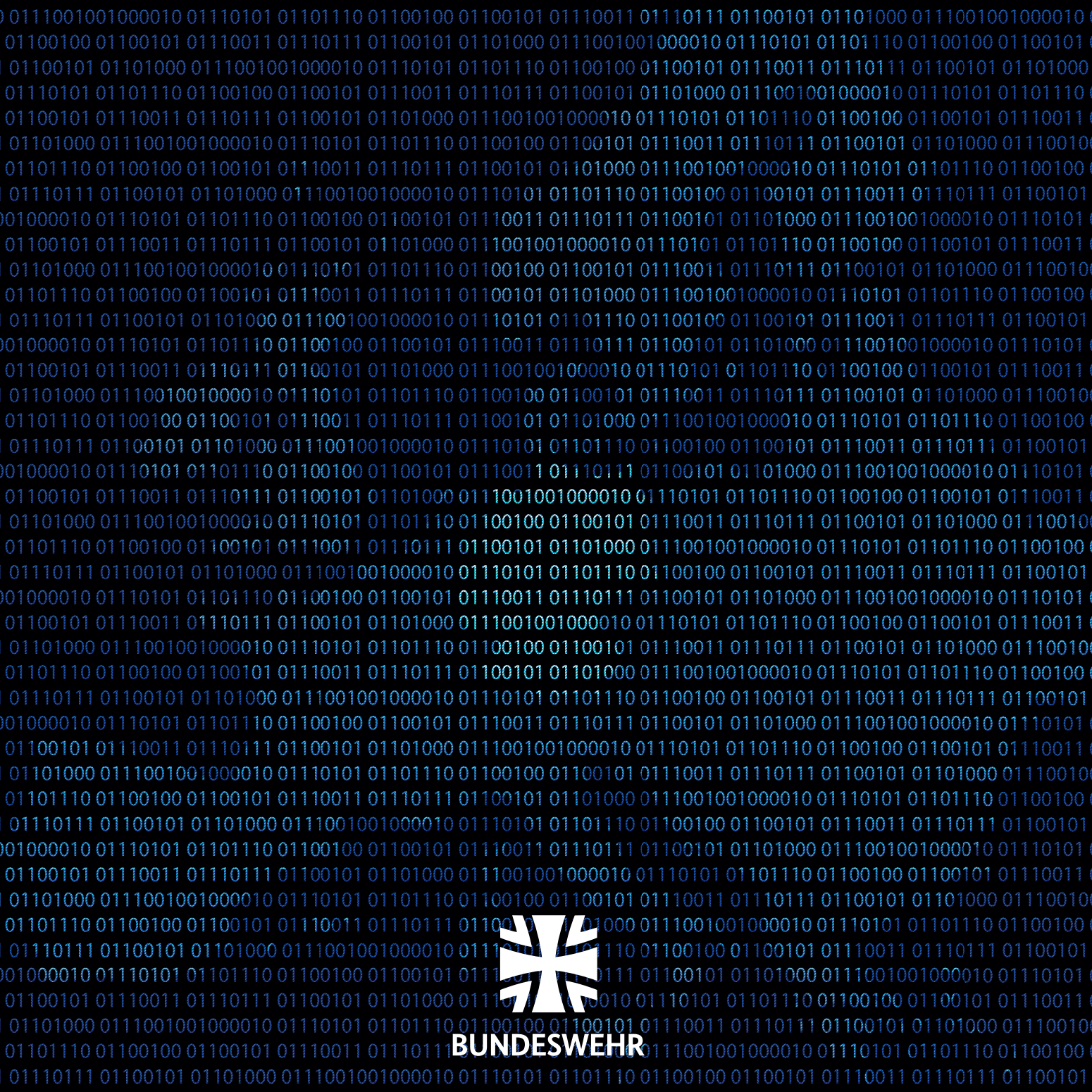
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