

News story: UK and France increase security cooperation in the Channel

Updated: Minor amends to text.

The Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, and his French counterpart, Florence Parly, have reaffirmed the strength of British-French defence ties at a meeting at the historic Admiralty House today.

Following an inspection of a Guard of Honour at Horse Guards Parade, the Defence Secretary and the French Minister of the Armed Forces signed an agreement to increase British and French co-operation on countering terrorism and illegal migration in the Channel, one of the busiest maritime highways in the world.

Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said:

As we leave the European Union we will continue our relationship with our European allies and a vital part of this will be through our defence relationship.

The Channel is of huge importance to both our countries and this new agreement demonstrates our commitment to work with international partners to help tackle the threat of piracy and terrorism around the globe and protect our people at home. The United Kingdom will always do what is necessary to protect ourselves and will work with our allies, like France, to achieve this.

The agreement builds on existing maritime cooperation between the Royal Navy and French Navy, which includes joint exercises and intelligence-sharing. It will ensure both countries use the most modern technologies and share knowledge, to help identify suspicious activities and conduct maritime security operations.

The meeting came ahead of the next [UK-France Summit](#) in the new year, which will further strengthen the UK and France's Defence cooperation under the [Lancaster House Treaty](#).