

News story: UK sets up joint Caribbean Coordination Cell with French and Dutch allies

The MNCCC will share, coordinate and optimise the use of ships and aircraft delivering emergency aid to affected islands. By working together as well as alongside close allies and partners, including the US and Canada, the military cell will improve the efficiency of humanitarian relief operations in the region.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

The UK has led the way in providing expert disaster relief to those suffering in the wake of Hurricane Irma and now Maria moving a significant amount of troops, aid and equipment into the region. The creation of this co-ordination center will see the UK work with our European allies as we share our expertise and assets to coordinate the delivery of emergency relief across the region.

In the face of such devastation, it is more important than ever to work side by side with our international allies to maximize our response to this crisis, making sure that aid reaches those who need it most.

The MNCCC is intended to act as a liaison and coordination body which will align international military activity and work as a point of contact for participating nations and regional authorities.

The military cell will be established on the island of Curacao at the Dutch Naval Base Parera, and will be active for between one and two months in order to support the longer term reconstruction and recovery effort in the region. The cell will be staffed by around 30 military personnel from the three nations, where the UK contingent will provide specific expertise in tactical and operational air lifts.

The creation of the cell is the latest example of joint crisis response work in the region, which so far has included a British C17 aircraft transporting 30 tons of French equipment and vehicles to Guadeloupe to support French helicopter operations, and the Dutch vessel HNLMS KAREL DOORMAN picking up additional UK aid from Portsmouth today on her way to the Caribbean. Moreover, a UK specialist in humanitarian and disaster relief was amongst the first French military deployment to the region, and all three nations have liaison officers embedded in each others' military headquarters.

The MNCCC builds on a history of the UK's close defence collaboration with France and the Netherlands. Our Armed Forces work side by side across the globe, for example in the Counter-Daesh Global Coalition and also in NATO,

through which France contributes to the UK-led enhanced Forward Presence deployment in Estonia and the Dutch have committed a company of Marines to the UK-led NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) this year. The UK also works alongside the Netherlands as partners in the [UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force](#), a nine-nation-strong high-readiness task force, whilst the UK and France will train, operate and fight alongside each other through the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, successfully tested through [Exercise Griffin Strike](#) last year.