

Admiral Sir Tony Radakin KCB ADC



Chief of the Defence Staff

General Andrus Merilo
Chief of Defence
Juhkentali 58
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10¹² July 2024

Dear Andrus,

I am writing to offer my congratulations on your appointment as Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces. I am sorry that I was unable to attend the change in command ceremony in Tallinn, but I hope we will get the opportunity to meet at NATO ChoDs. I was lucky to share an open and constructive relationship with your predecessor, and I very much hope we can continue this tradition of frank and friendly cooperation.

The defence and security relationship that Estonia and the UK enjoy is built on the solid foundations of shared values and a long history of close cooperation. The UK and Estonia are lucky to work closely together not just bilaterally, but through NATO, the Northern Group, and particularly through the JEF. Our collaboration exemplifies what is possible when two similarly minded, close allies come together in shared commitment and purpose.

I'm also aware that our HQ CABRIT team is working hand in hand with your Divisional HQ to ensure the UK's Forward Land Forces are integrated and operationalised within the Estonian National Defence Plan. I know you have been closely involved in the deliberations with my staff officers on the FLF posture, therefore I look forward to discussing this in detail with you at our first meeting. We plan to focus on 4 Brigade Combat Team being our principal contribution and to return 12 Brigade Combat Team to the 3rd Division, where it will be a staple of the division and SACEUR's Strategic Reserve under the ARRC.

Estonia's vocal and unfaltering support for Ukraine has been indispensable to the NATO alliance; indeed, I have always admired Estonia's willingness to make significant sacrifices in pursuit of ensuring Ukraine's victory. It is as important as ever that we, along with our allies, remain resolute in ensuring Russia's aims are defeated in Ukraine, and I look forward to working with you in public forums to reiterate this message in the strongest terms.

May I wish you the best of luck during your tenure as Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces.

Congratulations! And I
look forward to meeting

Yours,

Tony