

1967-2017: 50 YEARS OF NATO IN BRUNSSUM





“Despite all the different nationalities, despite the cultural barriers, despite the fact that NATO acts globally, despite all this - we succeeded together in coming together. We are ‘host to NATO’, it says on the billboards as you enter Brunssum. But we are more than that. We are neighbours. We are friends. Yes, I think we are even family. NATO is in our veins. That, to me, is the heritage of 50 years of NATO in Brunssum.”

(Luc Winants, Mayor of Brunssum)

BRUNSSUM CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AS HOST TO NATO

The 50th Anniversary of a NATO Headquarters hosted by the town of Brunssum was celebrated in style 31 May. Military and civilian personnel of Allied Headquarters Joint Force Command Brunssum, joined by veterans from the local area, donned their best uniforms and attire to participate in a military parade conducted in the town centre. To underline the gravity of the occasion and the strong bond of friendship that exists between JFC Brunssum, the town, the province of Limburg and the host nation, the following VVIPs were in attendance:

His Majesty King Willem-Alexander
of the Netherlands;

Ms Rose Gottemoeller
(NATO Deputy Secretary General (DSG));

Mrs Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert
(Netherlands Minister of Defence
(NLD MoD));

General Curtis M. Scaparrotti
(Supreme Allied Commander Europe
(SACEUR));

Mr Theo Bovens (King's Commissioner
and Governor of Limburg).

General Petr Pavel
(Chairman of the NATO Military
Committee)

The parade and reception were jointly hosted by the Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, and the Mayor of Brunssum, Mr Luc Winants. Following an inspection of the parade by General Scaparrotti the Mayor, three winners of a young persons' regional debating contest, the Dutch Minister of Defence, the NATO Deputy Secretary General, SACEUR and Commander JFC Brunssum each delivered short speeches to those on parade and the on-looking public. The parade concluded with a fly-past of Belgian F-16s.



THE VIPs

Opposite page, top Right: King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands followed by Ms Rose Gottemoeller (NATO Deputy Secretary General), General Curtis M. Scaparrotti (Supreme Allied Commander Europe), General Salvatore Farina (Commander JFC Brunssum)



Left: The King of the Netherlands meets Commander JFC Brunssum upon arrival and then (far right, opposite page) enters Brikke Oave with a traditional royal gesture; Right, opposite page: General Tom Middendorp (Chief of Defence of the Netherlands) and General Petr Pavel (Chief of NATO Military Committee)



"In the fifty years since the Alliance first came to Brunssum, the world has changed a great deal. Joint Force Command played a crucial role in how we have adapted to that change. Just as it continues to do today."

(Mrs Rose Gottemoeller, NATO Deputy Secretary General)



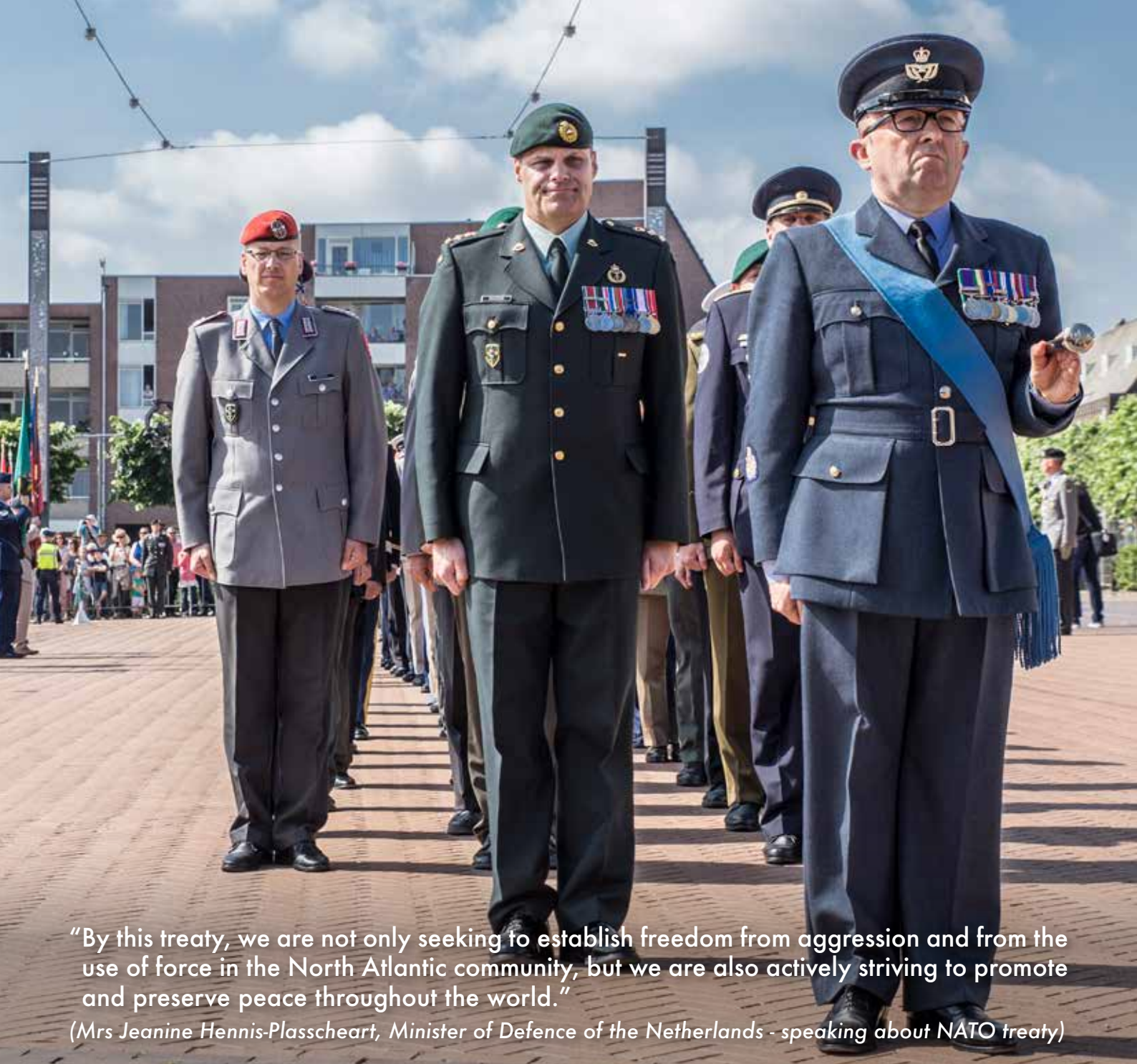
III





THE SPEECHES





"By this treaty, we are not only seeking to establish freedom from aggression and from the use of force in the North Atlantic community, but we are also actively striving to promote and preserve peace throughout the world."

(Mrs Jeanine Hennis-Plasscheart, Minister of Defence of the Netherlands - speaking about NATO treaty)



Above: JFC Brunssum servicemen stand in Lindeplein before the official speeches; Left: Luc Winants, Mayor of Brunssum, addresses the public flanked by three young citizens; Opposite page, from top left to bottom right: ensigns carrying parade colors; the Parade Commander reports to Commander JFC Brunssum and SACEUR; NATO Deputy Secretary General, SACEUR and the Dutch Minister of Defense deliver their speeches.





"Today we reflect on the past, but we do so to give us confidence and inspiration for the future and to remind us of the power of working together. We are living in a period of significant transition for our Alliance - another period where those opposed to our freedoms and values are challenging us. And so again, NATO stands united to play its vital role in protecting our freedoms and in building a future where Europe remains whole, free, and at peace."

(General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, Supreme Allied Commander Europe)

Above: the Parade Commander and the troops saluting authorities on the march in Lindeplein; Right: General Scaparrotti and General Farina pass in review before the parade; Opposite page, from top to bottom: the Royal Netherlands Air Force Band; servicemen marching; public and HQ staff attending the event watch the parade unfold.







"As we reflect on these past 50 years, I would like to recognize the efforts of all the personnel who have served in Brunssum before us. And more, more importantly, I pay tribute to those faithful and dedicated NATO military and civilians who paid with their lives the ultimate price in service to this command, to NATO and to their nation."

(General Salvatore Farina, Commander Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum)



THE PARADE

Above: Brunssum, 31 May 2017 - Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, and Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, salute the flags during the 50th anniversary parade in Lindeplein. Opposite page, bottom: Dutch Veterans in Lindeplein during the ceremony while the National anthem of the Netherlands is played; Left: King Willem-Alexander, accompanied by the Governor of Limburg and the Mayor of Brunssum, greets the public before leaving.

NEW WING RIBBON CUTTING



General Curtis M. Scaparrotti (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) officially cut the ribbon to open an extension to the JFC Brunssum headquarters in a short, yet poignant, ceremony on 31 May. Lieutenant General Van Duren, Commander Joint Support Command of the Netherlands Armed Forces, represented the Netherlands Mi-

nistry of Defence at the ceremony whilst Mayor Luc Winants attended on behalf of the city of Brunssum. Mr Jack Corten attended on behalf of the contractor, Laudy.

The extension is the result of a significant uplift in manning allocated to JFC Brunssum, following the last structural review of Allied Command Operations in 2012, that will enable an additional circa

200 staff to be accommodated. In his remarks General Farina, Commander JFC Brunssum, stated: 'I see a strong powerful architecture, complemented by a large open and transparent foyer. For me this symbolizes the strength of NATO, and our open way of conducting operations.'

"Today is not simply the anniversary of an event which took place 50 years ago it is a celebration of 50 years of friendship, support and community. A shared history that we can all be proud of."

(General Curtis M. Scaparrotti, Supreme Allied Commander Europe)



MONUMENT UNVEILING



"NATO is about people coming together – working together – in support of our shared values and common security. The hospitality you have shown the men and women of NATO these last fifty years embodies that spirit. I am honoured to join the other speakers today in celebrating this enduring friendship."

(Mrs Rose Gottemoeller, NATO Deputy Secretary General - speaking about the civilian community)



Shortly after the 50th Anniversary parade had finished Mayor Winants, Governor Bovens, Deputy Secretary General Gottemoeller, General Pavel (Chairman of NATO's Military Committee), General Scaparrotti (SACEUR) and General Farina jointly unveiled a bronze artwork by the renowned Dutch artist, Harald Vlugt. This highly impressive work surrounds a waterfall that connects the town square (the Lindeplein) to a lake in the adjacent Vijverpark.

Twenty-eight trout have been painstakingly etched into the bronze representing the members of NATO who, just like the trout, often swim against the current to achieve their goal.

Note: The flag of Montenegro was raised at NATO Headquarters on Wednesday (7 June 2017) in a special ceremony to mark the country's accession to NATO. Flag raising ceremonies were also held simultaneously at Allied Command Operations (SHAPE) in Mons and Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, Virginia. Montenegro became the 29th member of the Alliance on Monday (5 June 2017) when it deposited its instrument of accession to the North Atlantic Treaty with the US State Department in Washington DC. Thus, on 31 May 2017 (the day the 50th anniversary of Brunssum hosting NATO was celebrated) there were 28 NATO members.



FAMILY DAY

Following the formal elements of the 50th anniversary celebrations 31 May (parade, reception and monument unveiling) an eclectic range of activities commenced in the Brunssum Vijverpark embracing a central theme of family entertainment.

Bus tours were conducted of the NATO base. Of necessity, this was not spontaneous but a carefully planned activity that allowed local people to sign up in advance to a maximum capacity of 600 available seats. This proved extremely popular. Those lucky enough to secure a seat were first briefed on the enduring role of NATO, and JFC Brunssum's particular responsibilities, before being subjected to a security search and boarding buses. Once on-board the buses, a tour of the base commenced that included a running commentary of the use of the different buildings and those left that date back to the site's previous use as a coal mine.

The Vijverpark itself was bubbling with activity. Following short remarks by Commander JFC Brunssum, General Salvatore Farina, and Mayor Luc Winants, an international food market (representing 16 Alliance member nations) opened, providing delicacies free of charge to the public. At the same time, amongst other serials: a diving demonstration was conducted in the lake; the Dutch marines provided a climbing wall for the more adventurous to try; military vehicles were on display; local veterans organisations were selling patches and memorabilia; a disco provided background music; live musical acts rotated; a mini assault course was made available; and, sports facilities were provided for youngsters. The evening concluded with an outstanding concert by the Royal Netherlands Air Force band that played a programme of popular music free of charge.

All in all, this was an outstanding event that attracted large numbers of people and provided a platform for NATO personnel to interact with the public, and the public to interact with NATO personnel and their families, to the benefit of all. The relationship between NATO and its host town of Brunssum is one of mutual respect and is stronger than ever.



"I cannot imagine not growing up in safety. Thanks to my friends, my neighbours, my friend's father and all his colleagues, I can. They miss out on being with their families for my happiness and I am so grateful for that."
(Lian Meuffels, young citizen of Brunssum)



On these and the following pages: snapshots from the Brunssum Vijverpark, where several family oriented activities were organized within the 50th anniversary celebrations throughout 31 May



"So, your contribution to this Alliance – to peace and security – is invaluable. Those of you who work here can be proud of everything you do."
(Mrs Rose Gottemoeller, NATO Deputy Secretary General - speaking about JFC staff)



FAMILY DAY





"Since the very first day of my command here, I have always felt to be at home, and that same feeling is shared by the military and civilians of Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum. What we see today – local citizens standing alongside the headquarters personnel and their families – illustrates the cooperation and teamwork between JFC Brunssum and the local community."

(General Salvatore Farina, Commander Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum)



"I feel safe. In fact, my whole generation is safe. Even though most of us don't know how it feels to be unsafe, I know, I am safe."

(Sverre Kelderman, young citizen of Brunssum)



SPORT TOURNAMENTS

Above and below, respectively: the golf and the football representatives from the Headquarters Joint Force Command and the town of Brunssum before the matches organized within the celebrations for the 50th anniversary.





"One thing is clear: this future is going to be shaped by global development and events. And thus by global organizations - NATO among them. So this new generation is fully aware that NATO is part of their world, part of their future."

(Luc Winants, Mayor of Brunssum)

