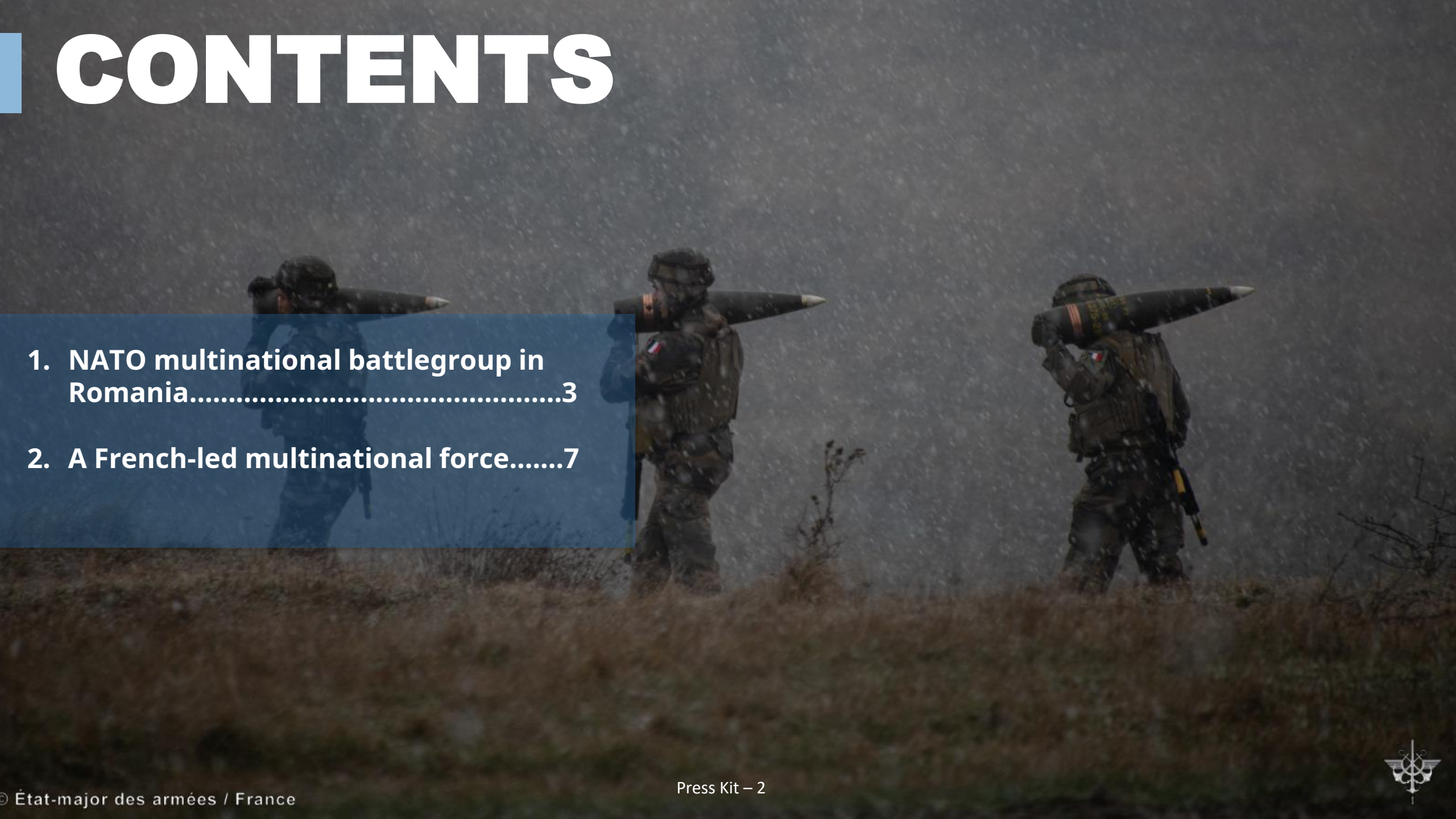


# PRESS KIT

## **French-led NATO multinational battlegroup in Romania**



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# 1. French-led NATO multinational battlegroup in Romania

*Reinforcement of NATO's deterrent and defensive posture*



Russia's military aggression against Ukraine is one of the most serious violations of the security order in Europe for several decades. Romania, as a bordering state, fears that the conflict could spill over on to its territory.

In response to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, Supreme Allied Command Europe (SACEUR) received the green light from the North Atlantic Council (NAC) to activate the Graduated Response Plans (GRPs), the first stage in the Alliance's regional defence plans.

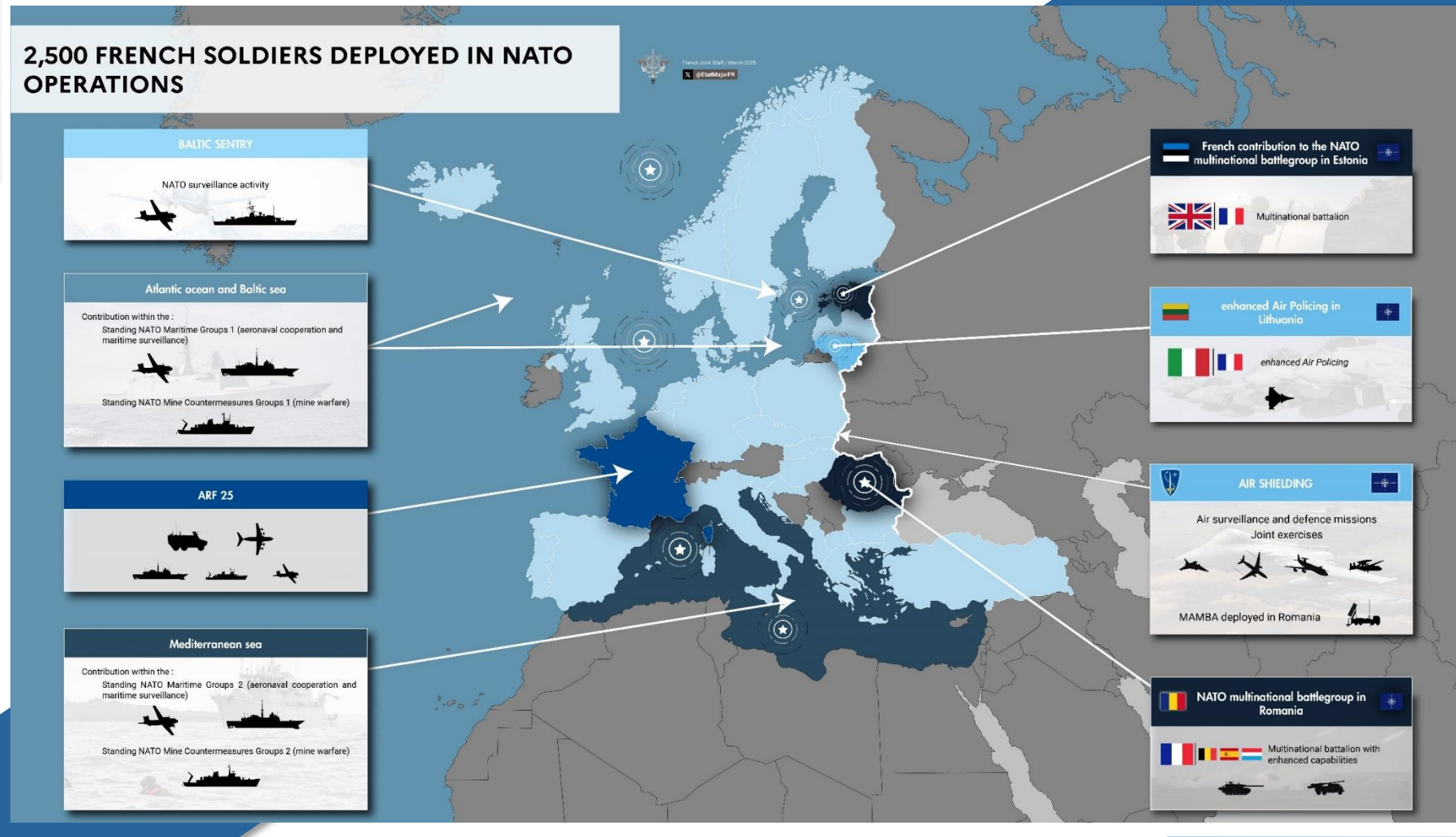
The implementation of these measures is designed to prevent the conflict between Russia and Ukraine spreading beyond Ukraine's borders into NATO member states.

As part of this phase, France, acting **within the framework of NATO**, has deployed a battalion to **Romania** (starting with the spearhead battalion of the rapid response force on February 28<sup>th</sup> that became the Multinational Battlegroup since May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022) and the MAMBA air defence system since May 16 in order to reinforce the Alliance's deterrent and defensive posture against Russia.



France is fully committed to reinforcing the strategic solidarity that is the foundation of the North Atlantic Alliance, and **the French armed forces have already been contributing actively to NATO's reassurance missions with measured, progressive and rapid response deployments.** We are playing our full part in strengthening the various NATO capabilities in the long run, as illustrated by the support provided at short notice to the Baltic countries and the eastern flank (Mission Lynx in Estonia and deployment of the Brigade Forward Command Element in Romania) to meet the commitments made at NATO summits.

## 2,500 FRENCH SOLDIERS DEPLOYED IN NATO OPERATIONS





With this deployment, France is reinforcing its presence and commitment alongside its allies on Europe's eastern flank. It is also demonstrating the response capabilities of its armed forces and reaffirming France's strategic solidarity with Romania and the other members of the NATO Alliance.

For the first time, France is assuming the role of leading nation in a NATO reassurance mission, thereby confirming its status as a **reliable, credible and loyal ally that is fully involved in the operational activities of NATO.**

The long-term deployment of a battalion commanded by France also testifies to the reinforcement of bilateral military relations between Romania and France.





# FOCUS



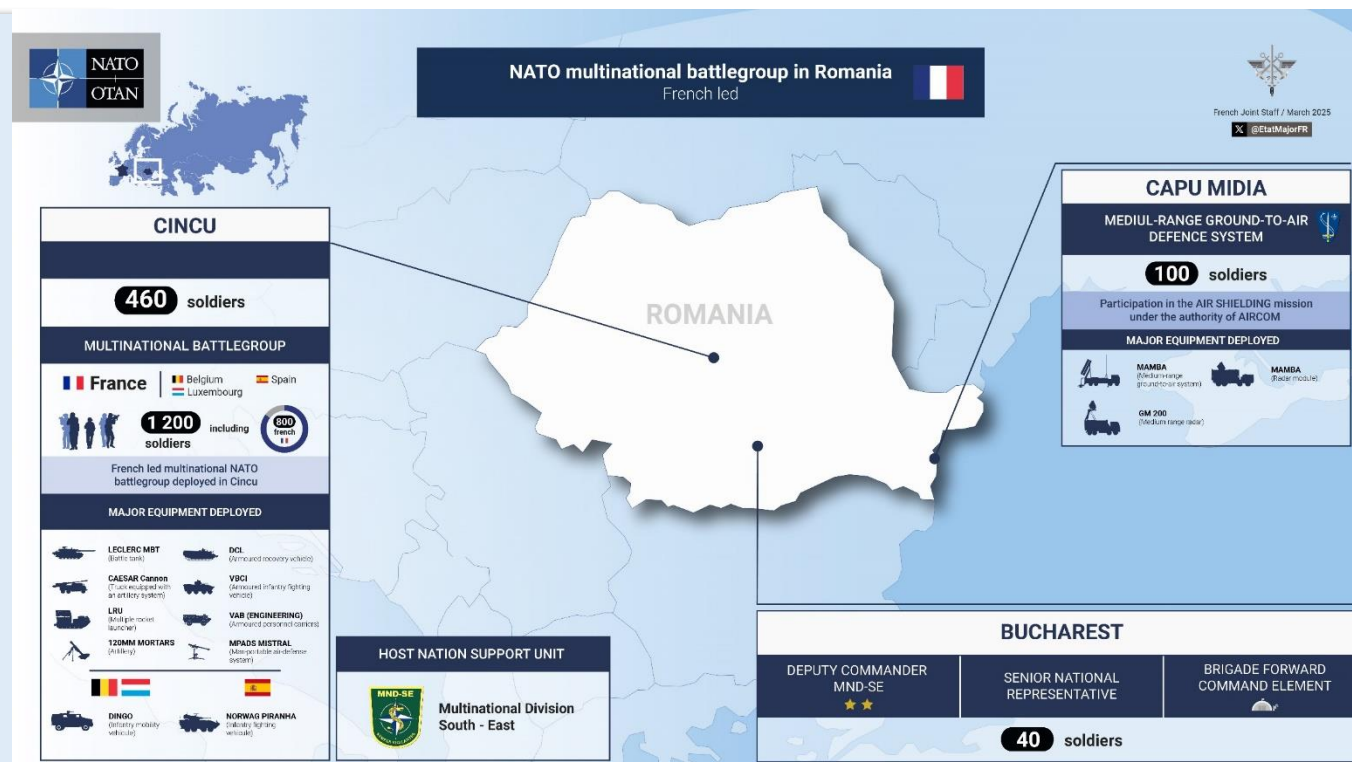
Rondache de candide on a vire sable charged in the center with the NATO star brocaded with an eagle's head erased proper; all within an orle parted in the 1st: the French national colours and in the 2nd: the Romanian national colours.

## 2. A French-led multinational force in Romania

+1 500

**soldiers** make up the multinational force in Romania, composed of the following units:

- Multinational Battlegroup in Cincu and Mihail Kogalniceanu
- Medium-range surface-to-air defence detachment (SAMP) MAMBA in Capu Midia
- National support echelon (ESN), in Cincu and Mihail Kogalniceanu
- Senior National Representative (SNR) and liaison detachment, in Bucharest





## Multinational Battlegroup

Since May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, NATO reinforces its deterrent and defensive posture on the eastern flank with the **Multinational Battlegroup** whose leading nation is France. It follows on from the Spearhead Battalion of the NATO Response Force (NRF) engaged since February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Since the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis, NATO has been committed to forming a **multinational battalion of over 1,000 soldiers in the first half of 2022**, as part of its gradual build-up. The Multinational Battlegroup is tasked with reinforcing the operational capabilities of the deployed troops, demonstrating **the determination of NATO and Europe** to stand up to every threat and fully integrate into Romania's defence plan.

Under the command of the Multinational Division South East (MND-SE), the **Multinational Battlegroup** has specially adapted capabilities that have been deployed by France, Luxembourg and Belgium.

**The Multinational Battlegroup takes part in joint actions and missions** based on the shared foundation of NATO standards, which enable the multinational forces to work together with unified concepts and methods. These actions and missions are conducted with the armed forces of the other nations present at the Constanța base, consisting mainly of Romanian and American military personnel together with Portuguese, Polish, Dutch and Canadian forces.

**All the forces present are united in the common goal** of contributing actively and tangibly to the various deterrent and defensive capabilities deployed by NATO on Europe's eastern flank.





# Multinational Battlegroup

The Multinational Battlegroup consists of the following units:

- A tactical staff and the n° 2 combat train (logistics detachment);
- an armored squadron;
- an infantry company;
- a combat engineer company;
- an artillery battery;
- An artillery battery;
- a Belgian mechanized armored infantry;
- a Spanish marines reinforced mechanized company;
- a Luxembourg reconnaissance unit.

Under the command of **Colonel Thierry DENECHAUD**, commanding officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dragons Regiment, the battalion has more than **1.500 soldiers** (300 Belgian, 200 Spanish and 30 Luxembourgish) with the following equipment:

- **13 Leclerc tanks** and **2 Leclerc tank repairers**, **18 VBCI** (armoured infantry fighting vehicle), **39 VAB** (armoured personnel carriers), **28 PVP** (small protected vehicle), **36 French VBL** (light armoured vehicle), **20 VT4** (tactical 4x4 vehicles) and more than **50 transport trucks**.
- **4 CAESAR** self-propelled howitzer, **3 LRU** (unitary rocket launcher) and **4 mortars** 120 mm.





## Leclerc tanks

The Leclerc tank squadron was transported by rail to the French camp at Cincu on **November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022**.

The Leclerc tank has firepower, mobility and protection capabilities, as well as command information thanks to on-board computers and data transmission.

It is the only tank capable of firing at a fixed target up to **4,000 m** while moving.

## CAESAR

Transported by rail from France, **4 CAESAR** arrived on **July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023** at Voila station in Romania, before heading for the Cincu military camp.

The CAESAR is a truck equipped with an **artillery system**. This equipment is the main armament of the artillery regiments of the multi-role and emergency engagement brigades.

It delivers the power of 155 mm ammunition, at a range of more than 40 km, with excellent precision.





## Medium-range surface-to-air detachment (SAMP) MAMBA



Since May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at the request of the Romanian authorities and NATO, the French forces have deployed the MAMBA latest generation ground-to-air defence system at the Capu Midia base in Romania.

Operated by around 100 airmen, the MAMBA medium-range surface-to-air system (SAMP) is a sophisticated weapon system that can provide:

- a protective bubble for the benefit of a moving land force and other forces deployed in an operating theatre,
- the protection of high-value sites,
- simultaneous 360° defence against all types of threat from the air (fighter planes, drones, cruise or ballistic missiles, etc.).





The MAMBA air defence system is composed of several interconnected modules and has the mission of **guaranteeing the air defence of the forces operating in the coverage area.**

Each launch unit of the system can salvo fire **up to eight ASTER 30 missiles**, each weighing 465 kg. The ASTER 30 missile reaches a speed of over 5000 km/h and can hit a target more than 100 km away. Several missiles can be fired simultaneously against different targets and in every direction.

To increase the efficiency of the MAMBA system, it is **connected and integrated via a tactical data link to the Romanian defence system and to the NATO defence system**, which commands it. Following a test phase, the MAMBA system was certified and is now fully integrated in the NATO Integrated Air Missile Defence (IAMD).

Again, this reaffirms the status of France as a **reliable, credible and loyal ally**, demonstrating its tangible solidarity by its readiness to respond to a need expressed by the Alliance and **contributing directly to the defence and protection of Europe's eastern flank.**

The deployment of this weapon system marks the **boosting of cooperation in defence and bilateral military relations between France and Romania** (in place since 2007, especially in the surface-to-air domain), **Belgium and the Netherlands.** It also testifies to the reality of France's commitment to its European partners.



## National support echelon (ESN) and command structure



The ESN is responsible for the logistical support of French detachments deployed in the Romanian theatre. It operates in different logistic domains. It is distributed between the Mihail Kogalniceanu air base in Constanta and the Cincu camp.

**Brigadier General Loïc GIRARD** is Deputy Commander of the NATO Multinational Division Southeast (MND-SE) in Bucharest. As part of his French responsibilities, he is also responsible for ensuring that French forces integrated into NATO's multinational structure are deployed in accordance with their mission. The Multinational Battlegroup of Cincu is part of this NATO structure.



The Deputy National Representative in Romania, **Colonel Frédéric PICHON**, is assisted by a liaison detachment based at the Romanian Armed Forces Headquarters in Bucharest. He assists the national representative of all deployed French troops, Brigadier General Loïc Girard, and liaises with partners.

## Brigade Forward Command Element – BFCE

Following the Madrid Summit in June 2022, France decided to deploy a **Brigade Forward Command Element (BFCE)** to Romania in November 2022.

This consists of a reduced staff of around ten military personnel, focusing on key command functions (C2 - command & control), under the operational control of **NATO's Multinational Division Southeast (MNDSE)** in Bucharest.

If the situation so requires, or as part of exercises, this element can be reinforced in France to form a complete joint brigade staff, fully capable of commanding the units assigned to it.





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