

# CNO, Commander of Belgian Navy Discuss Increasing Capabilities and Capacity



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday meets with Commander of the Belgian Navy Rear Adm. Jan de Beurme at the Pentagon for an office call, Sept. 23. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication 1st Class Michael Zingaro*

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday met with the Commander of the Belgian Navy Rear Adm. Jan de Beurme at the Pentagon for an office call on Sept. 23, the CNO's Public Affairs office said in a release.

The leaders discussed building maritime capabilities and capacity, as well as deterrence, defense and the need to continue to protect the stability and prosperity of the seas.

“Collectively, our capacity expands when we sail in company with like-minded navies around the world, and we are grateful for the continued partnership and collaboration with Belgium,” said Gilday. “We will continue to strengthen the bonds we share through increased operations, interoperability, and continued cooperation.”

Both heads of navy emphasized the need to develop high-end warfare capabilities, such as advanced mine countermeasures and ballistic-missile defense, while also leveraging enhanced capabilities and technology. The Belgian navy is currently leading a Belgian-Dutch mine countermeasures replacement program, which will supply the Belgian and Royal Netherlands navies with six new minehunter vessels each.

The U.S. Navy and Belgian navy regularly operate together

around the world. In July, the Navy participated in the Bulgarian exercise Breeze alongside Allies and partners Albania, Belgium, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Turkey and the United Kingdom. This summer the U.S. and Belgium were two of the 16 NATO Allied and partner nations that participated in exercise Baltic Operations 22, the premier maritime-focused exercise in the Baltic Region.

Beurme attended the U.S.-led 2021 International Seapower Symposium in Newport, Rhode Island, and will see Gilday again in Venice, Italy, next month for the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium. This was their first official meeting.