

Under Secretary Raven Visits United Kingdom and Norway to Discuss Regional Security, Highlights Importance of Interoperability



March 8, 2024

From Under Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

OSLO, Norway – The Under Secretary of the Navy Erik Raven visited the United Kingdom and Norway, March 3-8, to meet with partner navies, government and military leaders, Sailors and Marines, and to observe a NATO arctic exercise.

The international trip began in London, and was followed by visits to Oslo, Trondheim, Evenes, and Alta in Norway.

In London, Raven met with First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff of the United Kingdom Adm. Sir Ben Key, Minister of the Armed Forces James Heapey, and Chief Defence Nuclear Maddie McTernan where they discussed Ukraine, U.S.-UK Carrier Cooperation, and AUKUS progress.

The Under Secretary visited Barrow-In-Furness to speak with Royal Navy leaders, Sailors, and industry partners about undersea warfare, to include progress made on implementing AUKUS Pillar I. He toured shipyard facilities, a dry-dock, and the Submarines Academy for Skills and Knowledge.

“I want to thank Admiral Key and the Royal Navy for their global contributions to maritime security and stability,” said Raven. “We fly, sail, and operate on a daily basis with the United Kingdom, and together our strong partnership helps us

to ensure security, stability, and prosperity.”

In Norway, Raven met with Norwegian Minister of Defense State Secretary Anne-Marie Aanerud, Chief of Defense Staff Lt. Gen. Ingrid Gjerde, Chief of Staff, Chief of Defense General Erik Kristofferson, and Norwegian Intelligence Service Vice Adm. Andreas Stensønes.

Discussions focused on military capabilities, maritime surveillance, security challenges in the Nordic region, and ways to further increase cooperation and interoperability.

“The Arctic is a region of strategic importance,” said the Under Secretary. “Working together, the Navy and Marine Corps are supporting maritime statecraft while maintaining freedom of navigation and adhering to the rules-based international order.”

“Working with our Allies and partners, we will preserve the Arctic as a space free of conflict, where nations act responsibly, and where economic and energy resources are developed in a sustainable, transparent manner.”

Raven toured the Marine Corp Prepositioning Program-Norway in the Frigaard Cave in Trondheim, Norway. At Evenes, he observed a combat craft demonstration in the Norwegian fjords and met with U.S. Navy Seabees providing maritime support.

The trip concluded with the observation of the NATO-led arctic exercise Northern Response 24, in Alta. Nordic Response 24 is hosted by Norway and supported by Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe, along with contributions from all U.S. military services. This is one of a long list of impactful engagements underscoring the longstanding alliance between Norway and the United States. With diplomatic relations forged nearly 120 years ago in 1905, the two nations and their militaries remain strategically and operationally synchronized.

“The rules-based international order depends on free and open oceans, and the militaries and service members of the European nations participating in this exercise have an instrumental role in upholding that standard,” said Raven. “Realistic exercises like Northern Response 24 allow us to work with like-minded nations to strengthen our partnerships and ensure we are trained, ready, and interoperable for crises or conflict.”

More than 20,000 service members from 14 nations are participating in Nordic Response 24. Participating nations include: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States.

The trip marked Raven’s second to the United Kingdom and his first to Norway.