

# US DoD, UK Defence Ministry Sign Accord for Joint Carrier Strike Group Deployment



Sailors observe the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth II (R08) from aboard the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) in this 2018 photo. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kallysta Castillo

LONDON and ARLINGTON, Va. – Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher C. Miller and U.K. Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace have cosigned the Joint Declaration for the Carrier Strike Group 2021 deployment.

The Joint Declaration enables the deployment of U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy personnel and equipment, including a detachment of U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft and the Navy's Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), as part of a U.K.-U.S. combined carrier strike group, led by the United Kingdom's aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

"This deployment underscores the strength of our bilateral ties and demonstrates U.S.-U.K. interoperability, both of which are key tenets of the U.S. National Defense Strategy," Miller said in a release.

The leaders look forward to seeing the culmination of nearly a decade of U.S.-UK carrier cooperation when Carrier Strike Group 2021 sets sail from Portsmouth, United Kingdom, later this year.

"This joint declaration paves the way for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps to be joining the HMS Queen Elizabeth Carrier Strike Group this year for the inaugural Carrier Strike 21 deployment," Wallace said in a release. "I am delighted that

the U.K. now possesses a 21st century Carrier Strike capability, which has been greatly assisted by the unswerving support and cooperation of the United States at all levels over the past decade. This deployment embodies the strength of our bilateral ties and reflects the depth and breadth of this vital defense and security partnership.”

The U.K. reached a major milestone in December when it declared its carrier strike program had achieved initial operating capability following a series of multinational exercises throughout 2020. This joint declaration paves the way for a successful inaugural operational deployment of the U.K. Carrier Strike Group alongside its allies.