

## Belgian Security 2040: which societal resources to mobilise?



Colloquium, 19 & 20 April 2023, Brussels (campus Renaissance)

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to a **two-day colloquium** organised on **Wednesday 19 April and Thursday 20 April 2023** by the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** of the Royal Higher Institute for Defence.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the USSR's collapse, successive Belgian governments have adapted their political priorities and sought to benefit from the peace dividend. The events of the last ten years, ranging from the return of geostrategic rivalries to natural and man-made disasters, conventional warfare on European soil and hybrid actions, using cyberspace, energy and natural resources, bring us back to the harsh reality! A sovereign state is responsible for protecting its citizens, defending its territory and ensuring its independence. It is essential to be prepared for the crises and wars to come. Thirty years of disinvestment have left our country and its population more vulnerable than during the Cold War. The resilience of our society to hybrid threats must become a priority again. One of the major challenges governments need to take up, lies in human capital. Not only is the quality of individuals indispensable; the mass of people that can be mobilised at short notice, in all the critical areas necessary for ensuring a country's existence and enabling it to resist, has once again become a fundamental element in absorbing destabilising shocks, both virtual and physical.

The colloquium initially aims to make the participants reflect on two concepts that are essential to face crises: the resilience of our society (with our way of life and our values) and total defence. Our colloquium's ambition is to raise the question whether investments, materials and a limited structure are really enough. To what extent should the mobilisation of a wide range of societal resources not be thought through, translated into detailed interdepartmental plans and coordinated, synchronised and directed with the necessary tools? In a second step, we will look at two particular cases: 1) the human capital pool, in particular the ready-to-use reserves that can be mobilised in different time frames and for different durations depending on the circumstances; 2) the indispensable civil-military cooperation, the private-public partnerships to be put in place to protect not only our critical infrastructures, but also the ecosystems that guarantee their functionality.

This colloquium will take place in English, Dutch and French on **Wednesday 19 April 2023** from 9:30 to 19:00 and on **Thursday 20 April 2023** from 9:30 to 17:30 **in the conference room at campus Renaissance** (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8/Hobbemastraat 8, 1000 Brussels**). A simultaneous interpretation in English, Dutch and French will be provided in the conference room. **Registration (via the following link: [www.defence-institute.be](http://www.defence-institute.be)) by Sunday 16 April 2023 at the latest is compulsory.** If you would like to have a hot meal (three-course menu from six euros) on campus during the lunch breaks, we kindly ask you to also indicate as such when you register. You can also buy sandwiches at the bar. Please note that you can only pay with Bancontact.

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng  
Air Force Major General  
Director-General  
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

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## Programme Wednesday 19 April

09:00 – 09:30 **Registration**

09:30 – 10:00 **Welcome address**  
Mrs Ludivine Dedonder  
Minister of Defence

10:00 – 13:00 **PANEL 1: 'Total Defence' Concept**

Chair:  
Prof. Dr Alexander Mattelaer

Speakers:  
Dr Paal Sigurd Hilde (associate professor Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies)  
Dr Joakim Berndtsson (senior lecturer University of Gothenburg)  
Dr Ieva Bērziņa (senior researcher National Defence Academy of Latvia)  
Colonel Erik Claessen (Belgian Defence, ACOS Strat)

Debate moderated by panel chair

Q&A session

13:00 – 14:30 **Lunch break**

14:30 – 17:30 **PANEL 2: Resilience**

Chair:  
Prof. Dr Tanguy Struye de Swielande

Speakers:  
Dr Victoria Vdovychenko (professor Kyiv Borys Grinchenko University & Aston University)  
Dr Rasmus Hindrén (head of international relations European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats)  
Mr Jan Bayart (coordinator for European strategic resilience and autonomy, FPS Foreign Affairs)  
Mrs Cathy Berx (governor Province of Antwerp)

Debate moderated by panel chair

Q&A session

17:30 – 19:00 **Reception**

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## Programme Thursday 20 April

09:00 – 09:30 **Registration**

09:30 – 12:30 **PANEL 3: Reserve Forces**

Chair:

Senior Captain BAF Estelle Hoorickx, PhD

Speakers:

Lieutenant-Colonel Arnaud le Grelle (regional director FEDERGON)

Mrs Myriam Broeders (chief technology officer Microsoft)

Commandant FASF Benoît Chauchepat (co-founder C&V Consulting)

Colonel EMG Alexandre Vautravers, PhD (senior advisor Geneva government, editor-in-chief Revue militaire suisse)

Debate moderated by panel chair

Q&A session

12:30 – 14:00 **Lunch break**

14:00 – 17:00 **PANEL 4: Civil-Military Cooperation**

Chair:

Prof. Dr Cind Du Bois

Speakers:

Mrs Leen Depuydt (chief operations officer National Crisis Centre)

Mr Bram Couwberghs (defence & intelligence leader Microsoft)

Mr Bart Bruelemans (chief resilience officer City of Antwerp)

Mr Filip Smeets (CEO Professional Association of Security Firms APEG-BVBO)

Mr Marcel van Eck (programme director National Security Dutch Ministry of Defence)

Debate moderated by panel chair

Q&A session

17:00 – 17:30 **Closing remarks**

Major General Aviator Frederik Vansina

Assistant Chief of Staff Strategy