



**General Gordon Messenger**

Vice Chief of Defence Staff, United Kingdom

**High-Level Military Forum**

**European Defence – common ambitions and national realities**

Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016, 15:30 – 16:45 h

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General Messenger joined the Royal Marines in 1983. After a range of junior officer appointments, predominantly in regimental service and including a 1 year Mountain Leader course, he attended the Canadian Staff College in 1994. Two staff jobs followed, in the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) and HQ Royal Marines, before he was appointed as Chief of Staff to 3 Commando Brigade in 1999; a tour that included an operational deployment to Kosovo.

He commanded 40 Commando from 2001 to 2003, which included operational deployments to Afghanistan and Op TELIC 1, the invasion of Iraq, in Mar 2003. After a sabbatical in Geneva, he joined Joint Force Headquarters as Chief of Staff in 2004; a job that saw him on various operations worldwide, including the tsunami relief effort, the civilian evacuation from Lebanon and command of the Op HERRICK Prelim Ops deployment in Southern Afghanistan in 2005.

After attending the Higher Command and Staff Course, he briefly acted as Director Force Development in MOD Main Building before being appointed to the position of Director Joint Commitments (Military) in Sep 2007, coordinating military policy for all overseas operations. After selection for Brigade command, he then commanded 3 Commando Brigade for their operational tour to Helmand Province in Sep 2008, followed by promotion and a tour as the Chief of Defence Staff's Strategic Communication Officer.

From 2010 to 2012 he served as Chief of Staff (Operations) at the Permanent Joint Headquarters, responsible for the conduct and capability of UK overseas operations. On promotion to 3\* in Jan 13, he assumed the position of Deputy Commander of NATO's Allied Land Command in Izmir, Turkey before becoming the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Military Strategy and Operations) in the MOD in Jul 14. General Messenger was appointed as Vice Chief of the Defence Staff in May 16 following promotion to 4\*.