

Written by Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO  
Thursday, 19 January 2012 12:18

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The Declaration, which came into effect upon its signature, is a non-legal document highlighting the deepening and expanding cooperative relationship between the two parties in a comprehensive manner.

The parties formally reinforced their level of cooperation -- The Honorable Mayor of Stavanger, Christine Sagen Helgo and the Commander of NATO's Joint Warfare Centre, French Army Major General Jean Fred Berger, signed on 18 January a Declaration of Cooperation that aims to enhance the strong ties, good communication and partnership between the Joint Warfare Centre and the City, as well as to establish a framework to examine the possibilities of constructive and collaborative activities for mutual benefit.

During her speech, the Honorable Mayor of Stavanger, Christine Sagen Helgo highlighted the historic importance of the day as it marked the achievement of an important milestone for the Joint Warfare Centre and the City of Stavanger. She said: "Joint Warfare Centre is the continuation of a more than 1500 years of military tradition at Jåttånuten, or Mount Jåttå. We are very proud that you see the value of continued presence here in Stavanger. But as much as we want to be a good host to NATO and JWC with its ongoing operations, we want Stavanger to be a city where you and your family feel welcome and at home. As Mayor I am very proud of the multicultural and multinational dimension of our city. We are now 127 000 citizens, from which almost 20 percent have their origin in another country than Norway. You and your families are a valuable part of Stavanger society."

The Mayor continued to say: "The declaration that we are about to sign is not the result of lack of cooperation. I would rather say it is a manifestation of a rich history of friendship between JWC and the City of Stavanger. I believe that it will strengthen the bonds between the military,

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your families and the community of Stavanger. I am sure that we will find many areas of common interest and benefit along the way.”



During her speech, the Mayor specifically referred to her official visit to Ulsnes training facility on 15 December 2011 to observe the then ongoing ISAF training event. She pointed out the importance of the work undertaken by the Joint Warfare Centre. “It made a strong impression to learn about the training and preparing of ISAF personnel in general,” the Mayor said.

Also speaking on the occasion, Commander Joint Warfare Centre Major General Berger said: “I am, in a way, an Ambassador of NATO in Stavanger; so are my personnel, coming from 20 NATO and Member Nations. I am very pleased that you paid a visit to our ISAF training event and thus became the first Mayor of Stavanger to observe our very realistic exercise for the NATO soldiers who were preparing to deploy to Afghanistan. The Centre is NATO’s footprint in Norway and we represent a strategic link between both sides of the Atlantic; the United States and Europe. Today’s signature of a ‘Declaration of Cooperation’ is very important for us and we commit ourselves to clearly and fully engaging on this declaration. My hope is to make our relationship more visible for all of us, including our families.”

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The full text of the Declaration of Cooperation reads as follows:

***Joint Declaration of Cooperation between the City of Stavanger and the Joint Warfare Centre***

***Anxious*** to strengthen and consolidate the bonds between the Joint Warfare Centre community and the wider society of Stavanger;

***Desiring*** to further deepen their excellent relations of amity and friendship, which were established seventeen years ago, and affirm their values of solidarity and respect;

***Considering*** that it is necessary for this purpose to establish a framework for cooperation, which will extend and strengthen the execution of collaborative activities in areas of common interest and encourage the application of the results of such cooperation to our mutual benefit;

***Taking*** pride and happiness in officially establishing the cooperation between the Joint Warfare Centre and the City of Stavanger;

***Declare that we have committed to:***

*Cooperate with each other on matters of common interest;*

*Share information and provide mutual support in carrying out activities related to this Declaration of Cooperation;*

*Our collaborative activities may include, but are not limited to, development of items of exchanges and cooperation in the social, cultural and sports fields; planning and coordination of common events; organization of meetings and seminars on matters of mutual interest; and information dissemination.*

*We hereby subscribe to this Declaration of Cooperation in Stavanger on this day of 18 January 2012.*

*For the Joint Warfare Centre  
Major General Jean Fred Berger*

***(Signed)***

*For the City of Stavanger  
Mayor Christine Sagen Helgo*

***(Signed)***