



# EUROPEAN MISSILE DEFENDER *of the* YEAR 2023



*The European Missile Defender of the Year Award Ceremony honors missile defenders from the NATO Alliance for their exemplary service*

Friday, February 10, 2023  
Award Ceremony 5:00 PM  
Castle of Breda, Kraanstraat 4  
Breda, The Netherlands



Lessons learned from the Russian invasion of Ukraine show that Russia is facing numerous challenges in conducting its air campaign. Russia did not succeed in achieving air superiority because of Ukrainian air defence capabilities. Russian aircraft were deterred from operating over most of Ukraine's territory, which resulted in the use of numerous cruise missiles and ballistic missiles.<sup>1</sup>

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shown, once again, the importance of (ground based) Air and Missile Defence systems. After almost a year of high intensity conflict, we have witnessed a widespread variety of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and UAS which are used in large salvos against multiple targets. It is not only the quality that determines the success of the defender, but the quantity is a quality in itself. Cautious conclusions from this ongoing Russian-Ukrainian conflict are starting points for discussion within NATO about IAMD capabilities to challenge these kind of threats in a proper way.

The only way to face the mentioned variety of threats is to have modern integrated Air and Missile Defence systems in place. A robust network should consist of enough individual systems and a sufficient weapon load to defend high value assets. We need to be well postured before the conflict starts and be protected against attacks during the conflict. This suggests that comprehensive posturing requires distribution of our assets, dispersal based on indications and warnings with no single points of failure in the entire chain of command. It also suggests investments in Passive Defence, such as hardened shelters and Camouflage, Concealment and Deception; investments in Active Defence, including counter-UAS and cruise missile defence, and a better focus on left-of-launch counter-offensive capabilities. At the moment, this is the challenge we, as a missile defence community, are facing the upcoming years. I look forward to discussing the initial lessons learned and our mutual challenges in our 'High Level AMD Talks'.

The Netherlands Armed Forces, in cooperation with the MDAA, are honoured to host the 'High Level AMD Talks' as well as the 'Missile Defender of the Year' award ceremony. This year's 'European Missile Defender of the Year' award ceremony will take place on Friday 10 February 2023 at the Royal Military Academy in Breda, the Netherlands. Outside the principal events, all our guests will be offered a cultural program. It provides the opportunity to gain insight into the military history of Breda and in particular the Military Castle of Breda where our officer-cadets start their military career.

It is an honour and a privilege for the Netherlands Armed Forces to co-host this year's 'Missile Defender of the Year' ceremony.

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Breda and discussing last year's achievements during the award ceremony.

Dick C. van Ingen MA  
Major General (Air Force)  
Deputy Commander Royal Netherlands Air Force

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-ill-fated-invasion-ukraine-lessons-modern-warfare>



Ladies and Gentlemen, Partners and Allies and Distinguished Guests,

In the magnitude of the recent events over the past year in Ukraine resulting from escalating use of missiles, drones, and rocket attacks by Russia, it is vital to highlight the significance of air and ground-based defense. We have entered an unprecedented time in the modern era which hinges on nation's collective missile defense operations, architecture and rapid deployment of capabilities and an integrated air and missile defense to stand ready in defense of our nations.

Our international partners and allies rely on the underlying bi-lateral agreements that provide collective shared sensing data to maintain combat readiness. Missile Defense effectors, such as interoperable combat and weapon systems are challenged for integration on fire control.

It is clear, we need courage to shift our thinking to allow the collective Missile Defense strategy to change. Our adversaries are not waiting for us to make the necessary and required adaptations and advancements to extend our air and ground-based missile capabilities. They will continue to expose and exploit our weaknesses and gaps in Missile Defense.

It is the people of our Allied and Partner Joint Force that go up against and beyond limitations to design, deploy and operate current missile defense systems. They have continued to extend our joint capabilities and have directly contributed to the success in operational environments in and around Europe.

In association with the Netherlands Armed Forces, we are excited to bring together the European Missile Defender at the Royal Military Academy in Breda, Netherlands on February 10th, 2023, honoring our European Nations best Missile Defender of the year for 2022. We are also bringing together our courageous and intelligent European Missile Defense leaders for a High-Level Talks centered around Air and Missile Defense earlier on that day.

We look forward to seeing you for the European Defender of the Year Awards this year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Riki M. Ellison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Riki M. Ellison  
Chairman and Founder  
Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance

[www.missiledefenseadvocacy.org](http://www.missiledefenseadvocacy.org)

Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance  
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## EUROPEAN MISSILE DEFENDER of the YEAR 2023 AWARD CEREMONY

Date: 10 February 2023

To be returned by email or using the online form by February 5, 2023

<https://missiledefenseadvocacy.org/2023-european-missile-defender-of-the-year/>

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### ATTENDEE DATA

Family Name:

First Name:

Rank:

Nationality:

Agency/Organization/Unit:

Phone Number:

Email:

Accompanied by Guest?     Yes     No

Guest Name:

### HOTEL INFORMATION for reservation by February 5, please email the hotel

Name  
Address  
Phone number  
Check-in date  
Check-out date  
Booking Code: **PRI-GF60518**

Hotel Information:  
Van der Valk Breda  
Princenhagelaan 5  
4813 DA Breda  
The Netherlands  
[receptie@vandervalkbreda.com](mailto:receptie@vandervalkbreda.com)

### DRESS CODE FOR THE AWARD CEREMONY

Military: Service Dress    Civilian: Business

*Please make note if there are any dietary restrictions for the dinner in your RSVP*