

**Remarks by ambassador Ole Egberg Mikkelsen at a reception  
for Polish naval stakeholders onboard Her Danish Majesty's Ship Iver Huitfeldt,  
moored at Gdynia, 17 September 2018**

First of all, I wish to thank the master and crew of HDMS "Iver Huitfeldt" for inviting us onboard today. I will also take this opportunity to thank the Danish Naval command for making this port call in Gdynia possible and Naval Team Denmark for its strong support of the visit.

Let me then extend a warm welcome to our guests today from the Polish armed forces, the armament inspectorate, the navy inspectorate, the Ministry of Defence, representatives of the local community, the Director of the Naval Museum and the Vice-President of Gdynia as well as representatives of the Polish, Danish and British maritime industry. We are very happy that you have accepted our invitation.

We are proud to co-host today's reception with the British embassy. Let me take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Head of Mission, Mr Jason Rheinberg and his team for your excellent work and cooperation.

Some of you might be asking why the British and the Danish embassies are hosting you today on board a Danish frigate in a Polish port?

First of all, it is no coincidence that we are on board the "Iver Huitfeldt". This vessel represents the very best that the Danish maritime industry has to offer. The class is built on the experience gained from the Absalon-class support ships. By reusing the basic hull design of the Absalon class, the Royal Danish Navy have been able to construct the Iver Huitfeldt class considerably cheaper than comparable vessels.

This is also due to the fact that the Danish Navy implemented the frigate shipbuilding program with inspiration from the world largest container shipping company, Maersk Line, thus combining commercial and military expertise in implementing a complex building program on time and on budget and by using standard components to the extent possible. The Danish frigate program is a good example of affordable defense procurement.

The frigates are compatible with the Danish Navy's standard modular mission payload system. It is a bit like the LEGO-blocks that children are using. Extremely flexible and solid and at the same time with unlimited possibilities for combinations.

All in all, the Iver Huitfeldt class is simply a very competitive design that has become the standard setter globally.

It is therefore not a coincidence, that the British Babcock-led industry group, 'Team 31', has teamed up with the designers of the Iver Huitfeldt class, Odense Maritime Technology, in its bid for UK Royal Navy's general-purpose light frigate program.

The team launched its design proposal in the spring, called the Arrowhead 140 concept.

The proposal is based on the tested and proven design from the Danish frigate program and it is benefiting from the best of British ship building capabilities.

It will deliver an assured state-of-the-art frigate capability that can serve the demands of not only the UK, but allied and friendly nations globally.

Among those nations is Poland. This is exactly the reason, why we are meeting here in Gdynia this morning. Poland has very ambitious plans for the further development of its navy.

Just last year president Duda launched Poland's strategic concept for maritime security. Frigate class naval vessels are an important component of that concept.

The purpose of today's event is to inspire our Polish friends and allies to draw on the experience and competences that Denmark and the UK have gained with the Danish frigate program and the British Arrowhead 140 concept. The timing is good: Poland will actually be able to join the program and Poland would be an ideal partner:

First of all: The frigates would fit perfectly well into your strategy for maritime security. They are well tested, affordable and they can operate globally in accordance with Poland's aspirations to be a provider of security globally.

Secondly: Poland has a proud shipbuilding tradition and a very competitive maritime industry. Becoming part of the frigate program would be a major boost for Polish shipbuilding industry and open up global markets. It would also fit well into the political vision for the future development of the Polish shipbuilding industry focusing on highly specialized vessels.

The potential global market for frigates might be several hundred vessels. The Polish ship building industry would be well placed to become a central player in such a program.

Thirdly: Having Poland as a partner in the frigate program would fit well into the strong Polish Danish partnership that exists already. We are neighbors across the Baltic Sea, we are EU and NATO-partners. Danish troops are part of the Multinational Headquarters Northeast in Szczecin and we are both part of NATO's Advanced Forward presence. We are also partners in the Baltic Air Policing operation.

Thus, Denmark and Poland are close partners in security and defense already. Having Poland as a partner in the frigate program would be yet another component in our partnership and it would be a win-win for Denmark, for Poland and for our common security. I am sure the same will apply in the Polish-UK relationship.

I hope that today's event can be a first step in that direction and that your visit on board the Iver Huitfeldt today will be an irresistible appetizer that will create interest among Polish experts and decision-makers in making Poland a part of the British-Danish frigate program. I cannot think of a more appropriate partnership.

I look forward to work with you on making that a reality. Thank you for your attention.