



NATO Exercise in Greenland: Extreme Rescue Operations and International Cooperation

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Greenland is hosting the "**Arctic Shield**" exercise, an important operation led by Denmark that sees the participation of over **400 soldiers from 11 NATO countries**. The main objective is to test and improve capabilities to operate in particularly hostile arctic environments.

Key Points of the Exercise

- **Context:** The exercise is part of the "Arctic Endurance" framework, conducted in close collaboration with the Greenlandic government (*Naalakkersuisut*).
- **Location:** Operations are concentrated in southern Greenland, particularly in the areas of Narsarsuaq, Qaqortoq and Kangerlussuaq.
- **Main Focus:** Training in **MEDEVAC (Medical Evacuation)** procedures, that is emergency medical evacuation and treatment in rough terrain.



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The Rescue Simulation: Chronicle of a Complex Operation

A central moment of the training featured Finnish special units and a Danish patrol team near Narsarsuaq:

1. **The simulated incident:** A Danish soldier (Major Callesen) fell into a ravine in the difficult rocky terrain of Greenland.
2. **The recovery:** The patrol team rappelled down with ropes (abseiling) to provide first aid.
3. **The aerial intervention:** An EH101 Merlin helicopter from Danish defense, carrying a Finnish medical team on board, reached the group.
4. **International communication:** During the transfer flight, soldiers even used sign language to overcome language barriers, administering injections and stabilizing the patient.
5. **Hospital management:** Landing at a field hospital, the doctors simulated an emergency surgical intervention to remove the spleen, documenting the entire medical history directly on the patient's abdomen with a large patch.

"Even though we speak different languages, we share the same professional expertise. It was clear that cooperation and professionalism made sure that the rescue operation went exactly according to plan." — **Major Callesen**



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Why is this exercise fundamental for NATO?

The Arctic represents one of the most difficult and strategic geographic areas in the world. Conducting maneuvers with 11 allied nations makes it possible to:

- **Test real conditions:** Face the actual logistical and meteorological challenges of arctic terrain.
- **Integrate command chains:** Unite the entire rescue chain (from field patrols to field hospitals) by coordinating forces from different nationalities.
- **Strengthen the Alliance:** Increase NATO's presence and operational readiness in the arctic area, improving global security.