

A massive “simulated war” involving ships, aircraft and submarines off the west coast of Scotland

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A massive “simulated war” involving ships, aircraft and submarines is to be staged off the west coast of Scotland as part of a Nato military exercise.

The Royal Navy’s flagship aircraft carrier, HMS Illustrious, will take the lead role in Exercise Joint Warrior.

Forces from the USA, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, Turkey and Brazil are also taking part in the 21-day exercise which starts on Monday.

The scenario involves three nations fighting over disputed territory.

State-sponsored terrorism will also be introduced to the exercise, along with a period of built-up tension, followed by simulated war fighting and open hostilities.

Ships have already begun arriving at the Faslane Naval Base, which will host more than 100 British personnel and their allied counterparts.

Exercise sorties

HMS Illustrious will be the biggest ship involved and lead a nine-strong task group.

Her Harrier GR9 jets will be among 50 warplanes flying about 75 sorties a day.

Type 23 frigates HMS Northumberland and HMS Portland are also taking part.

The United States Navy is sending four ships, as is Canada, and there will be other ships from Denmark, France, Turkey along with the Brazilian frigate BNS Defensora.

Helicopters will be deployed from the UK, Canada, Brazil, the USA and Denmark, while planes will fly from the UK, Germany, France, Canada, Norway and the USA.

Ground forces will be provided by the UK, Belgium and from the United States Marines.

There will be some live firing during the exercise from fast jets, naval guns and land-based mortars. These will take place within weapons ranges across the UK.

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