



Admiral Rob Bauer

Chief of Defence, Ministry of Defence,
the Netherlands

Main Programme

Keynote Speech

Wednesday, 28th November 2018, 14:50 – 15:10 h

Rob Bauer (Amsterdam, 1962) joined the Royal Netherlands Navy (RNLN) via the Royal Naval College in 1981 and was commissioned as a naval officer in 1984. During the first twenty years of his service, he held numerous operational positions at sea, alternating with various postings ashore and the necessary operational education. He successfully completed the Advanced Staff Course in 1998. From 2005 until 2007, Bauer commanded the Air Defence and Command Frigate HNLMS De Ruyter. His command included an operational deployment in the Mediterranean with the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 as part of the NATO Response Force (Operation Active Endeavour). In late 2006, Bauer was deployed to Bahrain for five months as Deputy Commander of Task Force 150 (Operation Enduring Freedom). In 2010 and 2011, he held command of the Landing Platform Dock HNLMS Johan de Witt. After his promotion to flag officer (in the rank of Commodore) in April 2011, Bauer was appointed as Deputy Director of Plans for Operational Policy and Innovation, focusing on the future of the Netherlands Defence organisation. Eleven months later, he was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral and appointed Director of Plans, being responsible for the structure and organisation of the Armed Forces, including the newly formed Defence Cyber Command. Over the following three years, he was also a member of the Council for Defence Research and Development, the National Council for Cyber Security and the Netherlands Coast Guard Council. In September 2015, Bauer was appointed as Vice Chief of Defence, a position for which he was promoted to Vice Admiral. He is also the Chairman of the Defence Business Platform, as well as a board member of the National Committee for 4 and 5 May. Since early 2017, Bauer has also been Chairman of the Adaptive Armed Forces Steering Committee, which oversees the move towards a more flexible and sustainable cooperation with private companies and organisations in order to be better prepared for missions and a wide variety of other tasks. This also requires a more flexible layout of the personnel system. With the handover of his function as Vice Chief of Defence, in July 2017, he was able to take time to prepare for his new function as Chief of Defence. This new function comes with a new rank. On September 22, Bauer was promoted to the rank of Admiral and is now the highest in rank within the armed forces. Rob is married to Maaike. They have three children.