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## NATO to start annual Nuclear exercise Monday



Published on October 11, 2024

Document Date: Wed, Jun 17 2026 02:47:22 am

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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London, October 11 (QNA) – The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will begin its annual nuclear exercise on Monday, the alliance Secretary-General Mark Rutte said.

F-35A fighter jets and B-52 bombers will be among some 60 aircraft from 13 nations taking part in the Steadfast Noon exercise, hosted by Belgium and The Netherlands, NATO officials said.

“In an uncertain world it is vital that we test our defense and that we strengthen our defense so that our adversaries know that NATO is ready, and is able to respond to any threat,” Rutte said following his meeting with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer in London.

“The whole exercise will particularly focus on the United Kingdom, the North Sea, but also Belgium and the Netherlands,” he added.

The exercise does not use any live weapons. But some 2,000 military personnel taking part in the drills will simulate missions in which warplanes carry US nuclear warheads, officials said.

The exercise will start on Monday and last for about two weeks, according to officials from the 32-member transatlantic military alliance.