Upcoming Baltic Assembly meeting to fortify health and defence collaboration

The Baltic Assembly will hold a joint meeting of its Security and Defence Committee alongside the Health, Welfare and Family Committee on 26 April 2024, in Vilnius and Rukla, Lithuania. The meeting will begin with a visit at the Infantry Brigade “Iron Wolf” in Rukla, offering members an exclusive look at military operations, including a presentation by the Commander of the Infantry Brigade and insights into military logistics and weaponry.

The meeting agenda is structured to strengthen the ties between health services and military operations across the Baltic States. The afternoon sessions will focus on enhancing cooperation and coordination during emergencies and disasters, drawing on the experiences of the recent exercise Iron Wolf 2023-I. Highlight discussions will involve high-ranking officials like Lt Col Valdas Meškauskas and medical and defence experts from the Baltic States. The session will be chaired by Antanas Vinkus.

President of the Benelux Parliament Pim van Ballekom will share insights from the Benelux region on crisis management cooperation. He will highlight successful strategies that could potentially be adapted for the Baltic context.

The latter part of the meeting will delve into practical steps for a coordinated civil defence system, emphasizing common civil defence priorities and the development of a joint civil defence mechanism. This session, chaired by Audrius Petrošius, will feature discussions on enhancing public warning systems, creating mass evacuation plans, and promoting civil defence awareness among the Baltic populations.

The parliamentarians will hear expert insights into civic aspects of defence, supplemented by governmental perspectives from officials from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The meeting aims to forge a path toward more integrated and robust civil defence and health service strategies within the Baltic region.