

# ADMIRAL MICHEL HOFMAN

## BELGIAN CHIEF OF DEFENCE



A native of Oostende, Admiral Michel Hofman finished high school at the Royal Cadet School in Brussels, after which he joined the Royal Military Academy in 1978 as a candidate naval officer where he studied social and military sciences.

As a junior officer, he held several positions on board minesweepers, mine hunters and frigates. This period ended with a deployment in the Gulf region during Operation Desert Shield / Desert Storm on the Wandelaar frigate.

**Between 1991 and 1997**, he continued his operational career, first ashore at the Operations School of the Belgian Navy in St-Kruis Brugge, later aboard the Crocus mine hunter, the Westdiep frigate and by taking part in STANAVFORLANT, the NATO Standing Naval Force Atlantic. **In the autumn of '97**, he became the Military assistant to the Chief of Defence, Vice Admiral Herteleer, where he contributed to the development of a strategic vision for Defence through the "Vision 2015" working group. **In 2000**, after graduating from the Senior Staff Course at the "College Interarmées de Défense" in Paris, he took command of the Westdiep frigate and was later on deployed in the Mediterranean to participate in Operation Active Endeavour, launched shortly after the 9/11 attacks. **In 2002**, he was appointed Chief of Staff to the Belgian-Dutch Task Group and in January 2004, he became Deputy Operations officer to the Commander of the Marine Component and Deputy Chief Operations Officer Admiral Benelux.

**In 2006**, he successively became Deputy Officer and then Commander of the Operations Division within the Operations & Training Department of the Defence Staff. During that intense period, he contributed to numerous operational deployments of our Defence, notably in Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and off the coast of Somalia. **In late 2010**, he set sail once again as Deputy to the French Commander of the European Force EUNAVFOR Atalanta, at the peak of acts of piracy off the Somali coast. Following this deployment, he became Commander of the Belgian Naval Component and Deputy Admiral Benelux. The purchase program for the two new coastal patrol vessels Castor and Pollux was carried out during that period.

**In May 2015** he again joined the Operations & Training Department of the Defence Staff, first as Deputy Operations Officer and later as Head of the Department. Michel Hofman was promoted to Vice Admiral on 26 June 2016

**In July 2017**, he was appointed Vice Chief of Defence. He was charged with the restructuration of the Defence Staff and with the implementation of the Strategic Vision.

**In July 2020**, he was promoted to the rank of Admiral and became Chief of Defence.

He lives in Oostende and shares his free time with his family and friends.

