PRESS RELEASE

Extreme Cold: Tomorrow's Battlefield

With NATO now sharing a 22,000-km (13,700-mile) border with Russia, and climate change opening new geopolitical and economic frontiers, the Arctic Circle is once again becoming a theater of confrontation — the focus of the second edition of SITM, February 10–11, 2027, in Grenoble, France

GRENOBLE, France — In a joint declaration signed July 8, 2026, with Finland and Sweden, France confirmed its participation in NATO's Forward Land Forces in Finland (FLF Finland), the Alliance's ninth multinational battlegroup, stood up in June 2026. Under Swedish command and manned by Iceland, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark and France, the force is based in Finnish Lapland, in the Sodankylä and Rovaniemi regions, right on the Arctic Circle.
The creation of this battlegroup is further proof that cold-weather readiness is once again a core capability requirement on the Alliance's northern flank — and that equipment needs to keep pace. That is precisely the mission of the International Summit on Mountain Troops and Extreme Cold Weather Operations (SITM), whose second edition takes place **February 10–11, 2027, in Grenoble**.

What This Commitment Means for the Forces

Operating as part of a multinational battlegroup is nothing new: allied forces deployed on reassurance missions in the Baltic states have been doing it since 2017. What is new is the environment. In extreme cold, every gap between armies comes at a steeper price. Communications, fuels, qualification standards, spare parts and support chains across six differently equipped militaries must keep working together — over the long haul, at -30°C (-22°F).
While the principles of war remain the same, the way troops fight, move, bivouac and sustain logistics changes profoundly. A stronger military presence in these regions means deploying more troops — troops who must be properly equipped and trained.
France is no newcomer to this theater. An observer to the Arctic Council since 2000, it regularly deploys troops to the region for exercises. The 27th Mountain Infantry Brigade (27th BIM) also maintains close operational ties with partners across the Alpine arc, Northern and Eastern Europe, North America and the Middle East.

The Technical Challenges on the SITM 2027 Agenda

Extreme cold changes the physical behavior of nearly every system. SITM 2027 will address mountain, high-latitude, extreme-cold and extreme-heat operations as a single continuum rather than as separate topics, including:

- **Decentralized combat, AI and robotics**: integrating sensors and effectors in constrained environments
- **Energy, storage and munitions:** performance of lithium-ion batteries, fluids and weapons at very low temperatures
- **Mobility and logistics:** traction on ice, periodic engine restarts, alternative means of movement, self-sufficient support and repair
- **Communications and C4ISR:** radio range limited by vertical terrain, satellite links at high latitudes
- **Human factors and medical support:** degraded attention and decision-making at altitude, forward medical care as evacuation times grow longer

A Market That Reaches Beyond the Defense Industry

What sets this segment apart is that much of what mountain troops carry and use comes from the civilian world: skis, tents, technical textiles, snowmobiles, load-carrying systems and food designed for extreme cold. That crossover makes SITM a true dual-use, defense-and-civilian business event. It is one reason the summit is held in Grenoble, a center of excellence for both mountain sports and advanced technology. The other is that the Grenoble metropolitan area is home to a major 27th BIM complex.

"France's decision to contribute to the Forward Land Forces in Finland is a challenge that truly energizes us," said Gen. Antoine de la Bardonnie, Commander of the 27th Mountain Infantry Brigade. "Mountain soldiers know firsthand how cold and terrain set their own rules and fundamentally change the way we move and fight. Our responsibility is to prepare, equip and train units that can sustain operations there. SITM 2027 contributes directly to that mission by bringing those who operate side by side with those who equip them."

"Much of the equipment used by mountain troops operating in extreme cold falls outside the standard criteria for military equipment," said Charles Beaudouin, President of Coges Events, organizer of SITM. "SITM's role is to bring together, in one place, the expertise of those who operate in these conditions and those who equip them — including companies that never thought of themselves as defense suppliers."

Take Part in SITM 2027

Deliberately compact and held over two days, SITM brings together armed forces, government agencies and industry for conferences, workshops and an equipment exhibition. For military and government participants, it is an opportunity to compare doctrine, capabilities and lessons learned, and to see what the international industrial base has to offer. For industry, it provides direct access to end users' real-world needs and to the decision-makers shaping the capabilities of today and tomorrow.

2025 by the Numbers:

- **1,200 attendees**: military experts, security professionals, industry leaders and institutions
- **22 official international delegations** from specialized forces
- **40 senior French officials**
- **86 exhibitors**: major defense companies, small and midsize businesses, manufacturers and startups
- **28 countries represented**: a committed international community

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About SITM

The International Summit on Mountain Troops and Extreme Cold Weather Operations (SITM) is organized by Coges Events, an organizer of international defense and security events, in partnership with the French Army's 27th Mountain Infantry Brigade (27th BIM). Coges Events, a subsidiary of GICAT, also organizes Eurosatory, the world's leading defense and security exhibition, and Expodefensa, the international defense and security exhibition for Latin America.

About the 27th BIM

A rapid-reaction brigade of the French Army, the 27th Mountain Infantry Brigade (27th BIM) reports to the 1st Division. Its distinguishing feature is the ability to carry out all of its missions in steep and/or mountainous terrain and in extreme climatic conditions.

Its “mountain specialty” is defined as the full set of moral, physical, technical and tactical skills — individual and collective — required to live, move and fight in high or rugged terrain, in extreme cold or extreme heat.

The 27th BIM has taken part in every major French military operation over the past 30 years.

About GICAT

Founded in 1978, GICAT (the French Land and Airland Defense and Security Industry Association) has more than 500 members. Ranging from startups to major corporations, its members cover a broad spectrum of industrial, research, services and consulting activities serving military and civilian customers, both in France and internationally.

GICAT represents its members’ interests, promotes them in France and abroad, and fosters dialogue among users, government stakeholders and industry. To that end, it relies on the international exhibitions Eurosatory in France and Expodefensa in Colombia, as well as some ten French pavilions at defense and security trade shows abroad, all organized by its subsidiary Coges Events. For more information, visit https://www.gicat.com