

GENERAL VANSINA

CHIEF OF DEFENCE

General Frederik Vansina was born in Bern, Switzerland, in 1964.

As the son of a diplomat, he spent his youth in various countries in Europe, in the United States and in former Zaire. He graduated from the Royal Military Academy in 1987 with a Master's degree in social and military sciences.

After completing his pilot training, he joined the 350th Fighter Squadron at Beauvechain Airbase. After graduating from the European F-16 Fighter Weapons Instructor Training in 1992, he became the Squadron's Weapons and Tactics Instructor.

After successfully completing the Majors Course, he returned to the 350th Squadron as Operations Officer in 1995. He joined the Plans and Programmes Division within the Air Force Headquarters in Evere in 1996. During a period of four years, he combined this staff job with serving as Equerry to Prince Philippe.

In the year 2000, Major Vansina became the Commanding Officer of the 349th Fighter Squadron at the 10th Tactical Wing at Kleine-Brogel Airbase. He took part in the operation 'Joint Forge/Joint Guardian' over the Balkans as Chief of Operations within a mixed Belgo-Dutch detachment deployed in Amendola, Italy.

After attending the Higher Staff Course at the Royal Defence College in 2002, he was posted to the Strategy Department of the Joint Staff, after being promoted to Lieutenant-colonel. He was tasked with researching the future of the tactical air capability and was subsequently appointed as the action officer to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Strategy.

Lieutenant-colonel Vansina assumed command of the Flying Group of the 10th Tactical Wing in 2005. During that period, he successfully shepherded the first integrated Belgian F-16 detachment through the NATO 'TACEVAL' evaluation.

He transitioned to the Operational Air Command (COMOPSAIR) in 2007, where he became the Commander of the Operations Division (A3).

Colonel Vansina assumed command of the 10th Tactical Wing in 2009. During his command, the Wing participated in air operations over Afghanistan in support of the 'International Security Assistance Force' and over Libya as part of operation 'Unified Protector'. The Wing also completed several international evaluations in the 'Strike' role.

After completing his command, he was selected to attend the Senior Course at the NATO Defence College (NDC) in Rome. In February 2013, Colonel Vansina became Chief of Staff of the Belgian Air Component.

Promoted to Major-general in March 2014, he became Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Training. He became Air Component Commander (Belgian Air Force Commander) in November 2014.

In September 2016, Major-general Vansina was appointed Aide-de-Camp to the King. In January 2020, he took on the duty of non-residing Director of the European Air Group.

In the same year, he became Assistant Chief of Staff for Strategy in the Belgian Defence Staff. He dealt with political-military matters and was the Capability Director for the Belgian Defence.

In July 2023, he was promoted to Lieutenant-general and became Vice-Chief of Defence.

One year later, Lieutenant-general Vansina was promoted to the rank of General and became the Belgian Chief of Defence.

General Vansina has logged 2600 hours on jets of which 1900 hours on the F-16.

