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Defence Policy of Lithuania

1. The goal and objectives of Lithuania's Defence Policy
Lithuania's Defence Policy is an integral part of the National Security Policy aimed at the development (formation) of the international security environment at the same time contributing to the international stability and peace, and formation of the national defence capability to ensure both - deterrence from an armed attack, and reliable defence in case of armed aggression.

Objectives of Lithuania's Defence Policy are:

- To ensure effective fulfilment of functions of the National Defence System in peacetime;
- To ensure readiness to conduct reliable defence in case of armed aggression, including readiness to conduct mobilisation and instruction of citizens;
- To contribute to the strengthening of NATO defence capacity and to other international-security building initiatives, including participation in multinational operations;
- To maintain readiness to respond to non-military threats by deploying military assets to assist state and municipal agencies

2. Principles of State Defence
Legislation of the Republic of Lithuania sets forth the principles of State Defence which are the basis for formulation and implementation of Lithuania's Defence Policy. Defence of Lithuania is full-scale and unconditional, it is implemented in line with NATO's principles of collective defence.

The full-scale character of defence means that Lithuania has armed protection of the national armed forces as well as those of NATO allies, that national resources are invoked for the national defence, and that every citizen of Lithuania and the entire nation shall resist in every way defined as legitimate by the international law.

The unconditional character of defence means that defence of Lithuania is not subject to any conditions and no one is allowed to inhibit the right of every citizen and the nation to resist the aggressor, invader, or anyone else threatening by force the independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Lithuania. Alongside seeking assistance for national defence from the Allies or other international partners, Lithuania conducts defence and resists alone without waiting for the support to arrive.

Defence of the Republic of Lithuania must be conducted in line with the implementation of the collective defence principle of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereinafter referred to as NATO). According to Article 5 of the establishing Washington Treaty (1949) of NATO into which Lithuania entered in 2004, an armed attack on one or more Allies will be treated as an armed attack on the entire NATO and may provoke a defensive response in line with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Lithuania's defence is a collective defence of all the NATO members which entails that Lithuania is committed to treat a threat to any of NATO states as a threat to itself.

3. The main provisions of Defence Policy
Lithuania's Defence Policy is developed and priorities for the development of the Lithuanian Armed Forces are set with regard to the major tendencies of the international security environment and the character of threats to national security. Contemporary security environment may be characterised as quickly changing, complex and difficult to forecast. New non-conventional threats, such as terrorism, proliferation of mass destruction weapons, and cyber attacks emerge alongside the traditional ones. Readiness to respond to new types of threats is becoming an increasingly important and relevant point on the agenda of Defence Policy of Lithuania just like of other members of the European Union and NATO.

Ensuring Lithuania's security and defence is closely related to active participation in the activity of international organisations, especially NATO and the EU. NATO is the main guarantee of Lithuania's security. By the input into the development of collective NATO's capabilities and formation and implementation of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy Lithuania contributes to the efforts of the Euro-Atlantic community to create a secure international environment. Ensuring Lithuania's security is closely related to the processes happening in the neighbouring states, the Euro-Atlantic region, and beyond.

Seeking to prevent threats to national security and maintain the ability to respond to emerging challenges, Lithuania's defence capabilities must be strengthened and developed on a permanent basis and international commitments related to the EU and NATO membership pursued, therefore Defence Policy of Lithuania encompasses the following major provisions:

- Ensuring balance between national needs and international commitments by strengthening military capabilities necessary for national defence and at the same time making a proportionate contribution to the development of NATO's collective defence capabilities and international efforts to ensure stability and peace beyond the territory of the Alliance;
- The necessity to form the will and capacity of the public to defend the state and ensure constitutional rights and obligations that every citizen was ready to defend independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Lithuania;
- The aspiration to maintain NATO a reliable collective defence and security organisation capable of ensuring

security and defence of its members;
- Support to the initiatives of NATO transformation and closer cooperation among the allies aimed at strengthening the Alliance's capacity of responding to emerging security challenges and possible threats;
- Support to the formation of the EU civilian and military crisis management and conflict prevention capabilities to the end of developing an efficient EU Common Security and Defence Policy;
- Strengthening interaction between civilian and military capabilities and improvement of coordination of international organisations' activity in restoring stability, security and welfare in conflict-exhausted regions and countries;
- Contribution to ensuring international and regional security and stability through joining activities of arms control regimes and implementing trust and security enhancing means; participation in ensuring national and allied security through response to the threats of terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- Development of defence cooperation with the countries seeking to enter the Euro-Atlantic Security Community.

4. Directions of development of Lithuania's military capabilities

Lithuania implements defence policy through strengthening military capabilities equally necessary for national defence, proportionate input into the collective development of NATO and the EU crisis management and quick response capabilities, and contribution to the international efforts to spread peace and stability beyond the territory of the Alliance and the European Union.

The target Lithuanian Armed Forces is a well-trained and armed, mobile military institution capable of conducting tasks of national or allied defence independently or collectively with the allied forces as well as of deploying to multinational operations. To that end regular units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces are strengthened while the reserve is formed and trained to conduct national defence tasks:

- in the process of enhancing national military capabilities a particular attention is paid to the development of combat capacity of the Lithuanian Armed Forces with a prospect of responding relevantly to violations of the sovereignty of the country, taking part in multinational operations and conducting standby in the NATO Response Force (NRF) and the EU Battlegroups (BG), and rendering Host Nation Support (HNS);
- Regarding that credible State Defence requires not only regular armed forces but also appropriately trained reserve of relevant size, a particular attention is devoted to its training and formation, along with supporting formation of public and patriotic spirit aimed at enhancing citizens' military self-preparation for national defence and hereby ensuring overall readiness for defence of the state and its citizens.

5. Principles of Democratic Control of Armed Forces

All the decisions regarding Lithuania's Defence Policy, employment of armed capabilities, armed forces development plans, provision of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, procurement of weaponry and material resources of the National Defence System, and assignations for equipment and other needs, are adopted by civilian government elected in line with democratic principles. Responsibility and authority of the President of the Republic of Lithuania, the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania in implementing democratic control of the armed forces are set forth by the Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Lithuania.

Key points of national defence are processed and coordinated by the President of the Republic of Lithuania, Prime Minister, Speaker, Minister of National Defence, and Chief of Defence as the National Defence Council chaired by the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

URL: http://www.kam.lt/en/defence_policy_1053/defence_policy_of_lithuania.html