DIRECTIVE OF DEFENSE FOR 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Defense expects 2017 with success in management, modernization and development of the Armed Forces and defense reform. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania have provided power and capacity to ensure the safety and security of the country and national interests. The MoD has ensured resources for the Armed Forces to fulfill their mission and duties, in facing the challenges of the future and to improve treatment of the military and enhance their dignity.

During 2016, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania carried on their transformation process; they have successfully fulfilled the constitutional mission and legal obligations and those within the Alliance. While the security environment has become even more complicated, there has been progress in the implementation of strategic documents, improvement of legislation, increase of readiness and capacity development to ensure the security and handling of all scenarios of threats.

Modernization has equipped the Armed Forces with new weapons, interoperable with allies, with individual and collective quality equipment, and has increased their capacity for civil emergencies and search and rescue. All the achievements have been the result of effective implementation of the budget, the improvement of planning process, the increase of transparency and fight against corruption.

AAF has fulfilled its obligations within the framework of collective defense, in cooperation with their allies and partners, and proceeded with their contribution in NATO and EU led operations to meet the challenges of security and create a safer environment for our citizens and those of allied countries.

The Directive of Defense for the year 2017 bases on the goals of strategic documents for security and defense, and on fundamental documents of NATO and EU. Given the challenges and the role of AAF in the future security environment, below are presented the priorities and directions on which the plans and activities of the structures of the MoD and the Armed Forces are based.

II. MAIN PRIORITIES FOR 2017

1. Increase of professionalism, interoperability and operability of the Armed Forces;
2. Fulfillment of commitments within the framework of the Alliance;
3. Continuation of transformation, modernization and improvement of the infrastructure of the Armed Forces;
4. Increase of care and support for the military.

III. THE MAIN FOCI FOR 2017

The activity of the structures of Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces, for 2017, is to focus on the following areas:

1. Planning and Defense Transformation

Perform the Strategic Defense Review and continue with defense reform as a permanent process of transformation oriented by national strategic documents and those of NATO in order to create an effective professional, trained and well-equipped, ready, deployable, support and interoperable force to meet the constitutional mission and obligations towards the Alliance.

Continue to increase the role and contribution of Albania in NATO, through dignified representation, an active and constructive engagement in operations, as well as making available to the Alliance, the national infrastructure and physical capacities.

Defense Planning in accordance with the Alliance Defense Planning ensures that the transformation of the Armed Forces reflects the changes in the security environment, risks, threats and the dynamic process of transformation of NATO. Planning should aim at the implementation of the objectives of capacity, and should be driven by the Alliance, Readiness Action Plan, the decisions of Warsaw Summit and guidelines deriving from the NATO Ministerial.

Defense program managers and commanders of the main commands develop defense programs and update integrated list of priorities, focusing on group-battalion of light infantry, for its preparation and certification according to the required deadline.

2. Capacity Development

Develop capacities of the AAF for operations of national defense, collective defense, crisis management operations and operations for copying with civilian emergencies. In fulfillment of NATO obligations, ensure combat capacities, combat support and support with fighting services, ready and deployable when necessary.

Achieve modernization of the Armed Forces with armament, technique, transportation vehicles, equipment and systems in accordance with the Long Term Plan of Development of AAF 2016-2025, Capacity Objectives Package, according to the concept of a single group of forces and the concept of NATO's capacity development.

Modernization priorities are to be LF, MP and NF units which will be involved in the Alliance's operations and modernization programs in attaining the objectives of capacity.

LF is to have as its own priority the preparation for certification of the battalion group, with all its elements and the stated units in NRF, especially in the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (VJTF) and the participating forces in NATO Advanced Force. To this end, all elements of the battalion-group should be completed with personnel, major and support equipment, according to Alliance's standards. Furthermore, all the concepts, training and modernization plans for the increase of fire strength, mobility and maintenance of forces should be updated.

Modernization of NF is to focus on readiness of ship types "Illyria", in order to participate in NATO naval engagement, equipping them with weapons, equipment and necessary systems. In meeting Alliance, improve all the systems and capacities of naval detention, observation and patrolling of maritime space.

Priority of AF should be the training of air crews and equipping of Cougar helicopters, sustainment of the operational readiness of helicopters and aircraft crews and designation of two helicopters on readiness mode for NATO operations. Integrate AF personnel and equipment of air units with those of MIA and MoH. Proceed with the increase of training capacities, and flight hours, and make projects for capacities of airspace monitoring.

Draft plans for support capacity development to provide support of troops with transport, supply, maintenance, field services, and good management of materials, contracting, as well as search and rescue equipment.

Develop tactical intelligence and early alert capabilities, as well as meet the security standards for information storage. Work on developing the capacity of coping with hybrid threats, civil emergencies, as well as those of stabilization and reconstruction.

Fulfill its obligations in the implementation of the Common Strategy on Combating Organized Crime, Illegal Trafficking and Terrorism, draft policies and improve defense capabilities and cyber security, and sign the MOU with Alliance for this area. Extend the network of NATO commands in force commands and improve operational capacities of communication and information systems.

3. Readiness and Operability

Keep AAF in readiness to ensure the fulfillment of the constitutional mission and obligations on behalf of the Alliance, guaranteeing the independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order, increasing their engagement in community and civil emergencies. The units should be completed, trained and supported according to priorities focusing on the units stated in NATO. Force Commanders should develop and implement action plans to achieve readiness standards, under the new regulation and timely implement modernization programs and their equipping with major support equipment. In meeting the legal requirements by the central and local authorities and the role in service of the community, the Civil Emergency and search and rescue capacities shall be kept in preparedness.

The Armed Forces shall continue contributing to the Alliance's three main tasks: collective defense, crisis management and security cooperation. For collective defense, all the commitments are to be fulfilled by contributing to the Command Structure and NATO Force; to the Action Plan for Readiness; and to NATO Advanced Force. For the crisis management, materialize the contributions in operations led by NATO, the EU and the UN (in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mali and maritime activities in the Mediterranean Sea). The

representation in the structures of the Alliance is to be reassessed, with improved military diplomacy. For Security Cooperation, support the Alliance's initiatives in strengthening partnerships, by contributing in the field of arms-control and disarmament, and by supporting NATO membership of aspirant countries, in particular regional countries.

The deployment selection of military on operations shall continue to be implemented with transparent procedures in accordance with requirements and specifications of the operation. The military are to be prepared and equipped to perform the duty with high standards. The participation in NATO operations shall serve for the development of structures and personnel of the Armed Forces.

4. Education, training and interoperability

The education system, training and exercise is to enhance interoperability and meet the needs of AAF with human resources capable and competent at all levels. The education system shall precede the transformation of the Armed Forces, by updating the methodology and the military doctrines and teaching programs. Officers and NCO courses are to include modules in English and create and offer distance learning courses electronically.

Based on strategic documents and doctrines of the Alliance, *doctrines* of forces of the Armed Forces services are to be updated, to guide ways on how to achieve the goals and objectives in compliance with national interests. Drafting and revision of standard procedures should continue to mainstream unified processes and ensure interoperability with allies

Training to enhance military capabilities and interoperability of the Armed Forces and preparing individuals and staffs of the entire spectrum of operations and hybrid warfare is to be intensified.

Exercise and collective training are to unify troops and military units. *Interagency exercise* is to be planned and conducted to cope with civil emergencies, and the fight against terrorism.

In view of indications of *readiness and operability* the participation of units stated in NATO in military exercises in the framework of the Alliance's collective defense and bilateral exercises is to be increased. National exercises are to be synchronized with NATO by increasing the participation of allies and partners in national exercises of the Armed Forces.

Interoperability in doctrine, structures, equipment and systems, procedures and personnel should be a priority. To this end intensify the process of standardization by selecting, ratifying and implementing the Alliance's standards, as required by the capacity objectives and priorities of the Armed Forces. Standardization is to be accomplished by supporting the modernization plans by financial resources improving interoperability for participation in the NATO commitments.

5. Defense Resources

Human Resources Management is to enhance professionalism and equip the Armed Forces with professional military and civilian personnel, who are visionary and willing to take leading and command responsibilities, in fulfilling the mission and meeting the challenges.

Military recruitment and career advancement are to be accomplished with a set of criteria and transparent competition procedures, guaranteeing equal opportunities by contribution, merit and potential in the interest of AAF. In recruitment and promotion 15% are to be represented by women, and gender prospects are to be part of the policies and plans of the MoD.

Increase the motivation of staff by improving policies, payment, care, education and providing equal opportunities. Attention should be given to payment, compensation, housing and health care for active and military in reserve, with priority on the families of deployed military abroad.

The *defense budget* is to be planned and spent effectively, providing balanced support between budget items and increasing capital expenditures for infrastructure modernization. Budget planning is to be based on SU priorities and obligations within the Alliance, according to the List of Priorities and Integrated Defense Programs. The priorities are to be reviewed periodically and projects drafted in time to utilize the defense budget.

All structures are to plan activities according to the budget, in accordance with the objectives of the strategic documents and follow and report their performance promptly. Planning, programming and budgeting plans should be priority in order to meet the objectives and implementation capacity, the usability criteria and the deployment of AAF. In terms of financial constraints use the donor-funded projects.

6. Support

Equipment, systems and materials of AAF are to be effectively managed, in accordance with readiness levels, throughout their life cycle. Modernization of organic techniques for transportation of troops is to be continued, reserves are to be planned for supply needs and plans for maintenance of technology systems and equipment are to be developed and implemented. In the view of the increased role and in support of civil authorities, the draft concept of the reserves is to be compiled, in support of the population in emergency situations in cases of natural disasters. Effective coordination and cooperation with civil authorities and responsible structures for managing emergencies at national and local level is to be continued.

Health support is to improve, in order to provide preventive medical, dental, pharmaceutical, clinical and laboratory services. Priority should be given to health support in operations and general support (check-up, tests, vaccinations, referrals to civilian hospitals).

Legislation is to support the initiatives of the authorities of the MoD and the AAF with legal foundations. Review of legal acts in accordance with defense reform, compilation of draft acts

regulating the activity of the Armed Forces are to be continued and the necessary secondary legislation should be issued for their implementation. Approximation of Albanian legislation with the EU acquis in the field of security and defense should be continued.

Investments to improve the conditions of life, work and training of personnel should continue. Handling of properties not included in Deployment and Installation Plan is to be continued through privatization, lease, transfer and property ownership certificate for properties under the administration of MoD is to be ensured. Elimination of declared excess and unnecessary equipment and materials of Armed Forces is to be continued, through sales and disposal, taking care and preserving the environment.

7. Cooperation

Military cooperation in line with the foreign policy objectives, should support the modernization, education, training and joint exercises to enhance trust, mutual understanding and to intensify dialogue on security. Focus should be on active commitment, qualitative representation and fulfillment of obligations within NATO, EU, OSCE, UN or regional initiatives. Attention is to be focused on cooperation with NATO, the United States as a strategic partner, allied countries, Kosovo and the region.

The priority of cooperation with NATO should be the establishment and accreditation of the Center of Excellence for foreign fighters.

Likewise the Alliance application of comprehensive approach in its engagements, the focus of civil-military cooperation is to increase the effectiveness of strategic communication and cooperation with local and central government, NGOs and the media, support for the community and civil authorities during emergencies, and information to enhance the image of the Armed Forces.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Pursuant to this Directive, I require all structures of MoD / Armed Forces, to develop plans, programs and projects guided by priorities and directions of work, as well as to take all necessary measures to fulfill them on time with quality, applying lessons learned to eliminate the shortcomings, adaptation and success in the implementation of the Directive of Defense 2017.

MINISTER

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