DEFENSE DIRECTIVE 2019

The Albanian Armed Forces (AAF) achieved tangible results in all areas during 2018, as part of their constitutional mission and legal obligations. During 2018 the Armed Forces increased their operational readiness level and considerably improved the training system.

Completion of the Albanian Defense Strategy Review (DSR) document and other several documents in the field of legislation, increased transparency in human and financial resources management, continuation of modernization process in infrastructure and equipment, have responded and supported the activity of AAF structures at all levels.

The global, regional and national security environment continues to be under pressure from continuing and unexpected changes, as a result of increased geopolitical rivalries, emergence of increasingly aggressive countries adopting an unfriendly attitude to the West, its economic, political integration policies, and security in different regions, including the Western Balkans, accompanied by new threats and dangers. In adapting to this security environment, the Albanian Armed Forces have successfully fulfilled their obligations by developing operational capabilities and necessary defense capacity.

Tangible results have been achieved in the field of modernization. Implementation of the project for the Integrated Airspace Surveillance System of the Republic of Albania, equipment of "Iliria" class vessels with the modern armament system, implementation of repair and service projects for the Integrated Sea Surveillance System, purchase of individual soldier gear, equipment of individual NATO-standard armament, as well as equipment of Armored transport vehicles (HMMWV) for Land Force structures have significantly contributed to the increase of operability and interaction of AAF structures.

Participation of AAF troops in NATO-led missions increased significantly during 2018, responding to changes in the security environment and the constant need to show the Alliance's presence. Certification of the Light Infantry Battalion Group (LIBG), participation in "DSR" operations in Afghanistan, "KFOR" in Kosovo, in the Aegean Sea, and continuation of participation in enhanced Forward Presence – eFP", and Very High Readiness Joint Force (VJTF), are indicators for assuming responsibilities in the Alliance, precisely to strengthen this presence. Also, there has successfully continued the fulfillment of obligations on EU missions to EUTM Mali, and EUFOR "ALTHEA" to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The engagement of the Armed Forces in coping with civil emergencies, support for the community and other institutions have improved the image and credibility of the Armed Forces institution, but at the same time have increased expectations toward them.

All of these processes and activities produce real and tangible values when properly oriented to the personnel of the Armed Forces. Effective implementation and execution of the above-mentioned processes, activities, and measures requires a comprehensive commitment and engagement to make the Armed Forces a desirable place to build a military career. Our job is to

think and act accordingly, so as to recruit and retain dedicated citizens of our society as the rank and file of the Armed Forces.

MAIN DIRECTIONS FOR 2019

Given the constitutional responsibilities, mission, legal obligations of AAF, as well as obligations deriving from NATO, the main objective will be the realization and completion of the level of ambition foreseen in the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania. To this end, through harmonization and synchronization of the defense planning with national planning and the NATO Defense Planning process, work during 2019 will focus on these main directions:

1. Assessment of the security environment and adaptation to it;
2. Improvement of the legal framework;
3. Development and modernization of defense capabilities and infrastructure;
4. Staff motivation and increase of professionalism;
5. Continuation of engagements, active role, and credibility in the international arena;
6. Effectiveness in civil emergency management and assistance to community;
7. Increase of transparency from all structures of the Armed Forces.

Based on the main directions of work for 2019, the activity of MoD and AAF structures will focus on:

1. Assessment of the security environment and its adaptation.

Risks and threats to the security environment in the Republic of Albania, also as a NATO member country, in the short to medium term will significantly affect the development of the respective AAF capabilities and the specter of their operations. This requires AAF and MoD structures to identify, recognize and evaluate these threats and take measures to cope with them, which will positively influence the management of the security situation in our country.

Accomplishment of the AAF constitutional mission in the best way possible, considering changes in the security environment, nature and forms of risks and threats, will require that our intelligence capabilities and capacity continue to support AAF leadership and command authorities with information on these changes, as well as identification of timely warning for risks and threats to AAF's security in permanent deployments, and deployment areas and operations at home and abroad.

Climate changes have caused difficulties with accurate predictions, as well as increased the devastating scale of natural phenomena. The threats posed by these climate changes require MOD and AAF structures to adopt effective measures, and develop appropriate operational capabilities in response to civil emergencies.

2. Improvement of legal framework.
Continue the support with necessary legal framework for the implementation of the military status law, command and strategic leadership power and authority, and to improve the law on promotion process and military career. Review of the Civil Emergency Law; drafting subordinate legal acts for the functioning of the Institute of Geography and Military

Infrastructure; establishment and operation of the Reserve Force elements; compiling draft acts for the approval of international agreements. Priority will be given to compiling of draft acts for the continuation of the handling and reduction process for properties out of AAF Settlement Plan.

3. Development and modernization of defense and infrastructure capacities.

Modernization is an indispensable and continuous process that the relevant structures should be guided with maturity and intelligence. This process aims at developing and providing the necessary capacity to act independently or in co-operation with allies in military operations and missions, as well as coping with civil emergencies.

Continue to implement the Capacity Objectives Package to develop combat capacity, combat support and combat support services. Capacity Objectives are subject to a realistic assessment to best harmonize NATO requirements and financial support in accordance with defense programs.

Also, continue investing in infrastructure improvements for living, education / training, support operations and command and control of military structures in times of peace, crisis and war for each AAF component.
The main priorities in the field of modernizing defense capacities and improving infrastructure for 2019 will be:

- Continuation of the modernization of the structures within the Light Infantry Battalion Group of (LIBG), aiming at further consolidating the operational capabilities of the LIBG, declared units and subunits to the "enhanced NATO Response Force" (eNRF), the Special Operations Land Task Group (SOLTG), combat support capabilities and combat services support. Maintain a high level of readiness as well as Logistical support at all levels of command-control (C2) to respond rapidly to unforeseen crises;

- Establishment of operational capacities for observing and monitoring the airspace of the Republic of Albania, as well as improving operational concepts for the use of helicopters in different operating scenarios and situations. Particular importance is to be given to cooperation and coordination with national and NATO structures for the implementation of Alb-NATO Project at Kuçova Air Base. The aviation training is to aim at supporting the Light Infantry Battalion Group for the use of helicopters on the battlefield, support for SARs on land and at sea, and consolidating the standards required for participation in joint training with NATO countries.

- Maintaining a picture of the maritime situation, through continuous monitoring of the marine space, and building the capacity for secure communication through the Military Messaging System Management as a condition for successfully fulfilling the duties in the "Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 "for 2019;

- Enhancing the Response Capability of the Marine Force through a high operational readiness and more flexible concepts in their use;
- Fulfillment of commitments for the establishment of Military Cyber Security Unit.

4. Motivating staff and increasing professionalism.

4.1. Human resources.

The continuous transformation of the security environment requires a continuous adaptation of the Armed Forces where permanent attention should be paid to one of the main elements of defense resources, consolidation of the human resource management system, throughout the life cycle of uniformed personnel. Human resource management is to be guided by:

• *Reliability*, by providing and developing transparent procedures to all staff;
• *Competence*, by constantly updating to respond to ongoing needs of AAF;
• *Initiative*, by accompanying the process of managing new ideas by identifying and improving the potential shortcomings in the military education system;
• *Motivation*, by providing full support and continuous ongoing care towards staff.

Personnel is the main asset of the Armed Forces, the foundation of operational and defense capabilities. For this reason, staff motivation through progressive treatment with salaries and bonuses for specific working conditions, with effective health care, transparency, meritocracy and providing equal opportunities for education, career development and improving social policies will be a priority policy throughout the life cycle of the military. Also, in 2019, the positive experience gained in the program "Youth-Talent-Opportunity-Dignity" should continue, guiding young people in respecting national values, aiming at updating AAF's with dedicated new staff. Recruitment is to be done through a professional marketing based on current needs and AAF's perspective, adapting to demographic developments and information technology.

Aim to achieve and maintain 15% representation level of women in uniform in recruitment and promotion process. The gender perspective should be part of the policies and plans of the structures of the Ministry of Defense and the AF General Staff, not only in representation but also in level of responsibility. Continue the process of data entry into the Human Resource Management System for all active, reserve / released personnel as well as citizens who have performed compulsory military service.

4.2. Education and training.

The unpredictable nature of military operations requires that, regardless of the preparation or education in the AAF, everyone should be aware that they never have enough knowledge about strategies, technologies, culture or even the opponent themselves. Education should be based on the new education concept, individual and collective training and to be more consistent with the mission and main tasks of AAF. To address the abovementioned, the military education system is to be based on:

• *Analytical techniques*, more realistic approach and integration into strategic documents;

• *Inspiration* and *innovation* in the way of thinking and pedagogical organization;
• *Diversity*, where experiences and creativity of each student, as well as their exchange, are the main incentive.

The focus of work is to develop research and doctrinal thinking in line with the current and expected developments of the security environment in order to increase the quality and professionalism of military and civilian personnel of the Armed Forces structures at all levels.

Training should be guided by the principle of adapting the training plans, according to the specifics in which the military units will operate. Pre-dislocation exercises should continue to extend to all participating bodies in operations outside the territory of the Republic of Albania, thus increasing the autonomy of contingent commanders in recognizing the operational environment.

Synchronize national core exercises with those of the Alliance and utilize all opportunities for participation in international trainings within the Alliance or regional ones. Inter-institutional training should continue to be developed as an instrument in order to reach a high degree of coordination and cooperation between the responsible national structures. The lesson learned system is to aim at continuously improve the functioning of AAF structures, enhancing operational capabilities.

4.3. Readiness and operability.

Maintaining operational capabilities through the enhancement of interoperability, sustainability, suitability and use of technology with the primary purpose of meeting the constitutional mission, ensuring national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Priority is to be the continuation of operational commitments and the contribution of the Armed Forces in line with the three main tasks of the Alliance. Armed Forces even during 2019 are to continue their contribution to missions / operations led by NATO, the EU and the UN. Particular importance is to be given to the materialization of AAF's participation in the United Nations mission.

Participation in international and regional initiatives is to serve the enhancement the AAF's professionalism and interaction with the Alliance, increasing their role and credibility in the region and beyond. Their community-based engagement, as the first response to civil emergency operations, will continue to be considered a major task in peacetime.

4.4. Material Resources.

Material resources aim at supporting the activity of AAF structures and the concept of their operational use in peace time, crisis and war. The support of structures that will be / are ready to fulfill the constitutional mission and participate in the military operations of the Alliance is to be achieved. Also, special attention should be paid to supporting the structures involved in dealing with civil emergencies.

Health support aims at the implementation of preventive measures and health treatment of AAF personnel. It is important to pay attention to the medical treatment of personnel engaged in missions abroad before, during and after the end of mission.

Supporting and assisting the community is to focus on improving infrastructure, remote areas, clearing and certification of areas contaminated by UXOs, as well as continuing engagement to assist other institutions in the country.

The handling of properties outside the AAF Settlement Plan should be realized based on the legal and sub-legal acts through privatization, lease, transfer, registration, and application for ownership certificate of any property in the administration of its structures.

4.5. Financial resources.

The defense budget is to be planned and effectively spent, providing balanced support among budget items aiming at providing priority support to staff needs and increasing capital spending to modernize operational capacity and priority infrastructure. Responsibly disciplining the annual budget of the Ministry of Defense, as well as the fulfillment of budget requests and support of defense programs should be the essential requirements that will enable us favorable options in the field of defense. During 2019 should be worked to ensure better alignment of defense programs with budget programs, reducing the volume of work and synchronizing efforts to prioritize and timely and quality budget execution.

5. Continuation of engagements, active role and credibility in international arena.

5.1. International co-operation.

International co-operation is to be in full harmony with the foreign policy objectives in support of the integration processes of our country in the EU, in the interest of developing the capacity of AAF and aim for results in modernization, education, training and joint exercises.

NATO engagement and co-operation with partner countries have priority as activities that support the AAF's constitutional mission, development and implementation of the Capacities Objective Package. Also, the 10th anniversary of our country's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a special event for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania for their contribution and commitment to national, Euro-Atlantic and global security . Focus, in addition to the jubilee activities, is to be the development of the multinational exercise "Albanian Effort 19".

The Chairing by Albania of the NATO Military Intelligence Committee (MIC) during 2019 should be a key priority for intelligence structures in order to meet the Alliance Intelligence objectives and national obligations.

Active engagement, qualitative representation in the fulfillment of obligations within NATO, EU, UN, OSCE or regional initiatives for enhancing confidence, peace, security in the region and beyond is to continue.

5.2. Regional cooperation.

Regional cooperation aims at interaction on various military issues, such as education, training, exercising, participation in joint operations, and support to the Euro-Atlantic integration processes of the region.

Taking the lead of the SEDM regional initiative (2019-2021) and the Adriatic Charter (A-5) are to be key priorities within regional cooperation.

6. Effectiveness in Civil Emergency Management and Community Assistance.

In the area of civil emergencies, the legal and structural framework of the Civil Protection System and its modernization should be improved, to ensure citizens' lives, to minimize material losses, damage to property, cultural heritage and the environment.

The consolidation of the General Directorate of Civil Emergencies and the National Research and Rescue Center is to continue as the main structure in the management, coordination of search and rescue operations and civil emergencies. Special attention should be paid to coordination and cooperation with all national actors, as well as allied and partner countries, in the course of operations in response to civil emergencies.

Also, it is importance should be placed on drafting reserve plans for dealing with civil emergencies, as well as planning the necessary reserves materials.

Inter-institutional cooperation with central and local government bodies and the media should be quality and driven by the principle "zero risk does not exist", in order to successfully implement the warning and engagement in support and community assistance.

7. Increase transparency from all structures of the Armed Forces.

All Armed Forces structures are to focus on increasing transparency and the fight against corruption. Particular attention should be paid to transparency in personnel management, spending of public funds, personnel complaint system and the "Albania we want" program.

CONCLUSIONS

2019 is an important year for the AAF, as it coincides with the 10-th anniversary of our country's accession to the Alliance, therefore, for the implementation of this directive, I request from all MoD / AAF structures to draw up concrete action plans and programs, as well as to take all measures for their timely realization.