THE DEFENCE STRATEGY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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FOREWORD BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Approving the updated Defence Strategy is just one of many steps we have taken in order to strengthen and secure the defence of the Czech Republic. The Government has already approved a new Security Strategy, and Parliament has adopted new defence legislation. The Ministry of Defence is also taking steps to boost capabilities and capacities of the Armed Forces. Defence Strategy provides unifying framework for these measures. At the same time, it creates a solid groundwork necessary for enhancing the overall resilience of the government bodies and agencies, local administrations and citizens against the negative impacts of the unstable security environment and to support their ability to withstand them.

We are well aware of the fact that our homeland's security is closely linked with that of our allies and partners. It is, therefore, in our own interest to contribute responsibly to the functioning of the collective defence systems of NATO and the EU, as well as to participate in stabilization efforts in volatile regions. Defence Strategy thus reflects the collectively made decisions of the North Atlantic Alliance as well as the new Global Strategy of the EU. The implementation of the updated Defence Strategy will strengthen the credibility of the Czech Republic's contribution to collective security and defence. It will help rectify deficiencies stemming from the long-standing neglect of the importance of sustained maintenance and development of defence capabilities in the past.

We are responding to the unpredictability of the current security environment by substantially increasing our investments in defence. In this respect, it is crucially important to ensure that the considerable resources our society is investing into its national defence are managed both effectively and efficiently, which is also one of the primary aims of the updated Defence Strategy. I am convinced that the responsible approach of the Defence Ministry and the Government as a whole demonstrated in this document will be met with a positive response from our citizens. After all, it is the active participation of our citizens and their will to defend their rights and freedoms, which gives purpose and meaning to our country's defence system.

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Defence Strategy outlines the policy of the Government of the Czech Republic to ensure the defence of the Czech Republic. It defines how the key tasks of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic are fulfilled, and is the primary guidance for the ensuing planning process.

2. The Defence Strategy is based on the applicable national law regulating defence, particularly the Czech Constitution, international treaties and relevant Acts.[1] It stems from the *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*[2], and reflects NATO's *Strategic Concept*, the EU's *Global Strategy* and other relevant national, international and allied documents.

3. In accordance with the Armed Forces Act, the essential mission of the Czech Armed Forces is to prepare for the defence of the Czech Republic and to defend it against external attacks. In accordance with the North Atlantic Treaty, Czech Armed Forces participate in the preparation for the collective defence of NATO's allies' territory, which includes training exercises, involvement in NATO defence planning procedures and participation in deployed operations. The Armed Forces are also involved in activities to maintain peace and security, namely through their participation in peacekeeping and peace support operations, and in rescue and humanitarian aid missions. The Armed Forces actively cooperate with foreign (especially allied) armed forces in areas of common security interest.

[1] Defence of the Czech Republic is carried out in accordance with the Constitutional Act No. 1/1993 Coll., The Constitution of the Czech Republic; Constitutional Act No. 110/1998 Coll., on the Security of the Czech Republic; Act No. 219/1999 Coll., on the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic (the Armed Forces Act); Act No. 221/1999 Coll., on the Military Professionals; Act No. 222/1999 Coll., on Ensuring the Defence of the Czech Republic; Act No. 585/2004 Sb., on Liability to Conscription and its Safeguard (the Conscription Act); Act No. 300/2013 Coll., on the Military Police; Act No. 153/1994 Coll., on the Intelligence Service of the Czech Republic; Act No. 289/2005 Coll., on the Military Intelligence; Act No. 45/2016 Coll. Of the Service of Reservists.

[2] Authorised by Government Resolution No. 79 dated 4 February 2015.

B. PRINCIPLES OF THE DEFENCE POLICY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

4. Since 2012, the security situation in Europe has significantly deteriorated. In Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation blatantly carries out its power ambitions, including through use of military force. In doing so, the Russian Federation violates the norms of international law, including the territorial integrity of its neighbouring states. It has executed hybrid operations against NATO nations and EU Member States, including targeted disinformation activities and cyber-attacks. There is an arc of instability to the south and southeast from Europe, which is spreading throughout regions from North Africa to Afghanistan. This instability stems, in large part, from the weak and failed states that have allowed non-state actors such as the so called Islamic State and other extremist groups to create a zone of instability, which extends up to the European borders and threatens Europe with the growth of radicalisation, extremism, terrorism, and an alarming increase of illegal migration into the EU. European security is also being jeopardised by the relatively new threats associated with information warfare and organised cyber-attacks. These adverse trends represent a potential threat to the Czech Republic. Therefore, it is of great interest to the Czech Republic to strengthen its defence capacity and readiness, and to take its share of the responsibility in supporting those allies and partners who bear the greater share of the burden.

5. In response to these adverse developments, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union have adopted a range of measures to help strengthen the security of their member countries. Specific military measures being adopted include the enhancement of the NATO Response Force (NRF), including the creation of the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), and the development of the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the east and the tailored Forward Presence (tFP) in the southeast border of the Alliance.

6. In response to the deteriorating security environment, the Czech government has begun to increase defence funding. The most pressing task is to redress the consequences of the slump in the level of defence capabilities, and the personnel, technology and material negligence that had built up over the previous years, and to develop the Czech Armed Forces so that they are able to fulfil their tasks.

7. The Czech Republic ensures the defence of its sovereignty and territorial integrity, primarily within the framework of NATO's collective defence as set out in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Nevertheless, the Czech Republic's membership of international organisations does not free it from its primary responsibility of defending its own national territory. Autonomously, and in cooperation with other states, the Czech Republic maintains and develops, in line with Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty[3], its individual and collective capacity to resist an armed attack. The defence policy of the Czech Republic is based on the

[3] Article 3 the North Atlantic Treaty: "In order to more effectively achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist an armed attack.

country's membership of NATO and the EU, and benefits from the provision of home defence and security while, in turn, committing the Czech Republic to adequately contribute to the development of the collective defence of other member countries.

8. While the likelihood of a direct military attack against the territory of the Czech Republic remains low, it cannot be ruled out that the security and/or territorial integrity of some NATO nations or EU Member States may be threatened in such a way as to require the engagement of the Czech Armed Forces in collective operations to ensure the defence of these Allied nations. The Czech Republic therefore steadily develops the interoperability and efficiency of the Armed Forces by following the process of NATO's defence planning and conducting military exercises with our foreign partners. The Czech Republic supports the strengthening of Europe's security and defence and therefore actively engages in deepening defence cooperation within the EU framework.

9. The Czech Republic has been actively taking part, and will continue to take part, in international missions, peace support and peacekeeping operations, and rescue and humanitarian operations in foreign countries. It will continue to help build up the defence capacity of the armed forces of partner nations in unstable regions. In foreign operations, Czech Armed Forces cooperate with our partner and allied armed forces in accordance with international treaties and commitments. Outside the territory of the Czech Republic, the Armed Forces are deployed to support the efforts of the international community, in accordance with the principles of international law, in a broad range of operations led by NATO, the EU, UN and other international organisations and ad-hoc coalitions, or on a bilateral basis. The Czech Armed Forces can take part in collective defence operations, peace enforcement, peace support and peacekeeping operations, as well as in post conflict stabilisation and reconstruction. Furthermore, service personnel of the Czech Armed Forces may perform their tasks in humanitarian missions, rescue and evacuation operations, as well participate in additional civilian operations and observer missions of international organisations. They also contribute to the build-up and development of security and defence capabilities of partner nations in unstable regions, both on multilateral as well as bilateral basis.

C. THE THREE PILLARS OF CZECH REPUBLIC'S DEFENCE:

THE STATE, THE ARMED FORCES, THE CITIZEN

10. The Czech Republic's defence is based on the responsible approach of the Government, and other public administration authorities, to ensure the national defence system; on the development of the requisite defence capabilities within the framework of NATO's collective defence; and on involvement of Czech citizens in defence activities in the event of a serious threat to the state. An important aspect in the proper functioning of these three pillars is to strengthen motivation and create a clear legal framework as well as real opportunities for the preparation of citizens in performing their duties as part of national defence.

PILLAR 1: RESPONSIBLE APPROACH BY THE STATE TO THE DEFENCE OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, AND NATO AND EU MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENTS

11. *Defence of the territory of the Czech Republic:* The responsibility for preparing and ensuring national defence rests with the Government of the Czech Republic.[4] By the same token, defence is a matter for all branches of the government; regional governments, municipalities, legal entities, as well as citizens. The Czech Government creates conditions conducive to the development of the Armed Forces, and guarantees that those forces meet the requirements for defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state as part of NATO's collective defence.

12. *Collective defence:* In order to ensure its defence, the Czech Republic fulfils its capability targets voluntarily adopted in NATO's defence planning process, and maintains capabilities for the reception of allied forces on Czech territory and for the provision of host nation support. The planned measures for ensuring national defence are verified by regular training exercises carried out by crisis management authorities and agencies both on the domestic and international level.

4 Act No. 222/1999 Coll., on Ensuring Defence of the Czech Republic.

13. *The National defence system*: The national defence system is part of the security system of the Czech Republic, as set out in the *Security Strategy of the Czech Republic*. The primary function of the national defence system is to prepare, manage, coordinate and support activities of the relevant authorities, forces and assets in order to ensure the defence of the Czech Republic. This includes early detection, prediction and evaluation of potential threats, including hybrid threats. The national defence system is interlinked with the allied structures. Its operational activities are provided for and controlled by the President of the Czech Republic, Parliament and the Government of the Czech Republic, its various working and advisory bodies, ministries and other central government authorities. The Ministry of Defence is responsible for the process of national defence planning, and its coordination. Dedicated structures to provide direct control of defence are established during a state of national emergency, or in a state of war. The primary executive components of the national defence system are the Armed Forces. Other components include government institutions, regional governments and municipalities, as well as legal entities and natural persons as defined by law.

14. *Defence planning:* Effective and efficient build-up of defence capabilities accomplished within the framework of the Czech Republic's defence planning is driven primarily by NATO's defence planning process and is in tune with the needs of the EU.

15. *Resources:* A key prerequisite for an effective provision of national defence hinges on the existence of a stable, sustained, and sufficient resource framework. Years of underfunding has left the Czech Armed Forces limited in carrying out their missions in terms of human resources and materiel. The accumulated shortfalls will hamper the development of the capabilities of the Czech Armed Forces for many years to come. Acknowledging the worsening security situation, the Government of the Czech Republic has taken measures to redress the situation and has started increasing defence spending. In line with its NATO commitments, the Czech government will ensure that the defence budget will progressively increase to the level 1.4% GDP by 2020. In line with the conclusions of the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales, the Czech Republic will attempt, over the next ten years, to reach the 2% GDP benchmark for defence spending. It also aims to allocate at least a 20% share of defence spending for procurement and modernisation of major military hardware and equipment.

16. *Material support of defence*: The Czech government will continue to provide the infrastructure essential to national defence, sufficient material to cater for the defence and mobilisation needs of the Armed Forces, including taking economic measures during a state of crisis, and the development and use of national materiel reserves.

17. *Defence system stability*: The Czech Government will rigorously oversee the effectiveness of national defence spending and the rationality of the organisational structure of the Ministry of Defence. To achieve the stability associated with the recruitment and manning of army reserves, the government supports purposefully conducted and efficient cooperation with legal entities and citizens, including schools and educational institutions. The Czech government will actively prevent the risk of resource, organisational and personnel destabilisation of the Czech Republic's national defence system, which would reduce the quality of military personnel, damage the military's prestige, erode national defence capacity, and weaken the Czech Republic's credibility and political weight.

18. *Intelligence:* Current, independent, multi-sourced and wholly objective intelligence represents an irreplaceable element of the planning and development of an effective national defence system. Such

intelligence provides for early warning against security threats, allows their pre-emption, and is the grounds for the activation of the national defence system.

19. *Defence industry:* The defence industry of the Czech Republic is one of the cornerstones of the national security structure. Supporting the development of the defence industry ensures the highest possible degree of security for military materiel supplies and services, procurement and maintenance of crucial weapon systems to support the operational requirements of the Czech Armed Forces. The Czech government supports the preservation of specific military and otherwise irreplaceable capabilities in industrial production, research and development, particularly through state enterprises. In this regard, the Government ensures its continued development in attainable areas critical to Czech Armed forces. The defence industry and armaments policy is set out in detail in the Armaments and Defence Industry Development Support Strategy.

20. *Regional cooperation:* The Czech Republic supports the development of bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation, especially with neighbouring countries, and actively contributes to these endeavours. Regional defence cooperation is based on two primary pillars; cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany and developing cooperation within the Visegrad Group. In regard to mutual economic ties and its importance to NATO and EU, Germany is a natural partner for the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic will continue to foster close defence cooperation with Germany, including the creation of multinational larger formations earmarked as follow-on forces for collective defence operations and in compliance with the Framework Nations Concept (FNC) initiative. The premise is that the Czech Republic will assign a brigade to a higher level formation (division) as part of the initiative. Intensive military cooperation will continue among the Visegrad Group countries; the goal being to deepen interoperability (including cooperating in the development of the EU Battle Groups and NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Forces), and identify efficient solutions for the joint acquisition of military capabilities. One way of deepening regional cooperation with Germany and Poland is the Czech Republic's contribution to the strengthening of capabilities of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE) headquartered in Szczecin, Poland.

PILLAR 2: CAPABLE ARMED FORCES

21. The cornerstone of the armed forces is its personnel. It is the Czech Republic's goal to have the armed forces fully manned with highly motivated, well trained, universally prepared, and appropriately equipped personnel, provided with all prerequisites for their mission. In the Armed Forces those prerequisites primarily include education, training and other forms of preparation for key missions. To prepare personnel to a high quality and quantity (including training at higher – battalion and brigade – levels), adequate resources will be allocated to ensure that the training and military arts of the Armed Forces service personnel reaches the requisite level.

22. Equipping the Armed Forces with adequate materiel is also imperative. The Czech Republic will take steps to redress shortfalls in this domain in order to be adequately equipped with advanced armaments,

equipment and other materiel. Special attention will be paid to stocking sufficient materiel to allow for intensive combat operations, and create stockpiles for the contingency mobilisation build-up of the Armed Forces. These measures are defined in specific policy documents.

23. In order to clarify the objectives that the Czech Armed Forces aspire to achieve, the political-military ambitions are set out below. They represent planning objectives to be elaborated on in specific planning documents, and their fulfilment will be the subject of periodical assessments:

    a. In an armed conflict which threatens the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Czech Republic, all forces and assets of the Czech Armed Forces will be employed, including invoking citizens' duty of military service (mobilisation).
    b. Under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, the Czech Republic will provide land and air forces earmarked under NATO defence planning, whose core comprises a brigade task force based on a mechanised brigade, prospectively of a heavy type.
    c. For international crisis management operations, the Czech Republic will, depending on the nature of crisis, deploy a land brigade task force without rotation for a six-month period. In the event that such a task force is not deployed, the Czech Republic will be able to simultaneously deploy a sustainable battalion and company size land task force, or an air force component, with rotation, for international crisis management operations.
    d. The Czech Republic contributes task forces to the NATO Response Force (NRF), EU Battle Groups (EU BG), or for use within the framework of the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), totalling up to the equivalent of a battalion.
    e. The Czech Republic contributes to UN missions, primarily by assigning forces to the UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (UNPCRS).
    f. The Czech Republic is able to contribute to additional operations and missions by supplying tailored task forces or individuals, for example Special Forces and teams of experts who can provide training and mentoring, as well as personnel required to man NATO and EU international command structures. It is also capable of deploying the Czech Air Force to provide air policing for NATO allies.

24. The attainment of political-military ambitions rests on the following principles:

    a. *Single set of forces* both for the performance of military missions and the support of civilian authorities in non-military crises.
    b. *Force efficiency* with respect to the tasks of the Czech Armed Forces in the national defence system and the most likely missions while maintaining the ability to respond flexibly across a broad spectrum of activities.
    c. *Force effectiveness* based on meeting NATO standards, with specific emphasis on force preparedness.
    d. *Force modularity* enabling the creation of mission-tailored task forces based on organic units.
    e. *Force deployability* and usability for carrying out missions in international operations while progressively increasing the sustainability of the deployed forces.
    f. *Force interoperability* providing for integration with allies and carrying out missions in allied integrated information environment.
    g. *Gradual build-up of wartime capabilities*. The assumed l*ong-term warning times led, in the past,* to the concept of so-called 'deferred need'. Recent developments, however, have shown that

an armed conflict in Europe may break out suddenly, which significantly shortens the warning time for armed forces to attain operational capabilities. Therefore, wartime capabilities will be progressively built up, including the procurement of sufficient stock of materiel and stockpiles which will provide for attrition and wartime losses. Reserve forces will be enhanced, and supplies contracted, along with other additional measures. In this context the deferred need concept will be re-assessed and, if necessary, revised.

h. *Competent personnel*. In order to fulfil the specified tasks, conditions will be created to recruit and retain qualified and motivated personnel. An integral part of building wartime capabilities is competently managed, broad-based cooperation with legal entities and individuals, including schools and educational institutions, to provide educational programmes to prepare citizens in adequate scope and form, as well as direct cooperation in employing military professionals discharged from service upon completion of their military contracts, which enables them to join the reserve force or the active reserves.

25. In order to continue to deliver the required standards of political-military ambitions, it is essential to create relevant structures, capabilities and capacities for the Czech Armed Forces to ensure those ambitions are met. Based on the evaluation of security threats and the ensuing risks, it is essential, in the long term, to develop new units in order to enhance the combat capabilities of the Land Forces in particular, and thus increase the Czech Armed Forces personnel numbers by additional 5,000 military professionals[5] while maintaining the priority to provide adequate manning, equipment, armaments, training standards, and achieving full operational capabilities of the two existing brigades, one being a heavy brigade. Upon rearmament of units, the existing equipment will be used in reserve for the mobilisation build-up of forces.

26. The Czech Armed Forces can perform its missions autonomously as well as in partnership with its Allies, including the provision of Host Nation Support on Czech territory and its use abroad.

27. The Czech Republic uses its resources to build common defence capabilities within the NATO and EU frameworks, particularly if their acquisition and operation falls outside the Czech Republic's resource and technology capabilities.

28. The Czech Republic, individually, or in cooperation with Allies, actively develops its capabilities in the area of cyber security and defence.

29. The Czech Armed Forces may support civilian authorities on national territory within the Integrated Emergency System (IES), particularly in consequence management following large-scale natural or anthropogenic disasters. In the case of serious threats to the internal security of the state and its citizens, forces and assets of the Ministry of Defence may be assigned to reinforce the Police of the Czech Republic (PCR). The forces are assigned for those tasks as necessary and based on their availability. In principle, any component of the Czech Armed Forces, including the active reserve force can be used to support the IES and the PCR.

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[5] That involves an increase as opposed to the objective number of 24,162 military professionals provided for under the 2025 Czech Armed Forces Development Concept (p. 22, chapter 5.1, public release version). The 2025 Czech Armed Forces Development Concept was endorsed by the Government Resolution No. 1094 dated 21 December 2015.

PILLAR 3: THE CIVIC DUTY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

30. National defence is a civic duty and, at the same time, a moral obligation. The mandatory obligation for citizens to defend their homeland has never been abolished, even when the Czech Armed Forces became an all-volunteer military. The Czech Government endeavours to heighten citizens' awareness of their personal responsibility for national defence.

31. Currently, citizens preparing for national defence activities do so on a voluntary basis, and it only becomes compulsory in a state of national emergency, or in a state of war. Given the intermixture of internal and external security threats, preparing citizens for national defence calls for a combination of military and civilian approaches. That is the unified principle for the development and integration of measures in emergency planning and its tools, as well as preparation methods and procedures.

32. One of the most important measures adopted to fulfil the primary mission of the Czech Armed Forces, the defence of the Czech Republic against external attack, is the transition of the Czech Armed Forces from a peacetime to a wartime organisational structure. In a state of national emergency, the Ministry of Defence may order a selective augmentation of specific military units by calling up the Reserve Forces service personnel earmarked to perform extraordinary duties. During a state of war, the President of the Czech Republic will, on the advice and proposals of the Government, order the mobilisation of the Armed Forces which will then undergo a mass build-up of its military units, facilities, personnel, materiel and property. In order to provide for manning, a system will be set in place for the development and use of the Reserve Forces based on the liability of Czech citizens to conscription. A system of procuring reserves and supplies from the civilian sector will be created in order to augment materiel and property availability. The scope, contents and schedule of these mobilisation measures will be kept in line with the developing security situation.

33. An effective means of ensuring that citizens can fulfil their national defence civic right in peacetime is the concept of the Active Reserve Force, which connects the Armed Forces with the public. The primary responsibility of the service personnel in the Active Reserve Force is to prepare for the missions of the Czech Armed Forces during a state of national emergency or state of war. Active reserve service personnel may be assigned to operational activities outside Czech territory. They will be trained for their respective allocated tasks in advance and in organic units. In addition, service personnel in the Active Reserve Force may perform tasks as part of non-military crisis management, or serve in operational tours with their allocated units. Another area where citizens can become involved in preparation for national defence is the participation in voluntary military training exercises.

34. Voluntary activities of citizens are another important contribution to the defence and security of the Czech Republic, particularly gaining experience and knowledge in weapons handling, in compliance with the applicable law, or in first aid and health care. Government institutions will provide the adequate resources and tools to support these activates.

D. IMPLEMENTATION

35. The Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic is implemented by the decisions made by the Government of the Czech Republic, and by means of subsequent relevant documents that fall within the remit of the Ministry of Defence. The present Defence Strategy provides the basis for updating state defence plans and other relevant planning documents. The Government is kept informed on the implementation of the Defence Strategy by means of the Report on the Czech Republic Defence, which is submitted on an annual basis.

36. This document supersedes the 2012 Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic.

E. CONCLUSION

37. Safeguarding the defence of state sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Czech Republic is the principal function of the state and a duty of the Government. The Government shares this obligation with other governmental authorities, regional governments and municipalities. National defence is also a civic duty.

38. Preparations for national defence and the development of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic are based on the strategic goals and principles defined under the present Strategy. Capable Armed Forces with access to advanced military capabilities are a key prerequisite for an effective state defence system. Given the nature of the security threats and the Czech Republic's NATO and EU membership commitments, the Czech Republic's defence is not limited to its national borders; it is also planned and carried out within the international, primarily allied framework. However, the realisation of the Defence Strategy depends, namely, on sufficient resources allocated to the strengthening of the country's defence capacity. The implementation of the measures set out in the present Strategy will enable the Czech Republic to achieve an adequate level of defence capacity while, at the same time, contribute to the defence of its allies.

The Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic was discussed and approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on March 13, 2017, by its Resolution No. 194.

NOTE