THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

2017

FOREWORD

In its brief history as an independent state, the Republic of Croatia is again at a crossroads! The European area, in particular the area of Central Europe, to which Croatia belongs geographically, historically and culturally, is faced with security threats from the east and the south. The Republic of Croatia is located in the very center of these developments and at an intersection of these instable lines of force, which shook the foundations of Europe's security architecture, thus creating a need for a completely new European and Euro-Atlantic strategic deliberation and setting, and reminding of the lasting duty and task of tireless care for the state's national security.

In such circumstances, it is our duty to assume a more active role and be an assertive subject of international relations and act with the view of promoting and protecting the interests of our Croatian Homeland. The Republic of Croatia creates its own future and is a guarantee of its citizens' security. To fulfill this role, it must have the following:

• an active and self-confident foreign policy, which will contribute to the consolidation, development, connectivity, stabilization and security of the entire European area through the development of new and strengthening of existing alliances, promoting the national interests of the Republic of Croatia;

• a strong defence system, which will enable the Republic of Croatia to actively contribute to international efforts to stabilize our strategic environment, and guarantee the security of the Republic of Croatia from external threats to its security, integrity and sovereignty through deterrence;

• an effective system of internal security, which will guarantee the citizens of the Republic of Croatia the highest possible degree of protection from threats and challenges to their security, especially from contemporary threats such as terrorism, ideological and religious extremism, abuse of the cyberspace and different forms of asymmetric and hybrid threats to our stability and security;

• a highly professional security and intelligence system, which will enable early recognition of security challenges and their combating, and offer information support to decision makers to decide on timely response;

• a Homeland Security system, which will enable a coordinated and combined action of all its components, with the view of achieving synergy for the benefit of the Republic of Croatia, its national interests and security of its citizens.

The establishment of a Homeland Security system, as a framework for coordinated activity of all state bodies in the promotion of the national interests of the Republic of Croatia, is the key prerequisite for the Republic of Croatia's role as an active participant of international relations.

This National Security Strategy is yet another significant and indispensible step in the establishment of such a system. As the pivotal national security document, which has been adopted by a consensus that goes beyond partisan divisions, it is a true starting point for creating implementing policies, measures and procedures directed towards the realization of the national objectives and interests of the Republic of Croatia.

From the very beginning of its creation, the Strategy has been the result of a combined effort by a large number of governmental bodies of the Republic of Croatia, led by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia.

As President of the Republic of Croatia, I extend sincere gratitude and congratulations to all members of the commissions and the working groups, who through their dedication and hard work gave an immense

contribution to the development of a Homeland Security System for the future, thereby contributing to a more stable, prosperous and secure future of the Republic of Croatia.

Sincerely,

Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović

President of the Republic of Croatia

FOREWORD

During the first 26 years of its autonomy and independence, the Republic of Croatia has ensured its territorial integrity and defended its sovereignty in a just, defensive and liberation Homeland War. We made a significant contribution to establishing military balance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, what was a precondition for the Dayton-Paris Peace Agreement. After being internationally recognized as a country, we have reached our strategic goals of membership in the UN, NATO and the EU. Thanks to all these successes, the Republic of Croatia freely creates its strategic policies today, develops potentials using all available resources, and creates international policies together with its partners and allies.

Through its government institutions, Croatia has reached a high level of security. However, in global circumstances which, unfortunately, include increased and complex security threats and risks, Croatia has to be up to the challenges and has to continuously develop the capability of adequate and effective responses.

One of the basic tasks of every country is the security of its citizens and its national territory. Preventing security threats favours the development of economy, which creates preconditions for welfare and prosperity of Croatian people, increases the quality of life and demographic revitalisation of the country. A democratic and stable political system cannot function without security, because security of each citizen is a precondition for the stability of our society and our country. Therefore, I am glad that after 15 years Croatia is introducing this new, comprehensive National Security Strategy – a strategic document of an organized security system.

An important instrument in the implementation of this Strategy is the development of the Homeland Security System. With this new system, the Republic of Croatia will establish an effective mechanism to respond to unpredicted security challenges and natural disasters. This strong mechanism gives us the possibility to prevent, plan, and especially manage all kinds of crisis situations. It will also establish integration and synergy of all capabilities available at the state, local and regional level, as well as in the civil and private sectors. Croatia must be ready, at any time and in any conditions, to engage in an adequate, rapid, and responsible way to protect the security of its citizens and its territory.

Values created in the victorious Homeland War are the fundaments on which a modern Croatian security system is developed. In that context, it is important to underline that national identity is the tie that gathers us and contributes to our recognisability in the community of European and World nations and cultures. That is why we preserve our origins of identity and the foundations on which the modern Croatian state was created – the Homeland war and especially the victim of Croatian veterans and the whole Croatian nation, at home and abroad. We also contribute to the preservation of the national identity and protection of Croats living outside the borders of the Republic of Croatia, especially protecting their equality and constitutionality in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Every public policy in the area of national security will have to have its foothold in the National Security Strategy as the original document. Therefore, the implementation of the Strategy is a lasting process in which all stakeholders will develop policies and their respective areas making each strategic aim described in the Strategy operational. In this process of implementing and realizing the Strategy, the government of the Republic of Croatia will have a leading role and through international activities additionally accept coexistence of Croatia's position as a member of the EU and an ally in NATO.

Sincerely,

Andrej Plenković

Prime Minister

I. Introduction, vision and security concept

The Republic of Croatia is a sovereign Central European, Danube-Basin, Adriatic and Mediterranean country independently formulating its strategies and policies with the aim of realising national interests and goals, economic, political and social development, security of citizens, protection of national identity and fundamental values defined by the Constitution. Since gaining its independence, defence and liberation of the national territory in the Homeland War to the present day, Croatia has developed into a free, democratic and responsible country. Becoming a member of European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter: NATO) member, we reached important foreign policy and security objectives, and, furthermore, set such conditions that provide the Republic of Croatia with new economic, political and security development opportunities.

Through our own actions, and interacting with of a number of international processes, a high level of security was reached rendering possible a balanced development of the Republic of Croatia. However, foreign and domestic security threats, risks and challenges are changing constantly and rapidly, are very complex, interconnected and often unpredictable, thus creating the need for continuous development of national security policy and the ability to respond to the changes.

The national security in the Republic of Croatia is ensured by a coordinated action in all areas of development, not only by means of security instruments and activities. Therefore, it is necessary to build national security policies, structure and capabilities that will ensure activities within the national territory, but also outside it, independently and by joint international efforts in establishing peace, conflict resolution and trust building.

The vision of the Republic of Croatia is to, through comprehensive and coordinated action, develop as a democratic and free country, capable of protecting its population, territory and sovereignty, national identity, highest constitutional values, human rights and freedoms. The Republic of Croatia will keep ensuring economic and social prosperity rendering possible demographic renewal and revitalisation. It will continually take care of the members of Croatian people in other countries, develop its reputation and influence in the international environment, and participate in the making of international peace and stability as a member of the United Nations, European Union, NATO and other international and regional organisations.

National Security Strategy of the Republic of Croatia (hereinafter: National Security Strategy) is a fundamental strategic document determining policies and instruments for the realisation of the vision and national interests, and for the achievement of the security conditions that would allow a balanced and sustained development of the country and society. This strategy introduces a new security paradigm based on the model of human security, that is, the security of an individual – every citizen of the Republic of Croatia.

In today's world internal and external aspects of security are strongly linked, thus affecting our commitment to a comprehensive approach to accomplishing security goals.

The Republic of Croatia and its citizens have experience and are familiar with the concept of comprehensive action which had been directly applied in the Homeland War, where civil, military, diplomatic, economic and political potentials acted jointly in order to achieve freedom, independence and full sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Croatia. This approach enables the development of systems that will coordinate action of all state bodies, as well as the involvement of citizens and the entire society in the design and implementation of security policies. A comprehensive and inclusive approach is a prerequisite for sustainable socio-economic development and strengthening resistance in all conditions, and for international action founded on solidarity and trust among partners.

The Republic of Croatia will develop sustainable security policies and instruments and organise a system that will be properly managed, strategically focused on key challenges, proactive, coordinated, affordable, self-sustainable, efficient, responsible and prepared to manage risks.

The development of national security strategy is an ongoing process in which every Croatian Government, at the beginning of its mandate and in cooperation with the President of the Republic of Croatia, proposes a new or amends the existing National Security Strategy. This way, national security strategies will regularly be adjusted to strategic environment.

In order to accomplish and protect its national interests and to implement its strategic objectives, the Republic of Croatia will use all means at its disposal, proportionately to threats and risks to which it is exposed.

II. National interests

National interests of the Republic of Croatia derive from the fundamental values defined in the Constitution and the vision, considering its own geostrategic and geopolitical position and the situation and trends in the international environment.

- Security of the population and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia are basic preconditions for the existence of the state in all its functions.
- Well-being and prosperity of citizens are the most important indicators of quality and successful state, democratic political system and a stable society.
- National identity, international reputation and influence enable the Republic of Croatia to participate in international processes and in shaping a favourable international environment.
- Equal position, sovereignty and existence of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the position of the Croatian national minority in other countries and Croatian diaspora enjoy special care and protection of the Republic of Croatia.

III. Security environment

Global level

Connected and interdependent world is offering numerous opportunities for achieving well-being and security while at the same time it is becoming more complex and unsafe, subject to rapid changes and new challenges. This is contributed by trends connected to climate change, demographic trends and migration of the population, the development of new technologies and globalisation of the economy, as well as the increasingly important role of the internet in the creation of social and security processes.

Geopolitical competition among major powers leads to the weakening of multilateralism and the outbreak of inter-state and intra-state conflicts. At the same time the strengthening of power of non-state actors further complicate the security circumstances in the world. Shifts in global centres of power will affect a number of regional and local events and processes that can significantly influence the reaching of the goals set by this Strategy.

New technologies are changing all aspects of life while the world population, especially in poor and underdeveloped countries, as well as resource needs are ever significantly growing. Inequality among developed and underdeveloped countries is one of the causes of the large migratory movements. With the emergence of new viruses and drug-resistant bacteria, threats to the health of the population increase, boosted by climate change, environmental pollution, increase in all forms of international traffic and mass migration of the population.

The development of information and communication technologies allowed the processes that connect the world and make life easier, but has also created new threats and risks. Addiction of societies and

individuals to the internet and information technology represent a special vulnerability. Cyberspace attacks, regardless of the motives, increasingly endanger individuals, organisations and countries. Simultaneously, organisational fluidity, geographic distribution, technological diffusion and limitless ability to communicate make difficult the identification, intentions and capabilities of attackers. Cybercrime is on the rise, and cyberspace is increasingly used for illegal activities. Apart from possible breaches of security of classified, personal and sensitive data, the use of cyberspace to cause casualties and damage in the material world represents a threat likewise. Radical ideas and movements, evolving into extremism and terrorism, are multiplied and spread across the internet and social networks, thus gaining the reach and influence they haven't had thus far.

Dynamics and complexity of changes make it difficult to recognise trends and anticipate events, not only in the long term but in the near future as well. Security interests of states will increasingly be driven by the need for access to food, water, energy and communications, and future conflicts will take place in a vague and hardly distinguishable situation between war and peace.

Europe and the European neighbourhood

The European Union is surrounded by a zone of instability, stretching from northern Africa, through the Middle East, to the Caucasus and Central Asia. This zone is a long-term source of security challenges, from terrorism, illegal migrations, extremism, organised crime and hybrid operations to open regional armed conflicts.

Terrorism has been a constant threat to the international and national security, while the terrorists' readiness and capability to inflict heavy casualties and large-scale destruction have significantly increased. Terrorist groups use modern technologies for spreading their ideology, training, recruiting fighters and terrorist attacks. Terrorist groups involved in conflicts in Syria and Iraq have been joined by thousands of Europeans whose return to their home countries is a long-term security risk.

Mass migrations towards Europe pose a social, developmental, economic, political, cultural, health, integration and security challenge for European societies. Migrations are a consequence of numerous factors, such as armed conflicts, weak states, poverty, unemployment, and climate changes. For this reason, the influx of migrants towards Europe is expected to continue in the long term. One of the challenges related to migrations is further implementation of the international law on migrants and refugees.

At the same time, numerous European states are facing birth rate decline and the aging of population. This demographic deficit can be replaced only by immigration, where the management and the control of the process represent a great challenge for those states.

The European Union is also facing the challenge of establishing and implementing common European policies in certain areas, such as finances, migration policy, relations with certain states outside the European Union, and involvement in crisis resolving. Other challenges are also the processes of political radicalisation and populism in certain states. It is evident that the European continent is increasingly suffering the consequences of geopolitical tensions and threat to European security especially since the eruption of the crisis in Ukraine.

The probability of a large conventional conflict involving members of NATO and the European Union is low due to its potentially catastrophic consequences. Still such a conflict cannot be fully excluded.

Energy security and the securing of a stable supply of energy sources at acceptable price rates are one of the basic preconditions of the development of modern states. Member states of the European Union depend significantly on the import of energy sources, especially oil and natural gas. The states' dependence on a single supplier might become an instrument of achieving foreign policy goals.

The areas experiencing geopolitical competitions and the overlapping of interests of great powers face the danger of destabilisation by foreign activities and influences which could include different forms of hybrid threats as well.

Southeastern neighbourhood

The surroundings of the Republic of Croatia present a source of potential challenges, but also an opportunity for promotion and protection of national interests. Political instability, insufficiently developed state institutions, corruption, high rate of unemployment, and social and interethnic tensions make the security situation in our southeastern neighbourhood fragile, which also reflects on Croatian interests. An active presence of the European Union and NATO continues to be an important factor of stability.

The states of Southeast Europe which are not members of NATO or the European Union have different foreign policy goals and aspirations, but each of them sees the European Union and/or NATO as its own goal. They are in different phases of the accession process to Euro-Atlantic integrations.

Although the southeastern neighbourhood is still dominated by the Euro-Atlantic influence, the way is opened for the influence of other global and regional actors, thus geopolitical competitions and different destabilising influences from outside are reflected in this area as well.

The neighbourhood of Croatia is showing trends of strengthening of intolerance, radicalism and extremism, especially of Islamic radicalism. It is not probable that in the medium-term period the causes of radicalisation and recruitment of extreme Islamists could be eliminated, or mitigated to a significant degree. Since the beginning of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, several hundred people from Southeast Europe have joined the terrorist organisations active in the areas of the armed conflicts. Their return to their home countries increases the risk of terrorism for the Republic of Croatia as well. Self-radicalised individuals not in direct contact with terrorist organisations but, influenced by terrorist propaganda, capable of individual terrorist attacks, present yet another threat.

The strengthening of radical nationalism based on ‘greater state’ ideologies – including here ideas about changing internationally recognised borders - as well as activities directed at undermining the credibility of the Republic of Croatia, present a threat to the security, interests, and to the reputation of the Republic of Croatia, and jeopardise the existence and position of Croats in the southeastern neighbourhood.

For years in some countries has been underway a blatant defamatory campaign directed against the Republic of Croatia with all the features of hybrid and special action, that is, planned, permanent and systematic activities supported by state bodies.

The Republic of Croatia is situated on one of the routes used by organised criminal groups for trafficking arms, people, drugs and other dangerous substances. Instability in different hotspots led to an increased demand of illegal weapons and military equipment, which in turn resulted in the increase of organised crime. In addition, Southeast Europe has become one of the busiest migration transit routes. The danger of proliferating weapons of mass destruction and the dual-use items and technologies, especially by using the territory of the Republic of Croatia for their transport to other states, pose a security threat for the Republic of Croatia.

Despite all of the mentioned security challenges and risks, both the area of Southeast Europe and the entire Croatian neighbourhood, also present an opportunity for increasing the political, economic, security, traffic, energy, and other types of cooperation, as well as the building of trust and dialogue-focused policies.

Security threats, risks, and challenges for the Republic of Croatia

The Republic of Croatia, as a member of the European Union, belongs to a group of states of developed democracy, with which it shares common European values. In addition to the benefits derived from the membership, the Republic of Croatia and its partner states share security challenges as well. The Republic of Croatia, owing to its location as a Central European, Danube-Basin, Adriatic and Mediterranean country, is in possession of numerous resources, such as the Adriatic Sea with its submarine area, clean water, forests, and agricultural land, national parks and rich cultural heritage providing it with numerous natural, traffic, energy and economic opportunities.

Regardless of the complexity of the security and political situation, the probability of a direct conventional military threat to the Croatian territory is very low, taking into consideration the existing and foreseeable political and security circumstances, with the guarantee of national and collective defence, still it must not be ignored due to its possible major ramifications.

Unresolved issues of border demarcation with particular neighbouring states could have negative impacts on the effective control of state borders and control of the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

The Republic of Croatia, due to its geopolitical location and being a member of the European Union and NATO, has been affected by geopolitical confrontations. Thus, it has been exposed to political and intelligence activities of state and non-state actors, which perceive the European Union and NATO as a security threat or a challenge. The domestic, economic, security and defence circumstances are the object of the political and intelligence activities of states and other actors whose interests, activities and stance do not coincide with the Croatian ones.

The Republic of Croatia, independently, or as a part of Euro-Atlantic integrations, has been exposed to forms of hybrid operations, including elements of non-conventional, asymmetric, and cyber actions, aiming to take advantage of vulnerability, weaken the Croatian sovereignty and independence, undermine democratic values and freedoms, destabilise state institutions and to undermine the reputation and the influence of the Republic of Croatia.

The probability of a terrorist attack in the Republic of Croatia is low, but the potential ramifications are severe, especially in the context of a developed tourism and traffic sectors. One of the security threats which the Republic of Croatia is facing is the transit of the members of terrorist organisations across the Croatian territory, also used in illegal migrations.

Extremist activities by individuals and groups on the territory of the Republic of Croatia are sporadic, without an initiating potential and a wider support of citizens, and not having the potential of jeopardizing public security. Extremism is also visible in some individuals within sports fans groups. The violence, extremist rhetoric, and symbols used by individuals within sports fans and other groups undermine the security situation in the Republic of Croatia and its international reputation.

Public sector corruption is one of the important challenges for the Republic of Croatia that affects the functioning of the free market, economic growth, independence, efficiency and effectiveness of public and state functions and creates a loss of trust in public institutions. Corruption reduces investment potential in the Republic of Croatia, and also reflects on the international reputation and activities of Croatian companies in the international market. The most common methods of corruption are related to public procurement procedures and the issuance of various permits and approvals at the state and local level.

Organised crime represents a threat to national security because it endangers the system of institutions, the economic and financial stability and public security. The threat of transnational organised crime is facilitated by the Croatian traffic, economic and geographical position.

The computerisation of the Croatian society, the digitalisation of public services, such as e-health, and e-government, as well as widening the interconnected communications infrastructure, has resulted in an increased vulnerability to cyber threats.

The interdependence of world economy makes national economies vulnerable to external influence. The Republic of Croatia, having a significant portion of the GDP pertaining to tourism and traffic sector, is especially sensitive to global economy and security trends. Croatian economy is facing challenges of increasing competitiveness, increasing efficiency of the public sector, larger investment in research and development, decreasing debt and managing predominantly state owned companies and the state property. Agriculture is a domain in which the Republic of Croatia has numerous unused capacities such as uncultivated land, large import and a small portion of irrigated land, and large areas unprotected from the flood. Social conditions are characterised by an increase in poverty, social inequality, financial indebtedness of citizens and structural unemployment.

The Republic of Croatia has a negative demographic structure and trends whose continuation will impact the social and economic development of the country. Low birth rate, depopulation, negative migration balance, and the distortion of the population age structure will significantly increase the challenges that the Croatian society is facing, such as the lack of work force, unevenly populated land and social and economic pressure on state and public functions.

By strengthening the Croatian economy, there will be an increased need for energy sources and their import, which will in turn increase the sensitivity of the Republic of Croatia to disruptions in energy supply. At the same time, there are opportunities for further diversification of energy sources, building alternative and renewable sources and increasing energy efficiency.

Climate changes in the Republic of Croatia are manifested as extreme heat, drought and precipitation. The Adriatic Sea is sensitive to climate changes and the changes in the Adriatic flora and fauna have already been noticed. In the long term, the climate changes will have an effect on the rising of the sea levels, appearance of long droughts and a decrease of sources of drinking water. Such conditions will directly affect the health of the citizens, and the appearance of diseases not typical for the Croatian climate. Economic sectors, such as tourism, agriculture, fishing and energetics will feel direct consequences of the climate changes.

Environment violation has an effect on the decrease of biological diversity, the appearance of diseases, endangering the survival and the wealth of habitats and forests, pollution of waters, sea and air and the loss of arable land.

Explosive and unexploded ordnance remnant from the Homeland War is still a security problem for the Republic of Croatia. Apart from the dangers to the lives of citizens, the existence of mine-polluted and suspected areas hinders social and economic development.

Natural and man-made accidents and disasters can affect the population, natural and material resources and the critical infrastructure of the Republic of Croatia and the neighbouring countries. When natural disasters are concerned, the Republic of Croatia is especially sensitive to earthquakes, floods and fires of the open space. Accidents in hazardous industrial plants, in the Republic of Croatia or the neighbouring countries, could have severe ecological and security consequences. For this reason it is especially important to maintain the appropriate level of security and ecological standards in the industrial plants which utilise or release hazardous or harmful substances.

IV. Strategic goals and the instruments and mechanisms for achieving them

Strategic goals represent a blueprint for the realisation of the national security policy in the area of each national interest, in accordance with the conditions of the strategic environment and viewed through the

lens of the level of ambition in the medium-term period. In order to achieve its strategic goals, the Republic of Croatia will use all available instruments and mechanisms of national power.

Strategic goals are:

- Achieving the highest level of security and protection of the population and critical infrastructure
- Establishing and developing a homeland system security
- Developing and maintaining a strong and active defence
- Eco Croatia and developing a strong and sustainable economy
- Demographic renewal and revitalisation and the Croatian society
- Developing citizen-friendly public administration and strategic communication
- Protecting, strengthening and promoting highest constitutional values and the Croatian national identity
- Increasing the international reputation and influence of the Republic of Croatia
- Securing the existence, protection of identity and political subjectivity of the Croatian people, as a constitutive people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, protecting and supporting Croatians in other countries and diaspora

National security strategy discusses achieving the strategic goals connected to the national interest from which every goal is derived.

A. Security of population, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia

Achieving the highest level of security and protecting the population and critical infrastructure

The achievement of national interests stems from ensuring the liberty, rights and security of the citizens. The public security and security of citizens represent the basis for the development of individuals, social groups and the society as a whole. The primary function of public security is to establish an adequate standard of living and to create favourable conditions for work and production as well as sustainable development of the entire society. Protection and rescue of people's lives and property and protection of critical infrastructure is necessary for a safe society.

In the area of public security, the Republic of Croatia will ensure a balance between the security requirements of the society and the state, and the basic values guaranteed by the Constitution.

The security of society and individuals is a prerequisite for successful development of economy, especially tourism as an important branch of industry. On the international market, the Republic of Croatia has been considered a safe state. Under the present conditions, this is one of the most important criteria for choosing a travel destination.

The key preconditions for the achievement of public security are preventive actions, constant exchange of information, coordination and cooperation between the bodies and organisations of public security, business entities and all citizens. The public will be encouraged to participate in the achievement of security and the security culture development pointing to the importance of self-care, care about the closest, the society and the working environment, and creating safe surroundings in material and spiritual environment.

The police as one of the main factors of public security are directed at the protection of citizen's security and property, and the protection of fundamental rights and liberties. The activities to ensure public order and peace, investigate and prevent crime, take care of road traffic safety and to control the state borders will be intensified.

The security and intelligence system will develop proactive functioning capabilities and early detection of threats, risks, challenges and trends, based on the collection and analysis of information important to

national security in order for the decision-makers to be able to make timely decisions necessary for accomplishing strategic goals. Special attention will be given to issues of quantification and risk interdependence, reporting improvements, intelligence improvements through early warning, anticipation, knowledge acquisition, the application and effects of digital innovations, as well as suggestions for improving the security and intelligence system.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to improve normative and implementing conditions for permanent parliamentary, expert and civil control of the legality of the security and intelligence system, as well as civil control over the use of certain police powers.

A continuous education and training of personnel in the public security system, security and intelligence system bodies and private protection sector will be provided, while contemporary organisational models and technological achievements will be introduced in all public authorities. A systematic knowledge management approach will be developed in all organizations.

Acquiring new knowledge and technologies, as well as better understanding of domestic and international human and national minority rights protection systems, will enable more effective confrontation with increasingly complex threats and challenges, especially in cyber domain.

Security threats and challenges, such as corruption, organized, economic crime, and cybercrime, illegal migrations and terrorism are starting to gain a more international character. Therefore, the response to such threats and challenges requires effective and constant international cooperation.

Countering terrorism will be implemented by integrated approach and interdepartmental cooperation through measures of prevention, suppression, protection, prosecution and strengthening of international cooperation.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to develop its Integrated Border Management capacities, being the EU external border, thus fulfilling the requirements for joining the Schengen Area. The Republic of Croatia will actively participate and initiate legislative and operational measures at EU level in order to strengthen the overall capabilities and readiness to respond to the challenges of migration and control of external borders. The Republic of Croatia will combat illegal migrations, particularly illegal border crossings and cross-border crime. The intensive measures for the return of third-country nationals illegally resident in the Republic of Croatia will be undertaken and the overall security of the Republic of Croatia and the European Union increased. The process of integration of foreigners with international protection and residence in the Republic of Croatia will be strengthened.

Capabilities for the identification, detection, investigation and suppression of all forms of organised crime will be strengthened. The Republic of Croatia will monitor trends, intensify measures and improve mechanisms to counter the effects of organised crime groups, with intensive international cooperation.

By means of a comprehensive approach the Republic of Croatia will prevent and combat radicalism and extremism including education for democracy, nonviolence, human rights, minority rights and culture of peace. A zero tolerance climate towards violence will be fostered, in particular with regard to hate crime, violent behaviour among school-age population and youth and abuse of sports and other events for manifesting radicalism, extremism and hooliganism.

In the area of civil protection system and all segments of protection and rescue, a comprehensive overview of the current state of capabilities, threats and risks will be drafted and a coherent capacity building model will be proposed, covering the possibilities of responding to everyday needs for regular action, emergency situations, disasters and crisis situations on the land and sea. Based on that review, the development of Civil Protection, Croatian Firefighting Association, Croatian Red Cross, Croatian Mountain Rescue Service and of other actors will be pursued at the state, regional and local level, and a coordinated response to disasters and major accidents will be developed while ensuring the independence of regular actions.

A satisfactory level and a more efficient treatment of strategic commodity reserves will be ensured, in order to mitigate the consequences of extraordinary circumstances and the faster recovery of the affected area.

The key modality to increase the resilience and sustainability of society and national security is the inclusion of the population into the civil protection system, particularly in education and voluntary activities, for which different incentives and public recognitions will be developed, by recognising the skills and knowledge acquired through such work. Citizens' willingness to foster mutual assistance of the culture of solidarity will be encouraged as part of the emergency response after accidents and disasters.

The capabilities of the health system and the civil protection system will be improved to provide timely response to endangering the life and health of citizens as a result of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats and risks.

The Republic of Croatia will invest adequate funds for the complete elimination of mine danger in its territory. Population education programmes that live and work in mine-suspected areas and care for people suffering mine consequences will continue. The Croatian Mine Action System will be positioned and promoted in the international community.

The Republic of Croatia will intensify international cooperation and build disaster risk mitigation capabilities, through the development of early-warning systems, together with standards and operational forces for action within the European Union, but particularly with neighbouring countries with which we share common risks.

Critical infrastructure protection will focus on the prevention, elimination or mitigation of risks that can make critical infrastructure vulnerable and on the strengthening of their resilience. The management and control system over particular critical infrastructures is necessary to be continuously upgraded and improved, using the best experience of other states in this area.

Data exchange models between state bodies and private or public owned critical infrastructure agencies and operators will be developed for timely detection of possible security threats and risks.

By developing documents defining the policy and methodologies for critical infrastructure and limited national goods management, the Republic of Croatia will clearly identify which critical infrastructure elements must remain majority-owned by the State, thereby preventing the jeopardising of vital functions important for the state and the population in cases of business instabilities.

Strengthening the national critical infrastructure to contemporary security challenges and risks requires simultaneous maintenance and protection of national critical civil capabilities that will support the overall capabilities by a coordinated and comprehensive public and private sector involvement but in the first place of the private protection sector. These efforts will be coordinated with allies, international organizations and partners. Civil preparedness, being entirely in national responsibility, is the backbone of national resilience.

Establishment and development of the homeland security system

The Republic of Croatia has at its disposal a series of capabilities, institutions, governmental bodies, local and regional self-government as well as public and private sector. Their jurisdiction and mission is to take care about public security, health, protection and rescue of citizens and property, and the critical infrastructure protection.

Experiences to date in reaction to emergencies point to the need to establish a model that will systematically solve deficiencies that were found through securing coordinated planning, reaction and management in emergencies and in the state of crisis. The goal is to achieve synergistic preventive effect of the actions of several factors, quick and efficient prevention, or rather removal of harmful

consequences of the emergency or crisis event and shortening the time of recover and reversion to the state of functionality before the occurrence of the crisis event.

The emergence of new security risks has changed and enhanced the security paradigm and the responsibility for security. Borders that define where international, national or personal security begin and stop have disappeared.

The existing and new security threats, risks and challenges have expanded the responsibility for security from the state to an individual, society as a whole, and private and public sector.

The Republic of Croatia requires the partnership for security as a response to complex risks that the homeland security system will result from and it will be founded on the principles of respecting human rights and freedoms, transparency, solidarity, tolerance and dialogue. The Republic of Croatia will develop a modern, comprehensive, rational and efficient homeland security system that will correspond to our tradition and requirements. The approach that mainly comprised the security-intelligence system, defence and police has been replaced with an approach that in addition includes corporate entities, scientific and expert institutions, private and public sector and civil society organisations and citizens.

The homeland security system will comprise coordinated operation, the use of capability and potential of all components of national security, beginning from public security, defence, civil protection system, security-intelligence system, diplomacy and economy and other bodies and institutions in the Republic of Croatia. The homeland security system will be oriented towards recognizing, assessment and reduction of the security risks and planning responses to potential security threats to the values and interests of the Republic of Croatia.

Organising the homeland security system will provide for rational, efficient and coordinated use of the existing resources for the purpose of reduction or removal of the risks for national security. The homeland security system will provide support to management in emergencies and in the state of crisis that will include participation in management of the state of crisis situations at NATO and EU level. Operation of the homeland security system will provide an integral methodology and systematic monitoring of the risks for national security and establishment of the priorities in procedures.

Through development of the homeland security system the Republic of Croatia will provide coordinated preparation and implementation of regulations that will determine the measures and procedures of the security protection of importance for national security, particularly the protection of critical infrastructures.

The homeland security system will be formed of the central governmental bodies competent for defence activities, interior and foreign affairs, civil protection, finances and administration of justice, including the bodies from their scope of activities, and bodies of the security-intelligence system. Public and private companies, in the first place those from private protection sector, along with citizens and civil society organisations, will join the homeland security system.

Central governmental bodies with critical infrastructures in their scope of work, including other bodies from their scope of work, participate in the process of managing security risks.

The central body of the homeland security system is the National Security Council that will take into consideration the risks and issues form the scope of work of the governmental bodies related to national security. The Council will enact guidelines, decisions and conclusions on the manners of protection and realisation of the national interests and strategic goals.

The Coordination of the Homeland Security System will be formed to coordinate the operation of the homeland security system. It will take care of the implementation of the decisions, conclusions and guidelines of the National Security Council. The coordination will launch and coordinate development of the National Security Strategy or update the existing strategic documents.

The National Security Council will also regularly review reports on the state of risk and threats to national security and other strategic and planning documents and give recommendations to competent governmental bodies for the purpose of harmonisation the development of capabilities and operation.

In the case of emergencies and state of crisis, the Coordination of Homeland Security System will propose the Government and the President of the Republic of Croatia adequate response methods and operationally coordinate state bodies involved in the operational crisis response.

Specialised programmes of education and training will be developed for the requirements of the homeland security system. In that regard, employees of the governmental bodies, administration bodies, local and regional self-government, and public and private sector whose line of business is important for homeland security will take part in given programmes.

The homeland security system will be regulated with a special law.

Development and sustainment of strong and active defence

The Republic of Croatia has developed and maintained defence capabilities at appropriate readiness level for the purpose of timely reaction to changing circumstances and challenges from international environment. Croatian Armed Forces have been developing capabilities of the conduct of combat operations within defence of their own territory on land, at sea and in the air as well as in cyber space, independently or in cooperation with allies, till activation of the collective defence mechanism. The missions of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, as the basic proponent of the defence function, are defence of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Croatia and defence of allies, contribution to international security and support to civilian institutions. Membership of the Republic of Croatia in NATO ensures a convincing guarantee of collective defence as an important factor of deterrence and defence of the population, territory and national sovereignty.

The control and protection of the air space will be carried out by the use of national capabilities integrated with the appropriate allied system. The decision about continuation of building a capability of the control and protection of the air space of the Republic of Croatia will be enacted by the end of 2017.

The control and protection of the sovereign rights and interests of the Republic of Croatia at sea will be implemented through the coordinated action of all maritime defence actors in order for the control, protection and preservation of the sea to be insured. National capabilities will be upgraded by mutual exchange of data on situation at the Adriatic Sea, and in cooperation with the NATO and EU bodies.

For the purpose of implementing missions from the NATO Readiness Action Plan or rather in the case of deteriorated security situation, in order to participate in the operations of collective defence, appropriate military and civilian capabilities will be developed aimed at deterrence and defence and as contribution to credibility of the allied solidarity and cohesion of NATO.

Insufficient and critical specialities that are not cost-effective for development in the standing organisational structure of the Croatian Armed Forces, will be manned with reserve corps that should provide for building of the peacetime establishment of the Croatian Armed Forces for requirements of the national defence and to upgrade the efficiency of our operations abroad. In order to ensure the augmentation of the forces, through long-term development and manning of the reserve corps an appropriate model of military training will be selected.

In addition to the existing programme of voluntary military training, programmes of training and activities will be introduced that will develop security culture of the wider population, especially with young people, and strengthen the awareness that security and participation in defence are the right and obligation of each national and the entire community.

As a reliable and responsible ally, the Republic of Croatia will provide a balance between national requirements and allied obligations, in conformity with real possibilities of the economy and national

requirements and priorities. The planning of the defence capabilities development will be harmonised with appropriate processes in NATO and in cooperation with the Allies.

The funds for defence will be gradually increased towards targeted 2% GDP, taking into consideration the economic and fiscal possibilities of the Republic of Croatia. The importance of defence will be taken into account, but also the manners in which defence directly or indirectly contributes to the economy of the Republic of Croatia. This increase will enable the sustainment of the existing and development of the new capabilities.

The Republic of Croatia will contribute to efforts of the international organisations oriented towards strengthening of international security and stability through participation in international missions and crisis response operations. In activities of stabilization and reconstruction of the crisis stricken areas in foreign countries, civilian experts from private sector, academic community and civil society will also take part.

The Republic of Croatia will actively contribute to the missions and operations within the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union and will also take part in the Sharing & Pooling Initiative and in projects of the European Defence Agency. That participation will be complemented with efforts of the defence capabilities within NATO. Membership in the European Union will be used for better use of the structural and investment funds to build capabilities for dual civilian-military use.

Particular emphasis will be placed on establishing a mechanism of effective, safe, unobstructed and reliable exchange of information and on giving incentive to possibilities of the economic and academic sector in order to use all national potentials aimed to develop necessary defence capabilities. This will enable access to the latest achievements in a wide range of research areas, modern technologies and to methods and techniques of the scientific-research work that will help increasing the scientific and technological level of the defence industry and the society as a whole. Integral parts of these efforts represent the overcoming of dependence on military equipment of Eastern origin and that will be achieved by increased national engagement and international cooperation.

Operational engagement in the country, particularly abroad, requires a safe, complete, unhindered and efficient use of the information and communication systems and that demands a robust, efficient and heavy-duty cyber infrastructure. It is necessary to provide and improve the existing exchange and sharing of information, experiences and assessment of threats and risks among national participants, other states and international organisations.

National capabilities of fighting and defence against hybrid operations will be developed and those are implemented by states, organisations or individuals in a wider spectrum (diplomatic-political, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence and legal). The cooperation will be improved through existing frameworks for building resilience against hybrid threats in NATO and European Union.

Comprehensive national response should, through the homeland security system, provide for timely recognizing of hybrid activities, detect their origins, and give support to quick assessment of the situation and effective process of decision making. Resilience against hybrid threats will be built as well as capability and readiness for response given by the society and state that will use all nationally available instruments for defence.

The Croatian Armed Forces will provide support to civilian institutions in protection and saving people and material assets in the event of accidents, fires and flood when available capabilities of the task oriented organisations will not suffice.

Established continued democratic and civil monitoring of the Croatian Armed Forces will be constantly upgraded according to national requirements and the best democratic standards.

B. Well-being and prosperity of citizens

Eco Croatia and the development of strong and sustainable economy

The Republic of Croatia abounds in areas where natural environment has been preserved and that are an invaluable potential for development and prosperity. Croatian forests and rivers, sources of drinking water, fertile soil, swamps and lakes, the sea and numerous islands abound in a variety of life, in addition to numerous endemic species. In many areas centuries old styles of life have been preserved that have provided a harmonious relation with nature and environment and sustainable use of natural resources and sources. Such styles of life have resulted in big cultural variety, rich builder's heritage and numerous folk customs that have managed to preserve themselves as ethnical, cultural and regional heritage in conditions of modern manner of living. Nowadays, all those conditions and resources are real abundance in a modern, unified world in which the trends of commercialisation and repressing diversity have been generally present.

The Republic of Croatia will include its ecological heritage in sustainable circular economy and production of healthy food and exploiting the sources of drinking water. Tourism will continue to foster ecological and cultural heritage and thus additionally use the possibilities of ecological potentials and encourage the revival of Croatian villages and smaller towns.

Joint actions of the governmental bodies and bodies of local and regional self-government and business entities will realize a balance between demands for betterment of the quality of life, economic and social well-being and demands for preserving environment as natural resources. Measures and procedures for strengthening resilience of the Republic of Croatia to climate changes will be developed.

Legislation will be improved and measures carried out that will enable integration of the principle of sustainable development in creation and implementation of public policies and projects, or rather enacting strategic, developmental and investment decisions that affect the environment, taking into consideration climate changes in order to strengthen the power of resistance.

Through policies and stimulating measures for industrial production and food production the Republic of Croatia will create conditions for dislocations of particular industrial activities from major industrial centres towards underdeveloped and scarcely populated areas. This will have a positive effect on demographic revitalization and more proportional economic development and stimulus for sustainment and development of agriculture.

Sustainable development of the countryside and rural area will be ensured by stimulating investments in development projects. Competitiveness of the Croatian agriculture will be strengthened through stimulation of manufacture and capital investments and investments in modern technologies and the agricultural field know-how.

Regional development will contribute to economic and general social development of the Republic of Croatia. Regional development will be founded on continuous learning and transfer of knowledge, participation in decision making, resilience and sustainability, activation of local developmental potentials, culture of systematic public management and social sensitivity. Special measures of balanced regional development, especially in demography and economy-wise weakened areas, will be undertaken and developed.

Strong, competitive and flexible economy is a pre-requirement of the protection of national interests and realisation of the strategic goals of the Republic of Croatia. Stable financial system and economic growth, in addition to international trade, build up internal stability, and improve cooperation with other states in neighbourhood and in the world and advance the international position of the Republic of Croatia.

The growth of the economy increases financial capability for achieving strategic goals and prevents the emergence of negative phenomena and trends in society. On the other hand, national security creates preconditions for sustainable and growing economy and, in general, for stable functioning of the national economy.

Better management of resources and exploiting opportunities for growth and development in Croatian society is important at all levels – both in private and state sector. With continuous and systematic analysis it is necessary to identify the creators of added value in all national economy domains, but also to recognise and to eliminate factors negatively effecting Croatian economy.

Development and protection of the entire electronic communication infrastructure as well as the protection of the national radio-frequency spectrum, all being limited national goods, are important for national economy but also for functioning of emergency services in protection of the citizens' security, particularly in crisis situations.

It is necessary to provide incentive with measures of selective fiscal policy to branches of economy and to trading companies which have had proven influence on the creation of added value, or rather have had successful business models and business policy.

The state will be an example of an efficient system that will facilitate and support the functioning and development of the economy. Activating unused potential will contribute to increasing employment and stopping negative demographic and migration trends. Competent state authorities will develop programmes for more competitive economy, stimulating investment climate and easier conditions of doing business for entrepreneurs and investors. The state will develop partner and advising relation towards entrepreneurs.

Knowledge and technology are the driving forces and cornerstones of the global economy. Croatian educational system will be synchronised with the requirements and expectations of the economy and work force will be provided, ready for economic competition.

The competitiveness of economy depends on permanent technological improvements. Accepting new knowledge, adoption and development of new technologies and innovation will be boosted by investments in excellence in education and science. The degree of investments in research and development will be increased, innovations will be stimulated, the use of new and digital technologies in business facilitated and the development of business networks and connections accelerated. The strengthening of the innovation infrastructure will provide for sustainable development, employment growth and social inclusion.

In order to achieve a balanced territorial development of the Republic of Croatia, it is necessary to respect the prerequisites and circumstances that in certain counties favour the development of certain economic branches and to define and regionally implement selective economic and fiscal policies. Infrastructural, traffic and electronic communications links, as well as the availability of different energy sources, must be provided in order for the economic development to be stimulated in all parts of the Republic of Croatia. Economic policies will define economic branches and capacities of particular importance for national security and the production of vital goods, and such production will be encouraged in less developed areas and those areas threatened by accelerated depopulation due to lack of jobs or degradation of agriculture.

The dependence of the power-supply system on importation has been a permanent threat to efficient and continuous functioning of economy. Possible delays in deliveries of the energy sources or big large-scale price oscillations that might occur as a consequence of particular political events or circumstances that suppliers of energy sources find themselves in, have to be substituted by alternative short-term procurement. The Republic of Croatia will create new ways and channels of energy supply from alternative suppliers, increase energy sources, ensure new storage capacities, and further develop the

energy infrastructure independently, in cooperation with the private sector and international partners. It is necessary to intensify research of the national power-supply sources and to entrust the rational exploitation to societies predominantly owned by Croatian companies. It is necessary to change the regulatory, tax and institutional framework in order for the investments in renewable sources of energy to be increased. A normative and institutional system will be established to analyse the safety and quality of energy supply for all energy products and to develop action plans and measures in case of incidents.

The building of infrastructure will continue with the aim to construct infrastructure for upgrading traffic and communication connections and supply of power sources and drinking water in all areas of the Republic of Croatia. Incentive to revival of the uninhabited areas of the Republic of Croatia will be also secured through systematic support to ecologically sustained production and use of the preserved environment, land and waters.

Sea, submarine area and seabed are of particular importance for the economic development of the Republic of Croatia, so attention should be focused on the sustainable management and protection of the riches in the maritime areas over which the Republic of Croatia exercises sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction. Given the geomorphological features of the Adriatic as a semi-enclosed sea basin, the Republic of Croatia will independently and in cooperation with other countries, protect the Adriatic Sea and develop mechanisms of prediction and alertness in using and protecting against ecological and safety consequences. For the purpose of using available economic potentials of the Mediterranean, traffic connections will be advanced and critical infrastructure expanded. Policies and strategies of the economic development and scientific-research activities that are financed and stimulated by the state will be directed towards better exploiting of the Croatian geopolitical position of the Adriatic and Mediterranean country. New knowledge and technologies in the production of equipment and goods connected with maritime orientation and production of energy and food is a comparative advantage of the Croatian Mediterranean position providing numerous development possibilities that have not been sufficiently exploited thus far. Projects within the *Three Seas Initiative*, endorsed by the interests of the allies, will multiply the effects for Croatian economy.

The strengthening of the economic cooperation of the Republic of Croatia with states in the immediate environment contributes to strengthening of the mutual stability of those states and setting conditions for development of commercial cooperation will continue to be created. Likewise, through the development of mutual economic cooperation, economic progress of the Croatian people living in other countries will be particularly stimulated.

By investment in defence technologies and dual-use products and utilisation of the base of manufacturers in this specific industrial segment, the Republic of Croatia will invest in technologies and production capacities that are important for sustaining and stimulating competitiveness.

Opportunities available from the NATO and the EU economic segment will be used for the purpose of inclusion of appropriate national economic subjects in international procedures of public procurement.

Demographic renewal and revitalisation of the Croatian society

Security, existence and prosperity of the Republic of Croatia considerably depend on the manner human potentials will be preserved and developed in the future, the population number increased and uniform population density ensured.

Negative demographic trends, unbalanced regional development of the Republic of Croatia, the decrease and ageing of population have become an indirect limitating factor of the sustainability of the economic, regional and overall development of the Republic of Croatia.

These trends have also influenced the diminished capability of effective response to challenges and threats that jeopardise the existence and security of the Republic of Croatia.

Population policy will be implemented taking into consideration demographic, socio-economic, traditional and other specific features of the population of the Republic of Croatia. Given the negative demographic trends, the population policy, the policy of stimulating proportional settlement of the population, and immigration policy harmonised with requirements of the labour market will be implemented. Due to complexity and interdependence of multiple factors that affect demographic trends, efficient population policy requires comprehensive long-term approach and control, coordination and monitoring results of implementing policy in various spheres that may affect demographic trends.

Population policy will be carried out through management of the system of measures from the field of social, health, economic, housing, educational, legal, financial, tax and other policies aimed to create conditions for demographic renewal. It will be based on principles of the freedom of choice, free and responsible parenting and gender equality.

Long-term stable system of social and material rights oriented towards protection and rights of the children, reinforcing families and family values, with particular emphasis on harmonisation of the work and family life will have influence on increased level of the standard of living of the young families. Ensuring appropriate level of the standard of living of the families with children is one of the preconditions for realisation of the demographic growth.

Since for the population policy to be effective is necessary to ensure support by the entire society, along with a series of population and other measures an appropriate communication strategy is required as well.

The system of measures that will be directed towards establishing objective expert criteria for employment and career advancement, particularly in governmental and public services and administrative bodies of the units of local and regional self-government, rendering possible lifelong development of the human potentials, career advancement according to capabilities and rewarding excellence will be within support provided for creating prospects of social equality and possibilities for development of the young people and stopping of emigration.

In the process of enacting plans and guidelines of the economic development particular attention will be given to measures that will stop depopulation of parts of the territory and disproportional regional development.

In addition to comprehensive population policy, a series of measures will be undertaken from the field of health and social care to overcome negative effects of the population ageing.

Croatian diaspora will be included in the social life of the Republic of Croatia in order for their return to be encouraged while the existing diaspora’s potential more easily and to an extent possible integrated into the economic and social development of the Republic of Croatia.

Development of citizen-friendly public administration and strategic communication

Providing security to the citizens of the Republic of Croatia and ensuring their well-being directly depends also on efficient public administration and public services. Citizens and public evaluate the quality of realisation of their rights and requirements according to the quality of activities of the state and public administration and then indirectly develop the sense of security and overall quality of life. For realisation of this goal important role pertains to efficient judicial system, the system of administration at all levels, availability and social care services, science and education.

Reactions of competent state bodies to breaches of the law and penalizing of the illegal procedures have a strong general preventive effect, thus contributing to the protection of fundamental constitutional values, as well as human and citizens' rights.

Judicial system will adapt to new manifestations of law endangerment that will provide favourable conditions for the overall social development of the Republic of Croatia. The Republic of Croatia will take part in efforts of the international community aimed to establish legal framework for processing new

forms of crimes. Particular attention will be dedicated to cooperation in the area of application of adopted international conventions, agreements and other international acts.

Strengthening of the institutional capability and cooperation of the competent regulatory agencies, public administration bodies and legal entities with public authorities will provide for sustainment of the financial stability of the state, unhindered operation of the systems for carrying out of cashless and cash payment transactions and distribution of cash as well as effective combatting of money laundering and forgery.

Administrative system will undertake permanent efforts aimed to modernise administrative services and functions that will create an environment suitable for development of the economy, science, overall social life and particularly for individual development of citizens. In order to attain these goals, state and public administration will continue to introduce modern technologies in their work. This will simplify all administrative procedures and make them more available to citizens and legal entities.

The Republic of Croatia will make additional efforts and provide a normative framework and resources for extensive digitalisation of the state and public administration, public facilities and services and general availability of the top quality internet to all citizens and economic factors. That will provide for a decisive breakthrough towards implementation of the European Union's plans on general availability of the newest generation to all citizens and economy. Implementation of the digitalization will result in upgraded quality of the public services and facilities of the public authorities that will directly influence the citizens' quality of life and efficiency of the state at all levels.

With digitalisation of all public and state services the economy of the Republic of Croatia will be provided with a powerful incentive for accelerated development while the development and use of new technologies will be facilitated, and better international inclusion and interconnection of the economy, public services, scientific community, institutions and individuals active in culture, organization of the civil society and each individual will be induced.

The Republic of Croatia will develop measures of strengthening resistance of information and communication systems in cyberspace as well as of reducing negative consequences of their endangering or incapacitation. The emphasis will be on the key systems for normal functioning of the state institutions, storage, transmission and exchange of the classified and personal data of the citizens.

Regulations will establish the manners of forming and safekeeping data bases of importance for national security and citizens' security and will also regulate the infrastructure for safe-keeping, as well as measures for oversight and control of the legality of accessing those data bases.

Integral health care system, available to citizens of the Republic of Croatia, will continue to develop the measures of prevention and building capabilities in the field of public health protection oriented towards preventing contagious and mass non-contagious diseases. Dependence on industrial production and mass distribution of the food products increases the risk of poisoning due to mistake or abuse. The protection of citizens against these threats posed to health, along with the quality food and drinking water control, is one of the priorities in the field of security and health.

Sustainability and stability of the economy will be realised concurrently with just distribution of the social opportunities and protection of the environment. With active measures of protection of the most endangered parts of the population, the Republic of Croatia will reduce social inequalities and attain social peace.

The introduction of fundamental changes in the educational system will improve the discovery and development of potential of young people as well as the development of knowledge and skills with particular emphasis on information, digital and technological literacy, and harmonisation with the requirements of the labour force market. Through activation of young persons’ potentials, the educational

system will build individuals who are able to develop a society and adjust to changes. The concept of life-long education will be promoted as a necessity and an educational system model.

Within educational reforms particular care will be taken of natural, technical and interdisciplinary areas that have been neglected so far.

In conformity with requirements of the labour force market and economic development of the country, appropriate immigration policy will be planned and integration potential of the society will be increased.

By strengthening integrity, responsibility and transparency of the public authorities, the Republic of Croatia will fight corruption in public affairs and increase the confidence of citizens in state institutions. Anticorruption mechanisms will be strengthened, cooperation and capabilities of the public authorities will be fostered and support provided to the role of citizens, civil society and media in detecting and fighting corruption.

The Republic of Croatia will develop and apply the model of strategic communication that will render accessible and comprehensible national interests and strategic goals defined by this Strategy. Realising strategic goals and attaining a desired level of protection of national interests is possible only in conditions when the entire public and citizens understand these interests and goals and manners of their realisation. Communication with the most general public and possibility of receiving and understanding opinion of the public and citizens about the processes of implementation of the Strategy is crucial for successful management of implementation of this Strategy. Through communication strategy and procedures, the public and citizens will get a possibility of participation in the creation of security at all levels, thus realising and deepening the partnership for security.

Media are one of the central factors of the public and their free and responsible action has an important role in a two-way communication and support of fundamental values that a democratic system rests on. In order for a favourable atmosphere in society – characterised by tolerance, dialogue and appreciation and absence of extremism, hate speech, exclusiveness and violence – to be created, the responsibility lies on all factors taking part and sharing messages in media space. By fostering media freedoms, the Republic of Croatia will provide conditions for free development of the public, commercial and non-commercial media.

C. National identity, international reputation and influence of the Republic of Croatia

Protection, strengthening and promotion of the highest constitutional and Croatian national identity values

Croatian national and cultural identity is a foundation of the Croatian state and society. Particular care will be given to the preservation of the Croatian language as the most important element of the Croatian national identity. The cultural and national identity of national minorities is an integral part of the overall identity of the Republic of Croatia.

Croatian national identity is founded on constitutional values that promote freedoms, rights, equality and favourable social climate that includes tolerance, equality before the law, equality of opportunities for personal realisation, protection of human dignity, general and minority rights, appreciation of similarities and differences, protection of vulnerable groups and it excludes all forms of discrimination.

The Republic of Croatia, as European, and in particular a Mediterranean and Central European state, shares with other European states common Judeo-Christian identity origins and other common civilisation values to which it contributes with its historical heritage.

Education has one of the most important roles in preserving Croatian national identity and will continue to develop curricula that adequately address Croatian historical, cultural, linguistic, architectural, natural and other legacy and heritage. Croatian national and cultural identity will be perceived in the context of

the European community of peoples, languages, history, traditions and identities, enabling citizens to communicate on equal terms in such a community. Appropriate efforts will be devoted to protect the identities of minority groups living in the Republic of Croatia.

The Republic of Croatia, as a party to international instruments regulating the promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms guidelines of which are integrated into the national legislation, will strongly stimulate and foster organisations that could significantly improve the realisation of human rights and freedoms as well as protect and develop the national identity. Free media are an important prerequisite for the protection and promotion of Croatian national identity.

The Republic of Croatia will maintain a high level of respect and exercise of the national as well as national minority rights.

Fostering scientifically established truth about the Homeland War, material and non-material cultural heritage, natural heritage and Croatian language and its customs, contributes to international recognisability and reputation of the Republic of Croatia worldwide.

The Homeland War provided for the protection of universal values unifying all components of Croatian society and overcoming ideological divisions thus constituting a community of free and equal persons.

The Republic of Croatia will systematically oppose defamatory attempts against the Croatian people and the Republic of Croatia, through science-based truth about the Homeland War and events from Croatian history, including the history of relations with other nations and states.

The preservation of the values of the Homeland War, protection of the Croatian war veterans, disabled persona, families of the killed and missing participants of the Homeland War and their status in the society, are key requirements for preserving dignity of the Homeland War and evaluation of its importance for the creation of the Croatian state and building of the Croatian society.

The Republic of Croatia will make additional efforts to locate and identify persons missing during the Homeland War. Judicial bodies and bodies of criminal prosecution will continue to prosecute perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The Republic of Croatia will work with particular attention on the protection of the Croatian language and affirmation of the national symbols that will unify citizens, cherishing the memory of important events from Croatian past and Homeland War and paying tribute to all victims who sacrificed their lives and health for Croatian freedom and statehood. National holidays and important anniversaries from Croatian history, and in particular of the important events from the Homeland War, will be marked with particular reverence and pride, expressing dignity and respect to people of merit for Croatian freedom.

The Day of Remembrance of the victims of Vukovar and Škabrnja in consciousness of our citizens has gradually developed into paying tribute and cherishing memory of all victims fallen for Croatia. The Republic of Croatia will regulate by special law the marking of the Day of Remembrance of all victims fallen for Croatia, with appropriate symbols and the manners of marking.

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian police are an integral part of the national identity and Croatian history and will preserve the traditions of the Homeland War and Croatian war veterans. Through the implementation of its tasks, it will promote and nurture excellence and fellowship with its citizens.

It will persevere in informing citizens of the fundamental values, fostering public discussions on social issues, cooperation of the public institutions, media and civil society and pluralism. Proactive public activities will prevent spreading of hatred, radical and extremist ideas and promote the protection of human rights and freedoms.

Building international reputation and influence of the Republic of Croatia

The Republic of Croatia fosters peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, international cooperation and implementation and respect of international law in international relations. In conformity with its possibilities it contributes to operations of the multilateral organisations and integrations it is a member of, and in particular the United Nations, NATO, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

The Republic of Croatia is committed to the concept of a secure, prosperous, social and strong European Union as a community of equal states that share common civilization values, respect of human rights and freedoms, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law.

For the Republic of Croatia NATO is a guarantee of peace, stability and security.

Besides the membership in the European Union, Trans-Atlantic cooperation and alliance with the United States of America will continue to be one of the pillars of the Croatian foreign and security policy. The Republic of Croatia, as a relatively small state according to the number of citizens and its GDP, will build its international reputation and influence within the European Union with a series of measures and public policies and will work together with other partners to meet common goals.

By using its diplomacy, economy, historical and cultural heritage, the scientific and academic community in international environment, primarily in its immediate neighbourhood, and in Europe and in the world, the Republic of Croatia will develop the reputation of a safe state to live and do business in. Members of other states will develop a positive view of Croatia and its citizens with whom they share similar values and see it as a country which is desirable to visit for tourism and business, education or for taking up permanent residence.

The development of the reputation and influence of the Republic of Croatia will be supported by neighbourly cooperation and partnerships with other states in joint projects that reinforce the security protection against threats and its international position.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to actively provide humanitarian and developmental assistance to other states, especially in the state of crisis, within bilateral or multilateral cooperation.

Within the bounds of financial possibilities, granting scholarships to part of the students from other states will be supported. Upon completion of education in the Republic of Croatia they will be a bridge of cooperation and understanding among nations, and part of them will remain to live permanently in the Republic of Croatia.

The Republic of Croatia will use the successes of it scientists and artists as well as its excellent sporting potentials and the talent and success of its sportsmen and clubs to spread the reputation of the nation that has achieved remarkable results worldwide.

By participating in international missions and operations abroad, the Republic of Croatia will promote its reputation and influence of a state that firmly contributes to international peace and order.

Programmes of the Croatian Radiotelevision for foreign countries will be used more intensively to advance Croatian culture, historical and architecture heritage, way of life, preserved natural environment and numerous business opportunities.

Potentials offered by Croatian public health care and health resort-therapeutical capacities will enjoy support and care of the governmental bodies, as an important instrument of reputation enhancement towards other states, but also an important potential of the economy that can trace new markets.

The security and stability of its immediate environment and neighbourhood is of decisive importance for the national security of the Republic of Croatia. The Republic of Croatia will use its membership in

NATO and the European Union to reinforce its international position and to increase its influence on regional and global security circumstances, especially when it comes to its southeastern neighbourhood.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to promote alliances and partnerships, including the *Three Seas Initiative*, connecting North and Southeast and to strengthen its Central European, Danube-Basin and Adriatic dimension and cooperation with states which can become the driving force of strengthening and preserving the European project.

The Republic of Croatia will, through its diplomacy, advance the stated partnerships and alliances, attract foreign investments and help Croatian exporters to place goods and services on foreign markets.

The Republic of Croatia will evaluate its own geopolitical and geographical position as a state that has been strengthening its own energy supply security and stability of supply, and which has been contributing to the energy diversification and to the security of its immediate neighbourhood and the wider European area. Diversification of the oil and gas sources will be ensured and in this process the Republic of Croatia will become an energy link between Southeast, Central and Northern Europe, and further towards Asia.

The Republic of Croatia will enhance its geostrategic and traffic position through full integration into European traffic routes, via traffic connection on Adriatic-Ionian route and participating in other initiatives of international traffic connection.

The Republic of Croatia will seek to resolve the existing disputes regarding demarcation through direct negotiations. Should such negotiations don't result in the dispute resolving, it would be acceptable for the Republic of Croatia that such case is relinquished to jurisdiction of a international legislative body in the procedure in which the rules of the international law would be applied.

In the development of bilateral relations with particular states, the Republic of Croatia will take into account any defamatory treatment towards the Republic of Croatia, according to which it will be guided when considering the further development of mutual relations.

Particular attention will be dedicated to preservation of the minority groups and cooperation to solving joint issues.

For the Republic of Croatia, the area of Southeast Europe is of strategic importance and interest and priority in the security sense. In spite of the reform and democratisation progress achieved and the progress of the individual states, the continuation of the trends of instability, insecurity, tension and external destabilising impacts in this area is reflected in the overall regional stability and security of the wider European area. The Republic of Croatia places an emphasis on investing in the stability of the southeastern neighbourhood, seeing Euro-Atlantic integration and implementation of reforms as key factors and instruments for achieving stability and security, strengthening and building resistance of neighbouring states to internal and external challenges, and their economic modernisation and progress. The Republic of Croatia will therefore systematically act to support democratic and stabilisation processes and the accession of the states of Southeast Europe to Euro-Atlantic integrations, as well as renewal of trust and dialogue engagement.

The Republic of Croatia remains committed to the Euro-Atlantic perspective and future of Southeast European countries and strongly supports the enlargement process of the European Union and NATO. The Republic of Croatia is determined to provide further support and encouragement in their Euro-Atlantic integration process and reform processes in general, using its experience and knowledge from the accession processes that it will offer to these countries, including assistance in their capabilities building and strengthening in order for them to be capable of independent response to security challenges and threats. At the same time, it will stress the need for all conditions for membership to be met and for the development of democratic institutions, all being an investment in the transformation of society and successful democratic transition.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to build regional and global partnerships in line with the development of the political and security situation and its own interests.

D. Croats outside the Republic of Croatia

Ensuring existence, protection of identity and political subjectivity of the Croatian people, as constitutive in Bosnia and Herzegovina, protection and support to Croats in other states and diaspora

For centuries, parts of the Croatian people have resided in states of the Central and Southeast Europe as national minorities whereas Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are domicile, constitutive and constitutional nation. Their position has been changing through centuries, depending on political, social and circumstances of the state.

After the establishment of peace in 1995 and signing of the Dayton Peace Accord that established the constitutional-legal framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croats were reaffirmed as a constitutive people. In the period after 1995, and particularly after 2000, gradual changes in the electoral legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina took place leading to the encroachment of constitutionality, sovereignty and equality of Croats.

The Republic of Croatia is determined to fulfil its constitutional obligation of taking special care for the Croatian people as well as commitments arising from international agreements and will use all diplomatic, political, economic, educational, communication and other available mechanisms to protect their constitutional status, and equal and sovereign position. Ensuring the equality of the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as established by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a catalyst for building the functional and internally stable Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thus for the security and stability of the European area.

The Republic of Croatia will firmly advocate the rights of the Croatian people as constitutional and equal to all other constitutive peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will give its support so that decisions about future status of Bosnia and Herzegovina reaffirm the status of Croats as a constitutive and equal people.

The Republic of Croatia will advocate the need of accelerated Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. With knowledge and experience gathered during accession processes it will help Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement reforms and to meet criteria for accessing these integrations.

In bilateral relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a state of three constitutive peoples, the Republic of Croatia fully respects its statehood, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Republic of Croatia will continue to support infrastructural, health, scientific, educational and cultural projects important for the survival and improved position of the Croatian people. It will give incentive to large-scale investments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and particularly in those regions and projects that will support the existence and protect the national identity as well as the political subjectivity of the Croatian people, using different forms of European regional and cross-border cooperation.

The Republic of Croatia deems of key importance for the Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be entitled to education and public media in the Croatian language, to have right to free decision making in political life and the right of choosing legitimate political representatives in the representative bodies of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Republic of Croatia will promote activities directed to promoting coexistence and interreligious dialogue and cultural diversity.

The position and existence of Croats as national minority in other states of the Central and Southeast Europe depends on the degree of development of the political system and democratic institutions in those states. The Republic of Croatia will continue to take care of their position and to support all activities related to the protection of their national identity.

Croatian national minority living in the states where their minority rights are not fully protected enjoys particular attention and concern of the Republic of Croatia. The Republic of Croatia will ensure the highest standards of protection of all national minorities, and thus of Croatian, with its bilateral relations with these countries, as well as membership and influence within the European Union, NATO, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

Position of the Croatian national minority and Croatian diaspora communities throughout the world will be strengthened through diplomatic-political and economic cooperation together with the cooperation in the field of culture and science which by their good integration can be the catalysts of protection and promotion of Euro-Atlantic values, especially tolerance and pluralism, and thus be a valuable stakeholder in strengthening the security dimension and stability of the communities which they live in.

The Republic of Croatia will, together with governments of those states, support educational programmes in the Croatian language, support media and media programmes in the Croatian language and to financially support students, members of the Croatian national minority who have received education in the Republic of Croatia. In the time to come, they will be proponents of the preservation of the national identity, language, culture and the overall position of the Croatian diaspora worldwide.

V. Conclusion

The National Security Strategy, starting from highest constitutional values, geostrategic and geopolitical position of the Republic of Croatia, national interests and evaluation of the security threats, risks and challenges the Republic of Croatia has been faced with and those it might be faced with in a foreseeable future, has set strategic goals.

The National Security Strategy describes instruments and mechanisms at disposal to the Republic of Croatia for the development, protection and realisation of national interests, independently and in cooperation with allies and partners in the areas of common interest.

The assessment of threats suggests a very low probability of conventional military threat that could jeopardise the national security of the Republic of Croatia. The risks for national security of the Republic of Croatia are identified in different ways – in organised and economic crime, corruption, illegal state border crossings, terrorism, violent behaviour and extremism, climate change, deterioration of basic human rights and freedoms, natural and man-made accidents and disasters, endangering critical infrastructure and unfavourable demographic trend.

At the same time, numerous challenges for the Republic of Croatia offer opportunities for the realisation and protection of national interests and attaining strategic goals and provide possibilities for balanced and sustainable development of the state and society.

Primarily, this will be realised through the system of homeland security, thus implementing the partnership for security on the principles of respecting human rights and freedoms, transparency, solidarity, tolerance and dialogue.

The Republic of Croatia will develop a modern, comprehensive, rational and efficient homeland security system.

Such results could hardly be achieved solely through activities of the governmental bodies and institutions that are in charge and responsible for national security without understanding, support and activities of the wider public and without continued parliamentary, expert and civil monitoring.

For the purpose of successful implementation and realisation of this Strategy, all governmental bodies are obligated to enact strategic and other documents that will, within the framework of their jurisdiction, establish concrete goals, measures, procedures and capabilities of protecting national security. The security system will be developed and advanced in that way and it will guarantee to all the citizens that

the Republic of Croatia can, at any moment, rapidly, firmly and strongly respond to any threat, risk and challenge to national security.

This is viable only by increasing the responsibility of all participants of the national security in continued assessment of the threats and risks in their field of operation, planning and undertaking necessary actions and operations in managing and deterring threats and risks, as well as harmonised and rational use of all available resources.

The enactment of this Strategy will provide for realisation of the vision of a democratic, safe, prosperous, influential and highly respected state with free and safe citizens and protected national identity.

Once a year, the Government of the Republic of Croatia will inform the Croatian Parliament about the implementation of the National Security Strategy.