State Defence Concept

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The goal of the State Defence Concept is to define the guidelines for strengthening and improving the defence system in accordance with Latvia's geopolitical situation and Latvia's obligations to the collective security of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (hereinafter – NATO), of which Latvia is preparing to become a full member in the middle of 2004. The Concept determines the basic strategic principles that will guide the implementation of the tasks associated with state defence and is the basis for planning the development of the National Armed Forces (hereinafter – NAF).

The State Defence Concept is formulated on the basis of Analysis of Endangerment to the State, the Military Risk Analysis and forecasted trends in the development of international security. The state's defence policy and strategy have been formulated to avert possible threats. The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia [Satversme], the National Security Concept and Foreign Policy Concept and other regulations adopted by the Republic of Latvia determine principles, goals, tasks and legal mechanisms of state defence.

Latvia's regulations and action plans related to state defence are up-dated in accordance with the basic principles of the State Defence Concept.

1. Introduction

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2. International Security Environment and Latvia

The security of Latvia is determined by its geopolitical and international situation, its internal security and economic situation, the educational and cultural potential of the state, the capabilities of the military and civil defence systems, the ecological situation and other important factors.

The security of Latvia is closely tied to international security. It is characterised by the transnational spread of asymmetric threats (international terrorism, ethnic conflicts, migration, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, etc.), the increasing possibility of their occurrence, as well as the limited ability of forecasting the time and place such threats might be carried out.

Since its founding, NATO has worked to promote peace in Europe on the basis of the common values of democracy and the respect for human rights. After the end of the Cold War, the Alliance has adapted to new circumstances and current security needs. The most important goal of NATO is to defend the freedom, security and stability of its member states, as well as to promote stability and peace in the world.

The fundamental basis of Latvia's defence is Latvia's membership in the NATO collective security and defence system. In becoming a member of the Alliance, Latvia's responsibility for strengthening common international security and the prevention and management of asymmetric threats will increase.

Closer co-operation between the European Union (hereinafter – EU) and the United States of America (hereinafter – the USA) is essential for Latvian security, as long as the functions of NATO and the EU are clearly separated and any overlap in functions is avoided. Co-operation between EU countries in the field of military security and defence must strengthen the growth of the military capabilities of European nations within the parameters of harmonised and balanced transatlantic co-operation.

The USA has an important role to play in the promotion of European security. The support of the United States of America in strengthening the independence and security of the Baltic States was a decisive factor. Therefore, bilateral co-operation with the USA will continue to be one of Latvia's most important priorities in defence policy.

In the context of the threat of terrorism, measures of a preventative nature for guaranteeing international peace and combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have become more important. It is important for Latvian security that no terrorists or terrorist organisations are allowed to be active on its territory.

Latvia supports international arms control measures, which, in light of current asymmetric threats, are important for European and world security. Latvia continues to strengthen its contribution to the European security dialogue and continues to actively participate in the arms control measures implemented by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which ensure the promotion of openness and trust between OSCE member states.

Regional co-operation promotes security and stability in Europe. The co-operation between the states of the Baltic Sea region has become a successful example of the promotion of regional security and defence.

Latvia's security is irrevocably bound to the common security of the Baltic States. Military co-operation between the Baltic States promotes not only their individual defence capabilities, but also their purposeful integration into European and NATO security and defence structures.

3. Basic Strategic Principles of State Defence

The basic task of state defence is to guarantee national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the security of population. Latvia's membership in NATO ensures the security and independence of the state. It is NATO's responsibility to defend its member states against any type of threat. Along with its membership in NATO, Latvia's responsibility for strengthening international peace, security and stability will increase as both Latvian and international security are indivisible.

Latvia's goal in the European Union is to participate in the promotion of democracy and prosperity in our country, in the Baltic region, and in other states as well. Participation in the EU increases national security and stability. The EU has become a strategic partner of NATO in the prevention of international conflict. The participation of the NAF in EU-led operations will promote co-operation, mutual trust and success in the prevention and management of

crises. It is important to avoid any overlapping of functions between NATO and the EU in this process.

The NAF units assigned for participation in international operations should be prepared for participation in both NATO- and EU-led operations.

Latvia's defence is based on several basic strategic principles: collective defence; professional armed forces; co-operation between society and the National Armed Forces; and international military co-operation.

3.1. Collective Defence

The goal of Latvia as one of the next members of the Alliance is to improve the military capabilities of the NAF and its readiness to participate in NATO/EU-led and other international operations. In the event of a threat to the state, the NAF must be able to ensure its military self-defence capabilities until support from NATO forces can be received.

Latvia's defence capabilities are being developed in accordance with NATO's capabilities development guidelines. The Prague summit declaration specifies the military capabilities fulfilment obligations of NATO member states. The development and improvement of military capabilities takes place in the following directions:

1. Command, control, communication and information system;
2. Development of military capabilities;
3. Defence against weapons of mass destruction; and
4. NAF deployment capabilities.

The interoperability of the NAF with NATO forces is a prerequisite for successful integration into the Alliance. This facilitates effective co-operation among the various types of forces and units in the armed forces of NATO member states.

In case of endangerment to the state, the NAF must be ready to take part in prevention and overcoming of the threat. Latvia must ensure support for foreign armed forces through the host nation support system. This system is utilised both during international military training exercises and in the case of state endangerment, including operations under Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and those out of Article 5, as well as in case of a natural disaster and the process of dealing with its consequences. The improvement of the host nation support system for foreign armed forces must be continued.

3.2. Professional Armed Forces

The use of mandatory military service within the NAF could finish till the end of 2006. The reasons for professionalisation of the NAF are the following:

1. Armed forces must meet the demands of the current security situation, which depends on the quality of the armed forces involved and not their quantity;
2. Public support for professional armed forces; and
3. Membership in NATO provides security guarantees to Latvia, while concurrently bearing an obligation to ensure the country's readiness for collective security within the scope of the alliance.

Along with the termination of mandatory military service:

1. NAF will achieve greater operational capabilities to participate in international operations;
2. NAF units will have a higher level of combat-readiness;
3. NAF will utilise modern weapons systems and combat equipment;

4. Financial resources will be used more effectively; and
5. NAF will establish small, but well prepared reserves.

While establishing and developing armed forces based upon professional military service, the issue of attracting personnel will be essential. The recruitment system must be developed to conform with current requirements: flexible, modern and competitive in the labour market.

In addition to the issue of recruitment, providing soldiers and their families with appropriate social guarantees is no less important. The NAF needs to pay special attention to ensure high quality training, modern armament and equipment.

As the professionalisation of the NAF takes place, the National Guard and the Youth Guard will have an irreplaceable role to play in providing a foundation for the selection of professional service soldiers. At the same time, the combat readiness and the quality of training of National Guard units will be raised. The personnel policy and professional development programmes of the National Guard are being established in conformity with current requirements for military capabilities, while preserving the link with society and the military reserve potential. Such an approach is the basis for the future of the National Guard.

3.3. Co-operation between the National Armed Forces and Society

The successful implementation of the tasks assigned to the NAF depends on society support and understanding regarding the role and functions of the defence system and the armed forces. Society's understanding of the state defence system, the NAF and its principles founds sustainable public support for national security and defence.

The armed forces provide support for the prevention, management and elimination of the consequences of national emergencies – take part in the prevention of natural and man-made catastrophes and the elimination of their consequences; the neutralisation of unexploded ammunition, and participate in search and rescue and environmental monitoring operations. In turn, society and civilian institutions provide support in the performance of military tasks – ensure civilian expertise, mobilisation resources or participation in national support measures, as well as the availability of materials and technical facilities for the performance of these tasks.

3.4. International Military Co-operation

3.4.1. Co-operation with NATO member states

Co-operation with NATO member states is an essential pre-condition for Latvia's successful integration into NATO. The most important areas of co-operation are the training and education of military personnel (cadets, instructors and officers), expert consultations regarding the development of the defence system, co-operation among armed forces units and their involvement in international exercises. Once a member of NATO, Latvia will retain existing international bilateral co-operation projects, thus continuing the development of the armed forces utilising Western experience. In addition, new areas are being assessed in which co-operation with NATO states will provide Latvia with an opportunity to effectively integrate into NATO.

3.4.2. Co-operation between the Baltic States

Co-operation between the armed forces of the Baltic States is a basic precondition of strengthening Latvia's security. Close and intensive co-operation ensures regional stability. At the same time, co-operation between the Baltic States promotes the development of their armed forces and mutual interoperability.

As they integrate into NATO, the Baltic States must continue to develop and improve common military projects, which ensure the effective use of limited resources and the improvement of

common military capabilities. On the basis of mutual agreement, Latvia will promote the development of common specialised units for the Baltic States in NATO.

3.4.3. Co-operation within the scope of European Union Security and Defence Policy

Latvia supports close co-operation between NATO and the EU. Latvia's goal in European security and defence policy is to promote stability and the strengthening of security in Europe, to strengthen the EU's crisis management capabilities and to contribute promotion of transatlantic co-operation. It is important that NATO and EU security and defence policies complement each other in order to ensure the efficient utilisation of resources and to prevent any overlapping of tasks.

3.4.4. Co-operation with the states of the Baltic Sea region and NATO partner countries

Co-operation among the states of the Baltic Sea region promotes stability and security. The enlargement of NATO and the EU provides the region with an opportunity to ensure its balanced and successful development, as well as its long-term security. Co-operation with NATO partner countries, including Russia, will promote trust, security, stability and openness in Europe. Membership in NATO will give Latvia the opportunity to participate and provide its contribution to the further development of this co-operation, by sharing its experience with CIS and South-eastern European states and facilitating the democratic reform process in partner countries.

4. Military Defence

Military defence is ensured by Latvia's National Armed Forces. The operational goals, tasks and development of the NAF are set in accordance with the Military Risk Analysis and the State Defence Concept. The Commander-in-Chief of the National Armed Forces is the President who chairs the National Security Council, the Military Council, recommends the Supreme Commander of the NAF to the Parliament [*Saeima*] for approval and performs other functions associated with state defence, which are specified in the Constitution [*Satversme*]. The Saeima approves the National Security Concept and the State Defence Concept, exercises parliamentary control over the National Armed Forces, adopts laws in the field of national security and implements other measures. The Cabinet of Ministers provides national institutions with the necessary funding, in instances specified by law proclaims extraordinary situations, a state of emergency and mobilisation, decides on the participation of NAF units in international operations and performs other functions.

4.1. Tasks and Development of the Ministry of Defence and the National Armed Forces

Tasks of the Ministry of Defence

The Ministry of Defence formulates defence policy and co-ordinates and supervises its implementation. The Ministry prepares proposals regarding the funding necessary for state defence and implements the tasks specified in other regulatory acts.

In the event of a national emergency, the Ministry of Defence, within the scope of its competence, participates in the prevention of threatening situations and manages the elimination of the resulting consequences. The Ministry of Defence promotes and ensures civil-military co-operation and co-ordinates with foreign armed forces the provision of host nation support by those state institutions and authorities involved.

Tasks and development priorities of the NAF

The NAF must ensure the implementation of the following tasks:

1. Defence of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inhabitants of Latvia against military aggression;

2. Combat readiness, ability to take part in international operations and sustainability of the NAF;

3. Continue modernisation of the NAF and increase the level of professional military training;

4. Effective command and control of the NAF; and

5. Co-operation with state civil institutions.

The NAF takes part in prevention and elimination of the consequences in case of state endangerment and fulfils other tasks specified in regulatory acts.

The development of the National Guard is one of the priorities of the NAF. The operational goal of the National Guard is to ensure the performance of support functions for the NAF and the state civil defence system by implementing the following tasks:

1. Ensure the protection of vitally important objects to national security; participate in the evacuation of civilians; co-ordinate co-operation with the State Border Guard and others.

2. Ensure the fulfilment of support functions for foreign armed forces crossing Latvia's territory or being deployed in Latvia in order to assist in the elimination of endangerment to the state.

3. Establish combat support and logistic units in the fields of transportation, civil-military co-operation, supply, engineering and air defence.

As it integrates into NATO, the following have been specified as NAF development priorities:

1. On the basis of NATO capability development guidelines: to modernise the command and control, armament, training, logistic and supply systems; improve the air defence, air-space observation and control systems; and to continue the development of NAF units and the ability to deploy them to the location of operations.

2. Continue to develop and look for opportunities for mutual co-operation with the other Baltic States in the development and improvement of the military capabilities necessary for collective defence.

3. Develop host nation support capabilities for foreign armed forces.

4.2. Structure of the National Armed Forces

The NAF consists of the Land Forces, which are based on an infantry brigade and the National Guard, the Naval Forces, the Air Forces, the Logistic Command, the Training Doctrine Command and the National Defence Academy.

During a war or a state of emergency, the Security Unit of the Bank of Latvia is included in the NAF, and, during war, the State Border Guard is included in the NAF structure.

The military capabilities demanded by the NAF in order to implement the tasks assigned to it, determine its structure, the State Defence and the NAF Development plans. The diverse tasks, assigned to the NAF, include the spectrum of threatening situations from peace to war.

4.3. Personnel and Training

The preparation of professional personnel for the state defence system is one of the pre-conditions for ensuring Latvia's readiness for membership in NATO. The training system is regularly improved in order to ensure the development of military capabilities. An important element in increasing the professionalism of personnel is participation in joint training exercises, which include all types of forces and approximate real battle situations as closely as possible.

In order to provide the defence system with appropriately prepared personnel, the current military career planning system is being improved in accordance with the practice of other NATO member states. Also, a modern NAF personnel management database is being established.

4.4. Armament and Infrastructure

It is important for Latvia, as a future NATO member state, to ensure the interoperability of its armed forces with NATO and to provide them with modern armament. The priorities for armament procurement are determined by the armed forces' structures and the development of military capabilities within the system of collective security, including Baltic State co-operation. The armament procurement programs provide for the purchase of weapons systems and combat equipment that conform to modern requirements with the goal of providing the armed forces with armaments suited to fulfilling their tasks.

Military infrastructure is one of the essential pre-conditions in order to fulfil the tasks of the defence system. All infrastructure construction and maintenance is carried out in accordance with the NAF's long-term development plans. The goal of these infrastructural improvements is to ensure the operation of NAF units, the maintenance of armament systems and increased combat capabilities, and to ensure the necessary training environment and opportunities, which is also the efficient utilisation of resources.

4.5. Information Security

In order to ensure performance of the state defence system, the capabilities to send, receive and store classified information is being developed in accordance with NATO member state practices. Priority is being given to the ability to exchange classified information quickly and effectively between state institutions, and Latvia's representations abroad and NATO member states.

4.6. Resources

Up until 2008, 2% of Latvia's Gross Domestic Product will be allotted to state defence, security and integration into NATO.

Financial resources must ensure the professionalization and modernisation of the NAF. Latvia must develop forces that are NATO interoperable, deployable and supplied in accordance with the guidelines specified by NATO. The main areas of investment include the implementation of the tasks set for the defence system in the Timetable for Completion of Reforms, the improvement of the MoD and NAF personnel career planning and training system, the purchase of modern weapons systems and combat equipment, the interoperability of military forces with NATO and other areas, which are specified in the Minister's guidelines for the development of the state defence system and budget planning.

The planning, programming and budgeting system has proven its effectiveness. It improves and ensures an overview of the planning and programming process, and ensures the purposeful utilisation of funding and its control. Budget programmes have been improved to ensure an overview of budget funding and the results achieved.

The planning, programming and budgeting system is continuously up-dated to include current budgeting principles and elements.

The effective and stable development of the national economy and its growth are important factors in increasing state defence capabilities and improving material technical facilities.

5. Civil Defence and Crisis Management System

Civil defence is a part of the national security system. The work of the civil defence system is planned, co-ordinated, managed and controlled by the Ministry of the Interior.

The civil defence system consists of national, administrative and local government institutions, companies, business entities, institutions and organisations, as well as all persons, who have reached legal age, are capable of work and who belong to the Latvian State.

The interoperability of the civil defence and crisis management system with NATO and EU member state crisis management and warning systems, civil defence systems and others is essential for the management of national emergencies.

The co-operation between national administrative institutions within the scope of the crisis management system is co-ordinated by the Crisis Management Centre, which is directly subordinate to the Prime Minister. The Crisis Management Centre formulates potential crisis situation scenarios, standard operational procedures and plans for the prevention, management and elimination of the consequences caused by a threatening situation, and organises and co-ordinates crisis management training.

6. Conclusion

State defence policy is a part of Latvia's security policy. The key priority of defence policy is to ensure the state defence and globally – within international cooperation promote stability and ensure peace in the region and the world.

The basis for effective state defence is participation in the NATO collective security system and the EU security and defence policy, professional armed forces, highly prepared reserve force – the National Guard and the support of society.

The NAF is being developed in order to ensure its military capabilities and preparedness to:

1. Ensure defence of Latvia;
2. Fulfil the obligations of a NATO and EU member; and
3. Participate in international operations.

Latvia's state defence system is being developed according to Latvia's geopolitical and historical situation, available physical and financial resources, the military capabilities available within the scope of collective security, which determine the structure of the Latvian NAF, the professional qualification of NAF personnel, the improvement of the training system, the modernisation of armament and infrastructure, information security and the effective utilisation of resources. Society's support for and understanding of the National Armed Forces and its principles is essential.

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