

# **THE STATE DEFENCE CONCEPT**

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 The State Defence Concept is a document drawn up on the basis of Military Threat Analysis that determines the basic strategic principles, priorities, and measures for the State military defence during peacetime, threat to national security and a time of war.
- 2 The State Defence Concept is prepared in accordance with Section 29 of the National Security Law, and it is based on Military Threat Analysis. Current geopolitical trends, Latvia's foreign policy and security policy interests and commitments in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (hereinafter – NATO), European Union (hereinafter – EU), as well as in other international organizations and cooperation formats are taken into account in the development of the Concept.
- 3 The State Defence Concept determines the implementation of the State defence policy and planning of political and operational measures for State defence, as well as the required resources. The State Defence Concept serves as the basis for the development of the National Armed Forces (hereinafter – NAF), as well as for the actions of state authority and administration institutions, local governments, and natural and legal persons during peacetime, threat to national security and a time of war.
- 4 The State Defence Concept has been developed during Russia's ongoing full-scale war in Ukraine.
- 5 The State Defence Concept ensures continuity from the previous Concept.

# 1 SECURITY ENVIRONMENT DESCRIPTION

## Global Processes

- 6 The significance of military and power politics in international relations is growing. Utilizing a broad spectrum of hybrid, cyber, conventional, and nuclear threats, authoritarian states threaten international security and the democratic values of Western countries. Authoritarian states disregard widely accepted principles and norms of international law, pursuing aggressive and opaque policies. Strategic rivals continuously test the resilience and unity of Western countries both directly and through intermediaries.
- 7 Russia's full-scale war in Ukraine has fundamentally altered the security landscape in Europe. The changes will persist in the long term, and the outcome of the war will determine the future European security architecture. By waging this war, Russia has once again demonstrated its readiness to use military force to achieve its geopolitical goals.
- 8 Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is considered the most direct asymmetrical threat to international peace and prosperity. Although the level of terrorism threats in Latvia remains low, risks arising from various global processes must be taken into account.
- 9 One of the increasingly significant challenges to international security is posed by China's growing global ambitions. China actively employs various political and economic means, confrontational rhetoric, information and communication technologies, and cyber-attacks to strengthen its global and regional influence. China seeks to gain control over Western technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure, and supply chains, posing a threat to the freedom of action of Western countries.
- 10 Challenges to NATO's, including Latvia's, security arise from China's strategic competition with the United States as well as the deepening strategic cooperation between China and Russia, especially in the military domain.

## Threats Posed by Russia

- 11 Russia aims to divide the world into spheres of influence and expand its territory. In order to achieve this, Russia undermines the existing security architecture, rewrites history and cultivates propaganda narratives about Russia's historical lands. Russia demands that NATO returns to the borders of 1997 and refrains from enlarging to the east also calling for the United States to reduce its presence in Europe.
- 12 Russia does not consider international treaties and conventions, as well as generally accepted principles and norms of international law, binding upon itself. Russia's brutal warfare, violence against civilians, and other war crimes in Ukraine clearly demonstrate that Russia will use similar tactics in other military conflicts.
- 13 Nuclear weapons are an integral part of Russia's aggressive policy, serving as a tool of influence and the main guarantor of the regime's security and existence. Russia will continue to threaten with the possibility of using nuclear weapons to influence the decision-making of leaders of NATO's member states.
- 14 Belarus has become a satellite state of Russia and is politically entirely dependent on Russia, serving as support for achieving Russia's geopolitical interests in its western strategic direction. Russia has unrestricted access to the Belarusian territory, and has solidified its long-term influence and military presence in Belarus.
- 15 Russia's authoritarian regime is transforming into a totalitarian system. To ensure its stability and security, the regime uses repression against any expression of opposition,

controls mass media, and restricts freedom of speech and expression. To maintain public support for the regime, Kremlin propaganda falsely portrays Russia's war against Ukraine as fighting against the "collective West" and the "new Great Patriotic War." A convincing majority of the Russian society supports Kremlin's policies and believes that the country is developing in the right direction.

- 16 The potential for democratic reforms in Russia remains low. Russian society displays indifference and apathy towards the possibilities of influencing political processes in the country. It is unlikely that Russian society will show a desire for change, and any changes in the leadership of the regime will likely be purely decorative. To ensure the stability of the ruling regime, the level of social control in Russia will continue to increase. Societal consolidation and support will enable the regime to pursue its aggressive foreign policy.
- 17 Russia will continue to be an undemocratic, hostile, and opportunistic state. Russia poses the main long-term existential threat to Latvia's security. During the implementation of the Concept, the level of threat posed by Russia to Latvia's security will not decrease, and, depending on changes in political and military circumstances, the level of threat may increase.

### **Threat Scenarios**

- 18 In the short term, Russia will use hybrid warfare instruments to weaken Western countries and undermine their unity. The information war directed against Western countries, including Latvia, will persist, and there will be an increase in the frequency and intensity of cyberattacks. Attempts to sabotage critical infrastructure of Western countries will continue to threaten their security. To build up political and economic pressure, Russia will use energy, migration, and other increasingly innovative means of hybrid warfare as potential weapons against Western countries. Hybrid threats against Western countries may also be posed from Belarus.
- 19 The threat to Latvia's security could arise from a sudden military attack by Russia to seize a certain territory that may be followed by threats to use nuclear weapons, aiming to deter involvement of NATO reinforcements.
- 20 In the event of any attack, Russia would employ an overwhelming superiority characterized by a massive infantry offensive, new and inexpensive technologies, especially drones, and artillery firepower. Extensive resources that can be easily replenished compensate for the lack of quality in Russia's armed forces.
- 21 Despite the losses suffered in the war in Ukraine, Russia will maintain a significant military dominance in the region and sufficient reserves of military resources.
- 22 If Russia launches an attack, Belarus will provide support, thereby creating additional challenges for NATO's response. Although the potential deployment of Russia's nuclear weapons in the territory of Belarus does not significantly alter the balance of power, hybrid warfare scenarios related to these weapons cannot be ruled out.
- 23 It is assessed that the recovery of Russian armed forces deployed near the border in their pre-war levels could occur within the next five years. Russia will learn from the mistakes made in the war in Ukraine and reform its armed forces. Latvia must use this time period to strengthen its own and allied deterrence and defence capabilities to the maximum extent possible.

## 2 STRATEGIC GOALS AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DEFENCE

- 24 The fundamental task of Latvia's state defence is the defence of its entire territory and all its residents. The war in Ukraine demonstrates that even a brief loss of territory in the event of an attack leads to massive civilian casualties and the destruction of civil and critical infrastructure.
- 25 The defence of Latvia's territory and state independence also safeguards democracy, a unified system of values, Latvia's cultural heritage, and a way of life centred on the well-being of individuals and the common good of society. This way of life upholds principles such as freedom, equality, solidarity, and justice, fostering the development of a civic society.
- 26 The future development and security of Latvia are closely linked to the unity of society and reliance on a shared set of values that shape the national identity. Central to this is Latvia as an independent state, its historical development and achievements, culture, language, and the willingness and active involvement of citizens in defending the space where our shared values exist.
- 27 The defence and preservation of Latvia's statehood and independence are a collective responsibility of the entire society, implemented throughout from individual to national level. This collective responsibility is carried out through a Comprehensive National Defence model, encompassing a wide range of measures to strengthen Latvia's deterrence and defence capabilities and promote societal resilience.
- 28 The foundation of deterrence and defence is the NATO's collective defence system. Functioning and development of this system depend on strengthening military capabilities and readiness of the NAF, including the development of military capabilities, high combat readiness, a larger number of personnel, and interoperability and integration with NATO allied forces.
- 29 Strategic partnerships and international cooperation complement deterrence and defence capabilities by providing additional military and security support and contributing to the preservation of the existing rules-based international order.
- 30 A developed readiness culture is a prerequisite for societal resilience and survivability of the state. It is a collective readiness of the entire society to act in times of crisis and war, the ability to ensure the continuity of critical functions and services, as well as to support the NAF in defence operations.
- 31 The development of readiness begins with personal involvement, initiative, and responsibility of each individual. This involves raising military awareness, acquiring skills in handling weapons, active participation in national defence, the ability to take care of oneself and others, as well as willingness to engage in previously -learned and mastered forms of state defence support.
- 32 Readiness culture is also crucial at the collective level – it is the ability of communities, businesses, municipalities and state administration institutions to self-organize and actively act in times of crisis and war. Pre-developed action scenarios facilitate preparedness for various disruptions.
- 33 Readiness of the national economy to overcome crises is a prerequisite for the survivability of the state. Economic independence and resilience ensure the continuity of all sectors and areas, maintaining the security of the state in crisis conditions. Investments in the economic preparedness, production capacities, and adaptability contribute to strengthening Latvia's

defence. Investment in national security and defence also has a positive impact on the overall investment flow in the Latvian economy, promoting a secure environment for investors. To enhance supply chain resilience and develop the capacity of Latvia's military industry, involvement of the Latvian defence industry plays a significant role in the supply of material and technical resources.

### **3 RESILIENCE, CAPACITY TO ACT, WILL**

- 34 A responsible attitude of the entire society towards the state and its security, mutual cooperation among state institutions, effective mechanisms of public and private partnerships, and self-organization of the society are prerequisites for overcoming any crisis.
- 35 State security is directly dependent on the collective responsibility of the society for the future of the state and the trust in the Republic of Latvia and its values. Purposeful fostering of understanding of shared values and strengthening of civic activities and participation form the basis for the unshakable resilience of society. In the face of existential threats, a society united by common values and allegiance to the state is capable of survival.
- 36 In times of crisis or war, state administration institutions, local governments, the private sector, and society as a whole will need to continue providing functions and services critical to the functioning of the state and meeting the primary needs of society. An essential element in enhancing overall resilience and capacity to act is the organization and planning of various types of training and exercises during peacetime.
- 37 The role and duty of residents, communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), economic operators, local governments, and state institutions are to promote readiness culture for social action and persistence, including psychological resilience, already during peace-time.
- 38 Readiness culture involves both personal and collective responsibility with duties and roles of each individual, community, and organization. Initiative and self-organization are crucial in the development of readiness culture.

#### **Individual Involvement**

- 39 Every resident of Latvia must defend the set of individual rights established in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, as well as the national values defined therein.
- 40 Civic participation of Latvian residents is a prerequisite for the implementation of the country's defence capabilities. Extensive involvement of residents and communities in the mechanisms of national defence will ensure the collective resilience of the state during times of crisis and war.
- 41 Each resident must acquire and enhance the knowledge and skills to be able to protect not only themselves but also their family, community, and country during times of crisis or war. Residents are responsible for their preparedness and securing the necessary resources for independent action in a crisis during the first 72 hours without the support of the state and local governments.
- 42 It is equally important to increase residents' will to defend Latvia through educational work in educational institutions, as well as to strengthen citizens' connection with the state and ensure acquisition of specific military competences, where the State Defence Service will play a crucial role.
- 43 The involvement of citizens in state defence, the State Defence Service, the National Guard, and the training of reserve soldiers is imperative. Furthermore, involvement of residents in practical collaboration with the National Armed Forces units, planning and implementing resistance to aggressors, as well as promoting a culture of civil resistance, non-compliance, non-violent resistance, and the dissemination of verified information about state security and defence are crucial.



- 44 The success of resistance movement depends on concealed residents' support (such as supplies, medical care, information, financial support, communications, training, recruitment, and intelligence) for participants in civil and armed resistance, the NAF, and allied forces.
- 45 To foster residents' willingness to defend the state, civic education issues must be part of the education system, establishing and reinforcing a sense of belonging to the country in children and youth. Starting from the 2024/2025 academic year, national defence education will become part of the mandatory curriculum in secondary education, providing students with the minimum skillset for action in crisis situations and during times of war.
- 46 In addition to the mandatory educational content, the Cadet Force movement is being developed, within which 8,000 children in all regions of Latvia gradually acquire and develop leadership skills during the primary school education stage, while also strengthening patriotism and their physical abilities.
- 47 By undergoing national defence education and participating in the Cadet Force, young people gain fundamental knowledge about national defence, appreciate the importance of discipline and order, develop self-confidence, and are overall better prepared for the execution of State Defence Service duties.
- 48 Colonel Oskars Kalpaks Military High School prepares junior non-commissioned officers' and potentially future officers, thereby laying the foundation for the NAF officers' ethos.

#### **Involvement of Non-governmental Organizations and the Church**

- 49 NGOs play a crucial role in promoting readiness culture and societal resilience. Their task is to define and actively engage in fostering civic participation, promote community involvement and active participation in state defence, thereby strengthening the self-organizing capabilities of society.
- 50 Each NGO and religious organization enhances psychological resilience, provides humanitarian aid, supports those affected by crises, participates in civil defence and rescue efforts, contributes to maintaining public order, and disseminates accurate and verified information. NGOs promote community involvement in citizen training for action in crises and enhance society's ability to self-organize.
- 51 In response to the calls of local governments and state institutions, NGOs participate in role-play exercises of operational continuity plans to ensure uninterrupted provision of critical services during times of crisis and war.

#### **Involvement of the Private Sector**

- 52 To ensure critical functions and services for society, the execution of mobilization tasks, and overall as uninterrupted as possible operation of the national economy, the private sector must continue to operate also during times of threat to national security.
- 53 It is the responsibility of economic operators of critical infrastructure and critical financial infrastructure to draw up operational continuity plans, regularly test them in exercises, and ensure the availability of critical core services and goods during crises and times of national threat.
- 54 In private sector institutions that provide critical services and in state administration institutions voluntary National Guard units are formed from personnel working in these institutions to support the operation of the institutions and the continuity of critical services in times of crisis and conflict.

- 55 Economic operators with the obligation to draw up operational continuity plans are to incorporate measures and actions in their operation in the event of a national threat, including assessing the risks of supply security and the influence of unfriendly states. They shall also provide staff training and regularly conduct crisis exercises.

### **Involvement of Local Governments**

- 56 Each local government has tasks to continue the execution of critical functions for society and support the NAF in the event of a national threat. These tasks are reflected in the Civil Protection Plan and are regularly tested in exercises.
- 57 The active and independent involvement of local governments is crucial in fostering civic activity and readiness culture among their residents.
- 58 In collaboration with responsible state administration institutions, municipalities promote the establishment and maintenance of civil protection shelters, as well as the formation of voluntary civil protection units.

### **Involvement of State Administration Institutions**

- 59 To ensure the continuity of government operation, the Cabinet of Ministers takes leadership during times of war, running the state and consolidating resources and tasks.
- 60 Each industry and state administration institution has its role and duties during times of war. The task of state administration institutions is to ensure the continuity of critical state functions and services during wartime. Ministries and their subordinate institutions define duties in strengthening the resilience of the state and society, draw up emergency response and operational continuity plans, and provide regular training for critical personnel responding to national threats.
- 61 One of the prerequisites for societal preparedness and resilience is a functioning civil protection system with effective public notification and measures for the protection of residents.
- 62 To promote understanding of the role and actions of state administration institutions in the event of a national threat, it is necessary to continue organizing comprehensive exercises, involving all government institutions, local governments, economic operators, and NGOs.

### **Information Space Protection**

- 63 The goal of information space protection is to enhance the resilience of Latvia's government and society against various manipulations, including disinformation and information influence operations. To ensure societal psychological resilience in crisis situations, it is essential to enhance public understanding of the threats to the state and potential aggressor's intentions.
- 64 Both the communication capabilities of state administration institutions and enhancing the preparedness of the media are crucial. The Ministry of Defence improves communication plans through joint exercises with other government institutions, also involving media representatives, and ensures crisis communication in the event of a military threat to the state.
- 65 To prevent the spread of information which is hostile and damaging capacity to act, state administration institutions, in collaboration with NGOs and the civic society, must establish collaboration formats for information space protection. The example of Ukraine demonstrates that active public participation and self-organization, utilizing technology,

can successfully combat Russian propaganda, information operations, and psychological operations.

- 66 The institutions responsible for information space protection must ensure a unified approach to educating the public about threats in the information space.

### **Cybersecurity and Cyber Defence**

- 67 The goal of Latvia's cybersecurity and cyber defence policy is to strengthen the resilience of Latvia's information and communication technology systems, e-services, financial services, and electronic communication networks, reducing potential vulnerabilities and ensuring their continued operation not only in peacetime but also in crisis and wartime conditions.
- 68 It is essential to ensure that the information and communication technology infrastructure has an appropriate level of cybersecurity protection, including the development and provision of backup solutions applicable to both the public and private sectors. In cases where the external perimeter of electronic communication is compromised, the use of a unified state Internet exchange point must be ensured throughout the country.
- 69 Strengthening Latvia's cyber defence capabilities is crucial, including improving active cyber defence, increasing the numbers of specialized personnel in the NAF at all levels, and raising the capacity of the National Guard Cyber Defence Unit.

### **Resilience and Development of the Defence Industry**

- 70 Resilience, development, and ability of the defence industry to function during crises and wartime are prerequisites for successful national defence.
- 71 It is crucial to continue the national defence industry support policy to ensure the security of the supply of material and technical resources and services necessary for the execution of NAF tasks and to expand the mobilization resource base that corresponds to NAF needs. Priority areas include armament, maintenance of NAF support and combat equipment, soldiers' individual equipment systems, as well as information and communication technologies.
- 72 Strengthening the state's role in strategically important areas for the execution of NAF tasks, including enhancing the legal framework and initiating strategic partnerships in such logistics areas as ammunition production and vehicle maintenance, is essential. This also involves preparing strategic partners for continuous work during times of national threat. The state may be forced to undertake risks that the private sector is not able or willing to undertake.
- 73 It is necessary to promote the inclusion of Latvian industry in the supply chain of NAF capability development projects, thereby expanding the defence-related industrial base and facilitating knowledge transfer. To achieve this, it is essential to implement defence industry support measures in collaboration with NGOs and to assess the capacity and interest of national industry to engage in providing support for defence capabilities (industry mapping).
- 74 The development of new technologies with military or dual-use applications facilitates the execution of NAF combat tasks. Simultaneously, to enhance Latvia's competitiveness and promote greater economic security it is necessary to expand the defence innovation ecosystem and foster its export capabilities.

#### **4 DETERRENCE AND DEFENCE**

- 75 To deter any intention of an adversary to attack the territory of Latvia and thereby avoid war, Latvia, together with allies, maintains and develops combat capabilities, demonstrating commitment and readiness to defend Latvia against any form of threat.
- 76 The foundation of Latvia's deterrence and defence consists of the military capabilities of the NAF and the strategy for their use, NATO's collective defence mechanisms, and strategic partnerships at bilateral and multilateral levels.
- 77 Latvia's defence planning integrates the experience gained by Ukraine in its fight against Russia.

#### **National Tasks and the NAF Development**

- 78 The task of the NAF is to ensure the defence of the state's territory and its civilian population from the first centimetre, denying the adversary the opportunity to penetrate the territory of Latvia, using all necessary and available means.
- 79 The combat capabilities of the NAF consist of professional service units, the National Guard or territorial forces, the State Defence Service, the active reserve, and the general reserve. The development of the NAF is focused on the mobility of units together with firepower, survivability, decentralization of command and supply, mutual integration and interoperability with allied forces, technological development, and resilience against electronic warfare.
- 80 The NAF are developing capabilities by increasing firepower and ranges that deny the adversary free movement in the air, sea, and on land. Simultaneously, the NAF continue to develop air defence, coastal defence, long-range missile artillery, and unmanned aerial vehicle capabilities, as well as to introduce infantry fighting platforms into its arsenal. Additionally, the NAF are developing combat service support functions by building reserves and enhancing medical and logistics capabilities.
- 81 NAF units demonstrate high combat readiness and respond to various security challenges as well as provide necessary support to civilian institutions.
- 82 There is a need to invest in and develop a significantly larger and more capable army. The introduction of the State Defence Service will provide personnel for the development of NAF's priority capabilities, growth in personnel, and trained reserve soldiers for high and general readiness reserve units, contributing to the long-term structural transformation of the NAF.
- 83 Timely ability of the NAF, state security institutions, and other responsible agencies to identify, document, and prove hybrid warfare activities carried out against the country is a prerequisite for effective action. In the case of hybrid threat, the preservation of Latvia's statehood and the prevention of further escalation crucially depend on the capacity to act and collaboration of state administration institutions, rapid response, and international support.
- 84 Taking into account geographical and logistical constraints, in the event of sudden and unexpected threats, the NAF, together with allied forces stationed in Latvia, must be capable of defending the territory and civilians of Latvia using all available resources until reinforced by allied support, if it has not occurred prior to the attack. In the case of sudden and unexpected attacks, as well as regional threats and escalation, the NAF ensure the defence of the country jointly with NATO's highest military leadership, ensuring both the

reception of allied forces and the execution of state defence tasks according to the national and NATO defence plans until the complete elimination of the threat.

- 85 To maintain high combat readiness of the NAF, military exercises of various levels are regularly organized. At least once every four years, the NAF conduct an exercise called "NAMEJS," involving the entire personnel of the NAF and mobilizing material and technical resources, including the participation of the private sector and civil defence system. Exercises are also organized outside military training grounds, including in areas of each unit's responsibility. Military exercise cycles integrate combat readiness evaluation of NAF units.
- 86 To ensure long-term resilience of the NAF in the event of a military conflict, creating strategic reserves in priority areas such as food, fuel, and ammunition is crucial. Food and fuel reserves shall primarily be built up within the framework of strategic partnerships, and large-scale procurements must include supply security principles, concentrating supply capacity within Latvia's borders and relying less on cross-border deliveries, which is especially crucial in the first days of war.
- 87 The increase of ammunition reserves is carried out systematically, with the NAF allocating a set amount of funding each year.
- 88 Fuel reserves are ensured by both purchasing storage services from economic operators and developing NAF stocks to ensure a sufficient amount that can circulate within a specified time-period, thereby upholding high quality standards.
- 89 Food reserves are built up by purchasing food storage services from economic operators who have the necessary infrastructure for food storage and can ensure its continuous circulation, while also maintaining own reserves.
- 90 Every year, the NAF update the Mobilization Plan, identifying the capability gaps and resources that, in the case of mobilization, must be taken from the civil sector to fulfil NAF tasks. Similarly, during wartime, for the needs of the NAF and allies, it is necessary to take over territories and properties to ensure unit training, force integration, maintenance, and manoeuvring. It is crucial to identify missing resources in a timely manner and issue mobilization requests.
- 91 The enhancement of Latvia's external borders with both physical and technological engineering solutions that corresponds to the potential threats from the adversary, is an important set of measures for strengthening internal and external security of the state. The NAF in collaboration with the State Border Guard and state security institutions develop and exercise cooperation plans and mechanisms for scenarios involving hybrid and conventional threats.

### **NATO's Collective Defence**

- 92 Latvia's defence is developed within the framework of NATO's collective defence, which is the most potent instrument of deterrence against potential adversaries. NATO is a nuclear alliance providing a nuclear umbrella for all member states. Latvia ensures its role in promoting this significant mission. The Alliance's greatest strength lies in the unity of its allies, political will, military capabilities, and resources for the defence of the entire NATO territory and its population.
- 93 To deter potential adversaries from attacking Latvia and ensure defence from the first centimetre, it is crucial to have a developed and implemented NATO "forward defence"

strategy. This entails an increased NATO military presence in Latvia with deployed material reserves, supplemented by air and naval capabilities. It is vital to reinforce the presence of allies with designated forces, combat-capable NATO command elements in Latvia, executable defence plans, and political authorization for immediate involvement of these forces and military headquarters in Latvia's defence in case of military aggression.

- 94 Headquarters Multinational Division "North" is a NATO military command and control element in Latvia, which in collaboration with the Latvian NAF will conduct national defence operations, integrating national and allied forces and performing both national and collective defence tasks. The division is being developed as a combat-capable unit with the necessary support capabilities. Increasing contributions of allied countries with personnel and capabilities are being promoted.
- 95 The NAF are part of the NATO's collective defence force. NAF military capabilities and units are integrated into NATO's plans for regional defence and the execution of various types of forces' military activities.
- 96 To deter the adversary's aggression, train the execution of defence plans, and facilitate interoperability of forces, the reinforcement of NATO's military activities is essential already during peacetime. This includes regular exercises of various scale across the entire NATO territory. Every four years, a large-scale deployment of forces will be exercised in Latvia to train and test the readiness for the reception, deployment, and integration of forces and execution of operations.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

- 97 An essential condition for strengthening deterrence and defence measures is the establishment of robust strategic partnerships as a complementary set of measures that increases the potential of conventional defence, supporting NATO's collective defence tasks.
- 98 Strengthening and deepening of strategic partnership with the United States is critically important. It is in Latvia's interests to ensure the political will and timely military readiness of the United States to engage in Latvia's defence within the framework of both collective defence and bilateral cooperation. Of a particular significance, is continuous military presence of the United States in Latvia with units, military capabilities, equipment, and reserve stocks. It complements NAF capabilities and is integrated into Latvia's defence plans, enabling immediate involvement in Latvia's defence operations in case of a conflict.
- 99 Political and military cooperation with Canada is essential for promoting the establishment of an allied brigade-level unit in Latvia, and in the long-term achieving the functioning of a combat-capable brigade in Latvia that is capable of engaging in Latvia's defence alongside the NAF without a prior warning. Joint investments with Canada in the development of NATO's brigade, the necessary infrastructure and the required reserve stocks are prerequisites for fulfilling collective commitments.
- 100 Deepening and integrating defence cooperation among the Baltic States are prerequisites for more effective regional defence. The ability to provide support and conduct coordinated defence operations in the event of a sudden attack is a critical supplementary element of collective defence measures. Common plans and action models for mutual support, as well as joint efforts in the development of military capabilities among the Baltic States, are important directions for further deepening Baltic States' cooperation.

- 101 Due to the increasingly critical nature of the threat where response time and readily available resources are crucial, a regional approach to security is becoming more significant. Therefore, strengthening regional cooperation becomes a strategic necessity. It is essential for Latvia to ensure that the defence of the Baltic region is strengthened and mutually integrated with all Baltic Sea Region countries, thus preventing the adversary from gaining military superiority.
- 102 An increasingly vital role in regional defence is played by Denmark, which serves as one of the host nations of Headquarters Multinational Division “North” and ensures a significant military presence in Latvia. In collaboration with Denmark and involving other allied countries, a combat-capable division will be developed.
- 103 With Finland joining NATO, and with the anticipated accession of Sweden, it is in Latvia's interests to involve these countries in the defence of the Baltic region. We are interested in promoting military presence of Finland and Sweden in Latvia through various multinational military structures, and the placement of NATO’s command elements in both countries.
- 104 It is imperative to strengthen the Joint Expeditionary Force with the United Kingdom in lead. Investment in the joint development and readiness of these forces for defence measures in their area of responsibility is crucial. This will serve as a complementary and inclusive set of measures for NATO’s action, at the same time ensuring flexibility and rapid response opportunities, mitigating time and space challenge in the Baltic States.
- 105 It is essential to develop cooperation with Poland to strengthen regional cooperation. Poland is a significant international partner with a growing military potential and the ability to enhance regional security.
- 106 Strategic partnerships based on shared understanding, values, and goals provide a significant addition to Latvia's deterrence and defence potential and serve as an important framework for the development of practical cooperation also in other areas, such as economy, industrial cooperation, and the implementation of various joint political initiatives.

### **Contribution to International Security**

- 107 Latvia's security is directly dependent on the maintenance of a rules-based international order. Latvia contributes to sustaining this system and ensuring solidarity with its allies, as well as promoting global security.
- 108 Latvia, as a member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), NATO, and the EU, actively participates in maintaining and improving the existing international order. Upholding existing commitments and developing new opportunities within these international organizations is one of the directions that strengthens security.
- 109 The EU plays a crucial role in shaping and developing the collective European security potential, utilizing European-level instruments to enhance common security. Latvia is interested in a balanced and resource-based development of the EU security and defence pillar, which, overall, increases the volume and availability of military capabilities of EU member states for collective defence needs. EU instruments and structures must be developed in a complementary and non-competitive manner with NATO. Equal EU's economic capital investment across all member states is crucial to developing the military

- industry and mitigating the overall lack of EU capabilities, supporting solutions that enhance supply chain security and the ability of enterprises to function in crisis situations.
- 110 The EU plays a significant role in strengthening security in various regions. Therefore, balanced development of EU partnership policies is important, focusing on the security, stability, and development of European border regions and prioritizing Eastern Partnership countries.
- 111 Additional contributions to strengthening Latvia's security and defence are made through EU investments in various non-military instruments that promote societal resilience. These investments focus on addressing issues related to disinformation and strategic communication, as well as reducing the ability of hostile actors to influence political processes in the EU and its member states. The synergy and involvement of all EU instruments and structures are imperative in preventing hybrid threats.
- 112 Latvia's interests lie in global security stability, for which national responsibility must be assumed by investing resources in achieving this goal. Latvia's contribution to global security is closely linked to both the credibility of collective defence commitments and the preservation of the existing international order. Therefore, future Latvian contributions to international missions, operations, and rapid response forces are essential for strengthening European external security and capacity of international organizations.
- 113 Participation in international military operations, missions, and rapid response forces enhances the development and experience of the NAF, fosters combat readiness of units, and improves military interoperability with the armed forces of allied nations. The scope of NAF involvement is determined by operational needs of Latvia's defence.
- 114 A significant part of the existing international regulatory framework is the arms control mechanisms affirmed within the OSCE. The principles of mutual confidence-building, included in the current agreements, remain relevant in terms of their goals and essence. However, their effectiveness and impact on collective security depend directly on the willingness of all parties involved to adhere to them.
- 115 It is in Latvia's interests to preserve the current security architecture, including confidence-building measures developed so far in the field of arms control. Simultaneously, efforts should be made to prevent attempts to diminish Latvia's defence capabilities and restrict the implementation of national defence measures through arms control mechanisms.
- 116 It is in Latvia's security interests to prevent Russia from achieving victory in the war against Ukraine. Therefore, it is important to support Ukraine politically and militarily. Latvia envisions Ukraine as a future member of the EU and NATO and a close ally. Sustained unity among Western countries will be particularly crucial in ensuring the necessary support for Ukraine.
- 117 The Western appeasement policy pursued for years vis-à-vis Russia has failed. The only viable approach for Western states in their future relations with Russia is the implementation of containment policy.



## 5 STATE DEFENCE RESOURCES

### Financial Resources

- 118 To achieve the set goals, including the establishment of the State Defence Service, the development of the NAF reserve, and providing all structural units of the defence sector with the necessary weapons and other material and technical resources, funding for national defence is increased. In 2024, 2.4% of the respective year's forecasted GDP will be allocated for national defence, and starting from 2025, it will be increased to 2.5%. By 2027, defence funding will reach 3% of GDP.
- 119 When planning the allocation of funds, NATO-prescribed standards that promote the development of armed forces are observed, with no more than 50% allocated to personnel expenses and no less than 20% to investments in the acquisition of military equipment and weaponry. Financial resources allocated for defence are used solely for ensuring national defence.
- 120 To ensure the functionality of Comprehensive National Defence, all institutions in their financial planning allocate resources for the execution of tasks defined in the concept.
- 121 In order to promote the development and resilience of the defence industry, funding availability is ensured for strengthening the role of the state and establishing a framework of strategic partnership.

### Personnel Resources

- 122 The wartime strength of the NAF is set to reach 61,000 troops, consisting of 31,000 troops in peacetime structure and 30,000 troops in the general reserve.
- 123 The State Defence Service will support readiness culture in which every man and, on a voluntary basis, woman aged 18 to 27 will have acquired basic military skills, thus promoting a positive long-term impact on the performance of state defence tasks. To motivate young people to serve voluntarily in the State Defence Service, opportunities to provide additional financial resources for budget study places or scholarships should be considered.
- 124 The introduction of the State Defence Service will require investments in infrastructure development, provision of combat equipment, individual and collective equipment, as well as an increase in the commanding staff.
- 125 Graduates of the State Defence Service will be included in the NAF reserve system, initially as high-readiness reserve soldiers and later as general reserve soldiers. With the assistance of the State Defence Service, training reserve non-commissioned officers and officers will also complement the junior commanding staff of the NAF.
- 126 The system for maintaining combat capabilities of reserve soldiers is to be improved, specifying that all reserve soldiers must be attached to a NAF structure. The NAF will conduct reserve soldier training once a year.
- 127 The National Guard plays a crucial role in Latvia's territorial defence. Service in the National Guard is an honourable matter that should become an integral part of society's everyday life.

## **Infrastructure**

- 128 To ensure full-fledged development of NAF capabilities and host nation support, promoting improvement of the allied training systems, a priority will be given to the construction of necessary infrastructure. This includes developing storage networks, enhancing existing training infrastructure, training grounds, shooting ranges, and increasing accommodation capacity.
- 129 For each type of stock (ammunition, fuel, food), infrastructure development is planned in parallel with reserve procurement planning. This involves the construction of ammunition depots, fuel storage facilities, and food storage warehouses. Stockpiling is a long-term systemic process that involves regular allocation of financial resources for replenishment until the required material quantity for carrying out NAF wartime tasks is achieved. Simultaneously with the build-up of strategic reserves, the necessary storage infrastructure for their storage is developed.
- 130 The infrastructure of National Guard battalions will be gradually developed to ensure and decentralize the fulfilment of NAF tasks and supply.

## CONCLUDING TASKS

- 131 The defence budget will be planned in accordance with the gradual increase in the defence budget approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. The political ambition envisages that, as of 2027, the defence budget shall reach 3% of the estimated GDP. The Ministry of Defence will implement the State Defence Concept within the allocated state budget funds.
- 132 This Concept and the NAF Development Plan, based on this Concept, serve as the basis for drawing up medium and long-term planning documents, including guidelines issued by the Minister of Defence for the development of the national defence system and budget planning for the next year. The NAF development planning process ensures continuity in implementation of the Concept. Within this process, it is crucial to identify critical NAF capabilities for the fulfilment of the fundamental tasks of national defence.
- 133 Based on the Concept, the Minister of Defence, issues guidelines to the Chief of Defence on the key principles for the State Defence Operational Plan.
- 134 National defence is not only the responsibility of state authorities and administration institutions, including local governments, but also the responsibility of each individual, which is implemented through participation in national defence in accordance with the directions of action and measures defined in the State Defence Concept.
- 135 The implementation of the State Defence Concept is ensured by state authorities and administration institutions, local governments, as well as every natural and legal person according to their competence and the tasks defined in regulatory acts.
- 136 The implementation of the State Defence Concept also occurs through regular exercises, training, and practical drills at the government, individual ministry, local government, private, and non-governmental sector levels to promote readiness culture and develop and test crisis management algorithms.
- 137 In accordance with the National Security Law, the Saeima approves the State Defence Concept not less than once during each convening by October 1 of its second year of operation. Responding to the challenges of the geopolitical situation, this Concept has been developed and approved in an expedited manner.