

DEFENCE STRATEGY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



2023

FOREWORD FROM THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE



The Czech Republic and its Allies face a highly deteriorated security situation.

With its barbaric aggression, Russia has brought a large-scale inter-state war back to Europe and is making it clear that its great-power ambitions do not end in Ukraine. It has not yet come to terms with the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the accession of Central and Eastern European countries into NATO and the EU. It does not hesitate to use massive military force to achieve its objectives, and is indifferent to the lives of soldiers and civilians alike.

This situation requires a fundamental change in our approach to defence. After a long period of neglecting our defence capabilities, we have yet again realized that defence is one of the main tasks of the state and a necessary precondition for economic prosperity.

Our Government takes defence seriously and is committed to quickly fixing the shortcomings that have arisen in the past years as a result of political apathy and chronic underfunding. That is why today, the Czech Armed Forces is undergoing the largest modernization in its history.

Fortunately, the Czech Republic is not alone in its defence. More than ever before, it is now clear how important the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and defence cooperation with our Allies are to us. Our NATO membership therefore naturally remains the fundament and framework of Czech defence policy.

The new Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic ('the Strategy') lays out what needs to be done to make our defence as credible and effective as possible, and to contribute to NATO's common defence in an adequate scope and quality. Many of the steps and changes described in the Strategy are already underway.

The most important message of the new Strategy is the emphasis on the whole-of-government and whole-of-society nature of defence. In order to defend ourselves in cooperation with our Allies, we must not only build well-armed, well-trained and well-prepared armed forces, but also strengthen the overall resilience of the state and society and prepare our country to receive, move and support the armed forces of our NATO Allies.

The Strategy therefore also addresses those preconditions of successful defence that go beyond the remit of the Ministry of Defence. This is not a 'Defence Strategy of the Ministry of Defence' but the Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic. We all have our share of responsibility for the defence of our country.

But let me be very clear: the primary purpose of the Czech and NATO defence is to deter attackers. Our goal is not to wage war against the aggressor, but to deter attack. For effective deterrence, we need to have strong defence capabilities as well as an unquestionable determination to use them in the event of an attack.

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Minister of Defence of the Czech Republic
October 4, 2023

The Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic was approved by the Government on October 4, 2023.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- By invading Ukraine, Russia launched the largest military conflict in Europe since the end of the Second World War.
- The probability of a military attack on the Czech Republic or other NATO and EU countries is the highest since the end of the Cold War. In the long term, Russia will continue to pose the most serious threat to the security of the Czech Republic and its Allies.
- The war in Ukraine has confirmed the absolute necessity of our active membership in NATO. Together with its Allies, the Czech Republic is strengthening NATO's ability to deter adversaries and defend itself against aggression.
- As a result of Russia's growing aggressiveness, the main task of the Czech defence policy is to prepare for a long-lasting, high-intensity defensive war against a technologically advanced adversary equipped with nuclear weapons.
 - ▷ The first priority is therefore to build well-armed, well-equipped, well-trained and combat-sustainable armed forces deployable in collective defence operations.
 - ▷ The second priority is a comprehensive operational preparation of the Czech territory and enablement of reception, movement, and support of a potentially large number of Allied forces.
- Defence is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces only. Contribution from all necessary government bodies as well as the society as a whole is a precondition for the Czech Republic's ability to defend itself.
- Our state, society, and armed forces are being subjected to systematic hostile hybrid interference. Cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, economic coercion as well as sabotage, subversion and intelligence activities pose a threat to the Czech Republic.
- Strengthening the resilience of the state, society and citizens is thus an essential non-military prerequisite for defence and credible deterrence.
- Military professionals alone cannot provide for the defence of the Czech Republic. The ready and available reserves of the armed forces must assume a greater role in defence.
- The Czech Republic is therefore developing the capability to expand its armed forces into a wartime organizational structure. That includes building the armed forces reserves, readying the system of mobilization, developing the necessary infrastructure and procuring materiel stocks.
- The security and defence industry is one of the pillars of defence. It contributes to the security of supply and to combat sustainability of the armed forces. For this purpose, the dialogue and partnership between the state and the industry will be further deepened.
- The Czech Republic will create conditions conducive to the involvement of the defence and security industry in the system of economic mobilization.
- Adequate funding is an absolutely necessary precondition for defence. Therefore, the Czech Republic will spend at least 2% of its GDP on defence every year and, if needed, will proceed to further increase defence spending above this level.
- Reliable defence requires sufficiently sized, motivated, competent and well-prepared personnel operating in all areas key to defence.

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE DEFENCE STRATEGY

1. **National defence is the fundamental task of the state.** It is indispensable for protecting the vital security interests set out in the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic.
2. The purpose of the Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic ('the Strategy') is to **define the basic principles, goals, and instruments of the Czech defence policy.** It aims to articulate the key tasks for the Czech defence system in response to the changing security environment in which the Czech Republic finds itself. At the same time, the ongoing changes of the security environment have fundamentally changed the premises of and requirements for a successful provision of defence and for the Czech Republic's contribution to NATO's collective defence effort. The Strategy also reflects the evolution of the security and defence dimension of the EU.

National defence is a set of measures to protect the state's sovereignty and territorial integrity, the principles of democracy and the rule of law, and the lives of citizens and their property from external attack. National defence also involves participation in the collective defence system.
3. **The Strategy builds on the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic,** adopted by the Government Resolution No. 478 of June 28, 2023, and elaborates its implications for the defence domain.
4. The Strategy provides **guidance for follow-up policies in defence and for planning processes within the Czech defence system.** It emphasizes the need for the alignment of NATO and national defence planning. At the same time, it is an essential instrument of the Government's strategic communication with Czech general public as well as with the Allies, partners and adversaries.
5. The Strategy **builds on the key NATO and EU strategic and planning documents** (NATO's Strategic Concept¹, the Strategic Compass of the EU) and implements them – to the extent that is appropriate – into the defence policy of the Czech Republic.

2. SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR DEFENCE

6. After years of increasingly aggressive behaviour, **Russia has launched the largest military conflict in Europe since the end of the Second World War.** The war is taking place in the immediate neighbourhood of NATO and the EU and in proximity of the Czech Republic. It underscores how important it is for the state and society to build effective defence. The Czech Republic secures its defence primarily by developing national capabilities and through its NATO and EU membership.

A more detailed description of the security environment, including the identification of security threats, is included in the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic. The Defence Strategy focuses on its implications for defence and Czech defence policy.

¹ NATO's Strategic Concept is followed by the Political Guidance for Defence Planning, which outlines the Alliance's defence planning for the next four years. This document is classified.

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7. **The risk of a direct military threat to the Czech Republic remains low. However, the probability of a military attack against the Czech Republic or one of the other NATO and EU nations is the highest since the end of the Cold War.** In case they come under threat, the Czech Republic will, in line with its obligations and interests, join in collective deterrence and defence activities. The war in Ukraine confirmed the absolute necessity of our active membership in NATO, as the ability to deter adversaries from attacking and to repel aggression is significantly greater in cooperation with Allies.
 8. In the event of a military conflict between an aggressor and NATO Allies, the territory of the Czech Republic may be a target of the adversary's **long-range weapon systems as well as intelligence, diversion and sabotage operations.**
 9. **Russia presents the most serious threat to the security of the Czech Republic.** Russia's attempts at territorial expansion and efforts to control the countries in its neighbourhood will affect European security in the long term.
 10. The progressive **integration of Belarus into Russia's military structures** presents a threat to NATO's Eastern flank countries in particular.
 11. It is in the interest of the security and defence of the Czech Republic that **the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine be fully restored.** The resilience of Eastern European countries to Russia's hostile activities makes a major contribution to the security of Europe as a whole.
 12. The current nature of international security is largely **shaped by global strategic competition.** At its core is the desire of some states, mainly Russia and the People's Republic of China (PRC), to transform the international order and to enforce their own vision of global arrangement. Security threats are becoming increasingly interconnected, the lines between peace and conflict are blurring, and confrontation in new domains as well as competition for access to raw materials and technologies are growing. These trends bring increased demands on the defence and resilience of the Czech Republic.
 13. **The People's Republic of China acts against the security interests of the Czech Republic and its Allies in a number of areas.** These include cyber-attacks, hybrid interference, abuse of technological and resource dependencies, activities in the outer space, and PRC's political and military cooperation with Russia.
 14. The paralysis of both the United Nations Security Council and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe narrows the options for multilateral solutions. The erosion of arms control and disarmament regimes and mechanisms has weakened trust among states. **The functioning of the system of cooperative security has been fundamentally weakened and the Czech Republic can no longer rely on it in when it comes to crisis management.** This further increases the importance of the Czech Republic's active membership in NATO and the EU.
 15. Although the use of nuclear weapons against the Czech Republic's territory is unlikely, **Russia's aggressive nuclear rhetoric targeting NATO nations and EU Member States is highly dangerous.** Nuclear proliferation also poses a threat. The architecture of the global strategic balance is

degrading due to Russia's violation of its treaty obligations and the PRC's unwillingness to engage. The Czech Republic is therefore convinced that **as long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO must remain a nuclear alliance.**

16. The **use of chemical or biological weapons** by state and non-state actors in an armed conflict or terrorist attack poses a risk.
17. **International terrorism committed by non-state actors**, as well as state-sponsored terrorism, remain to be a significant asymmetric threat to NATO nations and EU Member States. Terrorism impacts the security of the Czech Republic as well.
18. **The security of the Czech Republic is linked to the security and stability in Europe's neighbourhood. The security situation in these regions is deteriorating.** North Africa, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Middle East are affected by complex security problems that are not manageable without international assistance. As a result of political instability and dysfunctional governance, there is a growing number of weak and failed states, which are becoming breeding grounds for terrorist and criminal groups, leading, among other things, to an increase in illegal migration. Outbreaks of tension and unresolved conflicts also persist in Europe, particularly in Russia's wider neighbourhood and the Western Balkans. In these areas, Russia and other actors are engaging to thwart stabilisation efforts.
19. Our state, society and armed forces² are subject to a **systemic hostile hybrid interference**. It often takes place covertly, and its perpetrators are difficult to identify. **Cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns and economic coercion, as well as sabotage, subversion and intelligence activities pose a threat to the Czech Republic.** These can occur even during peacetime. Russia in particular, but also the PRC and other actors, weaken the stability, social cohesion, effectiveness of decision-making processes and the defence ability of the Czech Republic and its Allies through a range of these activities. Strengthening the resilience of the state and society, including in non-military areas, is thus of critical importance for building the state's defence capacities.
20. **Rapid technological advancement and the proliferation of technologies transform the way armed conflicts are conducted.** The importance of the outer space and cyberspace for defence and for the overall functioning of society is growing. Emerging and disruptive technologies³ pose both new opportunities and risks. Due to the great power competition, the strategic importance of the use of technologies and access to the means of their production keeps growing.
21. **The impact of climate change will increasingly affect both the security environment and the defence capabilities of the Czech Republic.** Extreme weather can disrupt infrastructure

² For the purposes of this Strategy, 'armed forces' includes all military service personnel, i.e. military professionals serving in the following services: the Czech Armed Forces, the Military Office of the President of the Republic, the Castle Guard, the Military Police, the Military Intelligence, the Ministry of Defence, and organisations financed by the Ministry of Defence.

³ In particular, these include artificial intelligence, big data processing, autonomous vehicles and systems, quantum technologies, biotechnology, hypersonic systems, space technologies, new materials and energy-related technologies and propulsion.

and weaken the state's defence capabilities, as well as affect the character of the operational environment and the ways of employing the armed forces.

3. STARTING POINTS, PRINCIPLES AND PREREQUISITES OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC'S DEFENCE

22. The defence of the Czech Republic is built and carried out primarily in cooperation with Allied countries in NATO, underpinned by a strong transatlantic link. Our **defence does not begin at the borders of the Czech Republic, but far beyond them**. A credible collective defence of NATO Allies is its prerequisite.
23. The primary objective of NATO's collective defence, in which the Czech Republic actively participates, is to **deter any adversary from attacking Allied countries**. In the event that deterrence fails, the Czech Republic, together with its Allies, will join a collective defence operation.
24. As a consequence of Russia's increasing aggressiveness, the main mission of the Czech defence policy is to comprehensively **prepare for a long-lasting high-intensity defensive war with a technologically advanced adversary equipped with nuclear weapons**.
25. To this end, the Czech Republic will keep **building the military as well as non-military capabilities necessary for both collective and individual deterrence and defence** against potential aggression. This has both qualitative and quantitative implications for capability requirements. Lessons learned from the war in Ukraine are of considerable relevance to further strengthening of Czech defence capabilities as well.
26. Future conflicts will necessitate conducting **multidomain operations**. This will require synergies and a high level of harmonization of efforts across all areas of military engagement, i.e. land, air, sea, cyber and space operations. Contribution from civilian institutions is also essential.
27. **NATO is undergoing its most fundamental reorganization and strengthening of its deterrence and defence capabilities and instruments in thirty years**. This mainly means a new architecture of operational plans and a revision of the NATO Force Structure in accordance with the New Force Model, including the command and control structure. For the Czech Republic, this brings increased requirements for deployable and sustainable forces and capabilities within the framework of common deterrence measures and collective defence operations. It also brings significant increase in requirements for logistics capacities, including the prepositioning of ammunition and other materiel, and it requires the development of the capability **to receive sizeable Allied forces (both ground and air) on Czech Republic's territory** and to provide Host Nation Support (HNS).

PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF RECEPTION, STAGING AND ONWARD MOVEMENT OF ALLIED FORCES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

*In the event of an increased threat, the Czech Republic will be both **a transit and a host country** for Allied forces. Its role will be to provide Host Nation Support (HNS) to these forces. This support may require a range of measures and capabilities.*

***Transit of Allied forces** involves police escort, transport arrangements, provision of basic life needs including food, drinking water, fuel, rest and medical support, and provision of comprehensive force protection, including air defence and measures against the threat of subversive attacks.*

***Forces operating on our territory** will, in addition to the above, require the Czech Republic to create the conditions necessary to conduct successful military activities, i. e. securing the area of deployment, covering part of the supply needs (including storage capacities and prepositioned stocks) and implementing measures for Allies to be able to use the airspace of the Czech Republic.*

Enablement of these measures in a crisis situation requires due preparations to be made already in peacetime. This includes organisational planning, creating adequate legal framework, and building a robust transport infrastructure of adequate capacity as well as sufficient accommodation infrastructure.

*The requirements of operational preparation of the national territory and HNS significantly exceed the competences and capacities of the Ministry of Defence and must **involve a number of other public administration bodies and security forces and services** (including the Ministries of the Interior, Transport, Industry and Trade, Health and Agriculture, and the Police of the Czech Republic, the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, the State Material Reserves Administration, the National Cyber and Information Security Agency and intelligence services).*

28. Systematic defence capacity building must proceed continuously. The principle of ‘deferred need’ that was applied to the armed forces development in the past decades has weakened the Czech Republic’s defence capability. **Building well-armed, well-equipped, well-trained and sufficiently manned armed forces, as well as creating the conditions conducive for their employment, must happen now and as fast as possible.**
29. **The warning period, on which both the Czech and NATO defence policies relied until recently, has shrunk dramatically.** It is obvious that a maximum of only a few weeks or months will pass from the first available indications of the adversary’s aggressive intent to the start of a military attack. At the same time, it must be taken into account that hostile activity can take place even during peacetime (hybrid interference) and the Czech Republic must be able to counter it.
30. Due to the rapid transitioning between peacetime, crisis and conflict, it is vital that **certain decisions be made and implemented even outside the officially declared state of crisis** in order to deliver on deterrence and defence.⁴

⁴ States of crisis include the state of danger, state of emergency, state of national emergency and state of war. For the defence sector, state of national emergency and the state of war are particularly relevant. The state of national emergency is declared in the event of an imminent threat to the sovereignty or territorial integrity of the country or its democratic foundations. The state of war is declared in the event of an attack on the Czech Republic or if the situation requires the fulfilment of international treaty obligations on collective defence.

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31. This mainly applies to the implementation of deterrence measures and the preparation for collective defence in NATO. This may include both **the rapid deployment of Czech troops assigned for NATO-led operations and other activities, as well as the provision of HNS.**
 32. The defence of the Czech Republic is based on the NATO collective defence system. The Czech Republic bears a significant part of responsibility for its functionality, effectiveness and credibility. For this reason, **the priority of the Czech defence policy is the country's adequate contribution to building collective defence and deterrence capacities and instruments in NATO.** This primarily applies to meeting the NATO Capability Targets, contributing forces and assets of the Ministry of Defence to all three pillars of NATO's New Force Model, providing HNS on the territory of the Czech Republic and participating in NATO deterrence measures and operations.
 33. In accordance with its obligations arising from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Czech Republic will not seek to acquire nuclear weapons. However, the Czech Republic actively participates in NATO's nuclear planning and contributes to its nuclear deterrence.
 34. The EU defence initiatives contribute to filling the gaps identified in NATO defence planning, which is the main tool for the Czech Republic to identify required capabilities, and contribute to the security of Europe. **The Czech Republic contributes to the development of the EU's security and defence dimension with the aim to ensure its complementarity with NATO.** It supports the use of the EU defence initiatives to increase Europe's contribution to NATO defence as well as to protect Europe's security interests in situations where NATO is not involved. In particular, this includes the ability to manage small-scale crises in the areas of interest and to support the building of security and defence capacities of partner countries.
 35. Reinforcing defence and developing capabilities also takes place within the framework of **bilateral cooperation.** Through defence diplomacy, the Czech Republic develops cooperation with partners to deepen mutual ties and strengthen practical cooperation, especially military-to-military cooperation. **The key partners of the Czech Republic in the field of defence are, in particular, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland and Slovakia.**
 36. National defence is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces only. The defence of the Czech Republic requires a **whole-of-government⁵ and whole-of-society approach.** The Czech defence system must thus enable and further develop such an integrated approach.
 37. The defence of the Czech Republic cannot be carried out without an active cooperation between the public administration and the private sector, including the defence industry.⁶ **Further development of the defence industrial base of the Czech Republic is a necessity.**

⁵ The term 'government' covers both central administrative bodies and self-governing entities.

⁶ This mainly includes securing production capacity, building strategic stocks and strengthening resilience.

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38. Reliable defence requires **sufficiently sized, motivated, competent, and well-prepared personnel** serving and working both in the Czech defence system and in other areas key to defence, in the public, non-profit and private sectors.
 39. The defence of the Czech Republic cannot be provided by military professionals alone. It requires a larger contribution by ready and available **reserves of the armed forces**.⁷
 40. Even though in many respects the Czech defence system **has been built on sound principles over the past decades, its individual elements have often not been implemented to the necessary depth and scope**.⁸
 41. **Furthermore, defence has long been underfunded.** This has led to the creation of a significant internal carryover debt, manifested, in particular, in the neglect of infrastructure, delays in the armed forces modernisation and the low levels of stocks, including ammunition.
 42. Further **increases in defence spending are an essential precondition for achieving the necessary defence capabilities. Defence expenditures will reach 2% of GDP in 2024 and will subsequently be maintained at this level or above it.** This is ensured through the Act on Funding the Defence of the Czech Republic. In view of the unfavourable development of the security environment and the need to eliminate internal debt, the level of 2% of GDP must be considered as a minimum, while it is possible that we will need to spend even more on defence.

WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY PRECONDITIONS OF DEFENCE

43. National defence requires an integrated, whole-of-society approach involving the cooperation of all public authorities, citizens, the private and non-profit sectors and the educational system. **Successful delivery of the prerequisites for defence requires an active and responsible approach of all these actors both during and outside the crisis states.**
44. **Resilience of the state, society and citizens is a fundamental non-military prerequisite for credible deterrence and defence.** For this reason, the Czech Republic will further strengthen its civilian emergency preparedness and its resilience against military and non-military threats. It will adopt a responsible approach to meeting relevant Alliance commitments, particularly in NATO's seven baseline requirements of resilience.⁹
45. The Czech Republic will strive to develop knowledge and skills across the spectrum of **defence and security issues and resilience to both military and non-military threats.** To this end, the

⁷ The armed forces reserves include the Active Reserve.

⁸ These include, for instance, the provision of HNS, building of reserves, the capability to expand the armed forces into a wartime organizational structure, the preparation of citizens for national defence, and defence-related crisis management.

⁹ NATO's seven baseline requirements for resilience are: (1) assured continuity of government and critical government services, (2) resilient energy supplies, (3) ability to deal effectively with uncontrolled movement of people, (4) resilient food and water resources, (5) ability to deal with mass casualties, (6) resilient civil communications systems, (7) resilient civil transportation systems.

state supports the development of defence-related and technical skills as well as physical fitness of citizens. It also supports the preparation of the population to prevent and manage emergencies and crises.

46. **Citizens' preparedness for national defence is crucial.** The state's instruments in this area include the promotion of citizens' participation in the Active Reserve and in voluntary military exercises, as well as the institute of voluntary identification to join the armed forces. The Government and the Ministry of Defence will seek additional relevant tools to promote the voluntary involvement of citizens in preparation for defence. After the state of national emergency or the state of war is declared, the preparation of citizens for national defence becomes compulsory.
47. The Czech Republic systematically strengthens the **recognition by society of defence as a fundamental purpose of the state**. It shall strive to raise the social prestige of serving in the armed forces and public administration and to **build a comprehensive system of support for veterans and military traditions**.
48. All levels of both the civilian and military education system will also be appropriately involved in preparation for defence with the aim of promoting critical thinking, developing pupils' and students' civic consciousness, strengthening their sense of civic responsibility and motivating them to actively participate in public life. **The education system shall promote military, security and technical knowledge and skills in an appropriate manner** and foster the willingness to contribute to national defence.
49. **Strategic communication is an important tool for strengthening resilience of the state and society.** Adversaries use increasingly sophisticated hybrid methods to advance their objectives, including conducting hostile information and psychological operations to undermine public confidence in state institutions and the democratic system, spreading tensions and cripple the state's ability to function and make decisions. Strategic communication is the key tool to communicate defence and security objectives in an efficient and transparent way and limit the impact of hostile information operations.

4. REQUIREMENTS ON THE CZECH DEFENCE SYSTEM

50. The central function of the Czech defence system is to defend the state through participation in the collective defence efforts in NATO. This brings two main tasks for the Czech Republic:
 - I. in accordance with the apportioned NATO Capability Targets, to build **well-armed, well-equipped, well-trained and combat-sustainable military forces deployable in collective defence operations, and**
 - II. to enable the country's territory and ensure the **reception of and support for Allied armed forces**.

Other tasks will be addressed by the Czech defence system depending on the availability of capabilities and resources.

51. The Czech Republic and its defence system, including the armed forces, will be able to meet the following requirements and perform the following tasks:

- I. Contribute in NATO to the **deterrence of adversaries and to the defence of the Czech Republic and its Allies in all operational domains** (land, air, space, cyber, maritime¹⁰).
- II. For the purpose of NATO collective defence, to develop **forces and capabilities to the extent agreed in the NATO Defence Planning Process and to develop forces and capabilities to perform tasks under national command**. All these forces must be adequately armed, equipped, trained, resourced, interoperable with Allied forces, deployable, combat-sustainable and prepared to **fight a long-lasting, high-intensity defensive war against a technologically advanced adversary armed with nuclear weapons**. They must be maintained at a level of readiness commensurate to their affiliation within the NATO New Force Model.
- III. **Provide conditions for deterrence of adversaries and for the NATO collective defence on the territory of the Czech Republic**. This includes supporting the reception, staging and onward movement of potentially large numbers of Allied forces in line with the HNS requirements. The precondition for this is the cooperation of all relevant public authorities in the provision of medical support¹¹, accommodation and rest facilities, transport infrastructure (road, rail, air), fuel, food, drinking water and other supplies, and the protection of Allied forces on Czech territory.
- IV. For the purposes of securing the territory of the Czech Republic, protecting the population and meeting the needs of collective defence, possess both a sufficient **ground-based air defence** and an advanced **supersonic capability** integrated in the NATO Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS).
- V. Deploy armed forces to **military operations outside the territory of the Czech Republic led by NATO, the EU, the UN or *ad hoc* coalitions** in order to manage the consequences of security crises, stabilise conflict areas, suppress terrorism and carry out humanitarian actions. However, the deployment of armed forces in international crisis management missions and operations must not weaken the Czech Republic's defence and the country's ability to participate in NATO collective deterrence and defence.
- VI. Deploy armed forces outside the territory of the Czech Republic either in cooperation with partners or (in extreme cases and to a limited extent only) independently for the purpose of **rescue operations and evacuation of Czech citizens from crisis areas**.

¹⁰ For obvious reasons, the Czech Republic does not have the ambition to build a navy. However, it contributes to some common instruments and activities related to the maritime operational domain within the NATO and the EU cooperation. Participation in counter-piracy operations is one example.

¹¹ Medical support covers the provision of medical services, including medical care and transport of patients of the Czech armed forces and, when providing HNS, of Allied forces. In case military medical capacities are fully exhausted, civilian medical capacities will also be used.

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- VII. Provided it does not weaken the country's defence, **provide support to the regular components of the integrated rescue system** on the territory of the Czech Republic for emergency and crisis management.
 - VIII. In cooperation with NATO and EU partners, in *ad hoc* coalitions as well as independently, support the **building and strengthening of security and defence capacities of partner countries** in areas of interest threatened by instability, conflicts and infiltration by foreign armed groups. This may include advising, mentoring, training, information exchange and supply of materiel.
 - IX. If necessary, **expand the Czech armed forces into its wartime organizational structure** through selective recruitment and partial or general mobilization.

5. ENSURING DEFENCE

CZECH REPUBLIC'S DEFENCE SYSTEM

- 52. The national defence system is part of the security system of the Czech Republic, which is outlined in the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic. **The Government is responsible for the country's defence.** Other actors key to the national defence system are the President, the Parliament, Ministries and other central administrative authorities, local government authorities, law enforcement agencies, armed forces and citizens.
- 53. A well functioning **civilian control and democratic oversight of the armed forces** is one of the fundamental principles of the national defence system.¹²
- 54. National defence and the related duties and tasks are defined by the relevant legislation. The Government lays out the **basic guidelines for the defence of the Czech Republic in the National Central Defence Plan** and subordinate national defence plans.
- 55. Defence capability building includes **defence planning, development of armed forces and the enablement of national territory.** It also includes tasks for other public authorities and the society as a whole.
- 56. There must be well-established linkages and rules for the **involvement of industry in national defence and for the use of its capacities.** The defence industry in particular contributes substantially to the sustainability and further development of military capabilities and capacities.

¹² The civilian control of the Czech armed forces is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, the Government and the President. They set the main directions for their development and activities. Democratic oversight is exercised by the Government and the Parliament of the Czech Republic, which, among other things, approves the deployment of the armed forces and their budget and controls their activities through parliamentary committees.

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57. In the event of a major deterioration of the security situation, including serious hostile hybrid interference, an **appropriate state of crisis may be declared**, depending on the nature and severity of the threat and its impact on the fulfilment of our collective defence treaty obligations. The declaration of states of crisis creates the necessary conditions for public authorities to take appropriate measures for managing crises, including national defence.
58. To make sure the national defence system works properly, **the effectiveness of the decision-making process must be increased. Its interconnectedness with the NATO and EU crisis management instruments is a necessity.**
59. Efficient and timely decision-making also necessitates an expansion of the **integrated national communication system that enables transmission of national, NATO and EU classified as well as unclassified information** to all central administrative authorities and other components of the Czech security and defence system. Sufficient and up-to-date situational awareness must also be ensured by systematic monitoring and analysis of the external environment.
60. The national defence system and its individual components are **regularly tested and exercised both at the national level and in exercises organised by NATO and the EU.** The highest decision-making level (members of the Government) also participate in these exercises, depending on their focus. The lessons learned are subsequently used to enhance the effectiveness of the Czech defence system.
61. A key role in defence is played in particular by:
- **The Office of the Government** by coordinating the response to hybrid interference and strategic communication of the state,
 - **The Ministry of Defence** by preparing and implementing national defence and building the armed forces, by supporting research and development in the field of defence and by supporting the development of the defence and security industry,
 - **The Ministry of Foreign Affairs** by representing the Czech Republic in international organizations, by providing communication and strengthening coordination with Allies and by leading diplomatic efforts to prevent and manage crises,
 - **The Ministry of the Interior** by providing support to the defence efforts of the state by maintaining internal security, including countering hybrid interference threatening internal security, through the integrated rescue system, by ensuring efficient crisis management, population protection, civil emergency preparedness and fire protection, by further strengthening the resilience of the state and society, by ensuring emergency communication and secure government communications and by supporting the movements of Czech and Allied forces on Czech territory,
 - **The Ministry of Transport** by providing civil transport infrastructure to support the movements of Czech and Allied forces on Czech territory,

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- **The State Material Reserves Administration** by acquiring and maintaining state material reserves and emergency stocks of oil, oil products and other strategic raw materials for crisis situations as well as by coordinating the measures of the system of economic measures for crisis situations,
 - **The National Cyber and Information Security Agency** in the field of cyber security, especially by safeguarding the working of state's critical information infrastructure, in the field of protection of classified information within information and communication systems and cryptographic protection, and in the field of satellite navigation systems,
 - **The Czech Telecommunications Office** by supporting electronic communication of Czech and Allied forces operating on Czech territory and by ensuring the functioning of the state critical communication infrastructure,
 - **The Ministry of Health** in the field of public health protection and health services for the civilian population and, in the event of exhaustion of military capacities, by supporting the Czech and Allied forces operating on Czech territory,
 - **The Ministry of Industry and Trade** in the areas of support for and mobilization of the industry, transition to war production, security of supplies, energy security and fuel supplies, and the availability of raw materials needed for defence efforts and the functioning of the state and society in crisis, and by supporting research and development and supporting the industry in foreign markets,
 - **The Ministry of Agriculture** in the coordination of food production and drinking water supply on the territory of the Czech Republic during crisis,
 - **The Ministry of Finance** by providing funding for defence and processing the emergency or wartime state budget,
 - **The National Security Authority** in protecting both national and foreign powers' classified information,
 - **The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports** by supporting education and preparation of citizens for national defence.

In addition to the above-listed institutions, other public administration bodies are also involved in national defence and its preparation.

CAPABILITIES OF THE ARMED FORCES

62. The main combat force of the country's armed forces is the Czech Armed Forces. The country's armed forces are built on the **all-arms principle and with an emphasis on a combination of advanced technology and robustness**, resilience to hybrid interference and cyber-attacks, deployability, sustainability and the ability to operate in digital environment as well as in diverse

climate conditions, including at a strategic distance from the borders of the Czech Republic. The country's armed forces must have the ability to adapt quickly to changing situations.

63. Defence **capabilities will continue to be developed through multinational NATO and EU projects and initiatives**. The goals include ensuring access to capabilities that would be uneconomical for the Czech Republic on its own, increasing interoperability (standardisation, unification), reducing the number of platforms used, simplifying logistics support, and strengthening the Czech Republic's expertise in unique capabilities.
64. The Czech Republic seeks to build technologically advanced armed forces **equipped with modern combat systems, including unmanned systems**, capable of operating precision-guided munitions at long ranges.
65. **Command and control systems** will enable delivering effects in all operational domains in the context of multi-domain operations, including the ability to process and evaluate large volumes of data.
66. Forces will be maintained **in adequate levels of manning and readiness, with equipment and supplies** required to conduct combat operations in a large-scale, long-lasting, high-intensity conflict.
67. Further development of armed forces will not be based on the acquisition of new types of equipment only, but will also include **coordination of individual elements across domains and their integration into command and control systems**. This integration will be supported by the introduction of advanced systems with a high potential for future development.
68. **The Czech Republic assigns its forces and assets for all tiers of the NATO New Force Model**. To this end, it keeps increasing the readiness, interoperability, and geographic focus of the assigned forces in accordance with the requirements and nature of the individual tiers. The Czech Republic contributes to elements and measures of Allied deterrence, particularly on NATO's Eastern flank. The priority operational directions for the Czech armed forces are Slovakia (where the Czech Republic contributes significantly to the NATO multinational battlegroup), Poland and Lithuania. The Czech Republic also contributes to NATO's Allied Response Force. The readiness of all assigned forces and assets is regularly tested, among others through common exercises with Allies.
69. The core of the Czech Republic's contribution to the NATO defence system will be a **Brigade Task Force based on a mechanized brigade** and complemented by combat support and combat support service elements. The Brigade Task Force will be equipped with adequate stocks (especially ammunition), which need to be continuously invested in, and will be sustainable in combat as part of a NATO collective defence operation.
70. The Czech Republic is developing **light, medium and heavy land force capabilities**, including combat support and combat support service elements, capable of operating across the full spectrum of potential operational deployments. Emphasis is placed on the readiness and deployability of units and their ability to operate within the NATO multidomain command and

control system. The forces will be robust enough to conduct high-intensity operations against technologically advanced forces of the adversary.

71. The Czech Republic will protect its airspace and contribute to the protection of the airspace of Allied countries by employing **a new-generation multirole supersonic aircraft**, which will be capable of deployment in a future multidomain and digital battlefield, both as a part of NATINAMDS and in air operations conducted by ad hoc coalitions.
72. **Ground-based air defence capabilities** against traditional and new threats, such as swarms of unmanned aerial vehicles and hypersonic missiles, must be significantly strengthened. This will cover both the early detection of threats and development of a wide range of assets capable of eliminating them.
73. The Czech Republic will keep building its own **tactical airlift capability** and, in multinational cooperation with Allies, will secure its access to **strategic airlift and sealift capabilities**. It will further develop its **air support capability for land, special and territorial forces**. The Czech Republic will also be able to contribute to **NATO's aerial surveillance, early warning and command and control systems**. Independently or by utilizing multinational solutions, it will acquire tactical unmanned aerial capabilities.
74. The Czech Republic is developing **capabilities to operate in cyberspace**, including capabilities employable in multidomain operations and deployable in support of NATO and the EU. The Czech Republic will be able to defend itself in the cyberspace and will also contribute to common NATO and EU cyber defence systems. The Czech Republic seeks to acquire an active cyber defence capability.
75. The Czech Republic keeps developing a **reliable territorial defence capability**. The main objective is to cover the defence needs on the territory of the Czech Republic with an emphasis on the provision of HNS and the protection and defence of critical defence infrastructure and high-value targets. The ability to expand the armed forces into a wartime organizational structure and carry out mobilization is closely related to territorial defence.
76. The Czech Republic keeps developing **special forces capabilities** that contribute to countering both conventional and unconventional threats on Czech territory and beyond. They include special reconnaissance, intelligence and offensive capabilities and contribute to performing tasks in the areas of support and influence projection.
77. The Czech Republic is building the **capability to conduct information and psychological operations**.
78. The Czech Republic possesses **military intelligence capabilities** that contribute to the provision of comprehensive intelligence support to the state's defence functions through multi-source verified intelligence production. It includes provision of both strategic and situational intelligence information and is conducted in all relevant operational domains.

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79. To protect its armed forces and to support Allied forces present on its territory, the Czech Republic further develops comprehensive **military police capabilities**. These capabilities are designated both for operating in the Czech Republic and for autonomous operations abroad. They are also a necessary prerequisite for the armed forces' ability to expand into a wartime organizational structure.
 80. In the **space operational domain**, the Czech Republic actively participates in EU and NATO initiatives with an emphasis on ensuring situational awareness and the protection of jointly operated and employed satellite assets. The Czech Republic is building its own satellite surveillance, navigation and communication capabilities, as well as the low orbit imaging capability. **Reliable, secure and robust communications using satellite means** will be provided for the Czech armed forces, including deployed forces.¹³
 81. Where relevant, the **impact of climate change** on the security and operational environment, the nature of conflicts and the operational standards of the Czech and Allied forces (including the limited availability of vehicles using fossil fuels in the future and the advent of alternative energy sources) will be reflected in developing the defence capabilities of the Czech Republic.
 82. **Modernised infrastructure of sufficient capacity** is one of the necessary prerequisites for a number of military capabilities and other functions of the defence system of the Czech Republic. The facilities owned by the Ministry of Defence will therefore be adequately developed, especially with regard to the long-term neglect of storage capacities and training and accommodation facilities. It is also necessary for the state to secure ownership rights to all military facilities. The Ministry of Defence will therefore strive to settle ownership relations in military facilities.
 83. To provide **medical support to the Czech armed forces**, including its wartime organizational structure, and to ensure the **support of Allied forces on the territory of the Czech Republic**, the military medical service, including military hospitals, is being developed. In a crisis situation, civilian health service providers can also be incorporated into the medical service system to augment it.

PEOPLE

84. **An adequate number of motivated, competent and well-prepared military professionals and civilian employees** will work in the Ministry of Defence and in the defence system of the Czech Republic as a whole. To succeed in the current and future security environment is only possible with educated and motivated personnel.
85. The Government will provide **competitive working conditions and career management** to attract and retain qualified people of all required specializations, capable of dealing with new

¹³ The importance of satellite communication for the defence of the Czech Republic is growing across the entire public administration, which will develop these capabilities using services provided by both the government and commercial entities.

technologies and of cooperating with partners in the Czech Republic and abroad. The Ministry of Defence will employ a more flexible military recruitment system enabling a wider range of interested persons to join the armed forces.

86. The Czech Republic will prepare and **post military service personnel and civilian employees to international structures important for collective defence**. These include mainly the command structures of NATO and the EU and the NATO International Staff.

THE EXPANSION OF THE ARMED FORCES INTO A WARTIME ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

87. The Czech Republic is systematically building **the capability of its armed forces to expand into a wartime organizational structure**. This includes the system of mobilization, building the necessary infrastructure and procuring the necessary supplies of materiel, armaments and equipment for the entire wartime organizational structure of the armed forces. The obligations of citizens of the Czech Republic in the field of mobilization, including conscription duty, are defined in relevant legislation.
88. The Czech Republic develops appropriate conditions for the **engagement of the Czech defence industry in the system of economic mobilization**, including the provision of production capacities, primarily at the national level or in cooperation with NATO and EU countries and their industrial entities in safeguarding security of supply. The build-up of the system of mobilization will reflect the shortened warning time before the outbreak of a conflict.
89. The required size of the wartime armed forces of the Czech Republic is **regularly assessed and approved by the Government**. The reserve system is being further developed and strengthened when it comes to the reserves' size, readiness and flexibility of use. Following the update of the Concept of Mobilization of the Czech armed forces, the mobilization plans will be revised.
90. Due to the need for rapid response, those steps related to the preparation of mobilization will be identified, for which the feasibility of their implementation in **periods outside the states of crisis** is important.
91. With the overall increase of defence spending and the ongoing modernization of the armed forces, including the development of the Active Reserve Component, it is necessary to gradually **increase the allocation of funds to finance the needs related to the preparation for and execution of the armed forces' expansion into a wartime organizational structure**.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

92. The state must defend itself not only against current but also future threats. Most technical innovation takes place in the private sector and in research institutions, often with no direct relation to defence. Therefore, as part of a whole-of-society effort, the Czech Republic is strengthening its ability to **monitor and evaluate development trends and to respond to the possibility of their military application and abuse** (e.g. in the case of artificial intelligence), to

introduce emerging and disruptive technologies and to operate in new operational domains (cyberspace and outer space).

93. The Czech Republic will create conditions conducive to the direct involvement of relevant state organizations and institutions in research and development projects led by private entities that can be used for defence. For this purpose, it is necessary to **create an innovation infrastructure and eliminate the fragmentation of research and development activities within the Ministry of Defence**.
94. The Czech Republic **cooperates with the private and academic sectors and establishes appropriate partnership and contractual relations with them**. It also directly supports research and development contributing to the fulfilment of the required goals. It supports academic institutions and industrial entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups, in their efforts to engage in international initiatives.
95. The Ministry of Defence **uses efficiently the opportunities provided by international programmes** in the field of innovation. In NATO, these include, in particular, the defence innovation accelerator DIANA and the NATO Innovation Fund. In the EU, these are mainly the programmes of the European Defence Fund and the relevant initiatives of the European Commission and the European Defence Agency.
96. The Czech Republic actively participates in the formation of **international legal and ethical standards** governing the military use of new domains and technologies.

THE ROLE OF THE INDUSTRY

97. The defence and security industry is one of the pillars of the defence system of the Czech Republic.¹⁴ **An advanced and resilient national defence industrial base is a prerequisite for promoting national security interests** and it contributes to meeting the operational needs of the armed forces. It is therefore essential that the domestic defence and security industry is economically strong, technologically advanced, competitive and possesses necessary capacities. The Czech Republic will support supplies of materiel from the Czech defence and security industry to cover the needs of the armed forces.
98. **Ensuring the security of supplies of military equipment** is essential for the defence of the Czech Republic. The complexity of supply chains might affect their flow and reduce the deployability and sustainability of armed forces. For this reason, the Czech Republic supports increasing the competitiveness of the domestic defence and security industry with the aim of further develop its ability to provide both peacetime and crisis supplies of military equipment.

¹⁴ Both the strategic and specific goals of supporting the development of the defence industry are elaborated in the *Armaments and Defence Industry Development Support Strategy of the Czech Republic till 2030*.

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99. **The Czech Republic promotes the integration of domestic entities into international supply chains with an emphasis on eliminating technological and raw material dependencies on unreliable and hostile countries.** In order to ensure the security of supply, the Czech Republic enters into strategic partnerships with necessary foreign suppliers as well.
100. In areas where the domestic defence and security industry does not have the full range of required production and technological capacities, the Ministry of Defence will, when procuring military materiel from foreign suppliers, require the maximum possible **involvement of domestic entities in research, development, production and the provision of support for the life cycle of the purchased materiel.**
101. The Czech Republic strives to increase the ability of the industry to **respond, in a flexible way, to the rapid deterioration of the security situation.** Crisis production requires sufficient number of experienced personnel, access to raw materials including their stocks and energy supply. The Ministry of Defence maintains an overview of the production and technological capabilities of the defence and security industry and, in coordination with the State Material Reserves Administration, supports the creation of stocks of raw materials, components and technologies. The Czech Republic will strive to link requirements for supplies of military equipment in periods outside of the states of crisis with mobilization supplies.
102. In cooperation with other EU Member States, the Czech Republic strives for **the defence and security industry to be recognized as socially beneficial** and to have adequate access to public and private financial resources (loans, investment).
103. An essential precondition for maintaining the capabilities and further development of defence and security industries is their success on foreign markets. For this reason, the Czech Republic supports the **export activities of the defence and security industry**, including through strengthened instruments of state support. The foreign policy interests and international obligations of the Czech Republic will be taken into account.
104. **The Ministry of Defence develops state-owned enterprises under its control** to ensure security of supply, support the life cycle of military equipment and maintain and further develop technical expertise. They also play an important role in providing support for the training of the armed forces. Even though the Ministry of Defence strives for economic stability of its state-owned enterprises, profit generation is not their main purpose. Creating partnerships between state-owned enterprises and private entities may also be useful.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DEFENCE STRATEGY

105. Successful implementation of the Strategy requires a **whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.** Only timely and continuous effort will bring adequate readiness and responsiveness to threats and crisis situations.

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106. Providing defence is a long-term, never-ending process. **Defence planning must therefore be conducted with a long-term perspective.**
107. Adequate financial resourcing is essential for the defence of the Czech Republic. Therefore, the Czech Republic will **spend at least 2% of its GDP** on defence and, if necessary, will proceed to further increasing its defence spending above this level.
108. The Government will create conditions for **adequate personnel, technical and organisational capacities that will enable the optimal use of these resources.** Acquisition processes need to be streamlined, including in view of the speed of technological progress.
109. The individual elements of the Strategy will be elaborated in **subordinate policy, implementation and planning documents of the Ministry of Defence.** These are mainly the Central State Defence Plan and other state defence plans, the Long-Term Outlook for Defence, the Czech Armed Forces Development Concept, the Concept for the Operational Preparation of the State Territory, the Concept for the Preparation of Citizens for the Defence of the State, the Concept for the Mobilization of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic and the Armaments and Defence Industry Development Support Strategy. Following the adoption of this Strategy, these documents will be updated as necessary.
110. Specific tasks and measures within the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence resulting from this Strategy as well as subordinate policy and planning documents are implemented primarily through the regularly updated **Ministry of Defence Medium-Term Activity and Development Plan.**
111. **Other relevant public administration bodies** will implement the Strategy through their respective strategic, policy and implementation documents.
112. In the interagency working group to address legislative and legal issues in the field of defence, established under the Defence Planning Committee, **an analysis of all relevant laws and subordinate regulations related to defence, including the legal regulation of the states of crisis, will be carried out.** In cases where their current wording is not in accordance with the needs of implementing this Strategy, changes will be proposed.
113. The implementation of the Strategy in the whole-of-government context will be regularly **evaluated primarily through the Report on Ensuring the Defence of the Czech Republic and verified in national and NATO exercises.** Its implementation and evaluation will also be part of the implementation and evaluation of the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic.
114. In the event of a fundamental change in the main starting points, needs and goals of the defence policy of the Czech Republic, **the Strategy will be revised.**
115. This Strategy **replaces the Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic** that was approved by the Government Resolution No. 194 of March 13, 2017.