

"Baltic Defence Review"

H.E. Lennart Meri
President
of the Republic of Estonia
on the opening of the Baltic Defence College

Security is precious and there is never too much of it. And small countries, such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are often uncertain in their attitudes towards their own security. Vociferous self-confidence is only too often accompanied by an arrogant shrug. This attitude is based on an illusion that there would be no point for a small country in spending its scanty resources on self-defence. Or on the blind conviction that, if necessary, security will be provided by friendly partner states. Few are aware that Estonia's, Latvia's and Lithuania's attitude towards their security will determine whether our countries are to endure or not, determine the future of our children, our mother tongue, our culture and our home country. These things depend directly on our ability to reckon with the security structures of Europe and the world, and on our ability and will to contribute to these structures.

Security is indivisible wealth and must be cultivated in the spirit of close regional concord. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have the task to ensure, to the best of their ability, the security of the Baltic region, which is a necessary precondition to stability in Europe. Such future can be shaped in co-operation with our neighbours, provided that we have the will to do it. Everything begins with will. We are able and willing to choose ourselves, which international security systems to rely on. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have expressly stated their wish to become members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. We are willing to take on voluntary obligations for achieving this goal. And this is what we are doing. It is true that the task is difficult, even more so because unlike Poland or Hungary, all three Baltic States had to start from below the zero point: the occupation powers had destroyed our defence forces, and for many years, army and military service meant the distorted and ideologised military political machinery serving the purposes of the Soviet empire.

Today, our toilsome development has yielded the first results in the international co-operation in peace securing operations. The Baltic Defence College, starting to work before our eyes, and the joint military magazine "Baltic Defence Review", starting publication now, are examples of our will of defence.

With these steps, we help to secure our national sovereignty and regional stability, and make our contribution to the strengthening of global security.

I wish to underline the help of our Partner States in setting this new school in motion, and to express our sincere gratitude to the first Rector, Danish General Michael Clemmesen. Also, I wish that the whole school, both the students and the professors, would remember that the future students of this school will follow in your footsteps. Be aware of their keen eyes regarding you, of your responsibility to the future!

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Michael H. Clemmesen

Brigadier General
Commandant of the Baltic Defence College

The Baltic Defence Review will be published bi-annually during its first years. It will be housed in the Baltic Defence College. However, it is not the intent to limit its focus to that of a house journal. The review is created as a forum for debate on Baltic Region security and defence. We hope that the actual and potential participants in that debate will use it as such.

This first number will address three questions. The first one is the fundamental one: Can the Baltic States be Defended? The authors behind the three articles in the first section, Robert Dalsjö, Hain Rebas, and Kjeld Hillingsö, approach the issue in very different ways.

The second part let representatives of the Baltic States' defence establishment, Giedre Statkeviciute, Gundars Abols, and Ants Laaneots, describe how far their countries have taken their national defence forces after independence and outline how they have planned to develop their defence structures within the next decade. The final section describes or analyses the steps taken to bring the region closer to NATO by the participation in international co-operation and by increasing the level of interoperability. Linas Linkevicius narrates why and how Lithuania got involved in peace support operations. The articles of Vello Loemaa, Andrius Krivas, and I myself analyse the problems and progress of interoperability.

A normal issue of the Baltic Defence Review will besides covering different themes like this first issue, bring book reviews, translations of key articles or documents into English, and, when relevant, articles publishing the results of the work of students and staff at the Baltic Defence College.

I thank all the contributors to this number, not least the main illustrator, my old friend, the great Lithuanian photographer and patriot, Tadas Dambrauskas.

The Baltic Defence College: Strengthening Baltic Defence Structures through Education

Dr Björn von Sydow, Minister of Defence of the Kingdom of Sweden

It gives me great pleasure to contribute to this first issue of "the Baltic Defence Review", produced by the Baltic Defence College. Media and educational systems are both fundamental parts of a democratic and open society and they should therefore be given particular attention. Coming from academia myself, I fully appreciate the fundamental role that education and research play in every society and in every part of society.

The city of Tartu, where the College will be located, has historic connotations in this respect. Here, in the year 1632, the second university to be established in the then Swedish Empire was inaugurated. Its first Chancellor was Johan Skytte, in Sweden most remembered for being the tutor of king Gustavus Adolphus and - at the University of Uppsala - our first professor ever of the independent subject Political Science. In a time long before democracy as we know it was developed, he was a progressive person; in his opening speech at the university, he advocated circulation between the estates, as the social strata were named. He believed that not only noblemen, but also peasants should be welcomed at the university.

I expect that the Baltic Defence College will also stand for openness and free meetings of minds in its education, based on the democratic values of our time.

In this article, I will focus on two issues; the support to the build up of defence structures in the Baltic states, and the role of our common project, the Baltic Defence College.

The strategic environment

The security situation of the Baltic Sea region is in historic terms a favourable one. I need not recall all the changes for the better during the last decade, the regained independence of the Baltic states being one of the most important. Some risks and challenges remain, indeed, some new ones have arisen, but the present situation is focused on security-building and institutionalization of the gains we have achieved. In the defence field, one of the most powerful tools in our hands is the Partnership for Peace-process (PfP). The process has two dimensions. It includes most European countries and the United States and Canada in cooperation that is in itself confidence-building. There will be no stable security system if there are new dividing lines. The participation of Russia is needed and, not least in the Baltic Sea region, also the presence and involvement of the United States and other western nations. And, secondly, PfP enhances interoperability so that we are all better prepared for participation in common crisis management operations.

When Sweden took the chair of the project creating a common Baltic Defence College, it was without hesitation. A modern defence under civilian democratic control and with popular support contributes to democratic society. In the world in which we live, societies need to feel reasonably safe to be able to develop in a harmonic way. Self-defence is a right and obligation of each independent nation (see, for instance, the UN Charter articles 43 and 51).

I believe that the Nordic countries have experience to share with the Baltic states in the defence field. This is based on, among other things, our similar sizes as nations, similar terrain and similar

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climate. The Nordic countries have over time developed so called "total defence" systems. They encompass not only military defence units, but all resources our societies can bring together to defend our nations on the whole scale from crisis to full-scale war. Conversely, these resources can be used to counter peace time strains on society, i.e. during severe accidents, fires etc.

The concept of total defence

Total defence systems along the Nordic model saves money; dual civil-military use should always be considered as it not only reduces expenditures and the need for investments, but contributes to a civilian society more robust and able to withstand strains and crises of different kinds, also in peace time. Rescue services, medical services and telecommunications could be cases in point in this respect. Transportation is another example; why should the military sector procure all transport aircraft and lorries which they may need in a mobilized situation when many of those belonging to civilian society have will not be used during a war?

In our experience, smaller countries facing potential existential threats need to pool all kinds of resources to create a credible deterrence. In our view, it would not be wise or economically reasonable - indeed not even possible - to attempt to create separate military structures for deterrence without the full preparedness and support of the civilian resources and society.

I therefore find it very encouraging that the Baltic states and the supporting countries have agreed that the Baltic Defence College will be based on Nordic total defence concepts and Nordic military tactics.

There are a number of preconditions for the development of total defence structures, for example; elaborated national defence strategies with popular support; Parliamentary endorsement of aims, plans and budgeting; identified roles and missions for all parts of the total defence system (not only the military parts), and the development of openness, transparency and ties between defence structures and the population, for example between military bases and the surrounding local communities. Defence is not a matter only for officers, but a challenge to society as a whole. If popular support is absent, that nation will fail to meet the challenge.

National defence - international participation

I have mentioned that in our part of the world, this decade is characterized by the building of security structures and common crisis management. It is the historic duty of all of us to participate. What the international community first and foremost requires in the defence field, however, is that we are capable of creating a stable situation for ourselves, i.e. developing a capability for national crisis management and self-defence. Having this, we already contribute positively to the security situation. It is only when, after the Cold War, the security situation became such that we as nations and individuals felt reasonably secure, that we were capable of re-directing our efforts towards common crisis management in a more effective manner.

National efforts to build forces for international crisis management and humanitarian operations should, in my opinion, therefore be linked to national objectives identified in the national defence strategy. Different solutions can of course be found. I believe, though, that there should be a national context for the international crisis management capability a nation develops, so that it does not become a foreign object in the national defence system. The international crisis management capability should be developed as part of, and in harmony with, the defence system as a whole.

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In Sweden, every six months the responsibility for setting up our "standing" UN battalion - based on conscripts - rotates between different Swedish units so that the task constitutes an integral part of our national defence. The experience from participation in international service is thus fed back and integrated into the whole of the defence system.

The Baltic Defence College is a joint Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian school. This is a worthwhile end in itself. Despite many differences, there is much commonality in the respective situations and resources are scarce both on the Baltic side and on the side of the supporting nations. Attending educational institutions in other countries is an important additional experience, that is why most nations exchange students, but there exists a definitive need for a school that is based on the specific preconditions of this region. Sending students to other countries' schools is also a quite expensive undertaking, especially over the longer term.

Much can thus be saved and gained by a common project, as in other areas of defence cooperation, such as the Baltic Peace-keeping Battalion, the Baltic Naval Squadron and the Baltic Air Surveillance Network.

Direction of defence cooperation

In the context of the BALTSEA (Baltic Security Assistance) group of countries a common view has been developed on the direction of defence related support, based on the plans and priorities of the Baltic states themselves. We fully support the continuing work of this group to refine the coordination of defence support so that it is as efficient and effective as possible. In the long term, however, coordination of support can only be done in the ministries of the Baltic states themselves. To assist the development of the Baltic states' own planning capabilities is therefore a strategic and central area in our support.

The direction of defence-related support has also been discussed and confirmed at the Baltic-Nordic-American Defence Ministerial meeting in June 1998. From the Swedish point of view, we intend to pursue the direction we have understood to be the intention of the Baltic states. The direction of support from our part - as regards the military sector - is therefore:

- capability for "the Nordic conduct of warfare",
- priority to the quality of personnel and training ("quality of life"),
- emphasis on mobilized, reserve based defence,
- priority to land forces with anti-air and anti-armour capabilities, C4-enhancement and air defence (that is, land based surveillance systems and anti-air-systems),
- integrated logistics considerations.

Our common effort

Crisis management and defence capabilities along these lines, chosen by the Baltic states themselves, will contribute to the enhancement of security in our region. It will be the task of the Baltic Defence College to build the basis for those defence structures under democratic, civilian control through well educated, open-minded students who will be the future leaders of the Baltic defence forces. Leadership will be a key subject. It will be a common effort by the Baltic states and the supporting countries; the College will have a truly multinational staff, the students will come not only from the Baltic states but also from supporting nations. Over time, the gradual take over of responsibilities by the Baltic states is the aim of the project and this will be a measure of its success. It will not be an easy task, but, I believe, a most inspiring one and together we will make it a success!

Baltic Self-Defence Capabilities -

Achievable and Necessary, or Futile Symbolism?

Robert Dalsjö*

When the status and security of the Baltic states is discussed, "hard" security issues, including capabilities for self-defence, are often considered as sensitive or problematic. Nonetheless, these issues remain fundamental in the lives of nations, and they are pertinent regardless of whether the aim of NATO-membership is attainable in the longer term, or some other arrangement is found — short of re-inclusion into an exclusive Russian sphere of influence. A failure to address these issues properly, by the Baltics and by the West, could derail the entire process of Baltic integration into Western structures, with repercussions for the Euro-Atlantic security system as a whole.¹

The political and military utility of Baltic self-defences

It is often claimed that the geopolitical and military situation of the three Baltic States is such that military means cannot play any important role in their security policy — resistance would be futile should a Russian attack occur. A common corollary is that the purported indefensibility of the Baltics makes it useless and dangerous for the West to issue security guarantees in any form, "as nothing could be done except by nuclear means".² It is also often — wrongly — assumed that these nations lack a military heritage and a proven record of soldiering.³

The charge of indefensibility is of course true, if we refer to repelling a major attack of a reconstituted Russian military machine, using all possible resources, bearing down on just the Baltics, or on a single one of them. But it is equally true that this is a fairly trivial observation. The fact is that no country in the world can be successfully defended against all threats (especially in the nuclear age), and that few, if any, countries are defenceless against each and every threat.⁴

Furthermore, simple one-on-one military force balances or comparisons of geographic size do not provide the final word. One must also take into account such things as determination, terrain, an aggressor's time-constraints, and the wider military and political situation. There are plenty of examples of how will, skill and the logic of deterrence — if applied correctly and in the right circumstances — can defy the logic of numbers and geography.

Moreover, it is misleading to assess military security mainly in terms of the possibility and outcome of a major deliberate invasion. In most cases it is much more relevant to focus on the political consequences of perceived or real military imbalances — on domination and accommodation rather than on outright invasion. A situation where one part is perceived as superior and the other as vulnerable can affect patterns of influence and political freedom of action; it can facilitate coercion in a crisis or when a major decision is to be made, and it can open up for the use of force for intervention or for action by proxies.

Given the history and geographic position of the Baltic three it is understandable that the possibility of a major and deliberate Russian attack on them cannot be discounted. But the Russian army of today and the foreseeable future is only a shadow of the once mighty Soviet Army, in quality as well as in quantity, and would be hard-pressed to launch a traditional invasion.

Actual conditions in Russia as well as in the Baltic States warrant focusing on the lower end of the spectrum of conflict, or at least on contingencies involving limited forces: Intervention during a crisis, attacks by local forces or irresponsible actors, armed destabilisation, or the use of military threats for black-mail. These are types of conflicts and threats where even rather limited defence capabilities can be very effective. They can make clear that an act of aggression is taking place, by denying an aggressor the chance of a quick *fait accompli*, and raising the ante, and by putting down unrest which could give a predatory power a pretext for intervention.⁵

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The Baltic defence forces, which have been created so far, may appear insignificant in international comparison. Nonetheless, they already provide the states with the basic capability of asserting sovereignty and putting up more than just symbolic resistance. Furthermore, a capability to seriously impede an attack by such Russian forces that could be rapidly made available (a high-end estimate might yield about three brigades worth of ground troops, plus some helicopter and air assets) should be within reach, provided that current shortcomings in arms, communications and training are rectified.⁶

Deterrence at this level — regionally available forces — has a stabilising effect by restraining a possible Russian inclination to use military instruments rashly in case of a crisis, and by limiting the options for a Russian commander considering to take action on his own. An attack using only regionally available forces could turn into a rather messy affair, while sending reinforcements to the area prior to an attack would require decisions, time and actions which would be noted abroad. This could help responsible decision-takers in Moscow to withstand pressure for military action, as well as allow for other states to intervene politically. The prospect of destruction of infrastructure of vital importance to Russian exports, such as pipelines and terminals for oil, could also make politically influential Russian business conglomerates weigh in against a resort to force.

In a slightly longer perspective, say a decade, it should be possible for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to acquire forces which would give a potential aggressor cause to think twice before planning even a more deliberate operation. While the comparison of military forces is hardly an exact science it still seems possible to make rough estimates, indicating possibilities and problems. Current force development plans for the Baltic countries generally aim at setting up about five mobilizable brigades per country. Provided that the quality of these units is sufficient to make quantitative comparisons meaningful, the combined Baltic defensive strength of 15 brigades would not be negligible when set against a Russian army which may consist of no more than 6-8 fully manned and equipped divisions. This is especially so if the Baltics can make proper use of the defensive qualities of the terrain, which are better than commonly appreciated in the West.⁷

These numbers indicate that if the Baltic three can stick together in a crisis or in the face of a military threat, their chances of attaining a force-ratio amenable to asymmetric deterrence increases considerably. An attack on such a grouping, if united, would seem risky unless forces normally deployed at the borders against China, Central Asia and the unruly Caucasus are transferred in advance. Granted, extensive application of airpower, helicopters and high-technology gear could reduce an attacker's need for ground troops and time considerably, but hardly to the point of obviating the need for a build-up of forces before an attack.

The fact that such a build-up would be time-consuming and hard-to-conceal gives other powers the opportunity to assist the Baltics in ways that might avert a conflict or change its course. A key prerequisite for outside, primarily US/NATO, military assistance to the Baltics in case of crisis would, however, seem to be that the Baltic armed forces have the competence, quality and structure necessary to appear "helpable" and the capability to put such help to good use.

All in all, potential Baltic capabilities for self-defence may be greater than commonly thought. A combination of small rapid-reaction units and mobilizable battalions or brigades, supplemented by territorial units, could make a considerable contribution to the stability of Europe and the region, as well as to the direct security of the Baltic states themselves. The contribution would not primarily lie in averting intervention or invasion, but in the political ramifications of the existence of a defence capability: Ensuring that the eastern shore of the Baltic is not seen as a tempting military vacuum; reducing the room for bullying and recourse to military threats as a political instrument; increasing confidence in the Baltics and elsewhere about the permanence of independence; and facilitating further Baltic integration in Western structures, including NATO.

It would, of course, not be prudent to assume that Russia's current weakness will last forever. However, it now seems unlikely that Russia could bounce back as a great power in less than 15-20

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years, and every year that passes without basic reforms increases the time for revival even more. These are objective conditions that could not be changed by the exertions of old-style communists or nationalists, should they come to power. The Baltics and their friends in the West can use the time available to establish a pattern where real Baltic independence, and military deterrence at the regional level, is part of normalcy and where any change for the worse would be seen as a threatening aberration. When Russia finally emerges revived, chances are that its political elite may have reconciled itself to the new pattern, or at least that it considers the cost of changing it as too high.

Two problems - domestic funding and foreign arms

The special historical circumstances of Estonia's, Latvia and Lithuania's rebirth as sovereign states meant that national defences had to be organised from scratch. This difficult task was compounded by the after-effects of the traumas which have befallen the Baltic nations this century, including a wide-spread feeling that defence efforts are futile, and an attitude to things military shaped by fifty years of occupation. Given this, and the more general burden of clearing up the detritus of Soviet rule, it is not surprising that it has proved hard to get political attention for defence issues, to assign priority to military spending, and to convince the populace to accept conscription.

However, the process of seeking membership in NATO has increased the political salience of the defence issue and highlighted the need for credible and visible efforts in order to qualify as candidates. Estonia and Lithuania reacted first, raising defence spending to about 1.2% and 1.5% of GNP respectively (1998 figures), and making political commitments to raise the level to 2%, as well as working to ensure a greater intake of conscripts.

Latvia was slower in realising the importance of defence issues. The defence budget long languished at a level, less than 0.7% of GNP, which barely covered the salaries of present staff, leaving morale suffering and little or no room for improvement in capabilities. Much needed reforms of the regular (conscript) army and its associated structures have been held up and parliament has been reluctant to tighten lax conscription laws.⁸ However, the fact that a lack of effort could jeopardise prospects as a candidate for NATO finally registered in 1998, leading to a decision to increase spending to 1% of GNP 1999 and to set a target of 2%. This decision has, albeit with some deferments, survived through an election, a change of government and a scandal involving use of defence funds, and might thus stick.

However, just increasing the amount of Baltic attention and treasure devoted to defence will not suffice. Despite healthy economic growth, the Baltic three are still poor and it will be a long time before they can afford to buy — on commercial terms — the equipment they need, especially as a substantial part of the defence budget needs to be spent on attracting and retaining talented young people. So for the coming decade, the Baltic three will need outside assistance — training, arms, other equipment — supplied on favourable terms. There are good reasons for concerned states in the West to provide such assistance, the potential pay-off is considerable and the cost is almost negligible.

So far, substantial aid has been forthcoming from some 8-10 Western countries, including the Nordics. But most of the assistance has until recently either been focused on the tri-national Baltic peacekeeping battalion (BALTBAT), or been limited to light infantry arms, to training and planning, and to non-lethal equipment. Most potential donors have hesitated to give what is most needed: anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons; night-vision devices and modern communications; and general military equipment in such quantities that entire units can be outfitted in a uniform manner. Such hesitancy is not without cost. Refusal to supply arms may be seen as a signal that the Baltics are still on the eastern side of some geo-strategic line. Furthermore, officers and men who perceive that they are given the opportunity to die for their country, but not the equipment necessary to present a danger to an aggressor can hardly be blamed if they lose heart. Likewise, political and

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popular support for a national defence effort are likely to suffer if the armed forces fail to impress and cannot show examples of progress.

With this in mind, potential donors need to overcome their inhibitions and supply equipment to sustain and encourage national efforts. This now seems to be happening, as Finland has provided howitzers and ammunition, America has supplied large quantities of M-14 and some M-16 rifles, Norway has donated anti-aircraft guns, and Germany has re-militarised some of the equipment it donated earlier. Even Sweden, after lengthy fence sitting, has offered sales of used anti-armour and anti-aircraft weapons at reduced prices.

Looking forward

Opinions are divided as to whether the Baltic three will truly break away from the shadow of Russia, in their own as well as in Russian eyes. The sceptics are numerous and weighty, but the last ten years have shown that conventional wisdom often underestimates the power and the magnitude of the changes underway since the fall of the Berlin wall. The re-unification of Germany, the liberation of the Baltic states, the break-up of the USSR, robust action in Bosnia, the enlargement of NATO — all were things considered impossible or unnecessary until shortly before they happened. What was labelled as "prudent realism" has all too often proven to be conservatism and a lack of feel for political dynamics.⁹

Whether this applies also to the case of NATO and the Baltic States is open to debate. It is quite possible that developments will take a direction which makes enlargement less charged, where the process rather than the result is paramount, and where *de facto* integration becomes more important than *de jure* membership. But as long as the process of enlargement goes on and aims at enhancing the security of all European states, it seems immensely important that the Baltic three are neither excluded from the process on geopolitical grounds, nor fall out of the race because of lack of support or lack of own effort.

Given the uncertainty of what and where NATO will be in ten years time, and the possibility of temporary upsets in the process, it also seems wise to ensure that NATO is not the only pillar on which these small nations base their security, even when security is defined in a traditional way.

All in all, there is little ground for letting considerations of hard security and military defence eternally banish Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to the European margin or to some type of grey zone. Geography is not likely to change, and the past cannot be undone. But the political implications of a certain geographic location can very well change over time, and the past can lose its hold on the future. Time can work in favour of the Balts' desire to truly close the door on Molotov-Ribbentrop and to re-join the European mainstream, as well as in favour of Western desires for a Baltic Sea region and a Europe which is "whole and free". But time will only work in favour of these aims if it put to good use and a steady progress can be seen. This presupposes action on defence issues from both the Baltics themselves and their western sponsors. Provided action is taken and fears of imperialism and domination can be laid at rest, the position of the Baltics on the doorstep to Russia can turn from a liability into an asset.

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Earlier versions of this text has been published by the Latvian Institute of International Affairs (LAI), and in the August issue of RUSI Journal (Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, London).

¹ For a highlighting of the linkages between the Baltic states and overall European security, see Carl Bildt, 'The Baltic Litmus Test', *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1994, and Ronald Asmus and Robert Nurrick, 'NATO Enlargement and the Baltic States', *Survival*, Summer 1996.

² These arguments often surface both in internal Baltic discourses and in international circles. Cf. Douglas Hurd's Alastair Buchan memorial lecture at the IISS 1996.

³ Baltic resistance against German and Danish expansionism was fierce in the late Middle Ages, and the victory in 1410 at Tannenberg is famous. The 20th century-record of the Baltic peoples is less well known, but worth looking at. During the First World War, battalions of Latvian riflemen served with distinction in the Czar's army, later forming the core of the early Red Army and supplying its first commander, Jokums Vacietis. All three states, though initially lacking military assets, fought successful wars of independence in 1918-20, defeating German and Russian enemies in major engagements. Notably, mutual Baltic assistance and limited foreign help (including Finnish and British) played key roles in securing victory. During the inter-war years the Baltic armed forces were each able to field three to four divisions after mobilisation, plus air and naval units. The decision not to resist in 1939/1940 was by no means pre-ordained and was, in retrospect, tragic. (Finland's situation was in many ways similar, but Helsinki, after deliberation, made the opposite choice.) During the Second World War, the occupying Germans and Soviets raised several divisions of Baltic volunteers or draftees, which fought in the battles of 1944/45. Following Soviet re-occupation in 1944, tens of thousands of partisans kept up resistance to the early 1950's.

⁴ Colonel (retired) Bo Hugemark, a noted Swedish writer on strategic affairs, often makes this point.

⁵ It is worth keeping in mind that one of Moscow's prime tools for "re-integration" of recalcitrant former soviet republics has been the strategic equivalent of a protection racket: covertly fomenting and supporting armed rebellions, e.g. in Abkhazia and Transdnistria, until the legal government submits to a Russian military presence.

⁶ The first weeks of the Chechnyan war clearly demonstrated that even small defence forces could seriously impede an attack, derail the initial thrust and bog the aggressor down in slow and costly combat. A common estimate of the strength of the defending Chechen forces is 2000-3000 "regulars" with about 100 pieces of major land equipment, supported by some 30000 irregulars. Mark Galeotti, 'Decline and Fall - What went Wrong in Chechnya?' *Jane's Intelligence Review*, March 1995.

⁷ Though lacking in mountains, the Baltics are in no way a western extension of the steppe. Much of the land along the eastern borders is marshy and wooded; the bulk of the area between the borders and the capitals is largely forested and criss-crossed by streams, and many of the main roads pass through built-up areas.

⁸ 'A frank overview of Latvia's defence problems is found in Henning Frantzen, 'The Baltic response to NATO's enlargement', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, October 1997.

⁹ Cf. Robert Dalsjö, "Ryssland och NATOutvidgningen, En kritisk granskning i ljuset av svenska intressen" *Strategiskt Forum för säkerhetspolitik och omvärldsanalys* 1997:2. (FOA, Stockholm),

CAN THE BALTIC STATES BE DEFENDED?

AN ESSAY ON MACRO-HISTORY AND SEMANTICS

Professor Hain Rebas*

Questions

The answer to the title-question can be given very bluntly: - Of course, 'the Baltics' can be defended, as they have been throughout the periodically turbulent history of thousand years, from the Viking Age onwards.¹ However we assess their evolving through various enforced alliances, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian nations exist today - politically independent and free.

Have 'the Baltics' then been defended successfully? And to be precise, what does the verb 'defend' mean? What were and are actually 'the Baltics'? Was there, and is there such a thing today as 'the Baltics', in history and in modern security politics? Which were the contributing and decisive 'Baltic' defensive factors throughout the centuries? Is there any historical or geopolitical pattern discernible, which might guide modern strategists?

Instead of enumerating all the wars, battles and skirmishes in and around the 'Baltics' from times immemorial, i.e. from the oldest known Western and Eastern onslaughts in the 11th century², let us first try to define the terms 'Baltic' and 'defence' - to ascertain at least a formal inter-subjective understanding of the rather impressionistic in-depth analysis to follow.

'The Baltics'

Today, we generally encompass the re-established republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the term 'the Baltics'. Historically, though, 'the Baltics' is a fairly new and a rather hollow concept.

In any case, the 'Baltics' cannot be described in a vacuum. To be put in perspective, relief and substance, they have to be compared to some known entity. If we consider 'the Baltics' together with their geographically closest integrated region, 'the North/Nordics/Norden'³, we find almost total incongruity.⁴ The Nordics concept has evolved from grassroot levels, through truly democratic and representative institutions, during a period of at least 150 years. Foreign conquerors and rulers from the 13th century have, as we shall see, defined the concept of 'the Baltics' on.

Among the foreign definitions, from the 13th century on, we can discern a rather vague Papal concept 'Terra Mariae/Marienland' for the heavily crusaded and conquered territories of Livs, Kurs, Latvians and Estonians. On the secular side, the German collective '(Alt-) Livland/Livonia', beside the province 'Livland/Livonia', also contained the Danish duchy of Estland/Estonia (1227-1346), but not the coastal province of 'Kurland/Curonia', for more than 300 years, until the 1560's. Then, in the 17th century, the Swedish invention 'Östersjöprovinserna', included their 'Estland', 'Livland' and, suddenly, 'Ingermanland', south of the river Neva; 'Kurland' being then a well-developed duchy under the Polish crown. In 1795 the Russians added 'Kurland' to their previously (1721) conquered provinces 'Estland' and 'Livland'.

First in the 19th century, the adjective 'Baltic-Germans/Deutschbalte', resp. 'Baltic/baltisch' emerged as a strictly German-speaking regional upper-class distinction. Its purpose was to recognize and exclude the ruling elite (0,5 % of the overall population) from the mass of the native underclass,

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i.e. the 'rurals/Grauen/maarahvas', then mainly of Latvian and Estonian descent. In the 20th century, at the end of World War I, German reactionary forces in 1918 tried to forge a German duchy, 'Baltisches Herzogtum', consisting of the classical Baltic-German-dominated 'Ostseelande', i.e. 'Livland', 'Estland' and 'Kurland',⁵ under the German Kaiser Wilhelm II. In the early 1920's, the newly established republics of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and, very suddenly now, Lithuania, and also Poland, were supposed to make up the new international abstraction, the 'Baltic states'. They should form the northern link of the anti-Bolshevik 'cordon sanitaire', which reached down to the Black Sea. But Finland soon found it politically more profitable to turn westwards, to 'the North/Norden'. At the same time, the Poles got into endemic trouble over Vilnius and adjacent areas with their centuries-old Lithuanian neighbours and partners. Consequently they withdrew from closer 'Baltic' co-operation and left the three 'Baltic states' to care for themselves and, possibly, also for each other.

During World War II, Nazi-German occupants implementing their infamous 'Generalplan Ost' came up with the new normative entity 'Reichkommissariat Ostland', 1941-45, including the aforementioned 'Baltic' republics, and - Belarus⁶. The following Soviet occupation, 1944-91, introduced and secured almost permanently in Russian minds, such classifications like 'Baltijskij Rus', 'Nash Zapad' and, from the Kremlin formal, administrative point of view, 'Sovietskaya Pribaltika', which included also - Kaliningrad oblast' around historical Königsberg and Pillau/Baltiysk. This area also made up their 'Baltic Military District'.

Consequently, the collective names and concepts of the 'Baltic' region have varied with the resp. foreign conquerors. However, universally included in these names seem to be the territories of Estonians, Livs, Kurs and Latvians, i.e. classical Livland, Estland, Kurland. Contrary to them, which should be noted, Lithuania's political and cultural links have been mainly 'Middle East European/ostmitteleuropäisch', even East- and Southeast- bound, down to the Black Sea-area. Lithuania's history, for strictly geopolitical reasons, has been largely tied to Polish concerns. For these same reasons, its future security-policy direction will no doubt continue to be more of a 'Polish business'.⁷ Or, as good Lithuanians tend to see it, vice versa.

Another common denominator is the indisputable fact, that the aforementioned collective geographical and political classifications were ascribed to subdued 'Baltic' tribes and peoples from outside the region and from abroad. This serves as the main distinction to the peaceful inter-Nordic century-and-half-long grassroot-level integrative movement. Evidently, one can expect that non-existent, if not strained or even hostile relations between foreign lords and the mass of native subordinates in the 'Baltics', have contributed negatively to the overall ability to 'defend' the region.

- But how about the independence of the 1920's and 30's, as there were no formal lords, nor subordinates, and the 'Baltic' peoples ruled themselves according to the nations-promoting principles of the 1919 Versailles Conference? How about 'Baltic' co-operation then, especially in the fields of foreign policy and military defence? Surely, Estonia and Latvia then possessed a hard core of battle-experienced officers and soldiers?

- Yes, they did. But, simply put, after the victorious battle of Wenden/Cesis/Võnnu in June 1919, where Estonian and Latvian units crushed the Baltic-German 'Landeswehr' and the 'Reichs-German 'Eiserne Division' (no prisoners taken!)⁸, time was very short. The lives of millions of citizens of the emerging 'Baltic states' had to be re-organised from scratch and turned westwards, that is, away from the initially chaotic and consequently threatening Soviet Union. In so doing, there

was, as we have seen, no trilateral tradition at all to build on. Also, the disastrous regional effects of the 1929 global economic crisis had to be overcome in all three republics. Therefore, in terms of 'Baltic' co-operation too little was done too late, in the face of obvious revanchist rearmament in both East and West in the 1930's. As with all the joint 'Baltic' diplomatic and military mobilisation and operative plans, such as the so-called 'Baltic Entente' 1934, 'Baltic' trilateral foreign policy conferences and treaties remained just plans.⁹

The Latvian-Estonian military intelligence makes an exception to this co-operative failure. Without any formal bilateral political agreements, the intelligence sections in the respective General Staffs worked professionally and continuously exchanged vital information on common interest, namely on Soviet and Komintern whereabouts. Similarly, the Estonian and Finnish General Staffs, without political sanctions, i.e. on more or less bona fide or purely collegial basis, jointly planned to close the Finnish Gulf in case of war.¹⁰ The 'Baltic' military of the 1920's and 30's, therefore, should be seen as 'Baltic' co-operative forerunners.

As we know from history, the overoptimistic Estonian and Latvian so-called British political orientation of the 1920's faded away as democracy failed in the second part of the 1920's in Lithuania and some ten years later in Latvia and Estonia. It should be noted, that it were the autocratic Kaunas, Riga and Tallinn decision-makers and their camarillas who gave in to Soviet military pressure in the fateful autumn of 1939, and in the summer of 1940, not the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian nations as such. Therefore, the citizens cannot be blamed for not resisting the Soviet rape, and for not defending themselves¹¹, like the democratically governed Finns did in their heroic Winter War 1939-40.

Times change. New ideas emerge. Good old ones are reworked. As a programmatic contrast to this overall 'Baltic' ineptness some 60 years earlier, the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian ministers of defence, in Tallinn on 24th of February 1993, proclaimed the renewed Baltic defence co-operation. They did it on a wide democratic basis. The new co-operation was to be implemented step-by-step from platoon-level upwards, not primarily for boosting common Baltic military defence, but first of all to form a 'Baltic' well-trained unit for international peace-keeping purposes. Other steps were to follow; as they also did.

'Defence', the international context

Today, when discussing 'national defence', every self-respecting analyst deals with both 'hard' and 'soft' and, additionally, many other strategic issues. At the same time, superficial Western politicians and journalists visiting the 'Baltic states' all too often revert to their, rhetorical question: - 'Baltic defence? Whatever for? How on earth could these countries be defendable? As it seems, they imagine three tiny nations on small territories being exposed to the possible concentrated wrath of a big, strong and aggressive neighbour.

But our sceptical friends, for some reason, never ask if Finland, with its much longer eastern border, far smaller population and with about the same strategic depth, could be defended. Our sceptics seem to regard this as self-evident. Finland has indeed 'created a credible independent defence capability, which enjoys international confidence'.¹² In their somewhat limited fancy the sceptics also omit the constructive factor of time, the encompassing problem complexes in the present all-European, or even global security context, as well as the acting principles of today's international, strongly interwoven security communities.

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Usually, the counter-question: - 'Was totally surrounded West Berlin defensible during the Cold War?' shakes them a little as they gradually start to understand the complexity of the hint. - Of course, from a purely military point of view, Berlin was not defensible. But the otherwise aggressive Warsaw Pact did not dare to test the case. Our Western politicians and journalists know this. Because WAPA's leading politicians and generals recognised, that if attacking, they would be vulnerably hit elsewhere. Accordingly, Western credible deterrence boosted the independence and thereby also the 'defence' of West Berlin. This is a good principal lesson for students and actors in present 'Baltic defence' matters; it is a good lesson for Western benevolent politicians and journalists as well.

On the other hand, one could imagine that, for example, the Latvian national goal in some cases, like nuclear-deterrence, is not set for ultimate military defence of every inch of Latvian territory, but for possibly smooth survival of the nation. Then even surrender to the least of all evils might be the most adequate 'defence'-decision to take.

This is all to say, that the semantics of the abstract substantive 'defence' are depending on its historical contents but also on national aims and objectives. Nevertheless, because of the 'Baltic' definition and context from the 13th century onwards, as referred to above, there has always been and still is clearly more substance in the sentence 'The Baltics can be defended' than in 'The Baltics can defend themselves'.

In fact, 'Baltic' defence has almost always had an international character. It has always been embedded in international political and military enterprise. Confer for instance the undertakings of the veritable war machine of the region in the Middle Ages, the Livonian Order. Its Master residing mainly in Wenden/Cesis or in Riga, took orders from the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order in Marienberg in Prussia, indirectly and occasionally even from the Pope in Rome (as 1242). The Poles and Swedes, fending off Muscovyte Russian troops in 'the Baltics' in the 16th and 17th centuries until 1710, took orders from Warsaw resp. Stockholm, the Swedes in fact were allies of the 'infidel' Turks, south of Russia, as the Russians were allied with the Danes, south of Sweden. These multifaceted clashes of interest occurred during some 60 years in 'the Baltics' (1558-1629) and devastated the Estonian and Latvian lands as well as their peasant populations.

Some 300 years later, the German Imperial army tried to repel the Bolshevik advances in Estonia and Latvia in late 1918. And Hitler's multi-national invasion forces, after they had to abandon their Leningrad blockade in January 1944, carried through heavy and vigorous defensive operations West of Narva until August 1944. In both cases, general instructions and orders were given from Berlin.

On occasions, 'Baltic' territory has been used to launch Western attacks eastwards, like 1242 (the Livonian Order), the beginning of the 17th and 18th centuries (the Swedes, Gustavus II Adolphus and Charles XII), the beginning of the 19th (Napoleon and his 'Grande Armée'), 1919 (general Judenich on Petrograd), 1941 (the Germans with their Operation Barbarossa).

It should be recognised that all these actions were ordered from abroad and above and could in no way, neither formally nor in praxis, represent the wishes of the native population. By the way, the Estonian army disarmed General Judenich's White Russian North-Western Army in late 1919.

Similarly, Russian attacks on the West from 'Baltic' territories and aquatoria could not be considered as having the support of the 'Baltic' peoples. Many such examples exist, such as the assaults against the Swedish East coast in 1719-20, followed by the 1808 invasion on the Swedish island of Gotland and the offensive building of Fort Bomarsund on the Åland islands¹³ just before the Crimean War in the 1850's.

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In 1939-40, during the Finnish Winter War, Soviet strategic air force, based in enforced military bases on the northern coast of Estonia, bombed Helsinki and other Finnish cities.

Finally, from the 1950's and onwards the Soviets threatened their Western neighbours across their Baltic 'Sea of Peace'. Both with nuclear arms, carried by submarines based mainly in the former Königsberg area and by strategic aircraft from all over their 'Sovietskaya Pribaltika', and above all by their SS1c (Scud), SS 12's (Scaleboard), SS 20's and whatever, from well-spread and -masked bunkers in 'Baltic' soil. The portée of the latter reached not only neutral Sweden but also even the Western coast of Norway.¹⁴ So the WP super-joint-manoeuvre 'Západ' in 1981 in the Baltic Sea, starting also from 'Baltic' air and naval bases, involved some 100.000 troops and practised mass transport and large-scale joint landing operations on an open coast. A Swedish parliamentary investigation in 1983 recognised 'to an overwhelming degree' Soviet submarines as regular intruders in Swedish coastal waters.¹⁵

No wonder that at the same time, the 'Baltics', the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian SSRs, as parts of hostile territory i.e., were massively threatened by US and NATO retaliatory missiles.¹⁶ As usual, presumable attacks on, as well as the defence of 'the Baltics' were planned to be carried out by 'non-Baltics'. With whom should the 7-8 millions of 'Balts' unite in solidarity? In face of double destruction? Where should they turn to for safety? The historical thesis, that 'Baltic defence' was, and is, an international matter was some ten-fifteen years ago getting close to Armageddon.

Conclusion

Except for maybe two short periods in history, 'Baltic' defence has been an obvious supra-'Baltic' and international matter. The first exception was the beginning of the 13th century, as Germans, Danes, Swedes and Russians, and even Lithuanians invaded Livonian, Latvian and Estonian lands. The second one in 1918-20, as Estonians and Latvians fought for their national independence against Bolshevik Red Guards, Baltic-German 'Landeswehr' and Russian Whites. It follows that these violated territories were far too often misused for foreign military undertakings against the East as well as against the West. Equally, international conflicts like the Great Northern War (1700-21), World War I and II, were partly carried out in Estonia, Livonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

From the 13th century on, even the collective names of our geographically fluctuating 'region', like 'Livland', 'östersjöprovinserna', 'Reichskommissariat Ostland, or for that matter 'Sovietskaya Pribaltika', have had nothing to do with the wishes, not to mention the ideals and dreams of the indigenous peoples. Nor did these foreign kings, Ordensmeisters, Kaisers, tsars and dictators that followed as formal rulers, ever consider the idea of asking the subdued Livs, Latvians and Estonians et alii about their political or strategic preferences. Clearly¹⁷ there was negligible concern for the oppressed, whether or not coercive Baltic Germans routed invading Poles in their lands, or whether attacking Russians beat or got beaten by some Swedish overlords. Or, for that matter, if they in the 1980's were to be brought to Apocalypse by NATO or WP nuclear missiles. Indeed, 'Baltic defence' has generally not been a 'Baltic' affair - the powerful Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Middle Ages being a totally different matter.

Only in the independent 1920's and 30's, and after 1994, when the Russian troops finally left the re-established republics of Latvia and Estonia¹⁸, there has been a theoretical chance for a joint 'Baltic defence' on a democratic all-'Baltic' basis. For different practical reasons, a functioning common defence was not established during the first period of independence. The two decisive negative

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reasons for this were a century long tradition for living beside each other rather than together, on one hand. And the fact that governments in the end of the 1930's were constituted by autocratic regimes without much sense of reality on the other. As a result, there was neither 'Baltic' deterrence, nor a functioning collective security system to stop shrewdly operating Stalin and Molotov in 1939/40, Hitler and Himmler in 1941, and Stalin again from 1944 onwards. As we know, the autocratic leaders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the late 30's gave in one by one. And so their split countries, with their useful ice-free transit harbours¹⁹ from Paldiski/Baltischport at the Gulf of Finland to Ventspils/Windau in south-western Kurland, were picked one by one by the aggressors.

As a contrast to this submissive autocratic behaviour in Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius, the democratically governed Finns resisted the Soviets in 1939. And they eventually succeeded in saving their independence, in reorganising their society and politics, in developing their economy, culture, popular image all over the world, and - also in building an adequate and flexible national defence.

In sum, if neighbourly 'Norden/the Nordics' is to be taken as a model for a thoroughly, and during some 15 decades democratically integrated region, there can hardly be any talk about any 'Baltics' in the same integrated semantic or geopolitical sense. The partly propagandistic notion 'the Baltics' simply carries along far too much of historical and present insignificance. There never has existed any noteworthy feeling of a 'Baltic identity' anywhere - except in some exile centres like the Pinneberg University outside Hamburg in the late 1940's, in Stockholm, New York and Toronto, during the ad hoc 'Baltic Peace and Freedom Cruise' in the Baltic Sea in 1985, and of course in Soviet GULAG prison camps²⁰.

Outlook

Now, in the end of the 1990's, democratic Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have got a new opportunity for co-operation in all fields of social activities. Nothing could really stop them from reaching the monolithic and certainly deterrent defence status of Finland - if they only wanted to. For instance, if they merely decided, they could co-operate in foreign policy and put their border guards, their military and their Nordic-inspired total defence systems under a joint command - to work actively for common protective purposes. Who could actually hinder them? But no Estonian, Latvian or Lithuanian political party has, for obvious domestic political reasons dared to come out with such a rational proposal.

However, all 'Baltic' defence of today, regardless of purpose or nature, starts and develops within the republics of themselves. It is conditioned by factors like tradition, mentality, leadership, politics, economy, communications, technology and - the military in each respective country. The Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian military co-operate fairly well, cf. Western-inspired and -supported BALTBAT, BALTRON, BALTNET and BALTDEFCOL, the planned BALTPERSON and BALTWING, and also the new Danish-German-Polish MNC-NE²¹ with its large Baltic Sea area co-operation²². But even so, this is far from enough in times of civilian-led politics. If the parliaments and governments of the 'Baltic' states do not show more understanding and competence for common 'Baltic' vital security and strategy problems, then regardless of massive Western support, because of indubitable geopolitical consequences, the independence of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, will sooner or later be jeopardised. This already seems to be the case with heavily pushed around Latvia. But if Latvia drops away between Estonia and Lithuania - Estonia trying to move in the direction of Finland and Sweden, as Lithuania concentrates on co-operation with its old partner

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Poland - it will only be a matter of time before Russian/CIS still valid so-called Karaganov- or Kozyrev- doctrine²³ will be implemented in the 'Baltics'.

Certainly, a democratic, prosperous and peaceful Russia would be a very nice idea, not least for the Russians. Their main questions seem to be the future identity of Russia and in what direction it will move. Will it remain essentially colonialist, expansive and imperialistic, as the historian Kliutchevskij identified and predicted?²⁴ Or would it keep striving primarily for 'national safety and security', as existentialist philosopher Berdjaiev put it?²⁵ Or will it again grasp for harbours, mining areas and other economic advantages along a (post-)marxist-communist pattern?²⁶ Or, will it even implode and break up into several Russian-speaking states?²⁷ - What then? A new 'smuta'? With all the thousands post-Soviet nukes around?²⁸

Whatever, Russia's ant-size Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian neighbours are confronted with foggy to scary Russian/CIS perspectives on a daily basis. For tangible regional security purposes they should, ideally, try to join forces, politically, economically and militarily - in order to step-by-step catch up with the Finnish monolithic defence model.

No doubt, during the present independence, it is not the ideas of some autocratic leaders, but the free will of Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian citizens will be decisive for their future. That they could succeed in defending themselves, if they really wanted to, is transparently shown by the successful case of Estonia in 1918-20. Some 100.000 men were then mobilised, i.e. about 1/10 of the population. And tens of thousands of young Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians fought bravely during World War II. Unfortunately they had to do so in foreign uniforms, partly on foreign soil, partly even against each other.²⁹ For instance, the battle of Tehumardi on Oct. 8 1944 on southern Oesel/Saaremaa, belong to the really tragic moments of World War II. There the mobilised Estonians in Red Army and in German SS uniforms were forced to slit each other's throats in a pitched night battle. Whereas the Estonians had nothing to do with the start of the war, both totalitarians did.

Such endeavours and sufferings, and the still living ideological heritage of the Estonian, Latvian and especially the Lithuanian 'forest brethren' far into the 1950's, provide a healthy ground for a renewed, defiant will of defence. The impressive 'Baltic Chain' nurtured this hope in critical August 1989. Hundreds of thousands of people then held hands in a peaceful and dignified human chain from Tallinn via Riga to Vilnius.

Looking closer into matters, it should be noted though, that even 1918-20, the Estonian cause was supported diplomatically by a powerful allied mission, and militarily by the British Royal Navy in the Gulf of Finland, by two Finnish effective infantry battalions and by a company of Danish volunteers.³⁰ Accordingly, Estonian/'Baltic' defence even then had international character.

In the future, Western international security systems like the UN, the OSCE, the PfP within the NATO framework, eventually the WEU of the EU, and maybe sometime even still faraway NATO itself, will provide the guarantee for the freedom of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. But on one simple condition: The peoples, the politicians and military of these republics must show an outspoken will to engage, work and spend what is needed for at least a modern embryo of the total defence of their newly regained independence. On the military side of things, they should be expected at least to be able to respond adequately to all possible conventional 'Operation Returns'³¹ from the Pskov area. The rest would then be the matter for diplomats and the international security community to settle.

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Finally, as we have seen in history, and as will be the case tomorrow mainly as a function of fluctuating and unpredictable Russian politics, 'the Baltics' will remain a thoroughly international matter. For decades already, international observers like recently Carl Bildt of Sweden,³² have regarded 'the Baltics' as a barometer of Russian foreign politics. Even the traditionally soft-spoken Finns engage in placing 'the independence of the Baltic countries on a stable footing in recognising these countries security concerns'. They explicitly state that 'there must be no security vacuum in the Baltic countries'.³³

Ergo: the future 'Baltic defence' will be partly national, partly hopefully also inter-'Baltic' and monolithic as our Finnish model. Plus - depending on the local and regional efforts - it will as always be either Eastern, or it will be Western. On the threshold of the Third Millennium AD, it is high time for the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians to practically prove where they belong.

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¹ Generally 800-1050 A.D. Or, to be more quasi-precise, 793-1066.

² Notably, from the West, the Scandinavians, i.e. Swedes, Gotlanders and Norsemen - for instance, according to the ancient Norse 'Saga Olaf Tryggvassonar', the later legendary Norwegian king Olaf Tryggvasson (†1000) was kept for years as a slave on the island of Oesel/Saaremaa) - and then from the East the Russians and their vassals of the then independent city-states of Pskov and Novgorod. But, of course, as we can read in detail in the 13th century Chronicle by Henry of Livonia, Lithuanian, Latvian, Livonian, Curonian and Estonian tribes in ancient times, on occasion, also raided, cooperated and fought each other.

³ Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, i.e.

⁴ For a more detailed analysis, cf. H.Rebas, Baltic Cooperation - Problem or Opportunity? In: Perspectives. Institute of International Relations, Prague, Nr 9. Winter 97/98, p.67-76.

⁵ Cf. for instance, the title of the standard work by R.Wittram, *Baltische Geschichte 1180-1918. Die Ostseelände Livland, Estland, Kurland*. München 1954.

⁶ until 1944, to be exact, as for 'partisan-ridden' Belarus.

⁷ formally from 1386 until 1772 as Russia swallowed its first of three 'Polish' gulps.

⁸ cf. lately H.Walter, *Landeswehri sõjast...Ausalt ja avameelselt*. Tallinn 1989.

⁹ Cf. for an overview, G.von Rauch, *Geschichte der baltischen Staaten*. DTV. Wissenschaftliche Reihe, 2. Aufl., München 1977 ; Idem, *The Baltic States: The Years of Independence*. London, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1974; For a detailed analysis of the trilateral problems, cf. H.Rebas, *Baltic Regionalism?* In: Regional Identity under Soviet rule: The Case of the Baltic States. Hackettstown. New Jersey 1990, p. 413-28.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Leskinen, *Vaiettu Suomen silta*. Helsinki 1997; This is evidently not the place to discuss if these joint actions might have been in the German OKW interests as well.

¹¹ On the other hand, the citizens of the three Baltic states seem to have had the political leaders they deserved.

¹² *Security in a Changing World. Guidelines for Finland's Security Policy*. Report by the Council of State (1995), p. 43.

¹³ belonging to the then Grand Duchy of Finland.

¹⁴ R.Taagepera, *Inclusion of the Baltic Republics in the Nordic Nuclear-Free Zone*. In: Journal of Baltic Studies XVI/1, Spring 1985, AABS, p. 33-51; Cf. also L.Uller, *The Nordic Reach of Soviet Forces in the Leningrad and Baltic Military Districts*, and B.Hugemark, *The Significance of Soviet Forces in the Baltic for Swedish Security*. Both in: Journal of Baltic Studies, XVII/3, Fall 1986, p. 220-37.

¹⁵ *Att möta ubåtshotet. Ubåtskränkningarna och svensk säkerhetspolitik*. SOU 1983:13. Stockholm, esp. p. 80.

¹⁶ G.L.Guertner, *Nuclear Strategy in the Nordic Region*. In: Journal of Baltic Studies XVI/1, Spring 1985. p. 6-17.

¹⁷ Here, subjective and openly propagandistic concern is omitted on purpose.

¹⁸ They had left Lithuania earlier.

¹⁹ Cf. Molotov's explicite speech on August 1, 1940, in Moscow, on the VI. Meeting of the Supreme Soviet, as the fresh 'Baltic SSRs' 'opted' for membership in the friendly family of USSR nations. In: Pravda (Moscow), Aug.6. 1940.

²⁰ H.Rebas, *Balti koostöö - probleem või võimalus?* In: Akadeemia 9/1998. Tartu, p. 1795-1814, esp. p. 1808-10, with commentaries by A. Kaalep and J.Isotamm; cf also A.I.Solzhenitsyn's world-famous 'Ivan Denissovich' and his 'GULAG-Archipelago'.

²¹ Multi-National Corps North-East, earlier LANDJUT with HQ in Rendsburg, as of April 99 with HQ in Szczecin/Stettin.

²² within NATO Partnership for Peace operations framework.

²³ From 1992, with the ominous notion of Russia's 'Near Abroad', i.e. former Soviet territories, where Russia pretends to have 'special obligations' to their fellow countrymen.

²⁴ V.O.Kliutchevskij, (1841-1911), whose 'Kurs Russkoj Istorii' in five volumes (1904-10) and many editions moulded Russian minds for decades.

²⁵ N.A.Berdjaiev, (1874-1948), exiled 1922, in 'Sudba Rossii...', Moscow 1918.

²⁶ Cf. Molotov 1940, as in footnote 18.

²⁷ Cf. S.Hedlund, *Hur många Ryssland efter Sovjet?*. Stockholm 1993.

²⁸ Cf. openly 'derzhava'/revanchist A. Drugin, *Osnovy geopolitiki. Geopoliticheskoye budyushtcheye Rossii. Arktogeya*. Moskva 1997. The author's (pseudonyme?) special consultant is Lieutenant Genral N.P. Klokotov, Head of the Strategic Institute of Russian General Staff Military Academy; And, as late as Dec. 1998, Russia/CIS's Minister of Defence, General Igor Sergeyev, visiting China's National Defence Academy, threatened: 'Chechnya, or some other region that wants to secede from Russia, but also Estonia, Latvia, Japan and other countries with unsolved territory problems with the Russian Federation, could become potential targets for nuclear attack', as quoted by Tatyana Jurassova of Moscow in Tallinn weekly 'Den za Dnyom'. T. Kallas, Kes vehib tuumapommiga? In: *Postimees (Tartu)*, 9.12.1998.

²⁹ Mainly in German, Soviet and Finnish units.

³⁰ A Swedish voluntary corps turned out to be more of a quantité négligeable.

³¹ as of August 1998 as the reinforced 76. Guard Airborne Division in Pskov mobilised and moved westwards.

³² Conservative Prime Minister of Sweden 1991-94.

³³ Security in a Changing World. Guidelines for Finland's Security Policy. Report by Council of State (1995), p- 49.

Defensibility.

Lieutenant General K.G.H.Hillingsø *

Introduction

At the Madrid summit in 1997 NATO declared that the enlargement process would be reviewed at the 1999 summit. Many hoped that this would mean that the next candidates for NATO membership would be pointed out then. Now, however, this hope has apparently vanished. It seems most likely that the only decisions to be taken will be to admit Poland, The Czech Republic and Hungary, to reiterate the open-door policy, and to use a couple of years to study the lessons learned from the first enlargement round before deciding on new members. Many reasons for not opening a second enlargement round have already been given and new reasons will be added. To the Baltic States, to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the message will probably be that they are not yet ready for NATO membership. As Karl-Heinz Kamp from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation states, this is "camouflage for a cost-benefit analysis". Many officials in NATO countries find, he says, "the military or strategic advantages of adding these three countries to NATO would be outweighed by the damage caused by offending Russia." It might destroy any effort to embed Russia in Euro-Atlantic security structures¹. To this should be added that many commentators, and most important amongst these are US senators, regard the Baltic States as militarily undefendable.

That Russia is vehemently against the idea of admitting the Baltic States is evident from the warnings of all kinds including direct threats of military countermeasures given by Russian spokesmen. But Russia has protested and threatened before against envisaged and proposed steps of NATO and NATO countries, and up till now nothing has come out of it. When the step was taken, Russia eventually accepted it. So, whether NATO should neglect the Russian opposition to the enlargement process or pay attention to it and try to soothe Russia is purely a political problem. This article will therefore not deal with the problems with Russia, but try to tackle the alleged indefensibility of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Geo-strategic situation

In spite of the differences in language, population mix, terrain, military structure e.g. the three countries form a military-strategic entity. In a discussion about defensibility they should therefore be considered together, the more so as admitting one of the three countries into NATO would cause the same problems with Russia as admitting all three. They are all defined by Russia as "near abroad", and seen with Russian – and Belarus' - eyes Estonia and Latvia will give NATO a bridgehead close to the very sensitive areas of St. Petersburg and Pskov, and Lithuania will together with Poland ensure a NATO containment of Kaliningrad.

The question of defensibility

In a way it is not logic for US senators and other Western politico-military commentators to put much emphasis on the question whether the Baltic States can be defended or not. There is no imminent threat of war, and the development of the situation seems to be going in the right direction. All states bordering the Baltic Sea co-operate still more closely bilaterally as well as in many supranational fora, and disputes are settled by diplomatic means. The political situation in Russia is admittedly labile, and you see certain traits in the society that make alarmists compare the situation to the situation in interwar Germany. But democracy seems to be established, and everybody hopes for and many say that they believe in a peaceful evolution of Russia towards a state living up to Western ideals. Thus the main problem for those that deny that the Baltic States can be

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defended seems to be, apart from the cold war spinal cord rhetoric emitted from Moscow, the sheer size of Russia.

The argument that Russia is so large that there is no sense in defending against it is, however, not very logic either. In the first place no country except the USA would be able to withstand the conventional and nuclear military might of a Russia prepared for war. The same was the case the Soviet Union during the cold war, but at that time it was never a prerequisite for admission to NATO that a country should be defendable. Even forlorn outpost like Berlin and Bornholm were accepted under the protecting umbrella and prepared for defence. And the defence was not just prepared symbolically, it stood a good chance to succeed, because it would be supported by the entire military capacity of NATO. An attack on one of these areas would be seen as an attack on NATO as such and would trigger off a major war. In other words the Warsaw Pact could not concentrate all forces against Berlin or Bornholm. Only minimum force could be used, as the main forces would be needed to fight the major war against the Alliance. As intended, this fact deterred the Warsaw Pact from any military adventure even against the weakest links in the NATO chain. Thus, when defensibility is addressed in context of the Baltic States as members of NATO, one should not discuss whether they can be defended against a major attack from an enormous neighbour. But you should make the same demands to Baltic defence capacity as you made on the small NATO members and the isolated areas during the cold war.

Demands on the Baltic States

In general a country to be considered as a candidate to NATO membership must fulfil certain political conditions. To mention a few: parliamentarian control of the armed forces must be established, human rights must be respected according to Western democratic terms, defence budgets must be transparent. The demands on the armed forces could in plain language be boiled down to three: any new member should be able to defend its own soil. Its armed forces should have adapted NATO's standards and procedures and thus have interoperability with NATO-forces. And the country should be ready and willing to participate in NATO-missions.

Most of these conditions have already been met or will be met by the Baltic States in the near future. Only the ability to defend own soil sticks out. It could remain an insurmountable problem, as opponents to their membership could go on arguing that they never would achieve that capacity. For reasons mentioned above, however, a discussion could be cut very short, not with military but with political arguments. The task of the Baltic States is thus to convince the outside political world not so much of their military ability to defend themselves as of their will to do so.

This will must be demonstrated in a very tangible way. Primarily it must be shown that the countries, in spite of all the other economic demands put a high priority on defence spending. The defence budget should be on the same level as the average defence budgets of the member states not only to show good will, but also to be able to finance the other necessary steps to be taken.

The most important step is to create a general will in the population to defend the countries. This means that money must be spent e.g. on public information, and on creating a total-defence system that involves all official authorities and the whole population in a possible war effort. In this context it is very important to ensure that the personnel of the armed forces and in particular the conscripts are given conditions that inspire them to act as spokesmen for the defence of the country and for the armed forces.

As the Baltic States are regarded as a military-strategic entity, another important step is to ensure the best possible military co-operation between them. This is also important in order to convince an evil-minded power that it will be impossible to conquer or bring the states under control one at a time.

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And then of course money must be spent on the development of the armed forces. The development process must be handled in a way that makes it obvious that the aim of the armed forces is to meet the requirements of NATO. And further that they will eventually reach a size and combat power that is proportional to their geographic and demographic conditions. And finally, that they at any stage of the process will be able to put up a reasonable resistance against an invader.

Defence structure

The requirements of NATO are well known to the three countries, and will not be dealt with directly; neither will the end product of the development process. Viable plans taking the NATO requirements into consideration have already been made, and it should be the aim of the Baltic States to be members of NATO long before these plans are fully implemented. This is not an unrealistic thought as the armed forces of Poland, The Czech Republic and Hungary are in the development process, and these countries will in all likelihood be accepted as full members by NATO next year.

When the aim to be accepted during the development process is combined with the necessity to ensure the ability to fight an intruder throughout the process, the obvious solution is to establish a system that from the very beginning can make conditions unpleasant for an enemy. Considering the economic situation it goes without saying, that no step should be taken and no cost should be accepted, that prejudice the desired end product. For instance no money should be squandered on materiel nice to have if it is not needed in the fully developed organisation.

This leads to recommending a defence system where the whole nation is mobilised for the war effort, and large armed forces are organised and use a doctrine like Yugoslavia in the days of Tito. Generally speaking this means a concept based on conscription where the main part of the armed forces, which is lightly armed, locally mobilised and relatively stationary, is backed up by small mobile, more heavily armed units. These forces should be on high readiness and fight according to a modified guerrilla doctrine using hit and run tactics, evasive action against superior enemy forces etc. Before taking on the guerrilla role, they should also be able to hold key points and key terrain until the defence is penetrated. This ensures that an invader is immediately met with armed resistance all over the country and that resistance will be protracted. The enemy will not be able to rely solely on small, modern, highly mobile units as large infantry forces will be needed to ensure freedom of movement in wooded and build-up areas. And he will not be able to conquer the country with a coup-de-main against the government and key points where international aid and reinforcements can be brought in.

In detail this means that the bulk of the army including the homeguard should be armed with a high number of portable antitank and automatic weapons and mortars. A large quantity of antitank mines should be at hand, and defensive positions should be prepared in peacetime where needed for protection of key points and for blocking mounted advance by the enemy. These forces can be formed at relatively low costs and ought to be established very soon. The smaller, mobile forces needed for quick reaction against surprise attacks like air- and sealandings and for assistance to key point defenders should be mechanised and include self-propelled fire support. They will be considerably more expensive wherefore materiel procurement and organising in principle could await the finishing of the main force.

In accordance with the guerrilla doctrine, the navy should rely on small, fast crafts armed with missiles, on seamines and coastal batteries. Geographical conditions do not allow an offensive guerre-de-course, and defence at sea should be concentrated at port and harbour facilities to obstruct sea landings. Mine laying can be carried out with improvised means, and for economical reasons the preparations for mine warfare should be the first step in the development plan. However, as the task of the navy will include keeping facilities open for the reception of reinforcements from the sea, mine-clearing units must be included in the inventory.

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The air force should eventually be able to undertake an area defence. As this must include fighter aircraft the Baltic States will probably only be able to organise it in full in a distant future. Till then air defence should be based on portable short-range air defence systems concentrated around key points such as reception facilities.

Conclusions

Of course the solution to the defence problems of the Baltic States are not as simple and cheap as described above. A lot of money must be spent on training, communication -, warning - and fire control systems, ammunition, and infrastructure to name only a few areas. However, the guerrilla type defence has a good fighting value from a very early stage in the development of the force structure. The starting costs are relatively low, and it has a certain deterrent effect, as it has never been the favourite dish of armed forces prepared for major war to fight guerrillas. But the main argument is that the mere decision and the first preparatory steps to implement the described defence structure and doctrine will give a very clear signal of the Baltic States' will to defend themselves. This together with the fact that they from the very beginning have involved themselves deeply in co-operation with NATO, the OSCE and the UN might turn the scales in favour of a NATO membership. After all, as hinted, it is the politicians of the NATO countries not the military who must be convinced that the Baltic States are defendable.

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¹ See Karl-Heiz Kamp in Survival, the IISS Quaterly, Autumn 1998 p. 170-186.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES: VIEW AHEAD

Giedre Statkeviciute *

I. Introduction

The process of the restoration of the Lithuanian Armed Forces commenced in 1990. Defence structure redevelopment rather than structure reform was the main issue. It was necessary to develop the basic legislation to regulate the place and objectives of the military structures within the Lithuanian democratic society. From the very beginning there was a clear desire to develop Lithuanian Armed Forces to be compatible to the models operated by other western countries. Therefore, it could be said that the development of a national defence system is resting on two cornerstones: enhancement of the country's self-defence capability and development of a defence system interoperable with NATO.

A defence budget growth that will enable us to achieve our strategic objectives is being supported by a favourable economic and political climate in the country. Lithuania's dynamic economic development allows us to increase defence spending substantially. On a current basis, Lithuania has increased its defence budget twice in 1998. Now it makes up 1.5 per cent of the GDP. This growth will continue and we will reach the level of 2 per cent by 2001.

Understanding that integration into the Western European security structures demands that Lithuania becomes a security provider able to share all obligations in this area, Lithuania pays great attention to the interoperability with NATO. Two important tasks have already been accomplished: Democratic and civilian control over the Armed forces and the adoption of a national security strategy. This has led to a complete revision of the military strategy and to a new force structure. The integration process towards NATO serves as a very strong factor to determine the modernisation of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. This is a long-term process, but the steps already taken have been very successful. The co-operation with NATO troops and participation in operations under NATO command provide Lithuanian soldiers with skills and experience, which are essential to the development of an overall interoperability with NATO forces.

By establishing effective chains of command, adjusting the planning, program and budget process, by improving various procedures, the military training and quality of life of the officers and soldiers, Lithuania has made significant progress in many areas.

II. The Command and Control System

The structural development of the Lithuanian Armed Forces is based on the new Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. The Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service outlines a new concept of command and control which adopts the unified command concept in accordance with Lithuanian National Plans and NATO standards. The new command and control structure consists of:

- The strategic level of command – development of military strategy; this function will be fulfilled by the President, the Minister of National Defence, the State Defence Council, the Commander of Armed Forces and by the Defence Staff;
- The operational level of command – planning and command of military operations; this function will be fulfilled by the Field Forces Commander, the commanders of other arms and branches of the regular forces and by the Commander of the National Defence Volunteer Forces;

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- The tactical level of command – execution of the operational plans by the combat units.

This new command and control structure provides for a clear operational chain of command and preserves civilian control over the military.

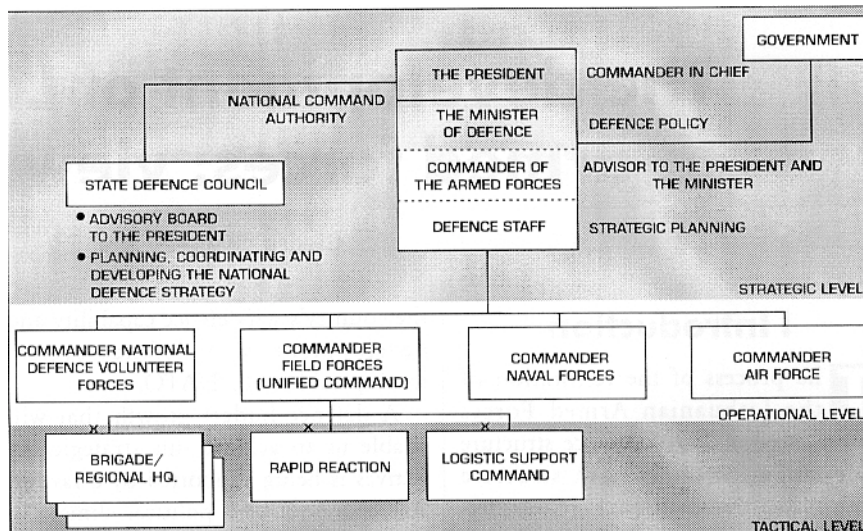


Fig 1 National defence structure: chain of command by 2008

According to the Law the President and the Minister of National Defence together constitute the National Command Authority. They exercise their authority and control over the Armed Forces through a single chain of command. The chain of operational command goes from the President to the Minister of National Defence, and then to the Commander of the Armed Forces. In special cases the chain of operational command can go directly to the Field Forces Commander and the commanders of other arms and branches of the regular forces, or the Commander of the National Defence Volunteer Forces.

The Commander of the Armed Forces as the highest military officer exercises command authority over military forces. He develops Military Defence Strategy, provides advice to the President and the Minister of National Defence on military matters, serves as a member of the State Defence Council and is responsible for recruitment, organisation, training, supply and administration of forces for sustained combat, and provides the forces required for the Field Forces Commander.

The Field Forces Commander exercises operational authority over units assigned by the Ministry of National Defence. He is responsible for integrating personnel and equipment to create efficient and effective combat forces. The Field Forces Commander also develops the tactical doctrine of operations to assure a well co-ordinated and cohesive operational capability of the forces assigned to his administration.

III. The development of structures adaptable to NATO

Regional HQ Concept

In order to optimise command and control of units located in different regions of Lithuania, to strengthen their combat potential and to assure independent capability to perform combat assignments, a territorial defence concept has been adopted. This consist of three military regions:

- Western Military Region;
- Central Military Region;
- Eastern Military Region.

One military region is equal to the size of a brigade. Each brigade will consist of three motorised infantry battalions, support and anti-aircraft units. Separate Jaeger and Engineer battalions will be incorporated into the structure of Central Military Region. It is also planned to form up to ten brigades of the active mobilisation reserve to enable the brigades of the military regions to be expanded into division in the event of war. In this case the motorised infantry battalions would form separate brigades. It is also intended to form a Rapid Reaction Brigade that will be deployed in central territories of the country in order to react quickly to a military invasion. This brigade will be finally established by the year 2008.

The Headquarters of the military regions will also be responsible for the operational command over the units of the National Defence Volunteers Forces deployed in the military regions. The commander of the regional National Defence Volunteer Forces unit (NDVF district) who performs administrative functions will be included in the

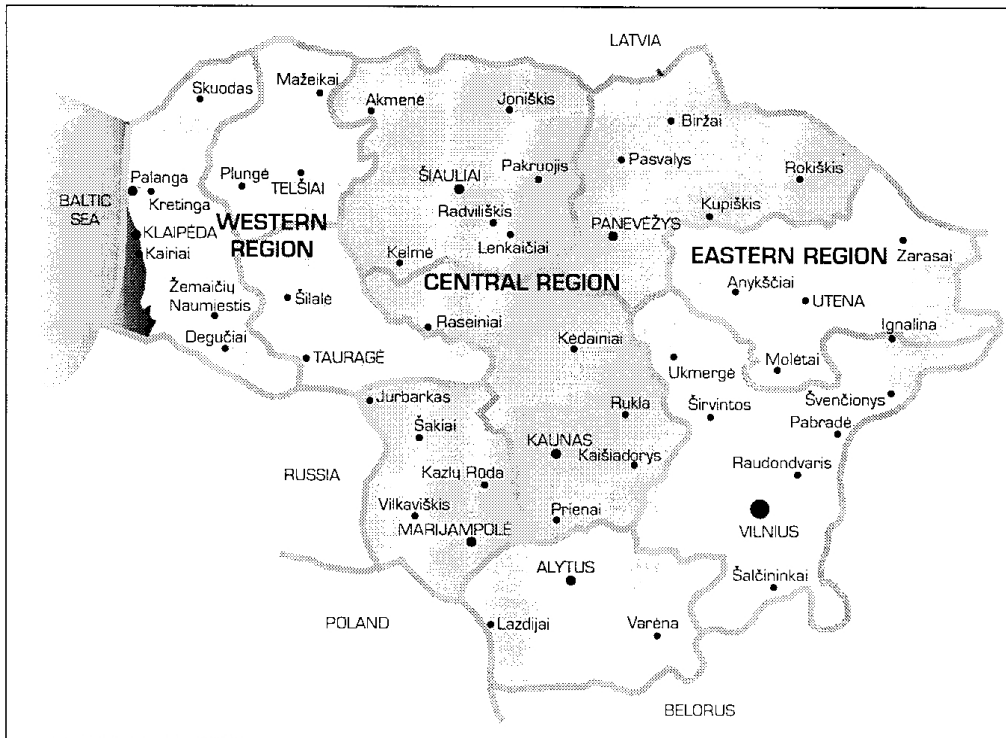


Fig 2. Territorial structure 1998-2008

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Headquarters of the brigade/military region. This structure will facilitate the integration of the National Defence Volunteers Forces into the overall Military Defence Strategy as a component of a single military force through the military region headquarters concept.

Standard Battalion Structure

The ongoing reorganisation of the standard battalion is aimed at achieving compatibility with NATO structures and should result in a significant increase in combat readiness and capability. Firstly, all motorised infantry battalions will have a unified structure and a more effective headquarters able to operate in all circumstances. Secondly, combat units of the battalions will be separated from the support units, i.e. support functions have to belong to specialised units. Furthermore, in peacetime each battalion will function as a training centre for conscripts, to provide them with specific military skills and to prepare them for the reserve. Finally, it is planned to supplement the structure of each battalion with a heavy weapons company, which will include anti-aircraft, anti-tank and heavy mortar platoons. In the event of war, the medical, communications and engineer units will become parts of the standard battalion.

IV. The development of credible armed forces: Our priorities

Command Control and Communications

A well-developed modern communications and information system is a crucial factor in a modern warfare. Lithuania therefore attaches great importance to the modernisation and further development of a communications and information system. At present, Lithuania does not possess a fully developed system to ensure effective guidance, transmission of commands and delivery of information to any point of the state's territory. One of the main ambitions in the development of the Lithuanian defence structure is to change this situation. This is obviously in line with the ultimate objectives to build credible Armed Forces and to prepare for integration into NATO.

A contract has been signed with the HARRIS Corporation to supply radio stations. In order to fulfil requirements of the Planning and Review Process program, new radio stations will be operational in the Panevėžys battalion and in the command post of the "Iron Wolf" infantry brigade by the end of the third quarter of 1999. These radio stations will be the first to correspond to NATO standards at the tactical level.

The sea coast surveillance system run by the Navy with modern communications systems have been installed completely. In addition, modern radio stations will be purchased for ships and coastal services. As a result Lithuania will have a complete communications system which meets all requirements of Naval Forces.

One of the main requirements of the programme to develop the communications and information system is to assure the command and control of sub-units in peace, during local conflicts and aggression. In any case the requirements for transfer of information at the strategic, operational and tactical levels are quite different, so the communications and information system has to be divided into subsystems adequate at the specific command level. The experience of small countries within NATO demonstrates that the creation of communications and information systems is very expensive. Therefore the Lithuanian system will need to make maximum use of existing commercial and governmental communications systems, within which independent defence system components will be created.

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A powerful strategic-operational defence system telecommunications-information network will be created over a six years period establishing a reliable connection between Armed Forces Headquarters and military units.

The provision of mobile tactical communications networks for subunits will depend on each subunit's location and importance. At present all units use communications equipment produced in the former Soviet Union. This equipment will be changed gradually into a modern communication system corresponding to NATO standards and will also be delivered to other units, and to the National Defence Volunteers Forces. The process of subunit tactical network modernisation will be completed within 1½ to 2 years. All tactical communications networks for the regular army will be modernised over a 10-year period.

Enhancement of Unit Capability

The Armed Forces units must be prepared for various contingencies, rapid regrouping, and be armed with modern infantry weapons. It is necessary to implement a number of initiatives to develop the Armed Forces in this direction. The enhancement of the defence capability must be based upon qualitative reforms throughout the whole of the Armed Forces.

The armament acquisition is based on the following three important qualitative principles:

- To reduce the diversity of weapon systems and types;
- to acquire armaments cost-effective to maintain;
- to provide the Armed Forces with modern weapons corresponding to NATO standards.

In line with the strategy of reorganising the armed forces, communications equipment will be acquired, which will further enhance interaction between units.

Qualitative changes must be implemented to guarantee the efficiency of the armed forces. Mobilisation, manoeuvring, co-ordination of actions and a good logistics system are important features of modern armed forces. The development of the transport sector will help to secure these features.

The qualitative changes in this sector are based on the following principles:

- To reduce the diversity of military transport equipment;
- to acquire new or almost new transport equipment, which during their 15-20 life will require minimal maintenance expenditure;
- to acquire transport equipment corresponding to NATO standards;
- to create three centres of transport services and repairs in the Western, Central and Eastern Military Regions;
- to acquire civil and dual-purpose specialised transport equipment in order to improve cost-effectiveness.

The Armed Forces reorganisation plan will be completed in three implementation periods. During the first period, new units would be supplied with weapons and equipment corresponding to NATO standards. During the second period, those units still using old equipment will be rearmed. During the third period, support and supply units will be formed, as well as such units requiring a large financial investment, e.g. heavy armour etc.

In the coming years the defence budget is expected to receive a higher level of resources for armament programmes, for the communication and information system development, for interoperability with NATO and the preparation of the mobilisation reserve.

Logistic/Infrastructure

Logistics

Logistics is a major consideration in the construction of the national defence capacity. Proper functioning of the logistic branch is vitally important for the operations of the military units to be effective and for the Armed Forces as a whole. The main purpose of the logistics organisation is to provide forces with armaments, equipment, means of transportation, medical supplies and all necessary commodities; to exercise control over their exploitation; to maintain installations; and to resolve environmental problems caused by military activities. The Department of Logistics in the Ministry of National Defence carries out central planning and management of logistics.

Modernisation of the logistics system is one of the priorities of Lithuania. This is one of the areas where PARP Interoperability Objectives have to be implemented. NATO conceptions of logistics and the experience of the Alliance members in the field of logistics are analysed and this will help to develop the Lithuanian logistics systems. It is of utmost importance to adopt working instructions, to improve formal documents, to prepare a supply strategy and to familiarise personnel with NATO procedures. Priority will be given to combat units; to units participating in the Planning and Review Process (PARP) programme and to newly established or reorganised units.

The plan for the development of the logistics branch will be carried out in three stages:

- *The first stage (1998-1999):* The development of a management structure. At this stage the Directorate of Logistics at the Defence Staff will be established. It will be responsible for planning supply operations, for analysing the needs of the Armed Forces, for managing financial resources, and for controlling supplies to military units and exercises. The Department of Logistics will be further expanded to include a codification division and the system of military depots and cargo grounds will be improved.
- *The second stage (1999-2000):* The development of the central military depot (Arsenal Depot) and its transformation into a logistics battalion. The Arsenal Depot installations will be reconstructed, security systems, service roads and loading procedures will be improved, and the Transportation Service will be developed.
- *The third stage (2000-2002):* The establishment of the Combat Support Battalion as the basis of the Transportation Service. In peacetime this battalion will be responsible for the transportation of dangerous and other military loads, the support of transportation for military units, for controlling the movements of military transport and for the technical maintenance of military vehicles. In wartime the battalion will be responsible for providing armaments, equipment, medicine and foodstuffs, and for the transportation of personnel. The battalion will also be responsible for the evacuation of personnel and equipment to the rear.

Having completed these development tasks, Lithuania will have an effectively managed logistics branch that is compatible with NATO standards. The branch will be able to properly support military operations both in peace and war, and it will enable the Armed Forces to participate in joint military operations together with NATO members.

Infrastructure

The plans for developing military infrastructure will concentrate on the construction of new facilities. Only those parts of the existing infrastructure, which are vitally important or conveniently located and require only little investment, will be reconstructed.

The financial resources for new infrastructure will be devoted mainly to the construction of military camps and housing. The construction of military camps will be undertaken simultaneously with the

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formation of new battalions. This strategy is an important part of the Quality of Life issue, as a new infrastructure will improve living and working conditions thereby enhancing the attractiveness of military service.

Training facilities are another important issue. Lithuania's whole network of training centres and establishments is being reorganised. The formation and improvement of the Conscripts Training Centre, Peacekeeping Forces Training Centre, of training centres of the National Defence Volunteer Forces and the battalion training establishments are particularly important. This network will play a vital role in enhancing the readiness of conscripts and of the mobilisation reserve, and in improving the skills of professional soldiers, NCO's and officers.

Air Defence

The Lithuanian Air Defence structure will consist of air surveillance and air control systems, the air force, anti-aircraft units, and a communications and management system. The structure will also use the capabilities of civilian radar and navigation systems. It will be compatible and able to exchange information with the corresponding structures in other countries (Estonia, Latvia, Poland, etc.).

The following steps are necessary in order to enhance the air defence capabilities and prepare Lithuania's Air Defence system for integration into NATO:

- Implementation of the BALTNET project: The establishment of a Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Centre, and the creation of a network of radar companies and their connections to the Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Centre;
- the connection of Lithuanian and Polish Air Defence Systems through the line of exchange of radar data;
- the completion of the procurement plan;
- systematic improvement of unit infrastructure;
- achieving interoperability with NATO standards of aircraft and airfields maintenance equipment;
- enhancement of combat readiness of personnel at all levels;
- personnel training at various academies and military schools as well as courses abroad (in Poland, Czech Republic, USA, Germany, France, Hungary);
- personnel training in spoken, technical and operational English language (courses in Lithuania and abroad);
- preparation of documents compatible with STANAG;
- improvement of the legal basis for the development of an Air Defence structure;
- active participation in international exercises.

Assuming adequate financing and material support, the whole Air Defence System should be operational by the year 2005. It will then be capable of ensuring the control and defence of Lithuania's air space, of exchanging information with neighbouring states (Poland, Estonia and Latvia) and of operating as an integral part of the NATO Air Defence System.

Language Training

The foreign language capability is one of the key factors that determine whether the Armed Forces can participate in joint NATO operations and missions. The success of such programmes as PFP and of multilateral projects such as BALTBAT, BALTNET or BALTRON heavily depends on foreign language skills. Therefore, the personnel's ability to communicate using the languages of NATO members (especially English) is of great importance in the process of integration into the Alliance.

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Language training is one of the constituent parts of Lithuania's preparation for NATO membership. The requirement for senior officers and to highest ranks to speak at least one NATO language has been enshrined in the Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. The programme of officers' and civil servants' English language training is currently being implemented in full. The main goal of this programme is to gradually increase the level of proficiency in English until NATO standards are met. The United Kingdom, Canada and the United States render their assistance to this programme.

Currently there are seven English Language-Training centres in the defence structure of Lithuania. Each centre has 20 students and courses with the duration of 3 month are held 3 times a year.

V. Development of Procedures for Officer Selection, Evaluation, Education, Promotion and Rotation

Selection

Currently officers' selection is executed according to an established order that corresponds with the basic principles of selection established in the national legal acts. The posting of officers is decentralised for almost all posts. Units and services in the national defence structure search for appropriate candidates themselves. A centralised search for suitable officers is used when peacekeeping subunits need to be formed or personnel have to be provided for the Ministry of National Defence and the Defence Staff. As a general rule, officers accept posts on a voluntary basis and are selected on the basis of their education, state of health, military and professional fitness and moral characteristics. An officer who applies for a particular post must have undertaken compulsory military service, and must possess appropriate educational qualifications and military experience to meet the requirements of the job.

Evaluation

The quality and efficiency of the professional armed service is highly dependent upon the procedures for evaluating officers and soldiers, in other words - their certification. The Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service, which was adopted in 1998, introduced certification of all soldiers. The previous order of evaluation, which only required the suitability of higher rank officers to be evaluated, was completely changed. At present, the main objective is to start applying certification for all soldiers serving in professional service.

The regulations require soldiers to be subject to certification at least once every twelve months. Moreover the participation and responsibility of immediate superiors in certification process will be increased. The regulations also require that more attention be paid to the soldier's knowledge of English language and his service potential. The Ministry of Defence will control the whole certification process.

Promotion

The new Military Service Law stipulates that a post occupied by an officer must correspond to his rank. It is necessary, therefore, to introduce a more rigorous promotion procedure. In line with the law and with the regulations for conferring a higher rank, promotion will be granted according to the basic principles of selection taking into consideration the needs of the Armed Forces, the limited numbers of officer appointments and the number of staff available.

Rotation

One of the most important operating principles in personnel management policy is officers' rotation. The main objective of rotation is to ensure the combat readiness of all military structures and to increase the reliability and efficiency of their management, to increase officers' qualifications and their professional utility, and to utilise their experience in a rational manner.

The rotation procedure will be implemented in line with the regulations of officers' rotation, confirmed by the Minister of Defence. Officers will be rotated every three years (as set out in the law), taking into account the needs and requirements of the service. Soldiers with exceptional specialist skills may, if necessary, be left in certain posts with the consent of the Minister of Defence.

VI. Centralised Basic Training

The quality of basic military training is an important aspect in building defence capability and integrating to NATO. Therefore strict requirements are to be applied in this area. Till now the basic training has been decentralised, which is one reason for these requirements not to have been met. Having studied the systems of basic training in different NATO countries the decision has been taken to centralise Lithuania's basic military training. Implementation of this decision will constitute a fundamental reform of the whole system. The final result of the reform will be trained conscripts capable of functioning within their assigned units. Additionally, basic military training will be the foundation of all other training, especially for the NCO corps.

Conscripts will be called up four times per year instead of two. Their basic training will last for eleven weeks, followed by military occupational speciality training. The latter varying depending on the required level to be achieved. The Basic Training Centre in Rukla is being constructed to become operational the first quarter of this year.

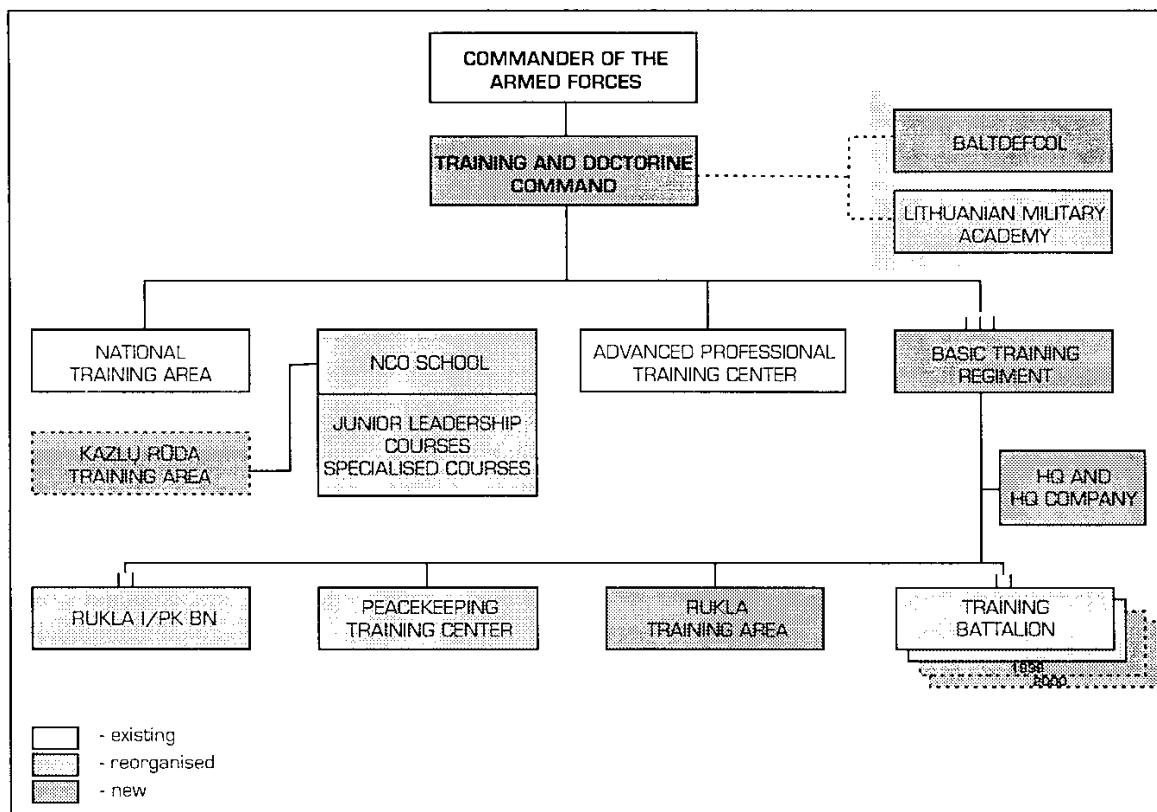


Fig 3. Lithuanian military training and education system

VII. Military Academy Programme of Instruction Reform

The preparation and education of commissioned officers is one of the most important areas in the development of Lithuania's Armed Forces, as it significantly contributes to building national defence capacities.

Currently the Military Academy offers various officer courses: the traditional four-year course for cadets, a two-year course for cadets and a course for university graduates. The two-year course for cadets, established to meet platoon leader requirements in units, will be introduced in the near future.

The Military Academy's primary purpose is to prepare platoon leaders. Advanced military training for company grade officers is planned. This training will focus on preparing officers as company commanders and battalion staff officers.

VIII. Reserve Force

The basic principles of the organisation and composition of the active reserve forces are fixed in the Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. This law defines that the active reserve forces are part of the military reserve and are composed of reserve personnel who have completed military service and have all the necessary military skills.

Personnel of the reserve will be called up periodically for military training and exercises in order to maintain and refresh their skills. There will be two readiness groups of reservists formed on the basis of age: 1) up to 35 years old - will be called up twice a year, 2) from 35 to 45 years old - will be called up once a year.

From 1999 onwards there will be compulsory military exercises for personnel that have not undertaken military service. Upon completion of these exercises the personnel will be included in the individual military reserve but would only be called up in the event of total mobilisation. These measures will help to fill out the legal acts on universal compulsory military service, thus putting into practice the concept of total defence and increased combat potential in the event of war.

From 1999 onwards the preparation of reservists will start at the Military Academy, the Non-Commissioned Officers' School and at the National Defence Volunteer Forces Training Centres. Having completed their introductory training, officers and non-commissioned officers of the reserve will have to enhance their qualifications periodically at courses in the training centres. Furthermore those military officers and non-commissioned officers designated to the reserve corps will be sent on specialised courses at Lithuanian universities. This programme was launched in autumn 1998. This is a significant step towards enlarging the reserve forces, as university students were previously exempted from military service.

In conclusion it should be noted that the system of reserve forces has been designed to meet the imperative to build credible Armed Forces and to implement the doctrine of total defence. There is a clear need to create a prepared reserve force.

IX. Planning, Programming and Budgeting

Defence Planning

Building national defence capabilities requires substantial financial resources. This is the prerequisite for successful implementation of the ultimate strategic objectives – the ability to repel any military aggression and to prepare for integration into NATO. Therefore the Government of Lithuania is determined to continually increase the resources allocated to defence. In line with a broad agreement between all parliamentary political parties, Lithuania's defence budget has been increased from 0.9 per cent of GDP in 1997 to 1.5 per cent in 1999. Lithuania's defence strategy and the Government's three-year term budget project anticipate a growth of defence spending up to 2 per cent of GDP by 2001. National defence plans provide that until 2008 Lithuania will assign approximately 30-33% of its defence expenditures for capital investment purposes, of which 13-15 % will be allotted for construction and 18-20% for procurement and modernisation of equipment. Given that the defence share of GDP will increase, it is expected that investment expenditure in 2005-2008 will reach 100-140 million USD per year, in 1998 prices. Political stability and dynamic economic development is a precondition for this growth, which will enable the development of a whole range of new projects and the formation of additional battalions compatible with NATO standards.

The priority areas for financing are fixed in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania. There are four major areas of defence expenditure:

1. *Improvement of the defence capabilities* which includes the development of infrastructure (military construction, training facilities, new military camps etc.), establishment of a new force structure (three levels of command, brigade/regional HQ concept etc.) and improvement of force readiness through training, purchases of new communications equipment and anti-tank weapons.
2. *Integration to NATO*. The main costs are related to the achievement of the PARP Interoperability Objectives and to participation in international operations and exercises.
3. *International agreements*. This area of expenditure includes the financial costs of co-operation in accordance with PfP, implementation of bilateral and multilateral projects such as BALTNET, LITPOLBAT, BALTRON, BALTBAT and the Baltic Defence College.
4. *Aid to the civil authorities*, which includes the improvement of the civil defence and Search and Rescue operations in accordance with ICAO requirements.

We are currently implementing a clear and comprehensive defence planning system to take forward NATO integration and development of Lithuania's Armed Forces. This system will consist of two closely related processes: First, a one-year planning, programming and budgeting cycle that would flow from a set of agreed political goals, via a resource programme to the defence budget; and second, a longer-term programme encompassing not only defence but also broader security issues. This process will lead to improved visibility and management of decision making and to the enhanced transparency of the defence budget.

Ten years Defence Enhancement Programmes

To build the national defence capabilities the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence develops ten-year defence enhancement programmes, which are part of the Long-term National Security Programmes. These programmes will provide comprehensive guidance for the strategic development of the Lithuanian Defence System. Long-term planning is very important when

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considering the perspective of integration into NATO, as it is an inherent part of the Alliance's development. The programmes under preparation clearly reflect the priorities in building the Lithuanian Defence System and enhancing national security.

At the given moment 7 programmes are prepared, which will be implemented until 2008:

- Development of the Armed Forces
- Development of the Defence Infrastructure;
- Development of the Defence Industry;
- Air Space Control System Development and its Integration into NATO Air Space Control System;
- Enhancement of Interoperability with NATO;
- Development of Science of War and Defence Technologies;
- Development of a Unified Civil Defence and Rescue System.

The Programme of Development of the Armed Forces identifies means and financial resources for the long-term development of Lithuania's Defence System. This programme includes military and civil defence specialist training, material-technical supply of the National Defence System, development of transportation services, creation of communication and information system, medical supply for the Armed Forces and reserve, and armament for the Armed Forces. The implementation of this programme will encompass the structural, quantitative and qualitative aspects and should increase significantly the defence capabilities of Lithuania.

The Programme of Development of Infrastructure is aimed at the improvement (reconstruction and renovation) of existing military camps and the construction of new facilities. The programme is especially important as it covers housing issues, the establishment of training infrastructure and the deployment of new battalions.

The objective of *the Programme of Development of Defence Industry* is to establish industrial structures to satisfy the minimal needs of the Armed Forces. It is not intended to develop industries for manufacturing armaments (weapons, aircraft, etc.). The main emphasis will be on the production of ammunition, some equipment (simulators for training, fragmentation vests, etc.), and the maintenance and modernisation of military equipment. This will ensure a minimum amount of supply autonomy. In line with the programme to develop defence technologies, the production of more sophisticated equipment will be considered in the future.

The Air Space Control System Development Programme is currently being established. The system consists of four components: Air space surveillance; air force; anti-aircraft units; command, control and communications network.

Lithuania's control of her airspace rests on the following main principles:

- Close co-operation with civil structures integrating both military and civil air space surveillance information systems;
- A linkage between BALTNET and corresponding Western European and NATO systems. This will facilitate the integration of the national system into NATO networks;
- Adherence to the standards and requirements of the NATO NADC.

The aim of *the Development of Science of war and Defence Technologies Programme* is to create a state defence strategy based upon the science of war and to introduce new technologies into the national armed forces. This programme will create the opportunity to employ the scientific potential of Lithuania: Currently the achievements of Lithuanian scholars in laser and other technologies are

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used only by foreign countries. These are the priorities that have been identified and which should be implemented by 2008.

The Programme of a Unified Civil Defence and Rescue System is designed to protect the population from dangerous situations during peacetime, crisis and in the event of war. This system will improve and monitor the readiness of all rescue services to react to natural disasters, catastrophes or to armed conflict. It will also ensure that the public will be warned and kept informed of hazardous situations. The programme is aimed at integrating both state institutions (the Emergency Control Centre, the Department of Civil Defence, the Armed Forces, ministerial organisations and local authorities) and volunteers from public organisations into a unified system of civil defence.

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The foreign experts have positively assessed Lithuania's progress. Lithuanian Armed Forces have been evaluated as the most advanced among the Baltic States. This is very encouraging. By improving her military strength, Lithuania aims to deter any external challenge to her sovereignty and territorial integrity. Alongside with this activity Lithuania will act as active security provider in the European and transatlantic security system.

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THE ESTONIAN DEFENCE FORCES - 2000

Major-general Ants Laaneots*

This article will give an overview of the current state of the mission, structure, weapons, equipment, leadership and training of the Estonian Defence Forces. The article will start with an overview of Estonian Military Doctrine, structure of the defence forces in both peace and war, followed by overview of the combat readiness of the Estonian Defence Forces. That will be followed by a description of the training system in the Estonian Defence Forces. Finally, the article will touch upon some basic problems and priorities in the current state of development of the armed forces.

1. Estonian Military Doctrine (Defence Strategy)

According to the Estonian Constitution, it is the duty of every Estonian citizen to participate or assist in the defence of the nation. Under the Act of Military Service all male citizens are liable for military service.

Estonia's armed forces are defensive in character. This is reflected in doctrine, structure, and equipment, budgets and training of both units and staffs. The Estonian armed forces shall contribute to furthering peace and stability: they are being developed to provide national territorial defence and participate in international peace support operations (PSO), and they are being structured to be compatible with NATO standards.

The Military Doctrine/ Defence Strategy is the basis for developing the Defence Forces. The Defence Forces, as a combat ready military component of the state, will act as a deterrent to potential power contemplating aggression and prevent any conflict situations. High combat readiness of the Defence Forces should cause any potential aggressor to reassess his intentions.

In case of armed conflict the Defence Forces will assure the freedom of action of governmental authorities, prevent the occupation of the country or the use of the Estonian territory by any power against a third power, and guarantee the independence of the state.

In developing defence strategy, several factors have been considered:

- 1) invasion could come from land, sea and air, and in very short time the entire Estonian territory could be involved;
- 2) the territory of Estonia is small, and it is very difficult to rely on its depth in slowing down the invasion;
- 3) the defence structures must be ready to act as a host nation, i.e. guarantee the readiness to receive outside civil and military support (including reinforcement), ensure logistical support and interoperability with support units in co-ordinated and combined actions.

Estonian Military doctrine is based on the principles of territorial defence. The main goal of such defence is to occupy and control strategically important areas; relying on the support of local defence structures. The task is to tie-up invading formations with battles on a relatively wide front and thus to slow down and exhaust the enemy. In carefully selected points the enemy must be stopped along the main invasion routes. In sections of supreme importance counter attacks must be organised to cause the invader

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maximum damage. This could be done by conducting widespread strikes with small units against the rear echelons of the enemy; thereby disrupting an aggressor's plans and finally causing him to abandon them.

One of the most important principles of territorial defence is to guarantee organised resistance to the aggressor on the entire territory of the nation even when the centralised command and control should cease to function.

2. The structure of the Estonian Defence Forces in peace and war

The wartime structure of the Defence Forces, as presented on the following pages, shall be regarded as the objective of the next 10 years. The development of the peacetime structure of the Defence Forces will be the task to be accomplished during the coming five years.

Defence Force's peacetime structure

The peacetime structure and organisation of the defence forces is being developed with consideration of both peacetime and wartime missions and the needs of the defence forces.

In peacetime the defence forces include regular armed forces and the volunteer organisation National Defence League (*Kaitseliit*), and are headed by the Commander of the Armed Forces. The Commander of the regular armed forces is responsible for military training of Border Guard and militarily organised Rescue Board units falling under the sphere of administration of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs. In peacetime these two are not part of the defence forces, but will form a part of it in wartime. Organisationally the Defence Forces are divided into four defence regions: northern, northeastern, southern and western regions.

The regular armed forces

The regular armed forces consist of conscripts and professional military officers and non-commissioned officers. The regular armed forces are a training structure with the aim of training wartime units and ensuring their mobilisation. Also, the peacetime regular armed forces have to be capable of performing other duties, such as response to crisis situations, participation in international peace operations, arms control and the implementation of relevant treaties, collection and analysis of information, and assistance to civilian authorities. The regular armed forces consist of three services: army, navy and air force.

The largest among services is the army, infantry forming its main bulk. The biggest unit of the defence forces in peacetime is battalion. The Army does not have central command structures at the moment and is directly subordinated to the General Staff. The ground forces include six independent infantry battalions, an Artillery Battalion, an Air Defence Battalion, and Peace Operations Centre. Estonia has established a peacekeeping company to participate in the BALTBAT and in possible future peace support operations.

The main task of the Estonian Navy is to guard and defend coastal areas of our territorial waters. Also, the task of the navy is training of qualified officer corps and creating infrastructure facilities to ensure interoperability with the Baltic states, the Nordic countries and with NATO; and participate in international co-operation. The navy consists of Naval Staff, Minesweepers' division and Naval Base. The Estonian Navy, together with the navies of Latvia and Lithuania, is in the process of forming a combined Baltic Mine Sweeping Squadron, BALTRON.

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The Estonian Air Force is primarily responsible for monitoring, control and defence of national air space. The air force consists of Air Force Staff, Air Force Base and Air Surveillance Battalion. Participation in common Baltic BALTNET project is an effective means for ensuring that the national air surveillance and defence would meet NATO requirements and be compatible with that of partner nations.

The Joint Military Educational Establishment, NCO Battle School; Signals-, Recce- and Logistics battalions are also under the jurisdiction of General Staff.

The Defence League Kaitseliit

The Defence League is a voluntary armed organisation, consisting of regular military personnel and volunteer members. The main mission of the Defence League is developing the national defence will. The Defence League also helps to prepare the population for national emergencies; the organisation conducts military training for its members, prepares citizens for armed defence and participates in the mobilisation process. In case of special need, the Defence League will assist the Border Guard, Rescue Service or the police. The Defence League emphasises social events as well as the intellectual, spiritual and physical development of its members.

The Defence League consists of the Main Staff of Defence League, 17 regional units (malev) and auxiliary organisations for women, boys and girls (Naiskodukaitse, Noored Kotkad, Kodutütred).

The structure of the Estonian Defence Forces in war

In setting up wartime structures, we have considered several factors: mission requirements, operational-tactical needs, available resources, the country's economic resources now and in the near future, the status of ready reserves and the possibility of obtaining arms and equipment.

The human resources of Estonia will allow bringing 100.000 people into various defence structures. The current planning allows the use of only 45.000 people. It is realistic to achieve combat ready reserves in accordance with the above number within five years. In case of a highly visible crisis situation the equipment could, however, be obtained in shorter time. In developing the wartime structures the main emphasis must be on preparation and training of qualified personnel.

The components of wartime defence posture of the forces and their mission.

The Defence Forces consist of the ground forces, the navy and the air force. The main components of the defence forces consist of peacetime regular armed forces along with regional reserve units.

The ground forces and their mission

The ground forces constitute the main combat capacity of the defence forces. Taking into account the limited depth for manoeuvres, the ground forces must exercise flexible defence against a superior aggressor by involving the entire territory of the country in small unit actions. This would prevent a rapid destruction of the defence forces by a surprise strike operation.

Thus the task of the ground forces is to offer armed resistance to any aggressor using entire territory of the state by launching intermittently defence and counterattack operations, as well as by organising guerrilla activities in areas under the enemy's control. The safe reception of outside military support and reinforcement is also an important task of the ground forces.

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The main combat units of the ground forces are infantry and coastal defence brigades, battalions and companies. artillery, anti-tank, air defence, engineering, recce and signals units. Service units as supply, logistics and various repair units constitute the supporting units

In acquisition of armament and equipment, the main principle is to ensure interoperability with NATO. The procurement plans must meet NATO standardisation requirements.

Organisationally the defence forces are divided into four Defence Regions (northern, northeastern, southern and western regions). Each region covers two to five counties. The commander of the region supervises certain military units, and local regional units. As a rule, all Defence League and Border Guard units in that particular territory are considered regional units.

The units of the defence forces are divided into general-purpose and regional units according to their purpose.

General-purpose units constitute the nucleus (50 - 55% of the defence forces) of the ground forces. This is the best-trained and -armed portion of the defence forces, manned as a rule with reservists not older than 35 years of age. The main bulk of the general purpose units of the defence forces consists of infantry battalions supplemented with artillery groups, engineer units, coastal defence battalions, air defence units, recce units, signal units and rear units. These units will be organised into brigades as necessary. The general-purpose units are used for the most important defence tasks and they may be assigned to central or regional command structures.

The regional defence units are used in certain regions for a specific mission engaging air or naval forces, for guarding or defending important objects, organising air-surveillance or conducting guerrilla warfare in areas that would be occupied by the enemy. Such troops can also be used to provide security or reinforce other troops. This category of units is usually composed of reservists 35-50 years of age.

The Navy and its mission

The mission of the navy during wartime is to defend the Estonian territorial waters, islands and coastal areas.

The navy consists of the Naval Staff, Sea Surveillance Centre, the Naval Base and units of (respectively) minesweepers, guard ships and auxiliary ships. The vessels of the Border Guard form guard ships' units and the requisitioned civilian vessels will be assigned to auxiliary ships' units.

The Air Force and its mission

The mission of the air force is to exercise control of Estonian airspace and to provide protection of strategic objects/ targets.

The air force consists of Air Force Staff, Air Surveillance Battalion and the Air Force Base. Air Force armaments consist of aircraft, helicopters, and air surveillance and observation equipment.

3. An overview of the combat readiness structure of the EDF

The combat readiness is defined as the status of the defence forces to carry out its defence mission depending on the situation.

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Most of the wartime units are in the reserves during peacetime and their sub-units participate in scheduled refreshment training.

In a crisis situation, bringing certain units to higher state of readiness will heighten the combat readiness of the Estonian Defence Forces. This will be accomplished by bringing reserve units for refreshment training and by using other means to increase combat readiness of the forces.

Depending on their peacetime mission, the units of the Estonia Defence Forces are divided by their state of combat readiness and deployment speed as follows:

Combat

indications of refresher training needed. ready forces (CRF)

Rapid reaction forces (RRF)

Mobilisation forces (MF))

Combat ready forces are units that have been designated in peacetime for security and armed defence tasks of the nation. This includes units dealing with aerial surveillance and airspace control, naval surveillance and control of territorial waters, as well as units that according to international agreements have been designated for peace support operations. Border Guard units also belong to this category.

Rapid reaction forces are designed to check and control crisis situations and defend objects that are vital to Estonian security. These units are to counter surprise attacks on targets, which may be vital to the activation of total defence systems. Three battalions and special units of the Defence League are scheduled to fulfil tasks in this category.

The mobilisation forces are the remaining forces to be mobilised. The plans are set depending on the time needed for their deployment:

the order according to which unit formation and activation of reservists will take place;

the order according to which supply and equipment will take place;

In the event of war, the defence forces will be brought to the level of their total combat readiness. The total combat readiness will be achieved by executing and completing the mobilisation plan.

The mobilisation of the defence forces consists of bringing the peacetime forces to wartime status according to pre-designed plans and within the prescribed time limits. Mobilisation can be general or partial.

Mobilisation will take place in many small mobilisation depots (up to company strength) which will be distributed all over the territory. The staffs of defence regions will direct the execution of mobilisation plans.

4. Overview of the training system of the Defence Forces.

Conscription

The process of conscription follows a territorial principle. After completing compulsory training, the entire sub-unit will be transferred to the reserves *in toto* and will be assigned to a wartime unit. In refresher training the entire sub-unit will be called to train together to assure smooth operation.

The term of conscription is 12 months. During this time a conscript will go through several training courses. All conscripts will receive basic infantry training, then specialised technical training and thereafter the entire sub-unit (platoon or company) will be exercised as a team. At the end of the training period special manoeuvres will be held, with reserve units taking part as well.

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The selection of non-commissioned officers and reserve officers takes place during conscript training to fulfil the positions of platoon leaders. Selected candidates will continue training in the Battle School of the Estonian Defence Forces. After completing this training the candidates will be sent to military units to gain practical leadership practice. Reserve NCO's and officers will be transferred to the reserves in toto as a unit.

Currently an alternative program is under consideration, to be used for training students at institutions of higher education as reserve officers.

Non-commissioned officers training for the regular forces takes place in the Battle School. The length of the course is 6 months.

Officer training

The preparation of active duty officers takes place at the Joint Military Educational Establishment. The training of officers includes several steps and phases. All regular officer candidates must have completed their obligatory conscript training. The first phase (of two years) includes peacetime platoon leaders' (wartime company commanders') training. This is followed by leadership practice in regular units of the defence forces.

In the second phase (of two years) peacetime company commanders' (wartime battalion commanders') training takes place. After completing the first two phases of training the officers obtain a higher academic degree.

During the third phase, an officer will receive staff training and education. The training will either take place at the Baltic Defence College or at a staff college abroad. Yet higher military education will be conducted at higher military institutions outside of Estonia.

5. Basic problems and priorities in development

The most serious of the current problems is the critical shortage of officers, non-commissioned officers and technically trained personnel; the inadequate infrastructure of the forces; the insufficiency of training facilities; and the total absence of areas for training with heavy weapons.

High priority and great emphasis is being assigned to proper planning of all structures of the Defence Forces.

Currently there are two planning periods in the Estonian Defence Forces:

- a) Medium term plan of development embracing 5 years
- b) Long range plan of development, including the next 15 years.

Medium term plan

In the medium term planning, great emphasis is placed on developing headquarter staffs (General Staff, branch staffs, unit staffs); by developing and manning them with competent personnel, qualified to do staff work.

An important short-term goal is the development of the General Staff into a central planning agency; after that the regional staffs can be formed as functional entities.

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In addition, constant emphasis is placed on leadership training at all levels of command. Also the work of standardisation of training in all training organisations continues. Great emphasis is also placed on forming of reserves as complete units.

Long term plans

In the development of the infrastructure of the defence forces, great emphasis is placed on the construction of facilities for the regular peacetime forces, and completion of construction of training fields and larger training areas. Another top priority is the development of a multitude of mobilisation centres.

In the procurement of weapons for training, every attempt is made to obtain the most up to date weaponry and to meet NATO interoperability and standardisation requirements.

In international co-operation high priority is given to participation in peacekeeping operations, and to NATO and NATO/PfP activities. The goal of such co-operation is to gain experience of combined operations and interoperability issues. The NATO interoperability requirements are being made standard operating procedures for the entire Estonian Defence Forces.

Our efforts, apart with moving toward the NATO, are and will be directed by the need to create our own self-defence capabilities.

Major General Ants Laaneots is the Chief of Staff of the General Staff, Estonian Defence Forces. After the independence Ants Laaneots was in 1991 appointed Acting Chief of Staff (General Staff, Estonian Defence Forces). He served as Chief of Staff From 1992-1994, at which time he entered into the reserve. In 1996 he re-entered into active duty, Estonian Defence Forces as military advisor to the Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces and was appointed Chief of Staff in 1997. The general has attended the NATO Defence College in Rome, Italy.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Gundars Zalkans*

Historical perspective

The rebirth of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Latvia is to be found shortly after the declaration of independence on 4 May 1990 or, phrased more accurately, as the consequence of the declaration of the independence. At the end of May 1990, after the attempted storming of the provisional government headquarters by students of the Russian military academy, volunteer units were formed to ensure uninterrupted functioning of the government. In June of that year, the chairman of the Highest Council's Defence and Interior commission, Mr. Talavs Jundzis, consults with Latvian officers retired from Soviet forces on the subject of defence and defence forces. The next month, on the initiative of another member of the commission, Mr. Odisejs Kostanda, a joint Baltic States Defence and Interior commission meeting on self defence is held in Ligatne, Latvia to which the former Soviet officers are invited. Over the next four months these meetings continue in Lithuania and Estonia. These same officers, among other, participate in organising barricades and in leading resistance against the OMON forces on 13-23 January 1991.

Due to further Soviet political and military pressure, the Latvian Highest Council on 20 January 91 establishes a Department of Public Security with Mr. Janis Baskers and Mr. Auseklis Plavins as director and deputy director. The Highest Council additionally decrees essential defence tasks, places all territorial defence units under the Public Security Department and starts establishing border guard units. On 2 August 1991, the Cabinet of Ministers directs the Department of Public Security to organise self-defence units and alternative service units throughout Latvia and to establish an NCO training facility. The development of national defence forces gains momentum. On 23, August 1991, the Latvian Home Guard is established as a voluntary self-defence organisation. On 29 August the Cabinet of Ministers asks for volunteers for the formation of Border Guard, in October a Borderguard Training Centre is established in Malpils and a naval forces training centre in Liepaja. On 13 November the High Council establishes a Defence Ministry, on 13 December a department of Border Guard and seven border guard battalions with Mr. T. Jundzis as the Minister of Defence. In January 1992 Defence Forces staff and Naval Forces are established with National Defence Academy and Air Defence departments the next month. That same month, Col. Dainis Turlais, who has extensive combat experience in Afghanistan, is appointed commander of the Defence Forces. Understandably, he places priority on establishing, arming and training the Border Guard, eventually totalling some four thousand men, mostly conscripted.

Defence Forces and National Guard

Early in 1993 Latvia finds itself with two different armies, each subordinate to different institutions- and with the Russian forces still occupying portions of Latvia's territory. The Home Guard, after exposure to US National Guard, renamed also National Guard, is headed by Col. Girts Kritovskis as Chief of Staff subordinate to the Chairman of the Highest Council, and subsequently to the newly elected President. The fledgling Defence Forces (DF), Naval Forces and Air Forces on the other hand, are subordinate to the Minister of Defence with the commander of these forces also being deputy Defence Minister.

It is understandable that the two structures are at odds with each other since National Guard are volunteer citizens, generally with no real prior military experience or training, and the Defence Forces are constituted from former Soviet officers who are slowly drifting back to their national homeland. While unquestionably their military experience is much more extensive than that of the National Guard leadership, most of them come from technical support branches rather than from combat arms. They also arrive with abbreviated, if may, military records to substantiate their expertise and many initial assignments therefore do not correspond to actual skills. Needless to say, many of them, after 20 or more years in the Soviet system, can think only in terms of that system and therefore tend to envision the evolving Latvian defence forces. So to say "in the face and likeness" of the heavy, inflexible, massive Soviet forces they are familiar with. On the other hand, the National Guard leadership although nationalistic and well intentioned lacks the

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discipline, experience and managerial skills needed to effectively organise and lead large military units. Nevertheless, the National Guard leadership recognises these shortcomings and when Great Britain offers tactical training to the Defence Forces and they decline, the National Guard takes up the offer with enthusiasm.

The problems encountered by both of the evolving forces are significant; lack of consensus on doctrine, lack of consensus how the defence forces should be organised, armed and equipped. Not the least of the problems is foreign humanitarian assistance – the defence ministry tends to accept anything that is offered for free without a clear understanding how it would be used and soon the warehouses are bulging. We must remember that the Baltic States at that time are considered potential flash points and only non lethal military assistance is therefore available. As a result of this, the Defence Forces can be seen attired in the uniforms of a dozen donor countries while the National Guard, not being entitled even to these hand me downs, have mostly only civilian clothing. Although there is a mobile infantry brigade, a combat engineer battalion, a chemical company and some others units, these exist mostly on paper.

There are many issues that are not resolved, and even more not even addressed. There is no military threat analysis, no defence concept, no defence plan and therefore obviously no justified armed forces end strength or development plan. The Defence Ministry and Defence Forces lack experience with cost estimates, budgetary process, and force planning – consequently the realm of what is possible for a small country's defence forces financially has not been determined. The former armour officers dream of tank battalions, the artillery officers of field artillery battalions, the air forces of jet fighter squadrons and anti-aircraft missiles and the naval forces of real warship. The organisational charts (TO & E) of combat battalions, of course are based on the Soviet model with overabundance of officers in battalion staff with a tailor, cobbler and tinmaker thrown in for good measure.

In May of 93, under the MIL to MIL Program, a military liaison team led by Colonel Ower Moon, Michigan National Guard is established in Latvia. This not only demonstrates tangible western support for the fledgling Latvian Defence Forces, but also sends a clear international political signal. We must remember that at this time the Russian army occupies parts of Latvian territory and their departure is still uncertain. Through the MLT program a partnership is established not only between US Department of Defence and the Latvian Ministry of Defence but also between the entities of Michigan and Latvia as well. Although the program was originally intended only for about a year, it proves so beneficial in exposing Latvian Defence Forces and National Guard to the US military way of doing things, that Colonel Koppa, Colonel Emery, Colonel Allen and now Colonel Jajick follow Colonel Moon. The Adjutant General of Michigan, General Gordon Stump, is personally involved in this project and has established a wide range of contacts not only among the Defence Forces and the National Guard but among Latvian politicians and businessmen as well. The arrival of the team is significant because it introduces an alternative, western way of looking at military planning, force structures and leadership. Appointment of Mr. Valdis Pavlovskis, a former US marine, as defence minister, reinforces this trend. Above all, it becomes clear that to ensure democratic control over the military, the Defence Forces and National Guard need to be brought under single command in the Ministry of Defence. Col Juris Eihmanis, who at that time is the Chief of Staff of the National Guard, realises this to be inevitable. From this point on, I can speak from personal experience – in the true tradition of shuttle diplomacy on one day I remember conducting close to 10 trips between the two parties before both Defence Forces and the National Guard consented to sign the agreement.

National Armed Forces

The next problem to be solved is that of a joint commander for the newly established National Armed Forces. In view of the incompatibility of the two existing structures, a consensus is reached in the government that the commander should be neither the Defence Forces commander nor the Chief of Staff of National Guard, but an officer with western military experience. The choice falls on Janis Kazocins, British army lieutenant colonel of Latvia descent at that time serving as Great Britain's military attaché in Latvia. However, the British government, obviously for political reason, can agree only in seconding him to the National Defence Forces as deputy commander and LTC Juris Dalbins, from the National Guard staff, is therefore nominated and appointed Commander of National Armed Forces on 5 October 1994. At this point several National Guard officers assume key staff positions in the NAF staff but the National Guard itself remains somewhat in limbo since it has both military and police functions and its exact status could not be agreed upon and as a matter of fact it still remain unresolved.

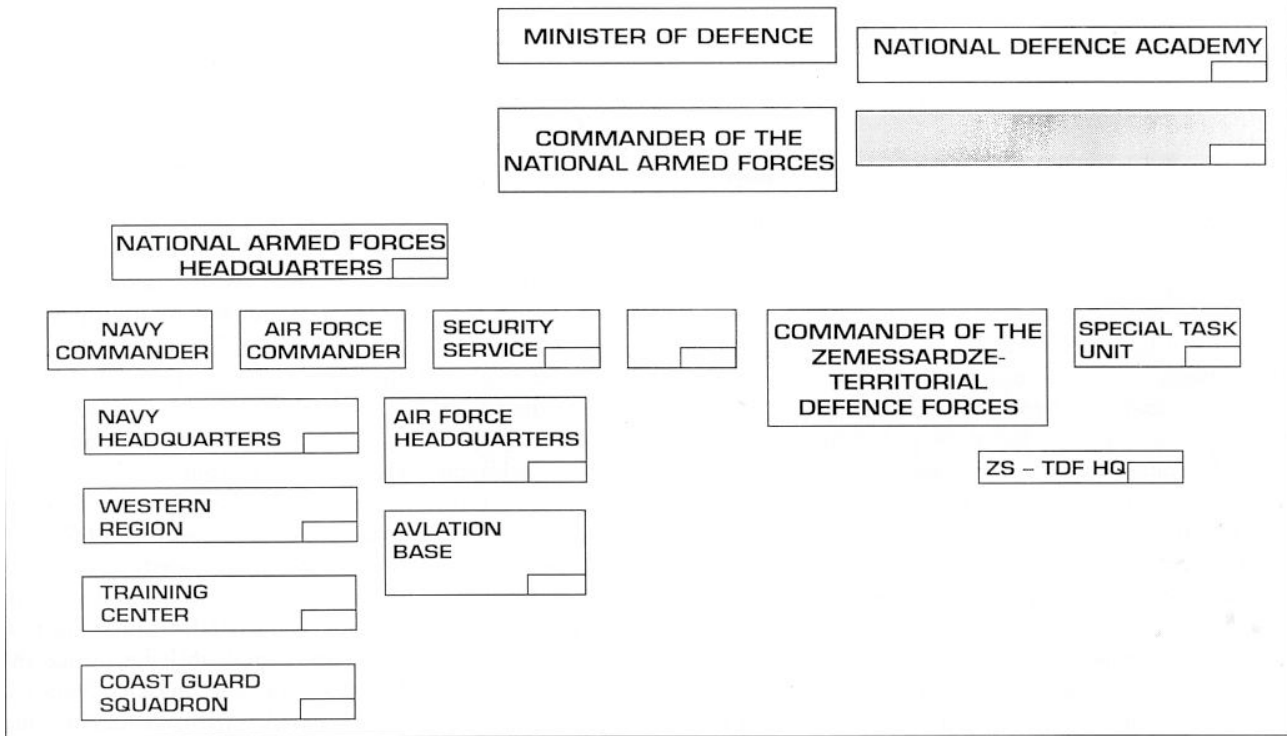
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Meanwhile, work begins on an orderly defence forces planning process – with the help of western experts, a National Risk Analysis and an Military Threat Analysis is conducted, followed by the National Security Concept and a Defence concept approved by the National Security Council and Cabinet in the spring of 95. Meanwhile Mr. Trapans, another western Latvian, had replaced Mr. Pavlovskis as Defence Minister. Unfortunately, in less than a year, because of policy disagreement with the Prime Minister, he is asked to resign, and the Prime Minister retains the defence portfolio for the rest of his term. The preparation of a Force Development Plan was required by the approved Defence Concept and this would have been the obvious domain of Col. Kazocins who eventually assumes the position of Deputy Chief of Staff. Unfortunately at this very time, Partnership for Peace Program come into being and for the duration of his tour Col. Kazocius time is taken up almost entirely with BALTBAT, NATO and PfP issues, with considerable success. This, however, leaves the inexperienced staff to struggle with the force development plan. The problem essentially narrows down to what we want versus what we need versus what we can afford. The problem is further aggravated by the retention by the Defence Ministry and National Armed Forces of far too many military objects taken over from the departing Russian forces. It is obvious the objects that will be required in the future can only be determined when we know what the defence forces structure will be in that future and that still, even today, remains to be settled.

The situation is further aggravated with the transfer of the border guard, with its full equipment and weapons to the National Armed Forces and the lure of commercial structures which pay considerably more for the skills possessed by some of the middle grade officers. The worst part is the fact that many of these officers have recently acquired these skills at overseas training centres as part of foreign military assistance. As enthusiasm is beginning to evaporate, especially after a series of conscript beatings, notwithstanding the fact that sociologists agree these were not problems created by the military but pre-existing conditions inherited by the military, retention of qualified officers becomes a problem. As a consequence of all this there existed and still exists some scepticism in the government how well increased defence revenues would be spent. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the classified National Armed Forces 5-year development plan submitted to the Cabinet and accepted “for information” is not based on realistic or even possible budget allocations. Especially, since the first year (97) anticipated budget fell far short of that projected therefore rendering the entire document irrelevant. At the present time, by direction of the new minister, Mr. Girts Kristovskis, the military threat is being re-evaluated, the defence concept is under review and hopefully a defence plan and a more realistic and sustainable force development plan will be produced. Lack of an approved and funded long range force development plan impacts not only on selection of military objects to be retained, but also on weapons acquisition, training requirement forecast and supply base. No doctrinal publication on tactics, operations, training or logistics have been developed and approved although traditionally that should be the responsibility of National Defence Academy. Obviously, if NATO compatible doctrinal documents are developed and approved, they will be put in practice, taught to conscripts, NCOS and cadets and thus institutionalised to drive and compel interoperability not only with NATO forces but among the military forces of the Baltic States as well.

With almost non-stop foreign visits to the National Forces staff and return visits to foreign countries, force development and other planning becomes near to impossible and by 1997 it became obvious there needs to be a subdivision of international and national political responsibilities from tactical planning responsibilities. Since the Defence Concept specifies National Guard based territorial defence and National Guard constitutes about 90% of the ground forces. In February of 1998 a reorganisation was promulgated essentially (as shown on illustration NR 1.), placing all ground forces, including LATBAT and appropriate training centres, under National Guard – Territorial Defence Forces command.

POSSIBLE SCHEME OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARMED FORCES



Special Mission Unit, Military Police Battalion and Security Service remain directly under the commander, as indicated in the illustration. Currently, in the Defence and Interior Commission of the Saeima, the appropriateness of having the Presidential and Parliamentary Security Service directly subordinate to the NAF commander is being evaluated, since Interior Ministry is already responsible for the security of foreign embassies and the Cabinet of Ministers. Quite possibly it could revert to Defence or even Interior ministry's subordination with a wartime TO&E mission with the NAF.

The SUV's military mission still needs to be defined which then will determine its numerical strength. Over the last years it has been constantly at only about 50% of required strength and under current law it can perform any anti terrorist missions only as backup, upon request, to Interior Ministry's anti terrorist unit. A logical military mission for this unit would be perhaps waterborne operations, similar to the US SEALs. The Military Police Battalion was formed for two purposes – guarding MoD and NAF facilities and providing provost Marshall type services to NAF training centres, to include criminal investigation services. The Military Counterintelligence Service is being downsized and reorganised since some of the investigations conducted by it previously are finally being transferred to the MoD Inspector General and military police.

National Armed Forces Missions

I believe the defence forces of Latvia, as well as those of Lithuania and Estonia, have four basic missions, further subdivided in specific tasks, for the accomplishment of which they must develop appropriate structures. These missions are:

- Ensuring compliance with applicable international conventions
- Attainment of political goal – NATO membership
- Real defence capability attainment
- National administrative and disaster relief missions

Budgetary consideration

Within realistic defence budget constrains the Latvian defence forces must accomplish all these missions simultaneously or in some order of priority. At this time, as previously indicated, there is no

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approved force development plan; because cost of proposals submitted to the government far exceeded resources that could be made available for defence. The situation is hampered by absence of accurate base line cost data- obviously we must first know how much things cost, before we can determine what we can afford. Clearly as well, we cannot create military structures, which we cannot subsequently maintain within a 1-15% GNP budget. A further complication is the fact that defence allocations have not been broken down in an acquisition budget and maintenance budget. We have so far tended to maintain forces too large to permit acquisition of weapons and equipment – in affect we have been paying conscript salaries for performing duties for the performance of which we have neither equipped nor trained them. Additionally, previously mentioned excessive military objects have proven to be a drain not only on resources, but on manpower to guard them from vandalism as well. This problem has been considerably alleviated, by Mr. Jundzis, the previous Defence Minister and the current defence minister is continuing this process of devastation.

Unfortunately, politicians and even some military planners have so far not succeeded in making the government and parliamentary decision-makers aware of the fact that NATO forces already have all their equipment. Therefore the 1% comparison with NATO 3% average is totally misleading – if NATO, like the Baltic States, had to simultaneously acquire their equipment and weapons then individual country budgets for several years would have to be at least 25% of GNP until the accusation bell curve levels out. In short, the dilemma of Latvian armed forces development is lack of knowledge what they can realistically afford.

- **Attainment of NATO membership**

The second mission is political attainment of NATO membership through participation to the maximum extent possible, in PfP and peacekeeping activities. To this end, the organisational structure of a Latvian peace keeping battalion (LATBAT) has been approved on the existing base of the so-called Suýi battalion. The structure and authorised strength of this battalion is indicated in illustration NR 1. Individual weapons (M-16's, 15's) for this battalion have already been provided by USA as well as individual equipment and some EDA vehicles. A full battalions communications set is on order through Warsaw Initiative funding as well as additional organisational equipment. The additional funding available through the IMET Program has been used for specialised unit officer training in USA training centres. While I feel the establishment of BALTBAT was at that time politically important and useful; its current status must be re-evaluated since without a defence agreement among the Baltic States, within any Baltic state it will never be used in its entirety for real defence purposes. That is a political reality. There also appears to be a problem with its employment when it is not required to be on mission. Perhaps it could be transformed into a Baltic States basic training centre as an extension of BATDEFCOL. Since the battalion, as such, can be used only *outside* the Baltic States, it would appear to make sense to retain a small BALTBAT command element thus ensuring its political continuity. But to disperse its companies to national battalions where during non-mission times they would train with the parent unit and perform national missions. Should a mission be offered, then each country would provide, in rotational order, one company out of their battalions thus eventually ensuring thus entire battalions interoperability and combat readiness. A country then could provide the whole battalion independently or, if required or so desired, each country could provide a battalion to participate with a Baltic Peace Keeping Brigade or BALTBDE.

In short, to ensure the attainment of the political goals, Latvia needs one fully NATO interoperable battalion which in a national emergency also serves as a rapid deployment military reserve force or participate, with other government agencies in national disaster resolution. Latvia can *afford* only one such battalion but it also *needs* deployment of military reserve force or participate, with other government agencies in national disaster resolution. Latvia can *afford* only one such battalion but it also needs only one such battalion. Its real defence must rest on mobilizable reserves and the National Guard.

- **International conventions**

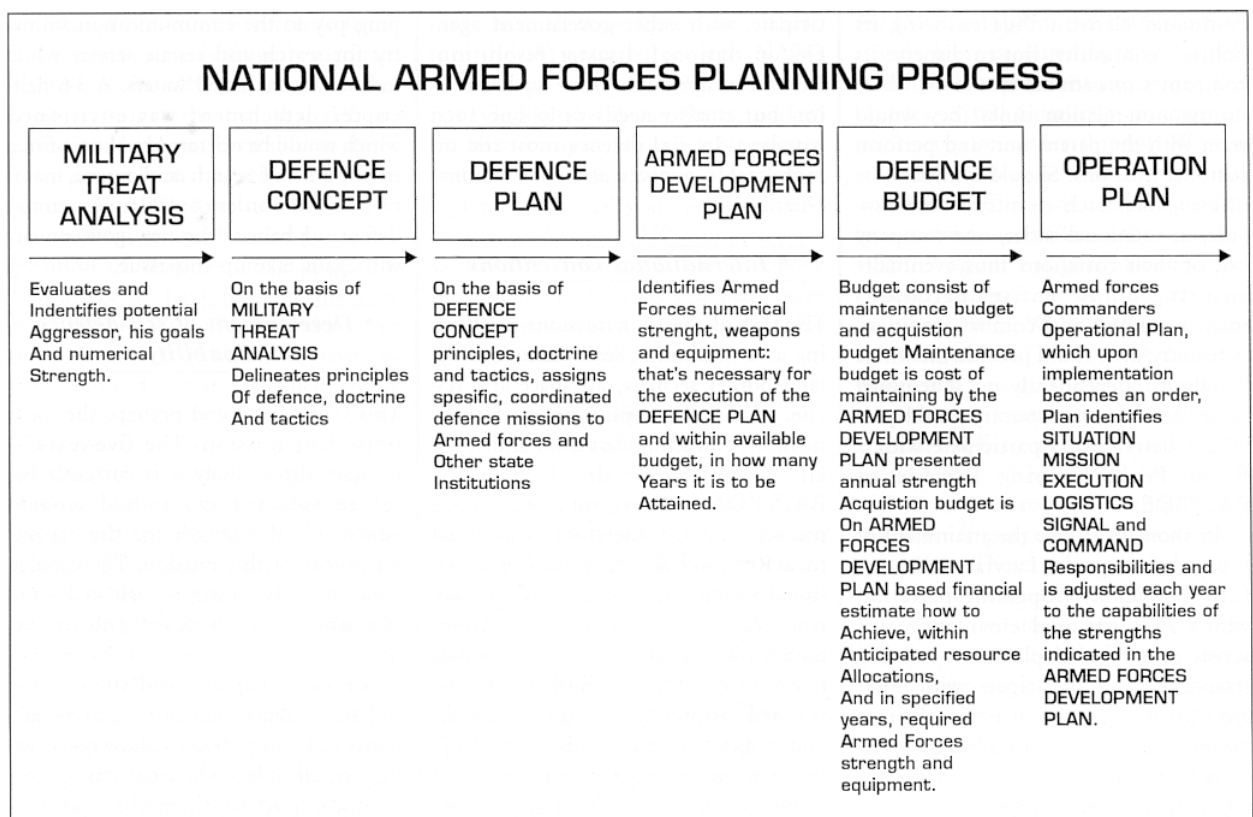
The first of the four missions in ensuring as a minimum, sea border security, land border security, air space and rescue. If the accomplishment of these missions contribute to national defence all the better. We already have the BALTRON and regional Air Space projects and are, therefore,

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committed to a Regional Airspace Centre a National Centre and a joint naval squadron structure. Three previous governments have discussed the search and rescue project but no decision has been reached primarily because of uncertainty about the most suitable helicopter. It would appear the aircraft could be bought for money that foreign shopping pay to the communication ministry for search and rescue service while in Latvian territorial waters. A 3-6 helicopter detachment was envisioned which would be operated by the air force in support of search and rescue, natural disaster, border control and national defence. I believe the new government will again take up this issue.

- **Development of self defence capability**

This is the third and perhaps the most important mission. The five-year-old military threat analysis is currently being re-evaluated and should provide adjusted end strength for the accomplishment of this mission. The defence concept is also being re-evaluated – the planning process is depicted in the figure.



To attain required end strength for full self defence capability, current law needs to be modified to allow conscription of all able bodied citizens subject to draft, putting them through a 2-months basic training course, retaining a small number on active duty, with the rest being offered a choice of either voluntarily joining the National Guard or joining reserve battalions, collocated with National Guard units throughout the country. The available annual number of conscripts has not been accurately established but varies somewhere between 10 000 and 15 000.

The reservists would serve to a specific age, calculated by computing the conscript pool against required end strength. However, the annual costs of basic training first need to be established and budgeted for in advance and it makes no sense to do basic training unless each conscript upon completion of the training is issued at least a uniform and individual weapon. To this end, the Ministry of Defence is planning to request an additional 30 000 M-14 rifles from the US (10 000 have been previously requested and received) to ensure standardisation of individual weapons as well as spare parts. Additionally, reserves require not only weapons but refresher training as well and the cost this needs to be computed as well.

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The current defence concept mandates small unit territorial defence, light infantry weapons and portable anti air and anti tank weapons. The recent reorganisation has announced the intent to formally place all ground forces, including the LATBAT and corresponding training centre under National Guard headquarters but the question remains how long it will take the National Guard to fully implement this decision.

The 16 000 strong National Guard, which as stated previously comprises close to 90% of the National Armed Forces and is the mainstay of territorial defence is currently at a crossroads. The early enthusiasm is slowly dissipating, willingness to sign up for a 3 year term is becoming a problem, some of the law and order duties are being assumed by trained police and there are still no governmental compensation for the time put in, no retirement plan and in some cases even a long wait for a uniform. Only when the state assumes full responsibility for the National Guard can it legally mandate obligatory service in a time of crises – currently reporting for such duty is up to individual conscience and patriotism. It is hoped that the new law “ On National Guard ” will address these problems and more reciprocal accommodation is reached between the state and the National Guard; without that territorial defence is impossible.

With this arrangement, the National Armed Forces Commander essentially commands the three traditional components and some small special units. Figure no.1 provides the possible force structures with the unshaded units already being in existence. The exact numerical strength of the territorial defence forces will be determined by the threat analysis- available resources compromise.

- **National Administrative and Disaster Relief Missions**

The last of the four missions consists of national administrative responsibilities; staff functions and maintaining in peacetime infrastructures needed to support the previous 3 missions. To execute these structures these missions consist of the Armed forces Staff, staff battalion (honour guard company, band, motor pool etc.) military hospital, athletic club, logistics facilities Adazi and other training centres. High on the list is National Armed Forces support for relief of disasters. Needless to say these supporting structures need to be reduced to the minimum to ensure that sufficient funds are available for the execution of the three priority missions.

On the legislative side that portion of the law that pertains to the National Armed Forces has already been extracted from the law “ On State Defence “ and now the law “On National Security” will incorporate the rest of that law. Because many questions dealing with security have not been resolved. Exact role of State President in defence, what happens when Cabinet, Saeima or president cannot carry out their responsibilities in emergency and may even require changes in constitution, it will be discussed at National Security Council prior to second in Saeima. The law on National Armed Forces should be passed within a month or two – the sticking point of the exact status of the National Guard volunteers, as indicated previously, will be addressed separately in a law “On National Guard”.

Much ado is made over the disparity of the Baltic States defence budgets, expressed as percentage of GNP. Clearly, the expenditures are for foreign relations, not defence, but these are national computations and I'm not sure how they would compare when reduced to required NATO budget guidance. I believe, however, that once the progress that is finally under way in the defence area is recognised by the government, the additional funding to bring the expenditures to a full percent of GDP will be found before the end of the year. And next year will see additional promised increases.

Finally, looking at defence at the regional level, it is obvious that Latvian defence establishment needs to determine where they see their future – Lithuania, no doubt, will have the sponsorship of NATO member Poland while Estonia will have NATO sponsorship of Finland. The military threat to Finland has changed significantly, other northern countries are reducing their defence forces and I feel it is only a question of time before Finland will ask for and receive NATO membership. I feel with the reduced threat, the voters in Finland will not accede in the future supporting enormous defence costs when the same can be achieved for considerably less with the NATO insurance policy.

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Participation of Lithuanian Troops in International Peace Support Operations

H.E. Linas Linkevicius, Ambassador of Lithuania to NATO. Former Minister of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania

How and why it started

Politics have many definitions. One is "the art of identifying priorities". This becomes particularly important when one needs too many things, needs them at once and has no resources to substantiate the requirement.

When Lithuania re-established her independence she faced a lot of immediate and very hard-to-tackle tasks. Everybody understood that it had been a very responsible and courageous move to declare an independent state, but it was even more responsible and difficult to preserve that state and to have it recognised by the international community. It was very difficult to make plans for establishing armed forces as an indispensable institution of a sovereign state as long as there were Soviet military forces stationed in Lithuania. And as long as the Gorbachev-led Soviet leadership was considering all possible measures – military intervention included – against Lithuania. And as long as some Western politicians were "appeasing" Lithuania's hot "heads" to keep them from troubling "democrat" Gorbachev in his perestrojka policy. There were disputes even in the Lithuanian Supreme Council on the timing and on whether or not Lithuania needed a ministry of defence and if it would present a provocation against the Big Neighbour.

Even when most of the above mentioned unfavourables were gone (the Soviet Union collapsed, the Russian military forces were withdrawn from Lithuania), it would still take a certain evolution of political and psychological thinking before a majority of the Lithuanian politicians realised the necessity to have national armed forces. Once the decision had been finally made, many were frightened by the need to start the creative work from scratch. Given the hard economic and financial conditions meeting Lithuania, and at the same time given the high criteria of military training and technology supposed to be met by any nation's defence forces in the end of the twentieth century, that work appeared worth Sisyphean efforts. The historic conditions of that time, with due account of the past experience, made it clear that Lithuania had to reject illusions to be defended or protected by somebody, unless she convincingly could demonstrate her own will and determination to do so by dedicating the available national resources. Of course the determination was needed everywhere: in the creation of a new legal system, in the economic reforms etc. I would, however, like to recall the circumstances, which influenced and determined the build-up of the defence forces during the period of 1993-96 when I served as defence minister. Due to various reasons, which may present the subject of a whole other essay, the defence budget was dramatically cut down and sufficed only to maintain the already existing facilities and equipment and to provide the soldiers with a minimum of survival items. We were short of everything: of funds for repairs, uniforms, weapons etc. It was highly unrealistic to even consider procuring any military equipment. Reproaches were made that the armed forces were trying to get too many buildings and compounds, and that they claimed inadequately much in comparison to the real requirements. For a long time it was impossible in a civilised, i.e. parliamentary, procedure to address those requirements: existing risks and threats and following the tasks of the armed forces. This was due to the fact that no generally acceptable national security concept existed. Before 1993, the armed forces were needed only because a military conflict could arise and one would have to defend oneself in one way or the other. Later, more need for appropriate planning was perceived. A certain (both objective and subjective) inability by the state to pay proper attention to the armed forces' requirements had to be

outweighed by some external injections or successful projects. Lithuania got that historic chance in her partnership with Denmark and, in particular, in the co-operative projects of training for international relations.

“Helicopter Agreement”

It is virtually impossible to overestimate the historic role of Denmark as Lithuania's partner at that stage of developing the Lithuanian armed forces. That certainly had many good reasons, but one could be safe to state that a lot of things happened thanks to the firm attitudes of the Danish military command and in particular of the Danish defence minister, Hans Hækkerup. Two peacekeeping-related projects initiated in the summer of 1994 helped the Lithuanian armed forces solve their most acute and immediate problems and even to compensate in part for the internal difficulties of system development. The first of the two projects was the participation of a Lithuanian platoon in the UN peacekeeping mission in Croatia within a Danish foster battalion. The project was born during a visit in 1994 of defence minister Hækkerup to Lithuania. During the helicopter flight from Klaipeda to Vilnius, in an informal working session with Hans Hækkerup, the first draft of the appropriate bilateral arrangement was committed to paper. It was nick-named "helicopter agreement" by the Danish newspapers. Some may have deemed it a simple adventure, because that sort of agreement was really unprecedented. The largest risk was on the Danish side, because the Danes undertook to integrate into their unit apparently under-trained foreign soldiers who spoke no English and had never been tested in action. The Danes also assumed the bulk of related financial responsibilities, supplied the Lithuanian platoon with everything that was necessary and provided pre-mission training. Had that plan failed, there would have been not only practical, but also psychological and, of course, political negative consequences. The advantages in case of success were also obvious. Being far from NATO's threshold, Lithuania got an opportunity to practically integrate her soldiers into the forces of a NATO country, teach the soldiers NATO procedures and language, and place them in a different psychological environment. Creating effective selection and sending young officers to the mission in the roles of private soldiers and lower ranks provided an opportunity to train a national military instructor cadre. At the dawn of creation of the national defence forces, Lithuania got a real chance to its own contribution to European security, instead of only asking for support and assistance. No doubt, it had to raise Lithuania's prestige with our Western partners. However, the Lithuanian parliament was at that time still to be convinced of the viability of the idea. It had, of course, many supporters – as further developments showed they were the majority – but there were fierce opponents as well. The reasons to oppose were various: lack of a legal basis; no experience in personnel selection; finally many were alarmed by the operation-related risks. One thing stood clear: If we succeed to begin, it will give start not merely to an international deployment, but to a new stage in the development of the Lithuanian armed forces – implementation of international projects. It was also obvious that the Lithuanian soldiers, who would keep international peace, would at the same time protect Lithuania. Even though understanding that about 30 well-trained and –armed men could not satisfy the defence needs of our state, I dare say that it was a very significant step towards enhancing Lithuania's security, and that was the most important thing at the time.

Resorting to the accelerated proceedings, the Parliament adopted – not without some complications – a law regulation of the order of sending Lithuanian troops abroad and of their participation in internationally mandated operations. There was a lot of enthusiasm, because we felt doing the pioneer job – and not only among the Baltic States. It was exactly at that time that a serious constitutional debate was going on in Germany on the possibility for that country's defence forces to take part in operations beyond the national border. I recall my German interlocutors, during my September visit to Bonn that year, very much interested in our experience. The experience was such that only one month before – namely in August 1 1994 – could we take an easier breath, because the first Lithuanian peacekeeping platoon, commanded by captain A. Chrapko, formed as a result of

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thorough selection, went to Demark for training in order to prepare for the mission. Four years passed, during which the project was succesfully developing. After three platoons had completed their tours on mission, LITPLA-4 in February 1996 became the first Lithuanian platoon to take part in a NATO led operation, IFOR.

Lithuania was the first among the Baltic States to start participation in peace support operations. Estonia followed suit in mid 1995 and Latvia one year later.

The BALTBAT project

The other important co-operative project, also diretly related to peacekeeping, is the BALTBAT.

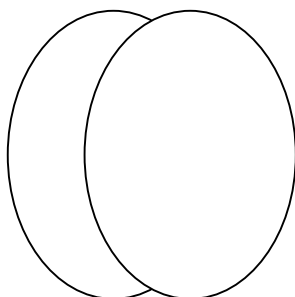
In April 1994 the ministers of the Nordic countries signed a memorandum of understanding on the support to the Baltic States in the formation of a peacekeeping unit. At a meeting in Visby, Sweden, a memorandum was signed between the Nordic and Baltic countries on mutual co-operation in the formation of a Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion. Already in September in Copenhagen, the defence ministers of eight countries – Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom – concluded an agreement on the establishment of the unit. In Copenhagen the co-oodination of the work began, and, to that end, two working groups were created. A Steering Group (at the political level) and a Military Working Group. Representatives from all states would meet periodically to ensure the proper implementation of the project. However, the practical and material assistance was also rendered by other states. The Nordic countries provided equipment, training and weapons. Similar aid was received from the US, Germany, France and the Netherlands.

All that was only possible, because abstract discussions about the necessity to help the young Baltic democracies were replaced by real co-ordination of dedicated efforts. At the meetings representatives from both the donor-countries and the Baltic States, it was possible to find out, which of the Western countries could provide the most effective support in what area. That process could well be called co-ordination of co-ordinators. On the other hand, the Balts got a possibility to co-ordinate their own requirements, which was not an easy task either. The co-operation between the Baltic States and their western partners ran for the first time in an increasingly systematic manner, after having been rather spontaneous and chaotic during the preceding years. It was not coincidental that this experience was later very positively evaluated in the US and other countries. The BALTBAT pattern of work started to serve as a model for multilateral political and military co-operation.

I am convinced that this organisational experience can be applied not only in other geographic regions, but also in other areas of co-operation, say production, industry or economy.

The evolution of the BALTBAT project confirmed the theoretical premise that the Baltic States, Lithuania included, should at this particular stage of development of their armed forces address the combination of two major tasks: development of internal defence capabilities (ability to react, should the need arise, to external threats to national security) and interoperability with NATO (training national forces for common actions and operations). At this stage, these two tasks overlap. However, due to a variety of reasons, they are not identical. Graphically it can be illustrated as two overlapping ellipses, the shared area of which constantly grows, so that they gradually coincide.

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Similar overlaps occurred in the development of BALTBAT: it is being planned to widen the battalions, capabilities by year 2000 from traditional peacekeeping to the entire spectrum of combat tasks. In other words, it will be an infantry unit, trained up to NATO standards, capable of performing national defence tasks as well as peacekeeping and peace enforcement. Once each of the Baltic States has trained its national "BALTBAT", it will no longer be a problem to ensure sustainable participation in international missions by rotating the mission contingents on a semi-annual basis. Each of the Baltic States will be able to delegate a company of its national BALTBAT, along with the agreed staff and support elements, to the common unit.

The first practical steps have already been taken, and soon it will be possible to discuss the experience from another project related to international peace support operations: A joint Lithuanian-Polish Battalion (LITPOLBAT). No doubt, this unit will also become a sort of window allowing to most effectively exploit the advantages of a strategic partnership between Lithuania and Poland in the area of defence.

These three projects – Lithuanian platoons within the Danish Battalion, BALTBAT and LITPOLBAT – have undoubtedly already played and will play in the future the most significant role in the training of our national officer and NCO cadre as the core of our armed forces, able to act together with our Western partners, having a European mentality and being highly motivated.

TOWARDS NATO INTER-OPERABILITY

POLICIES IN BRUSSELS

Colonel Vello Loemaa

Partner Military Representative to NATO*

NATO is a developing organisation. The pace of the development has increased considerably over the last ten years of this century and this millennium. This pace is unlikely to slow down after year 2000, when NATO will begin the second half-century after its birth.

One significant new step in NATO's current existence is the absorption of partner nations into this political-military organisation. During this co-operation it has been the partner states that have had a strong incentive for moving towards real independence as well as towards democracy. The contribution of NATO member states in this respect is invaluable. At the same time, it has probably been the partner states, which have made it possible for NATO to see things in a different perspective, to evaluate what has been done and from this base to understand the whole process better. It appears that one of the commonly interesting and very necessary areas is interoperability.

Interoperability has turned into a very common term. It can no longer simply be confused with the wrong assumption that it covers compatibility of equipment or the ability of people to work together. It covers all aspects that are needed for effective co-operation under all circumstances.

Interoperability is the focus of attention for both the personnel and highest levels of military command. It should further be noted that this area is also important for industry.

Below I will concentrate on the general observations made during the last year's analysis of experiences from NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) exercises. It is only through exercises that one gets a real picture of current situation and help to realise the goals of interoperability. I shall focus on discussions and conclusions made in the NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The experiences of partner nations will be touched upon as well.

It has been stated already, that NATO PfP exercises are turning into something more serious than during the first years of the Partnership for Peace programme. This, in turn, offers more chances to achieve the goals of PfP.

The goal for 1998 NATO/PfP exercises has primarily been to train and prepare commanders, staffs and troops for NATO-led Peace Support Operations, Search and Rescue Operations and Humanitarian Aid Operations. In addition a lot of exercises have been held "in the spirit of PfP". The conclusions after several exercises have accentuated the success of partner nations, their ability to learn quickly and to co-operate successfully with troops from NATO member states. However, not everything has gone as smoothly as each and every participant would have wished. It might be a good idea to analyse the shortcomings inhibiting successful co-operation.

Language

The biggest difficulty so far has been the incomplete language skills, that unfortunately still are characteristic of many partner officers. Even in cases where an officer has a good command of everyday language, he will still lack special operational language, which seriously reduces the value of the training. Officers posted at multinational headquarters will, in such cases, be only spectators. It is very obvious, that when time is wasted for translation of documents and orders, it will inhibit the course of the exercise. It should also be noted that the skills of civilian interpreters may sometimes be harmful rather than useful - their skills in military terminology are often very limited or lacking altogether. Critical situations, where real life would require immediate understanding of the smallest detail, can only be repeated in exercise situations. However, even

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during exercises there can be such situations, where "reruns" can not be afforded due to the lack of time or possibilities.

I would like to bring in one more aspect. It is one thing to use a language in one certain environment without technical tools. It is quite another thing to use the language with many other people for whom English (French) is not a mother tongue. Adding small changes coming from radio-transmitted information makes the situation more complicated. And when the enemy starts jamming communications, only an officer with a very good command of a language will be on the level of his tasks. Obviously, it would be ridiculous to have an interpreter standing by a member of the Special Forces or by a combat pilot.

NATO/PfP exercises have been successful. We must, however, take into consideration that their level and complexity will be rising in time.

Exercise Planning process

Exercise planning is the other area that has created difficulties. The before-mentioned problem with language skills is a factor that has decreased the possibilities of partner nations to take fully part in this process.

Exercise planning is indeed a long-term process. At the same time it is a gradual process, where every consecutive step is tied to the previous one. When the representatives of partner nations do not fully understand this, it can happen (and has happened), that no representatives are being sent to one planning event and the participation in the planning process will thus be incomplete, thus reducing the quality of preparation. A common procedure is sending different people to different exercise planning events. This leads to losing consistency and the quality of preparation is reduced once again. The fruits of this can be tasted throughout the whole exercise.

All this means, that misunderstanding of the importance of planning inhibits interoperability. Officers from partner nations working with planning should very carefully study the following NATO documents:

Bi-MNC Exercise Planning Guide,
Exercise Specification ,
Exercise Operations Order.

Operational Planning process

The operational planning process with partner nations has most probably been interesting for NATO officers too, as people with very different background have come together. In some partner nations, preparation for an exercise has been at a very good level. There are, however, still examples of the opposite also being the case. It is of utmost importance, that officers coming to any exercise should know the following NATO documents very well:

- MNCs' Guidelines for Operational Planning,
- Standard Operating procedures for the individual exercise.

Decision-making

As strange as it may seem, some partner officers have difficulties in decision-making, when information is incomplete. Sometimes no decisions are made at all. Even more in real life than during exercises, there is an insufficiency of necessary information to make decisions. An officer must be able to evaluate the situation and act even in such cases. We all know that inability to take decisions can have destructive results. The training of officers is directed into reaching the required level of decision making, especially during exercises.

In order to develop the decision-making processes, officers should know the legal base (both national and international) and get practical experience through participation in exercises or from Peace Support Operations.

Communications

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The use of communications among partner officers is very varied. It is not only the use of communications equipment, but also the last part of C3 (Command and Control & Communication), that guarantees the functioning of C2. Modern communications equipment includes both hard- and software. In short, it requires computer training for duty officers who are not familiar with the operating system. Computer knowledge again requires skills and knowledge of software at a certain level.

NATO terminology

Above I addressed language skills, including military terminology, but NATO terminology needs special attention. Most partner nations do not yet fully command the standardised NATO glossary, although by now it has been released to all partners. Whether we like it or not, during the work we have developed a specific working language, that is made rather complicated by many possible abbreviations and to navigate among them requires knowledge of the above-mentioned document. All acquired knowledge can be used in everyday international communications and exercises.

It is not wrong to say that almost all of the above-mentioned difficulties have been mentioned in the final paper of each exercise: NATO/PfP Final Exercise Reports.

So, the recommendations derived from NATO/PfP exercises would be:

The first and highest priority should be improving the knowledge of English language, including training NATO's operational terminology. Unless language skills are properly met by all participants, Partners should consider providing appropriate officers for translation.

The PfP, NATO/PfP training and exercise activities are bound to become still more complex. The activities will further be focused still more on the operational commanders and staffs. In this context, it is imperative that partners participate with personnel at the proper level of leadership.

Partners ensure continuity of representation at exercise planning events and building blocks (workshops, seminars etc.), keeping the same planners and participants throughout the exercise process to the greatest extent possible.

Partners familiarise with and practice the NATO Exercise Planning Process based on the Exercise Planning Guide to be promulgated by the end of 1998.

Partners familiarise with NATO procedures for operational planning and decision-making as given with the MNC's Guidelines for Operational Planning and related other Functional Planning Guides.

Partners intensify computer training in order to familiarise with NATO command and control systems operated during operations and exercises.

Partners carefully analyse NATO/PfP Final Exercise Reports to identify lessons learned on special functional areas (e.g. logistics) as a basis for national decisions on interoperability improvement.

It would probably be useful to send experts from each nation to NATO/ PfP exercises, who would evaluate the results of their officers and the exercise as a whole, thereby giving their own part into Final Exercise Reports compiled by NATO staffs.

It would be incorrect to claim that the points mentioned above are the complete list of the factors with influence on interoperability. Certainly there are more of them.

I should probably stop at a very important area that can not be measured quantitatively, namely cultural background. In saying that, we should not think of having one common cultural standard. It is good that there is nothing like that. However, in an officer's work in multinational

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headquarters it is necessary to know other cultural habits and characteristic traits. In a multinational environment, the best traits of each nationality will stand out, which gives an excellent feeling to work in such an environment. This will certainly go over to the service in the staffs of one's own state. Concurrently, especially on the level of sub-units, body language and behaviour that may seem strange in some other circumstances will stand out.

The behavioural norms of military members of some nations are quite rigorous – and the more rigorous, the better. However, there are other societies, where ethics is based on historical traditions, family and often the result of unwritten rules and laws. The latter society requires high-level educated officers, preferably think tanks, at their armed forces and human-oriented leadership. It seems that we have to concentrate more on this. The selection of officers should give necessary results. For Estonians there is a bitter lesson in form of Kurkse, where 14 soldiers drowned during an exercise, that should not be forgotten. Among other things, it also showed our weakness in culture, that could have lead to a loss of trust in multinational contingent. Everyone can imagine, what this would mean in a combat situation.

As a conclusion, we can say that partner nations have made a big step in the Partnership programme. The work ahead will be more complicated and requires respective efforts even towards interoperability. The Baltic Defence College is an extremely good chance for students to reach a completely new level in this area and in the future they will be able to give a worthy contribution for the defence forces of their country.

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Colonel Loemaa's last assignment was as Commander of the Estonian Air Force from February in the rank of Colonel. In this period he has had temporary appointments, as an acting Commander of the Estonian Defence Forces and an acting Chief of General Staff. During the recent years he has attended number of courses abroad. The most significant of them has been the Senior Course 89 of the NATO Defense College in Rome, 1997.

Towards Interoperability: Actions at Home

Andrius Krivas*

In the context of Lithuania's and the other Baltic States' aspirations to join NATO the interoperability of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian defence forces with the Allied Forces of NATO appears as an important measurement of the respective countries' readiness to assume and fulfil international military obligations.

Interoperability (often under different names, though) has presumably been on NATO's internal agenda ever since the Alliance established an integrated military structure. That has referred, first and foremost, to the Alliance's collective defence function, or, in other words, Article V operations.

The issue of NATO interoperability appeared on Lithuania's agenda for the first time in the context of the Planning and Review Process (PARP) that NATO launched in late 1994. At that time, the notion was mainly attributed to the area of international peacekeeping co-operation between NATO Allies and Partner Nations.

The mention of interoperability in the September 1995 NATO Enlargement Study¹ inspired a broader approach to this issue in the NATO aspirant countries. In the aftermath, NATO faced an avalanche of very insistent requests from such partners to define the interoperability requirements that they would be able to deliberately pursue and implement.

The partners found part of the answer in the PARP Interoperability Objectives. These, however, explicitly addressed only non-Article V aspects of interoperability. Besides, the set of the PARP interoperability objectives was too much open-ended: having more or less implemented ten or twelve interoperability objectives in the first cycle of PARP, a Partner Nation was supposed to agree on thirty to forty others in the second one, etc. That was like a never-ending game.

NATO has very carefully avoided formulation of an exhaustive list of interoperability requirements. One of the few attempts (not to say *the only one*) to answer the Partners' questions directly was a briefing to interested Partners on minimum interoperability requirements given by Group Captain Shannon at the NATO HQ in the spring of 1996². In that briefing a well-qualified NATO speaker honestly and to the best of his ability tried to address the very essence of the question. Even though there has never been an official follow-up to that briefing, it succeeded to provide a strong and very creative impulse to the internal thinking on NATO interoperability issues in Lithuania.

The briefing suggested that "NATO's operational effectiveness is heavily dependent upon the level of interoperability between the forces of its members (...). One important consideration within the 'country-specific review' during the pre-accession consultations will therefore be an assessment of the level of interoperability between the prospective new members' forces and those of NATO". The interested partners were urged, in way of preparation for future membership, to seek interoperability in four main areas. These were: policy and doctrine; defence planning; communications (split into two sub-areas of proficiency in NATO languages and communications and information systems – CIS); and reinforcements (with focuses on sub-areas of command and control, operational plans and procedures, logistic plans and procedures and infrastructure, air defence, and civil emergency planning). The latter area was the first direct reference to NATO core function of collective defence in the context of interoperability discussions with the aspirant countries. The first three areas could be equally relevant to the traditional PfP/PARP spectrum of peace support, search and rescue, and humanitarian aid operations.

In the fall of 1996, the then US Secretary of Defence William Perry argued, on two different occasions, in Oslo and Copenhagen that even though fulfilling the political criteria of NATO

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membership, the Baltic States did not meet the appropriate military requirements. His comment was interpreted in Lithuania as a two-fold allusion: one to the insufficient level of the national self-defence capability and the other one – to the lack of interoperability of the available assets and forces with NATO. The two resulting tasks, though largely overlapping, turned out to be not quite identical, nor was one of them subsumed under the other. The result was concentration of further Lithuanian national effort, supported by still modest but deliberately and steadily augmented resource allocations, in those areas, which addressed both the aim of strengthening the national self-defence capabilities and that of NATO interoperability.

In response to Secretary Perry's comments the Lithuanian MOD held, in early 1997, an international Workshop *in the spirit of PfP* on Interoperability of the Lithuanian Armed Forces with NATO Forces with participation from selected NATO and aspirant nations. (The then-Director of the SHAPE Partnership Co-ordination Cell at Mons declined the invitation arguing that a detailed accession-related discussion on practical force interoperability a few months before the NATO Madrid Summit was premature.) The findings of the Workshop absorbed a wide variety of different national approaches presented there and laid foundations to further NATO-interoperability related intellectual and practical effort within the Lithuanian national defence establishment:

Interoperability is an important issue in the context of NATO functions and enlargement. However, NATO enlargement is a purely political decision, while interoperability of forces is a technical one. At the same time, the interoperability with the Allies can be ultimately ensured only within the Alliance, rather than outside (because full interoperability suggests unity of command at international level, high degree of mutual openness and intelligence sharing which are possible only among close allies). Therefore, interoperability cannot be used as a pre-accession criterion. While addressing NATO interoperability issues, the demands of actual defence capabilities of the country concerned should not be overlooked. A harmony should be found between the requirements of the development of national self-defence capabilities and those of NATO interoperability, in order to make them parallel and mutually reinforcing. The real challenge facing the Lithuanian defence policy is to build up effective national forces that can ensure the defence of the country in the event of an external military attack. Once that task is close to completion, the work toward NATO interoperability will bear much more relevance than it may now. The unquestionable priority area in pursuing NATO interoperability is the spread of NATO official language skills in the Lithuanian forces, especially English as the language of NATO integrated military structure. Training of unit commanders, staff officers and sub-unit leaders according to the relevant NATO rules and procedures, aimed at developing independent thinking and acting among the officer and NCO corps, is another immediate interoperability priority. This training is mostly ensured by means of bilateral co-operation with selected NATO countries. Lithuanian participation in PARP is, together with participation in joint PfP exercises and the NATO-led SFOR mission in Bosnia, an important tool that helps to achieve interoperability with NATO. The interoperability value of PARP is preparation of interested Partners for future full-fledged participation in NATO collective defence planning. Many participants stressed that interoperability had to do with culture, the way of thinking of the military that is in many Partner Countries still influenced by the Soviet-fashion stereotypes of policy guidance, doctrine and warfare. If compared to the cultural aspect of interoperability, the compatibility of procedures and equipment appears secondary. For a country like Lithuania, whose geography compels it to base national warfare on light infantry, the top priority in the defence policy should be the development of well-trained and competent units able to communicate with NATO in terms of speaking the same language (English) and working on the same radio frequencies. The main criteria here should be understanding by the subordinates of the commander's intent, and quick decision-making at the lowest possible level. The purely technical aspects of interoperability with regard to light infantry are minor. What really matters is to develop a minimum level of capability and raise the nation's determination to resist an external attack. Relevant technical areas,

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where interoperability between Allies must occur, comprise communications equipment and procedures, and logistics, in terms of commonality of supplies, and with specific emphasis on the wartime host nation support arrangements designed to ensure effective receipt of Allied reinforcements. The main premise here is, again, the ability of national forces to defend their own country at least for a short period of time, in order to allow the reinforcements to arrive using the seaports and airfields of the country concerned.

One of the most intellectually productive points in the discussions at the 1997 Workshop may have been the distinction between the cultural and technical aspects of interoperability. The former was popularly referred to as 'interoperability of thinking'. However, that notion implicitly reached much further out into the areas of commonality of political, cultural, human, intellectual and material values and their hierarchy as reflected in the military culture. Its primacy over purely technical interoperability (unity of calibre, commonality of supplies, single map symbology, interchangeability of ammunition and primary combat supplies, co-ordinated use of radio frequencies, etc.) seemed to be generally recognised.

For the purposes of this article I dare suggest yet another way of structuring the interoperability issue by breaking it down to

(1) ability to understand each other ('software side': training, regulations, procedures, tactics, language, map symbology, agreed communications frequencies, codification, probably also quality of life of the defence personnel, etc.); and

(2) ability to practically support each other ('hardware side': equipment, weapons, means of communications, consumables, infrastructure, procurement, production, etc.).

With the definition, through the PARP, the mentioned NATO briefing and also national intellectual efforts, of basic interoperability requirements the Lithuanian national defence establishment got a considerable amount of homework to do as part of Lithuania's overall NATO integration strategy.

The interoperability-related actions (including those at home) can almost never be purely national, since the objective, contents and validation of interoperability efforts lie, by definition, in the interaction with foreign partners. Therefore, almost all that is done by Lithuania with regard to NATO interoperability of her defence forces has been done by means of international co-operation.

Only the provision of funding has been national. However, even that much-commended tendency of a steady and convincing increase of the defence budget has been largely based not only on the appropriate solid consensus among the major political forces in Lithuania, but also on the analysis of NATO countries' national practices and supported by their advice. Besides, there still exists substantial Western support to the development of reliable and NATO-interoperable armed forces in Lithuania, in the form of provision of training, expertise and materiel.

Let us have a brief look at some of the items of that 'homework'.

The **NATO official language training** is a *sine qua non* in the whole interoperability-related work. The primary focus is, of course, on English as the language of NATO integrated military structure. Lying on what we called the software side of interoperability, the language issue addresses its cultural as well as technical dimensions. The command of a language ensures, naturally, the access not only to professional materials produced in it, but also to all other intellectual products of the nations to whom that language is native or who use it as a means of mutual communication. Even more importantly, the language is the decisive key to personal contacts to foreign partners. Enabling our military personnel to communicate in English at a reasonable level of proficiency, we thus provide them with an opportunity to learn Western ways of doing things in the military area, but also to learn the Western way of life, system of values, etc. At the same time, it enables our Western partners to learn, through direct official and informal contacts with our English-speaking staff, about

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Lithuania, her military, her security policy aspirations and to become convinced that Lithuania is part of the same community of values to which NATO members belong themselves.

By now, the Lithuanian national defence establishment has developed what can be without exaggeration called an English language training (ELT) policy of its own. The sources of that policy go as far back as 1993 or 1994. Faced with dramatically increasing volumes of co-operation with NATO, the Defence Staff was by then no longer in a position to apply the requirement for its entire documentation and correspondence to be conducted or at least duplicated in the national language. The early stage of the ELT policy was to send out high-ranking military and MOD officials as well as the key persons involved in international defence co-operation to attend basic ELT at courses kindly offered by the United Kingdom, Canada and even Luxembourg. The US provided ELT to the Lithuanian personnel prior to attending professional training in the US under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme. Germany has applied the same pattern under the *Militärische Ausbildungshilfe*. Certainly, the course-related language training here concerns mainly German, which is also relevant in the context of NATO interoperability. However, the student slots offered abroad could, by far, not satisfy the huge ELT requirement of the entire national defence establishment. The main elements of our defence ELT policy, thus, became:

- the development of the in-country ELT capabilities implying, in its turn, the establishment of a network of language laboratories and libraries at the national Military Academy and in the units and hiring professional language teachers to work there. Each laboratory has the capacity to train 20 part-time (3 hours per day) students at a time and runs three basic ELT courses per year, thus totalling 420 trainees annually. The contents of the training course have been developed – and teachers trained – with the assistance of, and in close co-operation with, the British who also provided the core laboratory equipment. We already have 7 such laboratories and plan to open 3 more in 1999;
- introduction, under the new military service law, of a career development system that encourages officers to undertake efforts of their own to learn NATO languages, the certified command of English or French or the language of a NATO member country being one of the premises for promotion to the rank of major and for additional pay.

This work went along with continued co-operation on language training issues with the UK, Canada, the US, France, Germany and, to a lesser extent and practically exclusively within the PFP framework, with Hungary and Austria.

The NATO language training has remained very close to the top of the Lithuanian defence policy agenda for five or six years already. Today we can measure progress that has been made thanks to the deliberate concentrated efforts in this field. At the practical level, it is no longer a problem to find English-speaking personnel for participation in international exercises or for other co-operative contacts with the Western military, or to handle English-language documentation. In defining their ELT requirements some units and services (most notably, the Navy) say they no longer need basic ELT. What they ask for is very short-term ELT courses in specific areas of military expertise. Such courses and related study materials are offered, from time to time, by some of our foreign partners (e.g. the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden). It is, however, too early to re-orient elements of our in-country ELT capacities on the requirements of specialised training. These continue to address the more pressing need for large-scale basic training.

The future of our defence ELT policy may depend on the answer to the still-pending issue of whether the army is the right place for people to learn foreign languages. There is a growing understanding in Lithuania that the newly recruited personnel that join the armed forces should bring with them a solid ELT background from the previous civilian experience. After all, the knowledge of Western languages is highly relevant not only to the military, but also to all other political, social, cultural and economic fields of activities. Once the civilian secondary-school and

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university education system is able to provide the core of its graduates with sufficient practical Western language skills, the ELT infrastructure, which is currently being developed in the armed forces, will be able to face the task of advanced and specialised military foreign language training. Another way to approach NATO interoperability is the **participation in international exercises** together with NATO countries. Most of such exercises are conducted either under PfP or *in the spirit* of PfP. The former are NATO Commands' exercises with invitations to all Partner Nations to participate, while the latter - exercises initiated by individual nations with invitations to selected partners.

The Lithuanian policy of participation in international exercises has undergone a considerable evolution since 1994 when we tried to ensure a minimum force contribution to each and every PfP exercise. There was more of political and advertising effort than real interoperability-oriented work in it.

Nowadays, we focus more on command post, staff, map and simulation exercises than on field training exercises, because the former give more concentrated expertise at less expense than the latter. We tend to participate in international large-scale field training exercises only on our own territory or in close vicinity (e.g. other Baltic States, or Poland, or Nordic countries).

Our military attach more and more value to participation in the planning process for the exercises and staff procedures related thereto. The active phase of a particular exercise bears as much value as far it crowns the co-ordinated planning effort.

An important issue of the international exercise policy is the designation of personnel and units for participation. In selecting the individuals and units for such participation we give proper consideration to the relevant professional abilities and the level of English language proficiency of the personnel in question. Priority is given to the personnel who are likely to practically apply the experience they gain from international exercises in their further service in Lithuania for an extended period of time.

Another important aspect is tailoring the international exercises to the development needs of the international units that we are forming together with foreign partners. Such units are the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT), the Lithuanian-Polish Battalion (LITPOLBAT), and the Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON).

Having the task of training units and individuals, the international exercises certainly lie on the 'software' side of NATO interoperability. However, they are also very helpful in defining the appropriate 'hardware' requirements.

Since 1996 Lithuania has annually taken part in 22-25 international exercises. Lithuania is proud of its five-year record of participation in the **international peace support** efforts, which started with a contribution to UNPROFOR II in Croatia and continued with participation of sub-units (up to company size) in the NATO-led IFOR and SFOR in Bosnia. This participation demonstrates that Lithuania does not only consume, but also produce international security. It reflects the basic premise of Lithuania's security policy that peace and security elsewhere in Europe are indispensable part of our own peace and security. This participation is also a measure of maturity of the State to assume and implement international military obligations, also as partner in a defence alliance. Seen under the angle of NATO interoperability, such participation has been particularly valuable because it has so far always happened within a Danish foster unit. Hundreds of our servicemen learned through participation in the international peace support how to use NATO equipment, how to apply NATO command and communications procedures and how to practically interact with NATO forces.

A big part of NATO-interoperability related effort at home happens, of course, within the framework of the **PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP)**. The PARP addresses both the 'software' and 'hardware' sides of interoperability. Within its framework NATO defines, in consultation with the Partner concerned, specific interoperability requirements (nicknamed Interoperability Objectives, IOs, in the upcoming PARP cycle to be renamed Partnership Force

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Goals) to be met by selected Partner forces and assets by mutually agreed deadlines. This promotes the integration of NATO procedures into the staff work of PARP-designated units and helps define 'hardware' requirements in the PARP-earmarked forces and assets thus providing important input to the formulation of deliberate defence procurement policy.

What makes PARP particularly attractive to Lithuania is its ambition to prepare interested Partners for future participation in NATO collective defence planning system.

The PARP is also important as a mechanism, through which NATO standardisation and codification are entering, as part of our NATO integration strategy, the daily routine of the Lithuanian armed forces.

Lithuania's PARP policy has been, firstly, gradual expansion of the pool of PARP-earmarked forces and assets to include in the future the entire armed forces and, secondly, bilateral training and materiel co-operation with selected NATO nations, most notably Denmark, on the implementation of specific PARP Interoperability Objectives. In our bilateral co-operation plans with some of the partners we have also been trying to relate individual co-operative events, as far as applicable, to specific IOs.

The main contents of the interoperability-related homework on the 'software' side lie probably in the **personnel training**. Efforts have been made at all levels to have the Lithuanian military personnel trained in NATO approaches, tactics and procedures.

At the level of senior/staff officer training we have been in this sense relying for a long time on the training opportunities provided by Germany, the US and France within the framework of their national foreign security support programmes. However, the necessity to unify the doctrinal side of the national staff officer training and to approximate it to the conditions and realities of Lithuania without depriving from NATO doctrine, manuals and expertise led to the idea of developing own staff officer training capacities. Latvia and Estonia apparently had similar considerations. At the same time, the comparatively modest size of the national requirement for newly trained staff officers would hardly justify the establishment of a dedicated national educational institution in each of the three countries. On the other hand, the large overlaps in geo-strategic posture and security policy aspirations as well as many similarities in the development of the national defence forces over the last years allowed for a joint Baltic approach to the problem of staff officer training. The joint approach, in its turn, promised the benefits of having the staff officers trained in English and of obtaining direct Western support to a would-be institution. That was the background for launching the Baltic Defence College project that has by now entered the decisive stage of implementation.

At the level of junior officer training, the Military Academy in Vilnius has been continuously adapted to NATO training standards. Since the Academy staff has had, if any, only very limited NATO background, this adaptation is a long-term process, rather than a one-time wilful act. In this process Lithuania has been strongly supported bilaterally by the United Kingdom and Denmark, in terms of provision of advice, teaching materials and instructor training. Of course, our junior officers continuously take advantage of the long and short-term training courses provided by Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada, France, but also by such non-NATO nations as Sweden and Switzerland whose doctrines and approaches are, however, generally recognised as NATO-compatible.

At the level of NCO training, our national NCO Academy at Kaunas has been very successful in mobilising Western support and expertise, especially American (through the Vilnius-based US Military Liaison Team activities) and Danish. A number of NATO countries (most importantly, Germany) have been offering specialised NCO training at their national military training establishments.

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The demands of NATO interoperability at the level of basic military training are addressed with the help of our British partners in organisation of basic military training instructor courses in Lithuania. The target audience of these courses consists of individuals who will conduct centralised military training of newly conscripted army recruits at Rukla.

An indispensable element of our interoperability-related homework is Lithuania's participation in the implementation of the **Baltic defence co-operation projects**: Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT), Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON), Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET) and Baltic Defence College. All of them are supported by Western countries within the framework of the Baltic Security Assistance Management Group (BALTSEA), which turns them into mechanisms of introduction of NATO or NATO-compatible equipment, rules and procedures, respectively, in the Baltic armies, navies, air forces and officer training systems.

Last but not least, a vast area that is essential to our interoperability homework is the area of **defence procurement**. The NATO interoperability demands have made our military procurement system turn to Western military equipment markets. It is through the procurement that the Lithuanian armed forces get new NATO-compatible weapons and equipment: British cross-country vehicles, Swedish anti-tank grenade launchers, US communications equipment, etc. This also necessitates further co-operation on issues like supply of spare parts, maintenance base, operator training and others. Similar links, highly relevant to the interoperability issue, appear not only through direct purchases of equipment from Western companies, but also through much-appreciated military excess equipment donations to the Lithuanian armed forces.

This brief overview hopefully shows the place of NATO interoperability efforts in Lithuania's security and defence policy, exemplifies the actions that are taken by Lithuania at home to ensure the NATO interoperability of its defence forces. A comparison between the menu of interoperability areas and requirements specified in the beginning of the article to the work actually done so far may give an idea what areas need to be entered into and what tasks still have to be performed in logical continuation of this effort.

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¹ Study on NATO Enlargement, September 1995, Paragraph 74, 76 – 78.

² NATO Enlargement. Collective Briefing to Interested Partners on Minimum Interoperability Requirements - 31 May 96.

NATO interoperability and the Baltic Defence College

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In today's world, military operations combining the forces of more than one state is the rule rather than the exception. Thus it is important that military organisations open minded develop professional interests in learning what will make them effective partners in combined operations. Success or failure is likely to depend on it. Major powers' militaries may expect their partners to make the adaptation. For smaller states, however, that option does not exist. They must be able to understand and then to adapt, in order to develop interoperability.

To understand the ways the Baltic Defence College will promote the NATO interoperability of the Baltic States defence forces, one must first - in a general way - identify the obstacles to effective co-operation between military units.

ELEMENTS OF INTER-OPERABILITY

Common Language(s)

Without a common language, military forces cannot co-operate effectively. Two units with a common mission but without common language will have to divide the tasks between them in a way that makes interaction unnecessary. They must then hope that nothing and nobody will interfere with the line of division. However, no military operation can be safely built on such a premise. Any competent military opponent will seek these divisions of responsibility and exploit them. Therefore military forces conducting operations together with NATO units must master the English language.

The better the knowledge of English by the forces involved the better the basis for co-operation. The deeper the key staff officers and unit commanders know this common language and the more familiar they are with the different accents, nuances and dialects, the less scope for misunderstanding. However, deep key cadre knowledge of the language may not be enough. In most operations a "between the leaders" interaction will be insufficient to meet the demands of the situation.

Army units conducting mobile, high intensity operations must be able to interact at all levels to avoid dangerous misunderstandings that can lead to enemy exploitation or to fratricide caused by "friendly fire". Units will need to co-operate closely at much lower levels than was foreseen in the plan. They will meet on the battlefield as a result of the situation developing or by chance. Therefore it is necessary to have a rather widely spread common language base. Even individual soldiers and non-commissioned officers will need to have an active knowledge of the working language.

In peace support operations units from different nations will often be employed in territorial supervision and control missions. Such operations are much more predictable than fluent, mobile, high intensity operations and therefore, in theory, less dependent on low-level co-ordination and communication. However, units in such operations are often dispersed with platoons and even with sections in independent control posts or on patrols. Therefore even in such more predictable operations and missions, efficiency might well depend on a widespread knowledge of a common language.

A basic proficiency in the official, common, working language may not always be enough. For close co-operation, some basic knowledge of the language of the co-operation partner can be very helpful. One example: during the Cold War, Danish Army units had war time defence missions in the front line defence of the Federal Republic of Germany. In some defence plans, Danish battalions had German Army infantry companies attached, deployed forward of Danish positions, right up to the Inner German Border. These German companies could be forced to conduct a rearward passage of lines through the Danish companies during the confusing first couple of hours of the war. The German Army companies, including the cadres, were reservists. Most understood some English. However, it was quite clear that their limited English would be insufficient during what is one of the most difficult and dangerous operations when conducted during combat contact and under enemy pressure. In spite of this, there was one reason why Danish officers were fairly confident that it would work without a high risk of fratricide. There was a widespread knowledge of

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the German language among the Danish cadre and soldiers. If necessary, the communication could take place in an unholy mix of English and German languages.

The importance of common languages is also demonstrated by the fact that the Nordic States Armies have successfully conducted combined operations for decades. During the last five years, it has been done again during the UN peace keeping and NATO led peace support operations in the former Yugoslavia. In the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Nordic States successfully fielded and integrated a mixed company. In the very difficult operation protecting the Tuzla (safe-) area in Bosnia during the UN phase, the Nordic States worked successfully in a mixed mechanised battalion. The mission sometimes brought situations close to war under rules of engagement requiring complete understanding of the situation and accurate as well as co-ordinated judgement by all.

The high general knowledge of English in the Nordic Armies is an important factor of the success, but it is not the only reason why their co-operation is normally smooth and effective. All ranks are able to work together by communicating internally in their mixture of Nordic languages and English. It is also important that the general cultures have many common elements (the purely military cultures, on the other hand, have very few shared traditions and components).

Common procedures and basic formats

Common knowledge of language only creates the most basic foundation for co-operation. In itself, however, it does not remove the likelihood of misunderstanding, friction, and accidents. In order to increase the probability of co-operation being smooth, all involved sides will have to accept, absorb, and use, a common, standardised terminology. This includes standardised order and reporting formats, communications procedures and forms, as well as similarities in staff structures and working and planning formats. The co-operating parties must also have an agreed normal division of responsibilities and procedures in situations that will occur in the field during the operation: e.g. passing of each other's lines (like in the Cold War situation described above), and using the partner's indirect fire or air support units.

If these preconditions are not in place, the units will get in each other's way, with fratricide as a probable result. The chances of success through a combined synergy of effort will be very slim. In one of the accidents of the Gulf War, U.S. Air Force aircraft mistakenly attacked a British mechanised platoon. The USAF unit involved apparently had not conducted sufficient training exercises prior to their commitment to the air campaign using the common doctrine and procedures for Air-Land co-operation that had been developed over the previous 10 years in NATO. In the Tuzla operation mentioned above, the Nordic Battalion was dominated by the Swedish contributions. However, as the unit depended on air support from NATO forces, the Tactical Air Control Parties came from the NATO Danish Air Force. Due to the Swedish defence doctrine and organisation, no similar structures for close integration of land and air operations had been developed. Even if national Forward Air Controller teams had existed, they would have had to learn NATO procedures from scratch, making the chances of misunderstanding, inefficiency, and losses considerable. In the later NATO led peace support operation in Bosnia, the Nordic-Polish Brigade was supported by a NATO (U.S.) artillery sub-unit. If the Swedish or Polish battalions had used their national fire control procedures instead of the NATO-agreed, there would have been a high risk of misunderstanding and fratricide.

Technological interface

Common language and routine in using common procedures are not enough to ensure smooth co-operation in military operations. They must be backed-up by compatible technology.

The key element in making the common language and procedures effective is to have compatible communications equipment (and encryption systems) at the command levels where timely information must be available and direct co-ordination is essential. The more integrated the operations and faster the likely pace of operations, the greater the demand for systems that can work directly together at all tactical and operational levels.

If operations are likely to be interwoven to a very high extent and combat intensity likely to be high, efficiency will also depend on the compatibility of the logistics. At the low level, one could mention common standardised fittings on logistics equipment and common terminology for spares. At the medium level, you have common types of fuel and ammunition. At the high end of interoperability forces are using

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very much the same types of key equipment allowing use of the same spare parts and maintenance organisations.

The equipment and the support of the larger participating states have dominated all efficient international forces involved in multinational operations throughout history. This was the case on all fronts in the Second World War, the Indochina Wars, and is likely to be the case in future wars of some duration and intensity.

The higher the level of initial standardisation or at least compatibility between the military forces the higher the degree of interoperability. However, the cost and opportunity dividing agreement of NATO contradict this. Logistics support is a national responsibility in the alliance. However, it is sensible once in a while to remember that a shop- or book-keeper's logic have created considerable difficulties in combat in the past and is likely to be a problem for military leaders in the future too. A high degree of logistics interoperability reduces the burden on the combat soldier. Multinational forces must strive to obtain it.

Different military cultures

Even with armies that speak the same language, use the same procedures, and to a large degree have the same equipment, friction and misunderstanding is likely. Each nation possesses a unique identity, based on language, values, cultural identity, and social outlook. Armies are very much influenced by their national military experience and history, as well as the educational system, norms, social and political system, etc. of the society, the part of which it is.

Differences between armies resulting from the diverse national background can influence interoperability to a very high degree. Even minor factors can have considerable impact. Different cultures means that land forces vary in the way they do even the simplest things. They differ in the will to delegate authority and the level of trust they are willing to show in co-operation partners not firmly under their control.

The military culture and the normal missions with which an army is raised and trained -including the terrain and climate it is meant to work in- influences structure and tactical emphasis. It should surprise nobody that there is a distinct difference between ethos as well as tactics, structure and training in the Finnish Army, which focuses on defence of a relatively vast national territory in a difficult climate; and that of the British Army with its very different history and diverse missions.

Armies are very much social organisms and even if they are sometimes influenced by - and even "copy-cat" - military doctrinal, structure, and uniform fashions from "role model" armies, they remain very different.

These differences are much less pronounced in navies and air forces that are much more dominated by the medium in which they work and the technology they have to use to be effective.

Even the armed forces inside one state can be so different in ethos and training that this influences negatively their ability to co-operate effectively. The United States has spent much energy to develop the will and ability to co-operate between the different parts of the armed forces. Even in the Baltic States it has required a serious effort to bring the small regular and volunteer forces together in an effective co-operation.

The only way to reach effective interoperability in spite of the effects of the "cultural" differences is by living and training together, and by gaining understanding and knowledge - as well as acceptance - of the other's ways of seeing and doing things. There is no substitute for well-planned and rigorous training programs for all military forces, especially multinational ones. The combat effectiveness of the combined force depends on it.

WHY THE BALTIC STATES NEED NATO INTEROPERABILITY

NATO operability is relevant in two ways to the national security of the Baltic States:

- 1) For participation in peace support or other international operations outside the Baltic region: *Interoperability for international solidarity.*
- 2) For co-operation with NATO forces that may be deployed to one of the Baltic States in case of need before or after membership as a result of consultations during a crisis followed by a NATO decision to deploy regardless of member status: *Interoperability for enhanced deterrence.*

In the first context, units are likely to be relatively light and the operations will probably be of low intensity, making the logistics problem comparatively simple - in some respects. However, at the same time, logistics support could be difficult and demanding due to the distance from home if assistance is not available from other forces in the area. Until now the Baltic States have been able to have a high level of logistics

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interoperability through support of the armies of the states they have been serving with: Denmark and Sweden in Bosnia and Norway in Lebanon. The other technical interoperability problems have been solved in the same way.

The mixing of forces in solidarity missions is likely to be high, creating need for a minimum language skill at the low level of NCO's and even private level. On the other hand, the flow of events is likely to be rather predictable, and the intensity of operations low, making the risk of fratricide and costly misunderstandings slight. Therefore, the demand for cadre's in-depth understanding of the mission language and general knowledge of NATO procedures is likely to be limited. Most needs can be covered with a fairly short pre-mission training making the personnel familiar with the special mission Standard Operation Procedures. However, as the support from other states is reduced, the requirements for the Baltic States' cadres and structures are likely to increase in such missions, especially in the Enforcement end of Peace Support Operations.

Only small parts of the state's defence forces are likely to be deployed in a solidarity mission. Therefore, the development of NATO interoperability could be limited to a relatively small part of the cadre/forces in this situation.

In the second case, in the deterrence situation, the need for logistic interoperability between the Baltic States and NATO States forces is relatively limited. The NATO forces are likely to have a completely independent logistic support structure, and the Baltic States' forces operate close to their own support structures. However, logistics interoperability between the Baltic States - on the basis of NATO standards - could have significant benefits. It would enhance the credibility of deterrence and make the defence more robust.

On the other hand, in all other respects the interoperability requirements will be very clear. Some Baltic States' units will have to operate very closely with the NATO States forces, creating high demands for common language, procedures, and technological interface. Some local forces - both regular and territorial - are likely to be integrated in the NATO States' forces, and - potentially - the situation could develop into a high intensity operation with rich possibilities of misunderstanding and fratricide.

In that situation the Baltic States' forces would also have to co-operate and interact with each other, creating a need for internal common language and procedures - and the only agreed possibility would be the English language and NATO procedures.

Thus the requirement for interoperability based on NATO standards in this situation is general: nearly all forces must be prepared to interact with NATO state forces, even the territorial volunteers and reserve units. The integration of operations may be so close that broad understanding and acceptance of military cultural differences is essential.

THE ROLE OF THE BALTIC DEFENCE COLLEGE

What is a General staff officer?

The models vary in different armies. The term is understood here in the same way it was by the enlightened German fathers of the modern General Staff 150-200 years ago:

- Recruited among the young officers with a proven capacity to command and lead sub-units.
- Expected to be open-minded, critical of dogma, analytical in approach,
- With an in-depth acceptance of political control of all state armed forces,
- With an understanding of the need of humane leadership, positive motivation, and the development of trust and independence in subordinates,
- Developed through a general staff course that broadened the professional horizon and ability to hard, systematic work, in a disciplined co-operation with others,
- Later developed further through service in sequence of teaching posts, staff positions at various levels, troop command at various level, and as teacher/tutor of younger colleagues,
- Analytical and positively critical, if necessary self-critical, in reporting,
- Always evaluated by personality characteristics, the most important being the combination of moral courage to present the right solution even if unpopular, and the will power and personality to ensure that the chosen option is implemented with a sound professional foundation,

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- Accepting that becoming a member of the de facto elite of the national defence forces, a status based on intellect, character, and service, does not need to bring any formal privilege.

This is the model/ethos that the Baltic Defence College will attempt to promote among the students.

In principle such a General Staff Officer should be able to staff any military educational, organisational, tactical, administrative, or logistic problem - in any country - and come up with a workable recommendation (or decision). The general staff officer is a generalist rather than a specialist. He does not have one right model or solution that he tries to project onto any problem. He is open-minded and develops/adapts the recommendation to the actual problem/local conditions. Thus he is very suitable for international co-operation - and for working together with other state structures in his own state.

When the mission of the coming Baltic Defence College was developed in the summer of 1997, all persons and parties involved agreed that the teaching in the college should prepare staff officers capable of effective interaction with forces and staffs of NATO countries. However, the further development of the project and the international support for it have surpassed expectations and produced unique possibilities for developing officers that can support and guide their national defence forces towards effective interoperability.

The framework

The working language in the school is English. It was agreed in the summer of 1997, that "all teaching and work- except national teaching of administration - shall take place in the English language".

At the first phase of the student selection that took place mid-1998 in the three countries, the English language skill was a clear criterion. Thereafter further language preparation of the candidates is taking place abroad or in their home country.

The fact that English is the working language in most of the instruction means that the officers receiving staff training in the college will get approximately the same advantage in relation to NATO interoperability as the officers that go through a similar length staff course in the United Kingdom or the U.S. Of course, a period in a fully English speaking environment will tend to develop the ability to use that language further. The working English developed in Tartu, among other non-Anglo-Saxons, will be less than perfect, very much like the simple, common lowest denominator, English used in the multi-national headquarters of the alliance.

However, in a couple of ways, the Baltic Defence College course could have an advantage. Firstly, British and U.S. courses will tend to use national terminology rather the agreed NATO terms. Thus one could say that the Baltic staff course might be a marginally better specialist language preparation for NATO interoperability. Secondly, the small (5-7-person) size of the working groups, "syndicates", used in BDCOL makes certain that every student is forced into active use of English every day of the course. There will be no chance of "hiding".

The staff is multinational. It comes from 12 different states. The Directing Staff involved directly in the teaching of operations, tactics, and logistics is from 9 different states. Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. are all represented. On one side, this is a significant challenge in the development of the education and recommended solutions to problems, as the actual instruction given will have to be completely integrated. However, we shall make sure that the product will represent the sum of common sense and professional knowledge rather than be an attempt to compromise between contradictory doctrinal elements. On the other hand, the fact that we will demonstrate that it is possible to reach a high level of focused co-operation amongst members from so many nations/organisations will in itself show the students how a multinational NATO headquarters could work together- in spite of different background and military cultures. It will actually demonstrate that a significant element in being effective in spite of multinationality is gaining understanding of the roots of different military cultures.

The students will learn to work in small multinational groups. Nearly all work during the Baltic Defence College staff course will take place in syndicates involving at least the three Baltic States nationalities. No nationality will be in a dominant position. The work will be difficult, lead to misunderstandings, be felt to be

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a waste of time, bring frustrations. All the hardship endured on the way to a solution to the problem discussed will prepare the students to be successful international officers.

The students will have to develop and show considerable patience - as well as diplomatic sense, open mind, and the willingness to be convinced and compromise. That is essential in an international military group. However, in BDCOL the problems discussed are at a rather low, tactical and practical, level (e.g. the planning and the execution of operations at brigade/military region level and lower). It means that the pressure for real - rather than "political" and superficial co-operation is higher than it would be in a most multinational headquarters. Thus the course will prepare the students well for work in the fully or partly ad hoc multinational headquarters that will plan and direct international operations in peace support and defence in war. The course will develop attitudes and human interaction skills essential in creating successful interoperability.

The tactics part of the staff course will promote NATO interoperability in key areas. The general tactical field manual that will be developed in and used by the Baltic Defence College will mirror the terrain and defence conditions of the Baltic States, including the need for independent action by often widely separated combat units. However, at the same time, the manual will include all relevant formats for orders, planning, reporting, etc., from NATO manuals and STANAGs. Thus the instruction will prepare students to work with NATO member state forces, without blindly copying methods that are likely to be inappropriate to the actual defence of the Baltic States during the next decade.

The manual will be developed in close interaction with the Baltic States Main Staffs (and officer education academies/centres) making mutual exchange of ideas possible and likely as to enhance the development of NATO interoperability in the defence forces of the three states.

The curriculum

The instruction in tactics and logistics will not only be based on this tactical manual. It will also familiarise the students with relevant NATO tactical publications.

All but one of the nine exercises during the tactics part of the course will aim at developing routines in the use of the NATO formats in the defence of an area/region of one or two of the Baltic States. Three out of these major paper/reconnaissance/war gaming-exercises will involve analysing and practising the integration of NATO member state forces into the defence of the Baltic States.

One exercise will focus on planning and executing an international, NATO led - Peace Support Operation in the European periphery.

The instruction will endeavour to close gaps in the basic knowledge of students in such areas as the capabilities and tactics of different types of units, gaps that are the result of the still underdeveloped officer education in the three states.

All the work within this part of the instruction will aim at developing professional understanding and ability to analyse and plan in each student. There will be no dogma and norms to learn by heart. Thereby the students will be better prepared to interact effectively in any international context.

The instruction in military technology will be closely integrated with tactics and logistics. It aims at familiarising the students with the effects on tactics and logistics of the technology currently in use or about to be introduced into the great power forces. This must be considered an absolutely necessary factor in defining ways of co-operating in an actual future situation.

The instruction in Political Science and Strategy will develop understanding of the formulation and execution of the external politics of the state. It will also include the organisation of decision-making in NATO and other international organisations, including at the preparation for out-of-area international operations. It will also aim at preparing the students for understanding - and acceptance - of compromises between states co-operating in crisis or war in formal or ad hoc alliance.

All instruction at the Baltic Defence College will aim at developing open- and independent minded General Staff officers with the ability to understand and analyse the capabilities of various types of military organisations in different missions. This in itself - and the constant work in a multinational environment -

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will help to develop a unique ability to interface effectively with forces of different armies with different military cultures.

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