

# THE CZECH V4 PRESIDENCY PRIORITIES IN THE DEFENCE AREA

In the defence area, the Czech V4 Presidency will focus on the implementation of the Long Term Vision of the Visegrad Countries on Deepening their Defence Cooperation, with reference to the tasks set in the Action Plan which will be revised and updated during the Czech V4 Presidency term. The V4 Senior Body at the level of Deputy Defence Ministers, or State Secretaries of the V4 countries, is a body that coordinates V4 defence cooperation and brings new impulses. V4 defence cooperation is strategically covered by the Ministers of Defence.

## **Aim: Strategic Review of V4 Defence Cooperation**

**Implementation:** The Czech Republic will seek to initiate a substantive and open discussion on the development of the security environment and regional threats. The discussion should aim at a strategic review of future V4 defence cooperation in the evolving security environment and in the light of activities and initiatives aimed at strengthening of the defence and security dimension within the EU and NATO. The Defence Ministers will task the V4 Senior Body to elaborate on this topic. A broader debate on the subject will be launched at an expert workshop with the participation of experts and academics, whose output should inform the process of updating the "Long-term Vision of the V4 Countries" in order to strengthen their defence cooperation.

## **Aim: Capability development, harmonization of V4 defence planning**

**Implementation:** The V4 Planning Group (V4 PG) will continue to exchange information on the content of policy and planning documents with a view to harmonising their defence plans, especially in the longer term. In the V4 PG, the V4 countries will also coordinate their positions on defence planning and capabilities development in advance of meetings in broader NATO and EU formats as well as in relation to their partners, especially Germany. In capability development, the priority will be the building of joint V4 JLSC HQ with Poland as a leading country.

## **Aim: Building a common position on aligning EU-NATO defence planning and potential PESCO cooperation**

**Implementation:** The Czech Republic will promote the development of a common V4 expert and political position on the harmonisation of the NATO Defence Planning Process and EU defence initiatives. It will explore opportunities for a possible joint V4 PESCO capabilities development project and examine opportunities for V4 cooperation in the framework of the European Defence Fund.

## **Aim: Creating multinational battle groups, in line with NATO and EU commitments**

**Implementation:** V4 EU Battlegroup (V4 EU BG) should be ready for its standby period during the Czech V4 Presidency in the second half of 2019. The Czech Presidency will advocate building the battlegroup again in 2023. The priority is to create a V4 EU BG modular structure with a 1-year standby and 4-year rotation.

**Aim: Search for deeper armaments cooperation opportunities within NATO and EU to create a stronger position in promoting interests of the Central European countries**

**Implementation:** The Czech Republic will continue to identify new areas of armaments cooperation in a broader context of harmonization of defence capability development at the level of the National Armaments Directors. In doing so, it will follow up on the ongoing activities and information sharing, especially in the area of air defence and artillery. The Czech V4 Presidency will focus on the possibilities of cooperation in the area of joint procurement of ammunition (e.g. through NSPA, EDA) and possible joint research and development projects or training following the acquisition of new air defence and artillery systems by all V4 countries.

**Aim: Strengthening the harmonization in the human resource management**

**Implementation:** As part of the Czech Presidency, the V4 countries will continue to work in the Human Resources Management Working Group, focusing on exchange of experience in organisational changes within the Armed Forces, setting and implementing systemisation rules, opinions on women's role in the Armed Forces and in approaches to the risk behaviour of personnel. The discussion will be completed on the usability of human resources currently available in the labour market for the recruitment to the armed forces.

**Aim: Training and education as a means of enhancing the interoperability of the Armed Forces**

**Implementation:** The V4 Training and Exercises Strategy will be implemented. In this regard, we will primarily use the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE) headquarters in Szczecin and associated Division level headquarters. Our aim is to continue developing a robust training programme and gaining experience at higher command levels ideally in cooperation with key partners, especially the United States and Germany. The cooperation amongst V4 military educational institutions will continue, with an increased emphasis on language training.

**Aim: Search for more opportunities for strengthening regional cooperation**

**Implementation:** The Czech Republic will strive for further deepening of cooperation in the V4 "plus" format, especially with Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and possibly with the Republic of Korea. We will actively support the strengthening of the links between the V4 and the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) initiative, focusing on achieving tangible results.

**Aim: Regional cooperation to support the stabilization of the Sahel countries**

In accordance with the Czech Government strategy on addressing illegal migration at its source, the attention will be paid to the Sahel region and on supporting the G5 Sahel Joint Force (e.g. through training, material and financial aid). The Czech V4 Presidency will seek to share its operational experience in the region (EUTM and UN MINUSMA missions in Mali).

**Aim: Seek possible joint operational deployment**

**Implementation:** The Czech Presidency will search for opportunities for joint V4 operational deployment, building on its own positive experience of operational deployments abroad. One of the options offered in this context is the rotating command of the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM), or its presence in eFP. Furthermore, the Czech V4 Presidency will look for possible joint activities on the NATO's eastern Flank.