

## **Joint Communiqué of the Visegrad Group Ministers of Defence**

*With the aim of deepening defence cooperation of the Visegrad Group (V4), increasing the V4 contribution to NATO and EU capabilities, and enhancing the security of our region, we, the V4 Ministers of Defence:*

- I. Pay tribute to our Armed Forces for helping our societies in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. In this endeavour, our forces have demonstrated their high professionalism and readiness through providing essential services and support to our nations in the time of need.
- II. Stand ready to continue providing military assistance to civil authorities and support to our NATO Allies and partners as well as to the EU Member States. This includes measures agreed by NATO and the EU in order to be prepared for the potential second wave of the pandemic.
- III. Acknowledge the importance of taking steps towards more self-sufficiency in Europe, recognizing the shortcomings revealed by the pandemic.
- IV. Express our resolve to continue developing the capabilities of our Armed Forces to face the crises and challenges of the future. Meeting our commitments to collective defence is our shared contribution to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and stability in its neighbourhood. This cannot be done without sufficient financial resources.
- V. Appreciate the progress achieved under the Czech Republic's V4 Presidency, particularly in revising the "Long Term Vision of the Visegrad Countries on Deepening Their Defence Cooperation", initiating the project for a joint purchase of ammunition, making progress on future V4 EU Battlegroups, and developing the "V4 Plus" cooperation format with the United Kingdom.
- VI. Signed today the revised "Long Term Vision of the Visegrad Countries on Their Defence Cooperation". Its emphasis on strengthening cooperation in priority areas reflects our commitment to meet the challenges shared by our countries.
- VII. Stress the role of NATO as the cornerstone of European security. In doing so, we are determined to further reinforce NATO capabilities by meeting our individual commitments including the building of the V4 Deployable Joint Logistics Support Group Headquarters. This capability is a vital enabler for the operational deployment and sustainment of Allied forces and our joint contribution to NATO.

- VIII. Recognize the EU's efforts in strengthening the security of Europe. We will continue contributing to the related defence initiatives, paying special attention to the PESCO Strategic Review, as well as to CSDP missions and operations with the intention of coordinating our approaches.
- IX. Emphasize the importance of the V4 EU Battlegroup and its successful standby period in the second half of 2019. We task our military planners to continue their deliberations regarding the military aspects of future V4 EU Battlegroups.
- X. Encourage defence industrial cooperation among our countries, including with the aim of establishing consortia suitable to participate in multinational projects eligible for funding from the European Defence Fund.
- XI. Task our National Armaments Directors to continue the steps towards a joint purchase of ammunition through the NATO Support and Procurement Agency as a stepping stone to more ambitious joint armaments projects in the future.
- XII. Acknowledge a joint endeavour in implementing the V4 Training and Exercise Strategy and supporting activities with the aim of further enhancing the interoperability and readiness of our Armed Forces.
- XIII. Recognize the challenges and opportunities resulting from the ongoing digitalization and technological innovation, and their potential impact on our security, and emphasize the importance of cooperation in strengthening our resilience.
- XIV. Agree to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and best practices from responding to the COVID-19 crisis to adjust national military approaches towards mitigation and containment of pandemics and other biological threats.
- XV. Express our full support to the upcoming Polish V4 Presidency and further V4 defence cooperation – a necessary element in keeping our region safe and secure.

*Prague, 24 June 2020*

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