



Lithuanian Military Digest

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NEWS

THE FUNERAL CEREMONY OF ANTANAS KRAUJELIS



CHIEF OF DEFENCE OF LITHUANIA IN UKRAINE



JTACS COORDINATED STRATEGIC BOMBER ATTACKS

NATO'S PRESENCE

HELLO, I'M A LIEUTENANT HAMZA, THE PLATOON LEADER WITH THE BELGIUM COMBAT ENGINEERS



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The decision to procure new *UH-60M Black Hawk*

LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE SYSTEM HAS TAKEN A DECISION TO DISPOSE OF THE SOVIET-MADE MI-8 HELICOPTERS AND START NEGOTIATIONS ON PROCUREMENT OF NEW HELICOPTERS. THE NEW UTILITY HELICOPTERS ARE PLANNED TO BE USED FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS AND FOR THE TASKS OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES AND THE NATO ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE BATTALION BATTLE GROUP IN LITHUANIA.

"Currently the Lithuanian Armed Forces continues to use for its tasks three operational soviet-made *Mi-8* whose airworthiness deadline is very near, and three AS365 N3+ *Dauphin* helicopters that are mainly used for search and rescue operations and environmental protection surveillance in the territory of Lithuania. We have to change the remnant *Mi-8* Soviet platform to a western technology for military tasks," Minister of National Defence Raimundas Karoblis says. He also underscores that the need of more modern western helicopters arose because the operating life of the *Mi-8* will soon be over, their maintenance is expensive, constantly required, and a high-risk issue because of the

complicated supply of spare parts from the Russian Federation.

A market analysis that was done according to the criteria formulated by the Lithuanian Armed Forces has revealed that the UH-60M Black Hawk utility helicopter offered by the United States of America meets the demands in the most optimal way. Therefore, it has been agreed that negotiations with the U.S. Government on procurement of six *UH-60 Black Hawks* will be opened in the nearest while. The negotiations with U.S. Government concerning the helicopter procurement will begin in the nearest future, while the Letter of Offer and Acceptance is expected to be signed by the end of 2020. It is estimated that

The decision to procure new UH-60M Black Hawk

Photo credit: Alfredas Plaidis (MoD)



From page 1

the first of the new UH-60M military utility helicopters will be delivered to the Lithuanian Armed Forces by the end of 2024.

The value of the UH-60M Black Hawk utility helicopter procurement is approximately EUR 300 million. The U.S. Government is currently exploring options to potentially provide U.S. security assistance funds to this important procurement. "Direct acquisition of the capability from the U.S. government will supply Lithuania not only with a utility helicopter but also with a package of training, spare parts and necessary equipment. There is also a high probability that it will bring us additional financial support through the different U.S. security assistance funds," R.Karoblis says.

The Lithuanian decision to progress to the western military helicopter platform is supported by the leadership of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. Adjutant General of Pennsylvania Maj Gen Anthony J. Carrelli says in a letter to the Minister of National Defence of Lithuania Raimundas Karoblis that the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, bound by 26 years of close partnership with the Lithuanian Armed Forces, is prepared to render expertise, share experience, and contribute to training for crews, pilots and maintainers of the prospective acquisition. "Our long-standing and intense cooperation with the Pennsylvania Army National Guard and its future assistance will foster a better interoperability with the U.S. forces in exercises and international operations," Vice Minister of National Defence G. Jeglinskas says.

The United States is Lithuania's strategic partner and key ally for the security of the Baltic region. The two countries cooperate across a range of areas, including acquisitions. Another similar project underway and being agreed is the procurement of 200 JLTV armoured all-terrain vehicles from the U.S. Government for the Lithuanian Armed Forces. The United States, in its turn, made extensive investments to Lithuania's military training areas and other infrastructure, training of Lithuania's military personnel, and other areas, as part of its security assistance programs in Lithuania. In order to ensure sustainability of the cooperation activities and proper funding of long-term projects Lithuania and the U.S. have signed a cooperation plan in the beginning of this year. ■

Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.

Content

NEWS

THE DECISION TO PROCURE NEW UH-60M BLACK HAWK.....	1,2
THE FUNERAL CEREMONY OF ANTANAS KRAUJELIS-SIAUBŪNAS.....	3
CHIEF OF DEFENCE OF LITHUANIA IN UKRAINE.....	4
MEETING OF LITHUANIAN AND GERMAN MINISTERS.....	5
LITHUANIA URGES NEW TACK IN NATO'S BALTIC MISSION.....	6,7
FIGHTING THE BUREAUCRACY: THE DEFENDER 2020 EXERCISE IN EUROPE WILL TEST INTEROPERABILITY...	8,9
COMMANDER MULTINATIONAL CORPS NORTHEAST IN VILNIUS.....	10
JTACS COORDINATED STRATEGIC BOMBER ATTACKS.....	10
US SENATE APPROVES NORTH MACEDONIA TO NATO.....	11
A COMPROMISE ON TRANS-ATLANTIC DEFENSE.....	12,13
IN SHORT	
GERMAN UNITY DAY IN RUKLA.....	15
THE WORLD'S LARGEST TANK SHOOTING COMPETITION IN LATVIA.....	16
NATO'S PRESENCE	
HELLO, I'M A LIEUTENANT HAMZA, THE PLATOON LEADER WITH THE BELGIUM COMBAT ENGINEERS.....	20
NATO DAY IN ROKIŠKIS.....	22



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The funeral ceremony of Antanas Kraujelis-Siaubūnas

On 25-26 October the solemn funeral ceremony of the First Lieutenant (retired) Antanas Kraujelis-Siaubūnas, Knight of the Order of the Cross of Vytis, the last Lithuanian partisan, volunteer who actively resisted to soviet government, was held in Vilnius. On Friday, the leadership of the Ministry of National Defence and the Lithuanian Armed Forces, servicemen and the society gathered in the Chapel of Šv. Ignotas Church to pay respect to A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas. On Saturday, after farewell and St. Mass at Šv. Ignotas Church, the remains of the deceased were buried in the burial place of the Lithuanian Armed Forces' officers burial place in Antakalnis Cemetery.

"Life and fighter's path of Antanas Kraujelis is an example of strong will, noble-mindedness and unconditional love of the Homeland. Lithuania never forgets its heroes! Their life sacrifice is the cornerstone of our freedom today, on which we build an independent and democratic state. From the post-war partisan fight our soldiers today are taking the determination and spiritual strength to be ready to defend their parents' land from the enemy," said the Chief of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania Major General V. Rupšys.

The solemn event also involved participation of soldiers Honour Guard Company, who fired honor salutes, Lithuanian Armed Forces Orchestra, and men's chorus "Aidas" of Vilnius Officers' Club. In the Antakalnis Cemetery, a corridor of honour was formed from the soldiers of the NDVS and the members of the LRU, whereby the partisan remains were



Photo credits: Sg. Spc. Ieva Budzeikaite

brought to the burial ground. Respect to the Lithuanian partisan was also paid by US troops.

During the reburial ceremony of A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas remains, partisan's son Antanas Snukiškis plays a guitar and sang a song "Lets Save the Memory", partisan's sister Janina Šyvokienė in the name of her relatives thanked the gathered.

A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas was born on 25 October 1928 in Kaniūkai village, Alanta district, Utena county. In 1946-1947 he was partisan liaison, in autumn of 1948 he became a fighter of Mykolas Urbonas-Liepa partisan platoon. In autumn of 1950 A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas moved to the newly formed Henrikas Ruškulis-

Liūtas platoon, operating at the intersection of Anykščiai, Utena and Molėtai districts, and was appointed as Chief of Intelligence Division, Žėrutis District Headquarters, later — Chief of Žėrutis District Headquarters.

For many years, even though armed partisan resistance started weakening, the occupant government institutions persecuted A. Kraujelis with extreme violence. On 17 March 1965 the KGB and armed soldiers surrounded the homestead in Utena district, where *Siaubūnas* had a hiding place. He disobeyed to the calls of Soviet security guards to surrender, A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas did not give up alive.

After decades of searching by A. Kraujelis' relatives, historians and archaeologists, in June 2019, the remains of A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas were discovered in the Orphanage Cemetery in Vilnius, the identity of which was confirmed by genetic data.

The President of the Republic of Lithuania on 19 May 1998 by Decree No. 72 awarded A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas Order of the Cross of Vytis — Commander's Grand Cross (after death).

Partisan's sister J. Šyvokienė said: "Antanas Kraujelis-Siaubūnas died in his thirty-seventh year. For seventeen years the security was hunting, following him, but Antanas did not surrender and did not betray Lithuania. At the age of twenty he went to the forest, he sacrificed his youth for the fight, devoted his entire life and won because the security did not manage to arrest and kill him, even though they had impudently lied about killing Antanas Kraujelis." ■



Chief of Defence of Lithuania in Ukraine

Photo credits: Sgt. Špicėva Budzeikaitė



On October 20 Chief of Defence of Lithuania Maj Gen Valdemaras Rupšys and a delegation of representatives of the Ministry of National Defence and the Lithuanian Armed Forces started a three-day visit to Ukraine. Chief of Defence will see Lithuanian soldiers deployed to the Military Training Mission Ukraine and Chief of Defence of Ukraine Lieutenant General Ruslan Khomchak.

On the first day of the visit Maj Gen V. Rupšys will visit soldiers at training centres in Desna, later he will continue the formal visit in Kyiv where he will discuss bilateral and multilateral military cooperation of Lithuania and Ukraine, security situation and other relevant issues related to the reform of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with Chief of Defence of Ukraine. On the second and third days of the visit Lithuanian Chief of Defence will get to the 142nd training center of Ukraine's Special Operations Forces in Berdychiv and the International Peacekeeping and Security Centre in Yavoriv to familiarise with military personnel training programmes, their implementation, infrastructure, and the service conditions the Lithuanian soldiers have.

The Military Training Mission Ukraine of Lithuania currently comprise 30 soldiers.

The Lithuanian Armed Forces support Ukraine's defence sector reforms, especially concerning military training. Lithuanian military instructors have been taking part in a programme for training battalions and special forces of the Ukrainian armed forces and actively contributing to the reform of the NCO training system on their own and together with U.S., Canadian, British and Polish colleagues since 2014.

With the establishment of the Lithuanian Military Training Mission in Ukraine on 27 June 2017, up to 60 Lithuanian military instructors and civilian National Defence System personnel can participate in the program at the same time until 31 December 2019. Lithuanian troops are deployed in Ukraine for the purpose of training Ukrainian forces.

Soldiers of Ukraine are constantly invited to study at military training institutions in Lithuania and study at the Baltic Defence College on Lithuanian funding, also, attend various courses held for the in Lithuanian Armed Forces units. ■



Meeting of Lithuanian and German Ministers



Photo credits: Giedrė Maksimovicz (MoD)

"We deeply appreciate Germany's leadership in the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group — it is a substantial contribution to the security in Lithuania and the entire Baltic region," Minister of National Defence Raimundas Karoblis said on October 10 in Rukla, meeting with Minister of Defence of Germany Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer who had come to see German soldiers serving with the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group.

"The visit not only demonstrates the solidarity among Germany, Lithuania, and all the NATO allies but also send out a clear signal to any potential aggressor that NATO countries are united and ready to protect their territory," Minister R. Karoblis underscored. According to Minister, the countries had to assess soberly and adequately the threats coming from Russia in the region and the entire Europe, and therefore the NATO eFP Battalion was an adequate response from the international community.

"It was a very conscious decision to start visiting the Baltic states in Lithuania, Germany is proud to take a leading role in our common efforts in NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence here in Lithuania. It is our shared conviction that we have to remain united and that cohesion in the alliance is of paramount importance — especially in times when the challenges to our common security interests are growing. Germany and Lithuania will address these issues shoulder to shoulder and we are coordinating our steps as closely as possible

both within NATO and the EU," Minister of Defence of Germany A. Kramp-Karrenbauer said during the visit in Lithuania.

Defence Minister of Germany also thanked Lithuania for the hospitality and great conditions provided for the German military personnel in Lithuania and assured that they will not only be actively involved in manning the Battalion but also in regional exercises.

Minister R. Karoblis noted that Germany is increasing its collective defence commitments, e.g., is creating the new NATO Joint Support and Enabling Command which will ensure easier movement of NATO forces in Europe, as well as their deployment in the NATO region in case of necessity.



R. Karoblis also thanked Germany for the investments in Lithuania's military infrastructure. In 2017–2018 the Ministry of Defence of Germany spent approximately 62.3 million euros in Lithuania and plans to spend approx. 87.4 million euros in 2019–2021. The German Defence Ministry also plans additional funding for anti-UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) equipment, target systems for Infantry Fighting Vehicles, etc., in 2020.

"Germany has also become Lithuania's main partner in military acquisition area: PzH 2000 heavy artillery systems, technologically up-to-date Vilkas Infantry Fighting Vehicles are procured from Germany to modernise the Lithuanian Armed Forces," Minister R. Karoblis said. Lithuania is also buying Mercedes Benz trucks, G-36 assault rifles and other equipment and weaponry from Germany.

Germany has been the framework nation of the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group based in Rukla since 2017: Germany has the largest contribution of over 600 troops in the 6th rotation of the multinational unit deployed in Lithuania for deterrence and defence. In total, over 1.2 thousand soldiers from 6 countries currently make up the NATO eFP Battle Group Lithuania.

It was the second meeting of Minister of National Defence R. Karoblis and Minister of Defence of Germany A. Kramp — Karrenbauer this year. They first met in August at the European Union Defence Ministerial in Brussels. Ms A. Kramp-Karrenbauer was appointed as the Minister of Defence of Germany in July earlier this year. ■



Lithuania urges new tack in NATO's Baltic mission



Photo credits: Sgt. Spc. Ieva Budzėkaitė

Lithuania wants NATO to reframe its mission of protecting the Baltic airspace with more of a combat punch in mind, as nations in the region consider their defensive posture toward Russia.

Leaders from the southernmost Baltic country previously told alliance officials that they consider the contributions made under the Baltic air-policing mission and the Enhanced

Forward Presence program vital but insufficient to deter Moscow. Last week, Germany's defense minister, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, became the latest European leader to hear that message as she visited the German Army's contingent of 550 soldiers in Rukla.

"The backbone is created, but really we need more around this backbone," Lithuanian Defence Minister Raimundas Karoblis told

reporters during an Oct. 10 news conference with Kramp-Karrenbauer. "The issue of enablers is one of the issues that we have."

The minister also said that commanders of the NATO battlegroup in his country had requested ground-based air defense to protect their formations.

Kramp-Karrenbauer responded that Berlin's commitment to the air-policing and the for-



ward-presence missions remains strong. However, any decisions about plus-ups would have to be considered by the alliance as a whole. Moving the air-policing task into the realm of air defense "could be" one of the measures taken, she said.

To the Lithuanians, the distinction is about more than semantics.

"Currently, NATO air-policing mission is a peacetime mission," a spokeswoman for Lithuania's Defence Ministry wrote in a statement to Defense News. "The relevant procedures and mechanism have to be set in advance in order to ensure the smooth transition of NATO air-policing mission to air defense mission in crises."

Starting that preparation now "would significantly enhance NATO's deterrent effect in the region," the ministry said.

European alliance members, however, are running on empty when it comes to ground-based, air-defense kit, with scarce assets already spoken for in missions elsewhere.

"We have nothing that we could offer to deploy to the Baltics," retired Lt. Gen. Heinrich Brauß, a former NATO planning official and now an analyst at the Berlin-based think tank German Council on Foreign Relations, told Defense News. "Not even our battlegroups are properly equipped towards that end."

That is because funding for ground-based air defense was considered ripe for cutting during the past 20 years, as conflicts in Kosovo and Afghanistan presented no serious threats from above, according to Brauß. He said investments in the capability are only now beginning to rise again, including in the German military, partly because NATO members are figuring out their options following the demise of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

The decades-old pact between the United States and Russia expired over the summer following allegations of noncompliance by both sides. It prohibited the fielding of mid-range missiles in Europe, sparing countries here the headache of having to plan defenses against these weapons.

On her next stop in neighboring Latvia, Kramp-Karrenbauer was told that regional naval defenses, too, could use a boost.

"Our worry is not only air policing, but air defense and coastal protection," Defence Minister Artis Pabriks said during a joint news conference on Oct. 11.

Above all, he said, Latvia's security depends on NATO appearing as a united front in the eyes of Russian leaders. "That is the greatest guarantee for avoiding conflict in the Baltics," he said. ■

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Fighting the bureaucracy: the Defender 2020 exercise in Europe will test interoperability



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Defender 2020 in Europe is set to be one of the largest exercises the continent has seen in decades. And while it will test the U.S. Army's ability to project capabilities from the continental United States to nations across Europe, the opportunity will also put NATO to the test.

The U.S. and its NATO partners and allies acknowledge none of them will fight alone in a war against an aggressor in Europe, and thus operating jointly is critical but also difficult.

The U.S. Army has several years of experience performing tactical readiness drills at the brigade level in Europe through its gapless ro-

tations of armored brigade combat teams and combat aviation brigades. But with Defender, the service will demonstrate strategic readiness, testing its ability to respond with force and project itself across Europe in coordination with its fellow NATO members and partners, Lt. Gen. J.T. Thomson, the head of NATO Allied Land Command, told Defense News in an interview ahead of the Association of the U.S. Army's annual conference.

The exercise will test "all the systems that go with that kind of strategic reinforcement," he said.

Defender 2020 is set to be the third-largest

military exercise in Europe since the Cold War, Lt. Gen. Chris Cavoli, the U.S. Army Europe commander, told Defense News in an exclusive interview earlier this month. The division-scaled exercise will test the Army's ability to deliver a force from "fort in the United States to port in the United States," and then to ports in Europe, and from there to operational areas throughout the continent, including Germany, Poland, the Baltic states, Nordic countries, and Georgia, among others, Cavoli said.

The exercise will involve at least 15 NATO countries and two partner nations, Thomson said. And NATO specifically will participate at the corps level down to the tactical level, Thomson noted.

"From a land forces standpoint, the demonstration of collective defense is our best deterrent," he said.

"We're actually doing collective defense, and I stress collective, just not one or two nations," he said. "This is from fort to port. This isn't just a river crossing or a specific fight, it's very comprehensive in nature."

While the U.S. puts its National Defense Strategy Multi-Domain Operations concept to the test in Europe, NATO will evaluate its own strategic approach, according to Thomson.

For NATO, its ability to receive forces and equipment from the U.S., stage them, move them forward onto the battlefield and integrate them will be the focus throughout the exercise.



Though this has been simulated before, "in this case, we're not simulating it, we are doing it," Thomson said. "Once those forces get integrated, we're actually going to conduct defensive operations collectively."

Crucial to NATO will be evaluating the current state of military mobility and ensuring countries can seamlessly operate together. But those are also the biggest challenges, Thomson said.

During the Defender exercise, theater mobility will be put to the test at a massive scale — something that hasn't always been easy.

Defense News flew on a Black Hawk from Bulgaria to Romania during the U.S. Army-led exercise Saber Guardian in 2017 with then-

a regular basis. Hodges called for the establishment of a "military schengen zone" that would ease border crossings, but that evolved to a focus on "military mobility" across Europe.

Since then, the European Union has worked to improve crossings for militaries and their equipment over the past several years to ensure rapid movement.

But there are still hiccups, Thomson said. During Defender, participants must move massive amounts of equipment and troops across countries in the northeast of the continent. The effort will test infrastructure and border policies. Forces will have to cross through EU member countries and nations that are not part of the organization, such as Norway, and each

Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and at other episodic exercises.

"This one is an outstanding opportunity to do it at division, corps and joint task force level," Thomson said. "We don't do that that often."

At the exercise, interoperability will be tested as U.S. Army Europe serves as a combined joint force land component command and a NATO corps operates underneath it alongside American divisions. "The scale of this one will give us very good lessons and some good azimuth to work into the future," Thomson explained.

From 2020 onward, the Defender exercise will become an annual series taking place in



U.S. Army Europe Commander Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges when crew members were alerted they might have to land for an unanticipated customs check. The delay would have caused the general, who was leading the entire exercise, to miss a live-firing demonstration on the Black Sea.

A few emails and phone calls later, the stop-over was diverted. But the experience highlighted the red tape the military runs into on

nation has its own set of rules, policies and procedures.

Ensuring nations can be interoperable has been a challenge for NATO. "I'm fond of saying there's no such thing as 100 percent interoperability, not even within nations," Thomson said, but "we are headed in the right direction on interoperability. We test it and train on it daily across NATO" through work with the enhanced forward presence units in Poland,

both the Pacific and Europe, but every other year will be a "light" year — referring to the number of participating troops — the acting U.S. Army Pacific commander, Lt. Gen. John "Pete" Johnson, told Defense News in a recent interview. The drill in Europe will be "heavy" this year, and the Pacific version will be smaller. In 2021, the Pacific-based Defender will have its turn being the larger of the two. ■

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Commander Multinational Corps Northeast in Vilnius

On October 23 Lieutenant General Slawomir Woiczechowski, Commander of the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNCNE) has conducted a visit to Vilnius. The visit to a tactical command post near Vilnius International Airport was held as part of Exercise Griffin Lightning 19.

Exercise Griffin Lightning 19 took place on October 14-25 to train the Regional Land Component Command capability of the Multinational Corps Northeast for the Baltic states and Poland. The battle staff exercise involves over 500 MNC NE staff personnel from 24 NATO allies, over 60 of them are training at a tactical command post in Lithuania. The main command post deployed in Drawsko-Pomorske, Poland, maintains communication with the tactical command post in Lithuania.

The mission of the Multinational Corps Northeast is to maintain readiness for a quick redeployment and take over the command in the area of operations as directed by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) as the Corps or the Land Component Command HQ. The Multinational



Photo credit: MNCNE

Corps Northeast HQ based in Szczecin, Poland, is subordinate to the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Lithuania has 7 officers serving at the MNCNE at the moment. Battle

Staff Training Griffin Lightning 19 trains planning NATO article 5 operations in its area of responsibility — territories of the three Baltic states and Poland. ■

JTACs coordinated strategic bomber attacks



On October 23 Lithuanian Special Operations Forces, Lithuanian Land Force and U.S. Joint Terminal Air Controllers (JTAC) trained coordinating attacks of two U.S. B-52 strategic bombers at the Lithuanian Armed Forces Brigadier General Kazys Veverskis Training Area in Kazlų Rūda.

This was the first time B-52 strategic bombers were delivering fire at targets in a formation.

According to the exercise concept, the JTAC personnel had to identify targets, call in air support and guide them towards the targets through communication channels. The strategic bombers flew over the targets (buildings and vehicle columns) 7 times. 12 inert BDU 50 bombs were dropped from approximately 6-kilometer altitude. The targets were destroyed.

The aircraft took off from RAF Fairford in the United Kingdom and returned there after the flights over the Baltic region.

In autumn 2018 an aviation firing range was installed and certified according to NATO standards in Kazlų Rūda. The infrastructure allows aircraft crews to practice fire at ground-based targets and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers to practice interaction with the aviation. ■

Information and photo credits:
Lithuanian Armed Forces

US Senate approves North Macedonia to NATO

The U.S. Senate approved the accession of North Macedonia to NATO in a 91-2 vote Tuesday, meaning the small Balkan nation is a step closer to becoming NATO's 30th member.

The decision marked a victory for Skopje after the European Union decided not to initiate membership talks with the government earlier in the week. It also sends a broader message of support to Europe and deterrence in the region, said Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jim Risch, R-Idaho.

"This lays out a template to all Europeans, that they're welcome, that the door is open, that we want them to join NATO," Risch told reporters Tuesday. "The Russians hate this sort of thing, they hate an increase in the size of NATO, but we want the Europeans to be encouraged."

The "no" votes came from Sens. Rand Paul and Mike Lee, two libertarian-leaning Republicans. Several of the Democrats running for president were absent for the vote.

NATO member states and North Macedonia signed an agreement clearing the way for membership after the country officially changed its name from "Macedonia" in February. Greece had blocked its neighbor's NATO membership since 2008, saying use of "Macedonia" implied territorial claims on the northern Greek province of the same name and usurped ancient Greek heritage.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Oct. 4 at the NATO Parliamentary As-



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sembly in London that "NATO's door remains open."

When North Macedonia Prime Minister Zoran Zaev hosted U.S. Secretary of State

Mike Pompeo on Oct. 4, Zaev said his country plans to make its defense budget 2 percent of its gross domestic product by 2024, if not sooner. NATO has set a goal for its members to spend 2 percent of their GDP on defense.

North Macedonia also contributed troops to fight alongside U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Pompeo at the time cautioned the government to be vigilant against malign influences from beyond its borders. "The hearts and minds of North Macedonia citizens should guide your country forward, not Russian bots and trolls on social media," Pompeo said.

Twenty-two countries have ratified the NATO accession protocol for North Macedonia. The country can join once the remaining seven also do so.

For its part, Montenegro became the 29th member of NATO two years ago, and Georgia is expected to become a member of NATO, though no timeline's been set. ■

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A compromise on trans-Atlantic defense

The incoming European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, will need to work with Washington to defuse a quietly simmering trans-Atlantic defense cooperation issue that, if left unsettled, could do more long-term damage to the NATO alliance than U.S. President Donald Trump's divisive tweets.

The United States for years has sought to stimulate increased European defense spending while minimizing wasteful duplication caused by Europe's fragmented defense in-

at least three EU countries need to apply in a coordinated fashion to receive project research and development funding, which can be up to a 100 percent grant for the research phase. Plans call for spending about \$15 billion between 2021 and 2027 to strengthen Europe's defense R&D and stimulate innovation. Model projects include the Eurodrone and ground-based precision strike weapons.

A second related EU program, Permanent Structured Cooperation, or PESCO, also inaugurated in 2017, focuses more on efforts

programs, designed to pool and share scarce defense resources, are intended to help address that problem. But the exclusivity of these approaches favor the defense industries of EU members, and the hostile Trump administration rhetoric toward the EU is only supercharging this controversy.

President Trump's negative attitude toward NATO and European leaders has undercut European confidence in American trans-Atlantic leadership and strengthened a call in some European capitals for European "strategic au-



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dustry. Europe has finally begun to deliver: Defense spending is up significantly, and the European Union has created several programs to strengthen its defense industries. But in the process, the EU has created a trans-Atlantic problem. These advances in Europe could come at the expense of non-EU defense industries, especially in the U.S.

The European Defence Fund, or EDF, established in 2017, is designed to support the cooperative research and development efforts of European defense industries, especially small and mid-sized firms. Three eligible companies from

to foster defense cooperation among subsets of European states. Initially envisioned in the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, PESCO is an effort to develop a more comprehensive European defense consistent with EU's common foreign and security policy needs. Thus far, 25 of 28 EU nations have signed up, with 34 modest cooperative projects agreed to by the European Council.

The EU estimates that the inefficiency caused by the lack of adequate defense cooperation costs its members between \$25 billion and \$100 billion annually. These new EU

tonomy." Part of this autonomy is developing a more capable and independent European military supported by a stronger European defense industry. A stronger European military capability is a goal shared on both sides of the Atlantic, but not at the expense of defense cooperation. While European leaders understand that they are probably decades away from real, strategic autonomy and military independence, they are shaping the EDF and PESCO approaches to protect European defense industry by being fairly exclusive of U.S. or other non-EU defense industries.



This has U.S. defense officials worried. A May 2020 letter to the EU from two senior U.S. officials stated their "deep concern" about the programs' regulations. While current EDF and PESCO programs are small, U.S. officials are worried they will set precedents and will be a model for more ambitious European defense cooperation in the future. They fear not only that U.S. industry will be cut out, but that two separate defense industry tracks will be established that will undercut NATO interoperability and promote further duplication. Some U.S. officials have threatened U.S. retaliation unless changes are made.

EU officials respond that these criticisms are excessive. They note that some American defense firms established in European countries will be eligible, that there is nothing comparable to the "Buy American Act" in Europe, that plenty of trans-Atlantic cooperative projects can take place outside of these two EU programs, that the PESCO projects will be guided by both EU and NATO requirements, and that over 80 percent of European international defense contracts go to U.S. firms anyway. They also note that a deterrent to U.S.-EU defense cooperation is that U.S. arms transfer control regulations create potential American restrictions on the sale to third countries of any U.S.-EU cooperative weapons systems that contain U.S. technology.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who seems caught in the middle, has supported both EDF and PESCO, so long as the results fill NATO capability gaps and do not lead to further duplication.

Flexibility will be needed on both sides of the Atlantic to defuse this issue before it becomes too difficult to manage. Some opportunities for third-country participation will be needed.

Possible approaches to level the playing field include focusing on modifying PESCO, which is still under development in the EU. One suggestion is to create a "white list" of NATO nations not in the EU (such as the U.S., Canada, Norway, post-Brexit United Kingdom and Turkey) that might be invited to participate in selected PESCO projects on a case-by-case basis. This would at least set a precedent that PESCO does not completely exclude third

countries. And it would strengthen EU-NATO defense links.

Additionally, formal procedures might be established for closer cooperation between the PESCO project selection process and NATO's defense planning process. This will help avoid duplication and identify at NATO those areas where NATO nations outside the EU could cooperate on PESCO projects,

The U.S. might also consider amending its arms export control legislation to waive the third-country transfer review requirement for the export of U.S.-PESCO joint projects if the sale would be made to a country to which the U.S. would have made a similar sale.

EU internal negotiations on EDF are finished, and changes will be hard to make. Plus, EDF provides R&D funding grants that use European financial resources. While some \$118 million in U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency funds go to European firms, that is about 3 percent of DARPA's budget. So the U.S. might ask for some modest reciprocity from the EDF. But more constructively, DARPA and the EDF might co-fund R&D for joint U.S.-EU projects.

The United States has much to gain from a strong European defense industry. Europe has much to gain from cooperation with the U.S. defense industry. All NATO allies need to stimulate defense innovation to compete effectively with Russia and China. Both sides of the Atlantic have much to lose if this issue further disrupts NATO's already shaky political equilibrium. Hopefully von der Leyen's experience as a former German defense minister will help her to understand the urgency and to find a solution to this problem. ■

www.defensenews.com





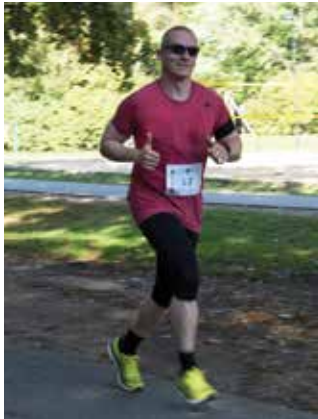
Marathon of NATO allies and civilians in Vilnius

OCTOBER 1

A team composed of representatives from from NATO Force Integration Unit (NFIU) Lithuania and their family members, together with the Lithuanian Armed Forces Defense Staff and the Embassy of Hungary in Vilnius (Magyarország Nagykövetsége Vilnius) participated in

the MH 64 Deseda Jótékonyági Félmaraton 2019 (24,5km) in Vilnius. This worldwide event gathers participants from the Magyar Honvédség (Hungarian Defense Forces), NATO allies and civilians that run together to support children recovering from long-term illnesses.

[NATO Force Integration Unit Lithuania photos and inf.](#)



Live-fire shooting of Belgium artillery



OCTOBER 1

The Belgium artillery, part of eFP Battle Group, trained together with their Lithuanian comrades at Kazlų Rūda Training Area during a live firing exercise.

[NATO eFP BG LTU stop-shots and inf.](#)

German Unity Day in Rukla



OCTOBER 3

German soldiers of NATO eFP BG LTU together with Belgium, Dutch, Icelandic, Norwegian, Lithuanian and Czech delegations celebrated 30 years of German Unity with a solemn appeal on the 3rd of October. With joy and gratitude to remember the liberty gained 30 years ago, this his-

torical event united Lithuanians and Germans. The Army Band from Ulm, Germany visited Lithuania and performed at the ceremony for this special occasion. "This is not just a German story. It is above all a European one", the German ambassador, Matthias Sonn, said to soldiers on this occasion.

NATO eFP BG LTU photos and inf.

Multinational Integration Day of the eFP Battlegroup



OCTOBER 8

During a day full of sportive events and a lot of fun, military competition and games competition, the multinational soldiers proved themselves with their fitness and cleverness on the Multinational Integration Day of the eFP Battlegroup in Lithuania recently. As part of several measures to increase the cohesion between the soldiers from Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, Norway and Czech Republic and six teams completed several tasks like waters crossing, transport of wounded persons or the Lithuanian steeplechase during a march on the Gaiziunai Training Area. The Norwegian Vikings were the winners.

NATO eFP BG LTU photos and inf.





ON OCTOBER 11 AND 12, NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Latvia hosted Exercise "IRON SPEAR 1902" — the world's largest tank concentration and shooting competition. "IRON SPEAR" saw 44 main battle tanks from eight different countries competing on timed live fire ranges where each tank crew was scored on time, accuracy, priority of engagement and communications.

Participating in challenging and competitive events like "IRON SPEAR 1902" contributes to the professional development of the individual soldier while also building esprit de corps through friendly unit rivalry and collaborative training.

At the end of the two days of competition the "Foxtrot 5" from France took the first place with "November 5" from Norway taking the second place and "Yankee2" from the United States taking the third place.

NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Latvia information and photo credits (stop-shots from movie "Exercise IRON SPEAR 1902". Camera: Cpl Vuong-DeRamos, Sgt Robles, Capt Jacobson. Montage: Cpl Vuong-DeRamos)

The world's largest tank shooting competition in Latvia



Run in the Lithuanian dunes



OCTOBER 23

Three soldiers of NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Lithuania won awards from the Curonian Spit trail. 40 runners from NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Lithuania competed in the run which takes place in the beautiful landscape of the Curonian Spit UNESCO World Heritage Site on the west coast of Lithuania. Competing in 12km, 25km, 47km, and 68km run, the runners run through forest, sand dunes and on the beach, making it a tough but enjoyable run, and truly one of a kind!

NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Lithuania photos and inf.



Multinational Military Police Day



OCTOBER 28

At the 4th Multinational Military Police Day the soldiers of NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Lithuania informed themselves at various stations about tasks, equipment and vehicles of the MP of Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium Norway and Lithuania.

In the competition with MP tasks and strength tests, the daily service of the MP could be tested practice. As in previous years, there was a raffle in favor of a non-profit organization. This year, EUR 1.205,- were donated to "Sužeistų karių asociacija".

NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battle Group Lithuania photos and inf.





The discount is applicable only upon presentation of a service card.

Conditions and applicable discounts may change.

* There are additional conditions.

** Expositions are free of charge to the Lithuanian Military Academy (LMA) cadets, Permanent Mandatory Initial Military Service (PMIMS) soldiers serving in the LMA, and soldiers from the Gediminas Headquarters Battalion (GHB).

*** Coordinate with the regional Conscription and recruiting service department.

**** Due to a match of the football club "Atlantas" coordinate with the Grand Duke Butigeidis Dragoon Battalion's S5 division of the Motorized Infantry Brigade "Samogitia". Due to a match of the basketball club "Neptūnas" coordinate with the National Defence Volunteer Force's S5 division of the Samogitia district 3rd team. Due to a match of the football club "Sūduva" coordinate with the Lithuanian Grand Duke Vytenis General Support Logistics Battalion's S5 division.

***** The discount is applicable to persons who serve or have served in the Lithuanian Armed Forces, also to those who are in the prepared personnel reserve of the Lithuanian Armed Forces (for the entire study period both for the first and second cycle studies).

***** The discount is applicable on February 16, March 11, July 6, and November 23.



National Defence System employees (soldiers, civil servants and employees working under an employment contract)



Soldiers of the Permanent Mandatory Initial Military Service



Members of the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union



Lithuanian soldiers



Soldiers of the National Defence Volunteer Forces



NATO soldiers



Negotiation issues

ACCOMMODATION SERVICES



Hotel and SPA center "DAINAVA" **up to 20%**
www.hotel-dainava.lt



Hotel "IMPERIAL" **up to 30%**
http://www.imperialvilnius.lt

FOOD SERVICES



Pizzeria "MILANO" **15% *******
www.facebook.com/milano.picerija



Restaurant Network "SAKURA" **up to 15% ***
www.sakuratime.lt



Pizzeria "ARDARTAS PICA" **10%**
www.ardartaspica.weebly.com



Pizzeria "EVOPIZZA" **up to 15% ***
www.evopizza.lt



Restaurant "IMPERIAL" **15% ***
www.imperialrestaurant.lt



Bar "CALIFORNIA TAPAS & WINE" **up to 15% ***
www.california.lt

CLOTHING, SHOES, ACCESSORIES



ARMIJAI IR CIVILIAMS **10%**
www.aic.lt



TACTICAL FORCE **10%**
www.tacticalforce.lt



SURVIVAL **10%**
www.survival.lt



LUKLA **15%**
www.lukla.lt



ATRIBUTAS **up to 15%**
www.facebook.com/Atributas-130235750751139/

LEISURE TIME



M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art (and museum departments) **50%**
www.ciurlionis.lt



Vytautas the Great War Museum **Free**
www.facebook.com/



Kaunas Ninth Fort Museum **50%**
www.9fortomuziejus.lt



Open-Air Museum of Lithuania **50%**
www.llbm.lt



Lithuanian aviation museum **50%**
www.lam.lt



Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum (and museum departments) **50%**
www.mairioniomuziejus.lt



Museum of Lithuanian Education History **50% ***
www.lsim.lt



Lithuanian sea museum **50% ***
www.muziejus.lt



National museum of Lithuania * **Free ****
www.lnm.lt




Lithuanian art museum (and museum departments) **50%**
www.ldm.lt



Šiauliai "AUŠROS" museum (and museum departments) **50%**
www.ausrosmuziejus.lt




Kelme regional museum (and museum departments) **50%**
www.kelmesmuziejus.lt

 **The Samogitian Museum "ALKA"** (and museum departments) www.muziejusalka.lt **50%**

 **Basketball Club "NEPTŪNAS"** www.bcneptunas.lt **Free ******

 **Mazeikiai museum** (and museum departments) www.mazeikiumuziejus.lt **50%**


 **Handball Club "DRAGŪNAS"** www.rkdragunas.lt **Free ******

 **Lithuanian Museum of Ethnocosmology** www.etnokosmomuziejus.lt **50%**

 **Football Club "SŪDUVA"** www.fksuduva.lt **Free ******

 **Trakai History Museum** www.trakaimuziejus.lt **50%**


 **Basketball Club "LIETKABELIS"** www.kklietkabelis.lt **Free *****

 **Contemporary Art Centre** www.cac.lt **50%**

 **Football Club "PANEVĖŽYS"** www.fk-panevezys.lt **Free ***

 **Botanical Garden of Vilnius University** www.botanikos-sodas.vu.lt **50%**


 **Football Club "STUMBRAS"** <http://fcstumbras.lt> **Free ***

 **Church Heritage Museum, Vilnius Cathedral Bell Tower and Catacombs** www.bpmuziejus.lt **50%**


 **Football Club "PARABELIS"** www.facebook.com/parabelis **Free ***

 **Summer camp "KOVINIS EŽIUKAS"** www.koviniseziukas.lt **10%**

 **Football Club "GELEŽINIS VILKAS"** www.fcgelezinivilkas.lt **Free ***

 **Vilna Gaon State Jewish Museum** (and museum departments) www.jmuseum.lt **50%**

 **Sport Club "TAURAS"** www.kulturizmoklubastauras.lt **up to 25% ***


 **Lithuanian Theatre, Music and Cinema museum** www.ltmkm.lt **50%**


 **Sport Club "SPARTA COMBAT FITNESS"** www.spartagym.lt/sparta-combat-fitness **up to 20% ***

OTHER SERVICES


 **Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania** www.valdovurumai.lt **50%**

 **Trade in fish products "ŠAMŪKIS"** www.samukis.lt **up to 10%**

 **"VICHY" aqua park** www.vandensparkas.lt **between 20-50% ***

 **Kazimieras Simonavičius University** <http://www.ksu.lt/> **50%**

 **Bowling "APOLLO"** www.apollo.lt **up to 15% ***


 **Adventure Park "TARZANIJA"** www.tarzanija.lt www.facebook.com/TARZANIJA **11%**

 **AIRSOFTAS.LT** www.airsoftas.lt **11%**


 **Car Service Centre "EOLTAS"** www.eoltas.lt **up to 30%**


SPORT CLUBS


 **Football Club "JONAVA"** www.fkjonava.lt **Free ***

 **Military entertainment KARIAUK.LT** www.kariauk.lt **D**

 **Basketball Club "ŽALGIRIS"** www.zalgiris.lt **Free *****

 **Military entertainment TANKS.LT** www.tanks.lt **up to 50%**

 **Basketball Club "HOPTRANS-SIRENOS"** www.facebook.com/Kauno-rajono-Hoptrans-Sirenos-176265212454136 **Free *****

 **Photo and video services "MUDUABU"** www.muduabu.lt **up to 15%**

 **Football Club "ATLANTAS"** www.atlantas.lt **Free ******

 **Ecological Clothing Cleaning "CLEAN GREEN"** www.cleangreen.lt **15%**



Hello, I'm a Lieutenant Hamza, the platoon leader with the Belgium Combat engineers

OUR SOLDIERS ARE TRAINED TO TRAVERSE ANY KIND OF TERRAIN, BUT SOMETIMES IT TAKES TOO LONG TO CROSS AN OBSTACLE. THAT'S WHERE I AND MY MEN STEP IN. ROAD WORKS, BRIDGING, BREACHING; WE CAN DO ALL THAT IN ORDER TO HELP OUR COMBAT TROOPS COMPLETE THEIR MISSION. WHEN WE ARE UNDER ATTACK, THEN OUR OWN OBSTACLES WILL MAKE THE ENEMY'S LIFE A BIT MORE INTERESTING.



Photo credits: 1LT (OF-1) ROEFJelle

engineer I have to deal with a lot of different techniques and works in order to support the combat troops.

What are the biggest challenges in your profession?

The biggest challenge is to understand the will of the combat commander correctly in order to support his plan in the most efficient way. Finding the best way to clear the obstacles is certainly the most interesting part of the job because when you are on the field, everything can become an obstacle.

What was your first impression arriving in Lithuania?

Well, my first day in Lithuania was a rainy day. So I thought that the weather doesn't change too much from Belgium. I had already met some Lithuanians before and it's incredible

that they all were so proud of their country, which has a rich history.

What's the best military experience for you serving in NATO eFP BG in Lithuania?

Up to now, it's the opportunity to exchange experience with the other nations and to see how the others deal with their means in a similar situation.

What was your best day in Lithuania?

It was Vilnius half-marathon. It was funny to see people coming from all around the city to watch the runners and give them support. You do not see it everywhere and I think it's the richness of the country. Lithuanians are really warm-hearted and always willing to help. ■

NATO eFP BG LTU Belgium contingent's inf.



What is your home battalion?

I come from Belgium and I belong to the 4th Engineer Battalion.

Why did you decide to become a soldier and later a combat engineer?

The will to serve my country motivated my choice beside the fact that being a soldier is not a usual job. I decided to become a combat engineer because of the variety of missions — it's certainly a job where the routine doesn't exist. Each situation is different and doesn't have always the same solution. As a combat

NATO Day in Rokiškis

ALLIED SOLDIERS IN LITHUANIA ENGAGED WITH ROKIŠKIS COMMUNITY AT THE NATO DAY IN THE REGION EVENT.



Photo credits: NFU Lithuania



The Ministry of National Defense and the NATO Force Integration Unit Vilnius are continuing the "NATO Day in the Region — Come, See, and Learn!" cycle of events carried out to mark the 70th anniversary of NATO alliance and the 15th anniversary of Lithuania as a member of NATO celebrated this year, on October 3 residents of Rokiškis town were invited to meet with NATO soldiers.

"Communication with the people of Lithuania and working towards mutual goals is one of the key priorities of the work of the NATO Force Integration Unit Lithuania. Knowing people and terrain is critical to us, somebody who is charge of redeployment of NATO forces. We have visited almost half of the municipalities of Lithuania and presented our work over the four years of our activity," Danish officer, Col Jakob Søgård Larsen, head of the NATO Force Integration Unit since the establishment of it in Lithuania in 2015, says.

Soldiers of the NATO Force Integration Unit and the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group, representatives of the U.S. CIMIC Cooperation Team, soldiers of the Lithuanian Armed Forces King Mindaugas Hussar Battalion and the National Defence Volunteer Force Vytis Military District 5th Territorial Unit, members of the Lithuanian Rifleman's Union came to meet with and to present their activities to the community of Rokiškis and members of the municipality.

Participants of NATO Day in the Region event in Rokiškis unveiled a monument built

NATO's presence



by the efforts of the community for the 15th Lithuania's anniversary in NATO by the Obeliai Museum.

Lithuanian and allied soldiers present NATO organization and its activities in various regions of Lithuania at NATO Day events. First events of the cycle were held in Varėna and Merkinė on May 30 earlier this year. NATO troops will also visit Anykščiai, Biržai, and Kėdainiai this year. The five municipalities were selected from all the applications received in response to the invitation of the Ministry of National Defence to organise a NATO event in the region to commemorate the 70th NATO anniversary and the 15th Lithuania's anniversary in NATO.

During NATO Days residents of different regions will not only be able to meet with soldiers, listen to lectures about the world's strongest military Alliance and take part in discussions, but also to view weaponry, equipment and gear used by the Lithuanian Armed Forces and the NATO forward Presence Battalion Battle Group.

The NATO Force Integration Unit has been inaugurated in Lithuania in September 2015 and in operation since. Its mission is to ensure and facilitate a fluent and efficient deployment of the NATO Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), and other NATO units in Lithuania. NFIU tasks in Lithuania also include support to allied exercises and

other assurance measures, contribution to Lithuania's defence plans, and identification of infrastructure objects necessary for a rapid deployment of allied forces in Lithuania. During peacetime the NFIU staff is 40-strong and comprised by international and Lithuanian Armed Forces soldiers. The staff is currently provided by 14 NATO countries. The decision to establish NATO Force Integration Units in 8 member states — Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary — was taken by NATO Heads of States and Governments at the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014. ■

Lithuanian MoD inf.



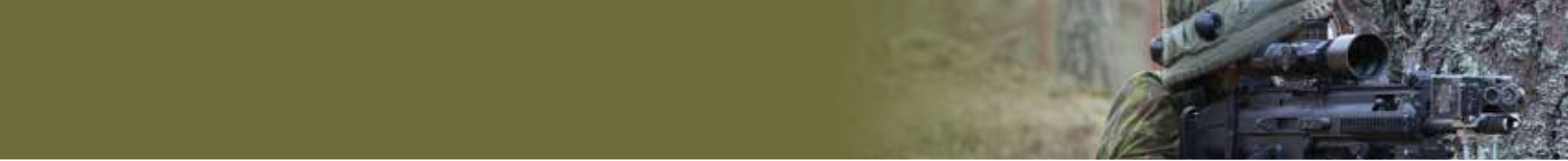


Photo credit: Sg. Spc Ieva Budzeikaite