



# Lithuanian Military Digest

JULY 2019. NO 7 (14).

## NEWS

### U.S. TO SEND \$250M IN MILITARY AID TO UKRAINE



### FRESH EUROPEAN AIR-DEFENSE PUSH



### EYEING RUSSIA, ARMY FIELDS JAM-RESISTANT GPS IN EUROPE



## NATO'S PRESENCE

### THOUSANDS OF WARRIORS UNDER THE RUTHLESS SUN



Photo credit: Alfredas Pliadis (MoD)

## "Uphold and Strengthen the Will to Resist Anyone Threatening Our Homeland"

AT THE END OF JULY, LT. GEN. JONAS VYTAUTAS ŽUKAS WILL HAND OVER HIS DUTIES TO THE NEW CHIEF OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA. THE PERIOD OF THE LAST FIVE YEARS (THIS IS THE TERM OF TENURE OF THE CHIEF OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA), WHOSE BEGINNING WAS MARKED BY THE RUSSIAN-INITIATED WAR IN UKRAINE, WAS REALLY INTENSE, DIFFICULT, AND FULL OF NEW CHALLENGES. IN ADDITION, A QUALITATIVE NEW STAGE OF MILITARY SECURITY IN LITHUANIA BEGAN.

### General, what are the main achievements of the Lithuanian Armed Forces over the last five years, what obstacles had to be overcome after facing new security challenges for our country?

There have been tremendous changes both in improving the quality of our military security and in understanding the threats, which, of course, was caused by the aggressive Russian behaviour — finally, it has been properly assessed and realized. It is important to note that it was the 2014 annexation of Crimea,

in violation of previous international agreements, such as the 1993 Budapest Memorandum, as well as the war in Eastern Ukraine, which finally opened the eyes of the Western states. NATO has taken a completely different look at the partnership with Russia that was recently appreciated, even though the representatives of Lithuania constantly warned of these threats from the East since Kremlin conducted its aggression in Georgia (Sakartvelo) in 2008.

Dear readers,

We would like to express our unspeakable joy and gratitude as this month is extremely important not only for the Lithuanian Armed Forces but for the entire country. It is an astonishing coincidence that one year has passed since the remains of the Commander of Lithuanian Partisans Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas was discovered in Orphans' Cemetery in Vilnius. It happened in June of 2018, and now another great day has dawned leaving an eternal mark in the history of Lithuania.

During the archaeological research, the remains of another five people with gunshot injuries have been found in the same cemetery. Genetic tests confirmed that one of them belongs to Antanas Kraujelis-Siaubūnas, Lithuania's last post-war partisan who died with a gun in his arms. Archeologists had been looking for the remains of chief of staff of Žėrutis region of Lithuanian Freedom Fight Movement, who was fighting and hiding in Utena district, for several decades.

A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas joined the antisoviet partisan movement to fight the Soviet occupation in 1948 and was involved in partisan activities in the Aukštaitija (Highlands) region. Being surrounded by the KGB officers, A. Kraujelis-Siaubūnas refused to surrender and chose to leave this world as a free man. Therefore, on March 17, 1965, our partisan took his own life. According to historians, there have been many false testimonies, including the one that the partisan's body was buried at a gravel pit in Utena. There are suspicions that it was the original plan but the partisan's body was eventually taken to Vilnius due to some change in circumstances.

As the partisan's sister said, "He lived in an occupied Lithuania but was free, refused to recognize the occupying government, and used to tell people that Lithuania would be free and we would live in our homeland without the occupying forces." It seems like after

losing so many precious lives which was sacrificed for the sake of Freedom Lithuanian people finally have a chance to honour those heroes in the way our freedom fighters deserved it. Another day, another victory for the state of Lithuania.

*Cordially,  
Team of the  
"Lithuanian Military  
Digest"*

**Antanas Kraujelis — one of the last Lithuanian partisans who died during an armed resistance against Soviet occupants in 1965.**

Photo from a private collection.



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Military Press Office of Lithuanian Armed Forces  
 Totorių str. 25, LT-01121, Vilnius;  
 Phone (370 5) 210 3897, GSM (370 6) 28 75851; fax (370 5) 273 5550;  
 Kotryna Gurevičiūtė  
 Correspondent  
 Phone (370 5) 210 3897, GSM (370 6) 28 75851; fax (370 5) 273 5550;  
 Email Kotryna.Gureviciute@mil.lt

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# U.S. to Send \$250M in Military Aid to Ukraine

The \$250 million of arms and equipment the Pentagon announced it is sending to Ukraine brings the total amount of security assistance sent there to roughly \$1.5 billion since 2014.

Ukraine will receive an additional \$250 million in military aid, some of it for lethal weapons, from the United States, the Defense Department announced.

Sniper rifles, grenade launchers, counter-artillery radar, electronic warfare detection equipment and other material were on the list of items.

The support also includes considerable training and advisory efforts by U.S. forces, notably for the Ukrainian navy, which has been unable to counter Russian naval forces in the Black Sea.

"The United States remains committed to helping Ukraine implement provisions of Ukraine's 2018 Law on National Security to strengthen democratic civilian control of the military, promote command and control reforms, enhance transparency and accountability in acquisition and budgeting, and advance defense industry reforms," the Pentagon said Tuesday in a statement. "These reforms will bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its territorial integrity in support of a secure, prosperous, democratic, and free Ukraine."

Russia seized the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine in 2014, and has supported separatist militants in the eastern Ukrainian region



Photo credit: Flickr.com

known as the Donbas. In a 2018 naval incident in the Kerch Strait, 24 Ukrainian seamen were captured by the Russian navy as three Ukrainian ships were fired upon and seized. Those captured remain in detention pending criminal proceedings.

Since the Kerch Strait incident, NATO countries' navies have expanded their activities in the Black Sea. The additional U.S. aid will bring total U.S. support of the Ukrainian military to \$1.5 billion since 2014.

In September, the U.S. Coast Guard handed

two Island-class cutters, each armed with .50 caliber machine guns and 25 mm deck guns, to the Ukrainian navy.

The aid can be regarded as a win for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, an untested show business personality turned politician who was elected earlier this year on an anti-corruption platform. Zelensky travelled to NATO headquarters in Brussels for his first official trip as leader, and earlier this week in Paris called for continued pressure on Moscow. ■

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## \$54 Million Study Aims to Improve Eurofighter Typhoon Aircraft

Members of the Eurofighter Typhoon fighter program at the Paris Air Show on Wednesday signed a \$54 million contract to conduct studies to improve the aircraft.

Eurofighter Jagdflugzeug GmbH, Eurojet Turbo GmbH and the NATO Eurofighter & Tornado Management Agency agreed to mutually support the long-term development of the combat aircraft.

The contract calls for a 19-month study of aircraft modifications and a nine-month study of adaptations of its EJ200 engine.

For the engine, range, persistence and longer component life cycles are the main areas of focus. A review of the plane will center on a redesigned cockpit with panoramic displays, high speed data networking capability, im-



Photo credit: Flickr.com

proved target data management systems and new outboard sensors.

The goal is development of a variant of the plane, built by a consortium of European companies and in service of several NATO countries since 1994, to maintain operational readiness and add to the platform's competitive edge for several decades.

"From this study we will look into operational effectiveness, interoperability and reduced costs, and fully exploit the full growth potential of the aircraft," Raffael Klaschka, head of marketing at Eurofighter GmbH marketing director, said.

The contract announcement comes as a mockup of the next Eurofighter plane, designed to make the Typhoon obsolete.

Spain joined France and Germany in a project to build the next generation of fighter jets, and defense ministers from all three countries signed a framework agreement initiating their trilateral cooperation.

A prototype of the new plane is expected by 2026, with a replacement of the Typhoon and France's Rafale aircraft by 2040. ■

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# Fresh European Air-defense Push



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**N**ATO members in Europe should band together and sharpen their focus on short- to medium-range air defense, with Germany taking the lead in forging a coalition, analysts on the continent argue.

The call by the German Council on Foreign Relations is based on the assumption that air superiority can no longer be taken for granted in future conflicts. Researchers argue that the playing field of air warfare has leveled out in recent years, with more countries deploying aircraft, missiles and drones capable of threatening NATO from the skies.

At the same time, European nations have divested sizable chunks of their air defense capabilities with the idea that shooting down enemy planes or missiles would be more of a tactical requirement in the future rather than a permanent, strategic one, according to Christian Mölling, a senior analyst at the think tank who co-authored a study on the issue.

"Air defense is a huge headache for NATO," he told Defense News, adding that the situation is especially dire in the Baltic nations.

Germany already holds the designation of a so-called framework nation when it comes to missile defense within the alliance. And while defense officials in Berlin are fond of touting that responsibility in arguing for the ambitious TLVS program to replace the legacy Patriot air and missile defense fleet, there is little to show for, in a practical sense, until the new weapon is actually fielded.

That is especially the case when it comes to short-range air defense, which covers threats up to about 8 kilometers away. Within the alliance, those weapons were "largely dismantled" over the last two decades, according to the study.

"Building a multi-layered, integrated air defense is a common challenge for all European countries in terms of procurement and operation," the study says. "Effective defense is only possible if threats can be identified early and jointly. National systems are not sufficient."

On the longer-range side, Germany is holding out hope that the TLVS project can attract buy-in from within Europe over the coming years. In Italy, for example, the military brass

appears interested in the technology, but the preferences of politicians in the government are harder to predict.

The idea of a European-wide, short-range air defense initiative has been on the table since officials at the European Defence Agency in Brussels concluded the inaugural Coordinated Annual Review on Defence of 2017 and 2018. Member states included the capability in their top priorities for future collaboration.

In that sense, there is reason to believe that the idea of a new PESCO project, as proposed by the German Council on Foreign Relations, could get traction. And if European Union officials are to be believed, whatever actual capabilities come out of that intra-continental process will also benefit the NATO alliance as a whole.

PESCO is short for Permanent Structured Cooperation, a key policy in the EU's quest for greater defensive capabilities. A new round of collaboration proposals is expected to take shape over the summer to be approved by member states later this year. ■

[www.defensenews.com](http://www.defensenews.com) inf.

# Eyeing Russia, Army fields jam-resistant GPS in Europe

**W**ith an eye on sophisticated Russian jamming and spoofing technology, the U.S. Army will field test jam-resistant position, navigation and timing gear with the 2nd Cavalry Regiment in Germany this September.

The decision comes amid a pattern of Russia jamming or disrupting all sorts of communications vital to Western forces in recent years, from mobile phone networks during exercises to electronic warfare against U.S. operations on the ground in Syria. NATO affirmed that Russia jammed GPS signals during its Trident Juncture exercise in November in Europe's High North region.

The Army will field a system called Mounted Assured Positioning, Navigation and Timing, or MAPS, on some of the regiment's vehicles — news first reported by Inside the Army. The system uses the Selective Availability Anti-Spoofing Module for GPS, a chip-scale atomic clock for timing an anti-jamming antenna to distribute position, navigation and timing information across a unit's mission equipment.

Russia's electronic warfare capability fueled the fielding to the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, Army Col. Nicholas Kioutas, the service's project manager for positioning, navigation and timing, said on the sidelines of the C4ISRNET Conference held in Arlington, Virginia, June 6.

"Right now what we can learn is how the equipment can hold up, because unless we're being specifically jammed, we won't be able to tell what happened," Kioutas said of the upcoming fielding. "We're constantly taking those systems and stress-testing them and trying to upgrade them, so it's not like that's the static system and we're done."

The Army is using a flexible acquisitions vehicle called an Other Transaction Authority with three vendors to develop the second generation of MAPS. Program office is asking vendors to provide it with their best technological developments, which is a reflection of the service's less prescriptive approach to capability development.

"We want industry to show us how to fight a different way," Kioutas said, adding later, "We said, 'bring us your best capabilities,' we didn't say what those should be."



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The Army plans to experiment with using assured PNT systems as sensors. One use would be for a group of linked systems to read the way a jamming signal strikes them to conclude where the jammer is located. "That'll be an additional capability down the road that we'll exploit," Kioutas said.

The program office is also developing Dismounted Assured Positioning, Navigation and Timing, or DAPS, for the Army's version of a smartphone, the integrated dismounted leader situational awareness system Nett Warrior. ■

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## Without a NATO-wide Effort, the Skies along the North-eastern Flank Could Be in Peril



Photo credits: Flickr.com

siting from mainland Russia to Kaliningrad, and they are swiftly dealt with by the air-policing mission."

Lukas Milevski, an assistant professor at Leiden University and a Baltic Sea fellow at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute think tank, told that the initial rotation of four fighter jets was doubled to between eight and 10 aircraft starting in 2014 in response to Russia's increased military activities in the region.

"The air-policing mission has had a visibly positive impact on Baltic security, as it has broadly safeguarded the countries' airspaces against Russian challenges. However, there are concerns whether this is enough after 2014," Milevski said. "We need to take into account what sort of military challenges these countries are facing. Since Crimea, such challenges have become more frequent, as on average there has been one Russian intrusion every two days."

### INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS

Milevski said the air-policing mission has proven itself effective by escorting Russian aircraft out of Baltic airspace, and by responding to other potential threats throughout the region. In 2013, the mission's jets were scrambled after the Russian Air Force simulated a nuclear strike against Sweden.

However, even the most successful efforts

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Confronted by what they perceive as Russia's increasingly belligerent activities in Eastern Europe, the three Baltic States are moving toward tightening their air-defense cooperation, and they view NATO's air-policing mission in their skies as a major part of their security. This is perhaps a sensible approach, as local observers say that without the alliance's support, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would be unable to field sufficient capabilities.

NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission was launched March 30, 2004, one day after Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania joined the alliance. More than 15 years later, the three states still depend on other allies, as they lack their own fighter jet fleets that could be deployed to safeguard their skies.

"On a day-to-day basis, NATO air policing can react to airspace intrusions or violations of flight rules that Estonia would be unable to deal with alone — this is important for preserving territorial integrity," said Tony Lawrence, a research fellow at the Tallinn-based International Centre for Defence Security think tank. "But more widely, the presence of the air-policing mission... is a significant demonstration of NATO's solidarity with its Baltic allies and its resolve to take Baltic security seriously. This is an important contribution to deterrence in the region."

Local analysts point to the noticeable increase in violations of the Baltic States' airspace since 2014, when Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula.

"There are frequent flight violations by Russian military aircraft, for example incursions into Baltic airspace, flying with transponders switched off or failures to file flight plans," Lawrence said. "Concerning Estonia's airspace, these violations often happen with aircraft transient capabilities."



## 4 New Members for NATO Cyber Defense Organization

**A** NATO cyber defense organization welcomed four new member nations June 13: Bulgaria, Denmark, Norway, and Romania.

The Cooperative Cyber Defense Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) is a NATO-accredited international military organization that specializes in cyber defense in technology, strategy, operations, and law.

The membership of the new nations to CCDCOE was celebrated with a flag raising ceremony.

"The fact that more and more nations are joining up to actively contribute to cyber security reflects the need to improve capabilities in the cyber domain," Col Tarien, director of the multinational interdisciplinary hub of cyber defense expertise, said. "Increased global connectivity and technological development means that we have to be ready for any type of cyber threat and bring our capabilities up to date. Tackling cyber threats that our democracies are facing demand expert knowledge and skills, which are reinforced by close cooperation between Allies and Partners."

Founded in 2008, the cyber center began with seven members. Now the organization has 25 members and expects to expand

Japan, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Switzerland are all in the process of joining the center, according to a press release. ■

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by the air-policing mission cannot provide Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with what they lack: a robust air-defense system capable of covering their respective territories.

"Each of the three countries has its short-range air defense system. They are also making separate efforts to develop their mid-range capacities, but a joint acquisition would be difficult, as they have different budgets and procurement cycles," Milevski said.

In 2016, Lithuania's Defence Ministry signed a contract with Norway's Kongsberg to acquire the Network Centric Air Defence System under a deal worth €109 million (U.S. \$123 million).

"Lithuania has ordered a mid-range system with delivery expected in 2020. Latvia has allocated funds for a mid-range system, but to date it has not launched its procurement. Estonia has aspirations to acquire mid-range air defense, but this acquisition was not included in its National Defence Development Plan until 2026," Milevski said.

Asked about a potential project by the three countries to jointly procure an air defense system, the analyst said that while Estonia, Latvia

and Lithuania share air-surveillance data and have made arrangements for the combined tactical command and control of their respective airspaces, they "do not have plans for joint acquisition in air defense."

The Baltic States "have been absolutely on the same page while lobbying for allied support to assist with serious air defense. However, when it comes to joint procurements, Baltic States have not been very collaborative, and in most of occasions they follow individual approaches," according to Māris Andžāns, a senior research fellow at the Latvian Institute of International Affairs.

Despite the hike in defense spending by the Baltic States, observed since 2014, budget constraints make it unlikely that the three countries could significantly develop their air defense capacities on their own. For 2019, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania forecast military spending of about €586 million, €637 million and €948 million, respectively, according to data from their defense ministries.

"Air defense is currently the single largest gap in the Baltic States' defense capabilities, but it's not one they can address themselves without NATO's support," Milevski said.

### NATO PRIORITY

Meanwhile, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg recently pointed out that the alliance has increased its presence in the Baltic region with air policing and battlegroups, and that it is striving to deliver "the necessary capabilities to always have the necessary readiness and strength of these battlegroups."

According to Stoltenberg, air defense is a priority for the alliance. The issue is likely to be on the agenda at a NATO defense ministerial meeting in Brussels later this month.

"Air defense is partly about what we can have stationed there, but also how we can quickly deploy additional capabilities if needed," he said.

Hungary is scheduled to be the lead nation for NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission in Siauliai, Lithuania, together with augmenting nations Spain and the United Kingdom. From this month, Hungary will deploy its JAS 39 Gripen fighter jet to Siauliai, the second time since 2015 that the country deployed an Air Force detachment to lead the mission out of Lithuania, according to a NATO statement. ■

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## European Defense Industry Could Regret

A new initiative by the Trump administration to subsidize U.S. weapons sales to some former Warsaw Pact countries could rankle European defense leaders, some of whom are fuming over Washington's recent request for full access to European Union defense coffers.

The European Recapitalization Incentive Program, or ERIP, a new tool developed with U.S. European Command to speed the process of getting allied nations off Russian gear, plans to spread \$190 million to six countries: Albania, Bosnia and North Macedonia, plus the EU member states of Croatia, Greece and Slovakia.

It's a relatively small amount of money, but the promise of expansion, along with the fact those funds will be used expressly to get countries onto American-made products, likely means European defense firms will keep a wary eye on the program's future, once they fully get wind of it.

Asked about a European response to ERIP, analysts noted that the advent of the funding stream could set off a flurry of activity among European defense contractors, who could see it less as a move to benefit allied nations and more as an industry power grab from American companies that would benefit from smaller nations with limited budgets addicted to U.S. kit.



The program kicks off in the wake of tense trans-Atlantic relations and a push by defense officials in Washington to have unfettered access to the emerging pot of European defense money, namely the European Defence Fund and the associated collaborative projects known as PESCO.

Washington's terse request to allow non-EU members into an initiative designed to beef up the bloc's organic defense capabilities was seen by some in Europe as evidence that America may be focused more on selling its own weapons than letting Europe become a defense player in its own right.

"From a European manufacturer perspective, you look at this and think how much of this is altruistic and how much of this is about trying to ensure U.S. market access and lock

some countries into an American approach?" questioned Douglas Barrie of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

"This is a big deal, if they are successful in making this program go," said Jim Townsend, a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Europe now with the Center for New American Security. "If you're a European defense company, you're going, 'I hope the Americans don't make this financial assistance into a big program,' because it's going to undercut them."

And, "if you're an American arms dealer you want to get in on that. That's manna from heaven for them."

The six countries are divided into two focus areas: Albania, Bosnia and Slovakia replacing helicopters; and Croatia, Greece and North Macedonia replacing infantry fighting vehicles. Those are two areas with plenty of European suppliers who would love to keep away their American competitors.

In particular, Barrie noted, the countries supporting Airbus and Italy's Leonardo would likely move to protect their helicopter market share, while multiple nations have indigenous ground vehicles they want to sell.

Fundamentally, both analysts agreed that if these countries with limited defense budgets get American subsidies to start buying U.S. gear, they are likely to stay with that equipment in the long term, including the lucrative maintenance tails. That means bad news for European manufacturers, and may lead to some sort of response.

"If I was an industry in Europe and saw this program growing", Barrie mused, "then I would be tempted to be whispering in my government's ear to do something similar."

And the program could expand, making it more of a challenge for European firms. Sometime in late June or early July, the U.S. State Department is expected to make a decision on whether to launch a second ERIP round, based on reprogrammed fiscal 2019 dollars.

If approved, officials will start identifying new projects at the end of the fiscal year, which could include new countries, such as Poland, Hungary or the Baltic nations, where European firms have been hoping to compete. ■

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Photo credit: Flickr.com

The US is paying countries not to buy Russian weapons.



## Skills Improved at an Exercise in Germany



Photo credits: Lithuanian Armed Forces

**T**wenty soldiers of the Engineer Battalion took part in an international Exercise Engineer Recee 2019 in Germany. Lithuanians honed their engineer reconnaissance skills alongside NATO allies from the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany for two weeks.

The training site was in a U.S. airbase in the vicinity of Luxembourg. The training engineers planned reconnaissance operations with colleagues from other countries, attended lessons

on different bridge constructions and presentations of weaponry, equipment and gear, exchanged experience, and trained to carry out reconnaissance of objects, routes, river crossings and bridges. During the active phase of the exercise the Lithuanians focused on railway and road bridges and road route reconnaissance. It was a novel but useful experience for Lithuanians to carry out the reconnaissance in a mountainous terrain.

According to the training Lithuanian sol-

diers, participation in multinational exercises, training military skills and enhancement of knowledge alongside NATO allies not only improves our soldiers' expertise and gives invaluable experience and new skills in conducting reconnaissance, but also strengthens Lithuania's defence and shapes a positive attitude of NATO allies towards Lithuania as an equal ally whose forces are able to act both, alone and together with fellow forces. ■

**Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.**

## Exercise BALTOPS 2019 Took Place in the Baltic Sea

**O**n 14-16 June two largest NATO ship formation groups — Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG1) and Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1 (SNMCMG1) participated in one of the largest annual naval exercise BALTOPS 2019 in the Lithuanian territorial waters of the Baltic Sea.

Maritime, air and land force elements trained in the exercise BALTOPS 2019. Military ships maneuvering in formations, ships convoying, artillery shooting, anti-aircraft and anti-terrorist defence, mine hunting and deactivation, anti-submarine warfare, amphibious operations and other military procedures were conducted and improved.

The exercise in the Baltic Sea region on June 9-21 involved more than 8 thousand personnel



Photo credits: Rūta Šaltmerygė (Lithuanian Armed Forces)

of various military forces from 16 NATO and 2 partner countries: Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, United Kingdom, USA, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, France, Romania, Finland, Sweden, Turkey and Germany.

BALTOPS is already the 47th annual naval exercise in the Baltic region led by the United States. This year, the U.S. 2nd Fleet, re-established last year, led the exercise. "U.S. 2nd Fleet be leading the exercise, but make no mistake, it will be founded on NATO and partner principles," then said Vice Adm. Andrew "Woody" Lewis, commander, U. S. 2nd Fleet. "Through BALTOPS 2019 and exercises like it, we strengthen our relationships and improve overall coordination and interoperability between allies and partners during both peace and times of conflict."

The main objective of the exercise BALTOPS 2019 is to strengthen coordination of capabilities for quick response to crisis and regional stability, to promote peace and security in the Baltic region. ■

**Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.**

## Military Police in the Exercise "Guardian Angel 2019"



**M**ilitary Police of the Lithuanian Armed Forces took part in the "Guardian Angel 2019" exercise organized by the Military Police of the Spanish Armed Forces on June 16-21. Lithuanian Military Police squad participated in the exercise with more than 800 military police officers from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Estonia, England, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania, NATO Military Police Center of Excellence and Spanish Civil Guard.

The exercise "Guardian Angel 2019" is designed to train allied military police units to interact during the crisis. Combined military units of different countries have performed NATO's military police doctrinal functions and tasks in interaction with each other in an international environment. Nine Spanish military police officers are assigned to the Lithuanian Military Police squad.

Despite the constant heat and intense exercise schedule, the morality of the Lithuanian military police officers is high and allies are constantly praising our troops for motivation and initiative," said Lieutenant Urtė

Juodvalkytė, Commander of the Military Police squad.

The International Lithuanian-Spanish Military Police squad carried out such tasks as traffic control, patrol, building assault, person protection, building raid with detainees, inspection of post-explosion sites, a military base protection, installation of a refugee camp, as well as the other tasks. Each unit performed two pre-planned operations per day.

The Military Police of the Lithuanian Armed Forces took part in "Guardian Angel" exercise for the fifth consecutive year. ■

**Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.**

## Slovak Forces Could Be Sent to Lithuania in Case of a Crisis

**O**n June 17 Vice Minister of National Defence Vytautas Umbrasas received Ambassador of Slovakia to Latvia and Lithuania Ladislav Babčan. Vice Minister underscored the importance of cooperation with Slovakia and thanked for the country's contribution to the security of the Baltic region.

"Slovakia is contributing to the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Groups, specifically, in Latvia, to the NATO Force Integration Units and multinational operations. It demonstrates strong Slovakia's resolve to be a part of the response to current threats to the security of the region and the entire NATO," Vice Minister V. Umbrasas said. "Of course, we have to continue seeking that the decisions of the Warsaw Summit are fully implemented, including enabling the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force," Vice Minister said.

Vice Minister and Ambassador discussed

the complicated security situation in the region and the threat from Russia, as well as unconventional measures, such as information or cyber-attacks, economic pressure to reach one's goals, and NATO response to them. They also addressed the transatlantic cooperation and matters of the EU's strategic autonomy.

Ambassador of Slovakia expressed delight that Lithuania and Slovakia agreed on fundamental issues and therefore could successfully cooperate and support each other in NATO and EU formats. Ambassador also stressed that the Slovak soldiers deployed as part of the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group in Latvia had a clear mandate to support the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Groups in Lithuania and Estonia in case there was a need.

Vice Minister V. Umbrasas stressed that bilateral cooperation should continue being developed and experience continue being shared, and

knowledge should be expanded in such areas as strategic communication and response to the Russian propaganda, cyber security and crises management. Vice Minister also thanked Slovakia for making available their Air Force L-39 aircraft simulator for training Lithuanian pilots.

### DEFENCE COOPERATION OF LITHUANIA AND SLOVAKIA

A Slovakian officer is serving in the NATO Force Integration Unit in Vilnius, Lithuanian and Slovakian soldiers are training in joint exercises, e.g. Tobruq Legacy. Also, Slovakia and other Visegrád Group countries contribute to the Baltic security by deploying rotational forces and soldiers and equipment to the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group. Slovakia also provides Lithuania the opportunity to use its L-39 flight simulation system for training pilots. ■

**Lithuanian MoD inf.**

## "Defence of Your Country is our Priority"

Soldiers under my command are sent to the NATO enhanced Forward Presence Battalion Battle Group (eFP BG) in Lithuania because we are staunch NATO allies and we are stronger together. We understand that your borders are our borders which makes the defence of your country a priority for us. We are proud to have the opportunity to serve together," Commander of the Royal Netherlands Army Lt Gen Leo Beulen said on a visit in Lithuania.

During the two days of the visit the guest met with Chief of Defence of Lithuania Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas. Generals discussed the regional security situation, implementation of the NATO deterrence measures, U.S. contribution to the regional security, the countries' participation in the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) and procurement of used military equipment from the Armed Forces of the Netherlands.

At the end of the meeting Chief of Defence of Lithuania presented the Lithuanian Armed Forces Medal of Merit to Lt Gen L. Beulen for his exceptional merits in developing and sustaining a close cooperation between the Lithuanian and the Dutch militaries in the implementation of the NATO eFP mission in Lithuania.

Lt Gen L. Beulen also met with Commander of the Lithuanian Land Force Maj Gen Valdemaras Rupšys, and observed Sniper Day 2019 shooting competition at the Gaižiūnai Training Area in Rukla (Jonava region) and met with the soldiers of the Netherlands and other allies deployed with the NATO eFP BG. ■

Lithuanian Armed Forces inf.



Photo credits: Sgš Syc Ieva Budzeikaite and Maj Mindaugas Neimontas



## Lithuania to Buy Radio Communication Equipment from the U.S.

In early June the Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania and the United States Government signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance on procurement of radio communication equipment for the Lithuanian Armed Forces. The total sum paid for the tactical radio communication equipment for the Lithuanian Land Force amounts to over USD 3 million. The financing comes from the U.S. European Security Assistance Fund.

"The modern communications equipment will not only improve communication and interoperability between the Lithuanian Armed Forces and NATO Allies, especially the U.S., but will also secure the communication among units of the Lithuanian Armed Forces," Vice Minister of National Defence Giedrimas Jeglinskis says.

The tactical communications equipment will be dedicated to maneuver units of the Lithuanian Land Force, rapid response forces,

and units on standby for the Domestic Support Forces.

"This procurement is another great example of Lithuania's commitment to strengthen their armed forces. These radios provide secure tactical communication capabilities that help increase interoperability with U.S. and other NATO forces," Deputy Chief of the Office of Defence Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy to Lithuania Major Sean Rufolo said. ■

Lithuanian MoD inf.



Photo credits: Kotryna Gurevičiūtė

## Thousands of Warriors under the Ruthless Sun

IT'S BEEN SIX MONTHS SINCE THE BIGGEST MULTINATIONAL TRAININGS IN LITHUANIA TOOK PLACE IN THE WOODS OF OUR COUNTRY. AND RECENTLY, WHEN THE FRUSTRATING SUMMER HEAT WAS BEATING A RECORD, THE NEW CYCLE OF THE TACTICAL FIELD EXERCISE "IRON WOLF 2019-I" STARTED ONCE AGAIN. ALMOST 4,000 BROTHERS-IN-ARMS INCLUDING OUR PARTNERS FROM NATO ENHANCED FORWARD PRESENCE BATTLE GROUP (EFP BG) GATHERED TO DEMONSTRATE AND IMPROVE THEIR CAPACITIES.





As usual, the two-week exercise took place in Gaižiūnai and General Silvestras Žukauskas training areas as well as civilian territories and their surroundings. The beginning was marked by a spectacular convoy of military vehicles which was moving from the places of deployment to the assembly area and operation locations. The road march took place along the public roads and included about 1,000 units of various military equipment: tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, artillery guns, supply and administrative transport. As a result, the citizens had another opportunity to observe this unusual event and make sure that our allies are ready to stand for the people of Lithuania.

Apart from the Lithuanians who organized the exercise, the most part of the participants were soldiers of NATO eFP BG from Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Norway, and the Netherlands. In addition, the "Iron Wolf" brought together even more partners — troops from Duke Vaidotas Mechanized Infantry Battalion and King Mindaugas Hussars Battalion trained defensive and offensive operations being reinforced by the combat and combat support units from Denmark, United Kingdom, Poland and the United States (US). Air support was conducted by British Army 3rd Regiment

Air Corps equipped with attack helicopters "AH-64-D Apache".

During the exercise one of the aims was to train the mobility of the units, their ability to quickly reach any place in Lithuania and both defend and destroy enemy's forces. During the first week, the divisions trained to work with additionally assigned units. Afterwards, a complex field exercise was conducted which was not any easier as the last and the most intense phase began — the troops trained to act on the principal "force-on-force". Combat shooting exercises were also carried out in the shooting houses of the training areas.

Sometimes it happened to be quite challenging to find a battlefield for those marked by the white straps and looking for some action. While driving across the woods, we were able to meet a couple of young cadets from the US attached to the squad level. Even in their tired faces we could see big smiles. "For me it is really great. We learned a lot of teamwork, had to coordinate with foreign troops, so it's been fun. The challenging part so far is doing this kind of operations with other countries, we had to get over the language barrier and how to fight in different kind of terrain. I also learned how to operate with different kind of weapon which is the Lithuanian one," said female soldier who, back in her home coun-

try, is taking a nursing major. Her comrade John was also delighted about the chance to train in Iron Wolf exercise: "It's great to be able to learn new tactics and have an opportunity to do that in a new environment. I've never been in a place like this and I love Lithuania."

Driving along the forest we managed to spot a couple of allied troops sitting between the trees. There were Dutch soldiers who just made their effort to stop the red forces. "We just had the first line of defence, one kilometre to the North. So right now, we are retreating and setting up the additional defence," soldiers said adding that it's a great exercise in order to show the citizens of Lithuania how allies can operate and that the eFP BG is standing together. "One of the most challenging things are the ones such as communication between different countries including the radio sets, different systems, and so on. However, here we are definitely learning to work together which is extremely important. Overall, it's a challenging mission because we're six months away from home but it's a great opportunity to train with all other countries. Usually we are training with German and French colleagues and now with Lithuanians and Czech so that's a bit of a difference." ■

**Kotryna Gurevičiūtė**





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\*\*\* 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.

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## "Uphold and Strengthen the Will to Resist Anyone Threatening Our Homeland"

From page 1

Let's have a look retrospectively. Since Lithuania's path towards the membership in NATO our country's armed forces, in addition to territorial defence, carried out its international commitments, took part in various international operations. Of course, the military and political reality of that time demanded this, and we saw a number of crises that affected the international community. For example, the Balkans, later Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.

Of course, even before the membership in the most powerful defence alliance in the world, the perception of threats from the East

was more relevant, and after 2004 a period of some kind of relaxation and confidence in self security began. However, as I mentioned earlier, the first warning signal was made in 2008 and we heard it clearly because both Sakartvelo and Lithuania once were incorporated into that big aggressive state and felt and saw where the disclaimed ambitions of V. Putin's Russia were moving towards. But then the reaction of the West was quite passive, maybe it could even be said that there was no reaction at all — the cleverly planned Kremlin's propaganda took care of it. However, the Ukraine events in 2014 were different.

The Western countries and the main security dimension that unites them — NATO — realized the need to change their military doctrines in the face of a threat which recently was not even called like that. It seems that, during the NATO Summit in Wales, where I participated, it was finally stated that the challenge to international security is not just terrorism or its asserts in individual states, but the situation that is emerging at the eastern borders of the Alliance.

Then it finally became obvious to many in Lithuania that there was an urgent need to strengthen our armed forces, because the real





The year of 1992



The year of 1992

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The year of 1995

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The year of 1994



war is not so far away, the enemy is behind the gate. It is important that politicians who were sometimes difficult to persuade to take into account the needs of the armed forces also understood the threat of the situation.

Crimean annexation and war in eastern Ukraine broke NATO's friendship with Russia in spite the fact that there has been a long dialogue, even cooperation, so Moscow had sufficient access to Alliance structures. In 2014, everyone finally actually saw who they are dealing with.

In Lithuania, it resulted in big changes by both developing



Then Colonel and current Chief of Defence Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas with President of the Republic of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus during one of the exercises. 1998



Gen Wesley Clark (on the left), then Chief of Defence Maj Gen Jonas Kronkaitis and then Colonel, current Chief of Defence Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas. 1999



Then Colonel and current Chief of Defence Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas with Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania (1990-1992) Vytautas Lansbergis. 1998

the armed forces and ensuring the national security in general. In this context, it is also necessary to mention the political parties' agreement on the allocation of 2% of gross domestic product to state's defence, predicting an increase to 2.5%; also, the return of compulsory military service the acquisition of qualitatively new armament, new national defence plans, and, of course, the permanent deployment of NATO forces in Lithuania.

But the most important thing, however, I would describe re-emergence or, at least, a clear demonstration of the people's will to defend their own country, which I believe was also seen by a potential aggressor, and certainly by our allies.

**You have described the events and topicalities of the last five years under your leadership of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. What would you distinguish on your way as a soldier — from being the first military volunteer of present-day Lithuania to Chief of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania?**

Everything, of course, began with Sajūdis, the Reform Movement of Lithuania. However, as far as I can remember, I did not feel an extraordinary breakthrough or sudden hope of a free Lithuania, because I came from Lithuanian freedom fighters and exiles family, where we always talked about the past of our country and believed that we will regain our Independence.

When the so-called *perestroika* began, my faith increased, and Sajūdis became a force or direction that clearly led us to the most important goal of that time. During those memorable 1988–1990s I took an active part in the activities of Sajūdis, together with other "green straps" (voluntary rally guard of Sajūdis) protected people during the events of this organization from various provocations, and I was elected to the Sajūdis Council.

On March 11, 1990 the Act on the Restoration of Independence of Lithuania, I would say, was more a spiritual gesture of the will of the nation, because we had no means to defend Independence, everywhere were KGB, Soviet Army units, and various elements opposed to Lithuania. Since I studied history, sometimes I wondered how our efforts to regain the Independence will end. I often thought: won't it be the same as during many other previous Lithuanian rebellions that were flooded in blood by the occupants from the East...

I remember that when the discussions on the need to build the Lithuanian Armed Forces began in April 1990, I didn't see any other choice

for myself. The National Defence Department (KAD Lith.) was established on April 25, and the requests of mine and other companions were already filled and laying in the Sąjūdis' reserve. At first, I worked for about a month at the then Supreme Council Security Department (ATAS Lith.), because the mentioned volunteer requests were distributed by the initiative of the head of that department Artūras Skučas, and afterwards on June I went to the emerging KAD.

At that time, the Lithuanian Armed Forces as a military structure did not exist yet. The need to take control of Lithuanian borders and gather information on how many occupation forces are in our country *de facto* and what capacities and resources they had we considered the main tasks of ours. This is how the KAD Intelligence unit emerged where I worked as an inspector and later became the head of Personnel unit. We started to form the State Boarder Guard Service, the Guard Company, the military officers' training courses and, at the end of the year 1990, we clearly felt the increasing tension, the activity of occupation forces in the entire country. I remember that me and my colleagues met the Christmas Eve of that year in the then KAD building (now Danish embassy building in Vilnius) and, seeing the Soviet army's movement right under our windows, we waited when they are going to assault KAD as well, because the capture of various objects in Vilnius has already begun and it was obvious that soon we will see the culmination of those events.



Chief of Defence Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas with President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė during one of the meetings in Parliament. 2018

When everybody gathered in the Supreme Council Palace (KAD buildings in Tadas Kosčiūška and Viršuliškės streets was already occupied), it felt like we are not going to fight back alone — an undeniable will of Lithuanian people to protect their country and their Independence was hovering in the air. Besides, we couldn't afford to repeat the mistakes of 1940, although, compared to the then army, which

had 3 divisions, artillery, aviation, we were basically armed only with hunting rifles...

We all remember what happened on January 13th. The new wave of tension began to emerge shortly after these events, because, besides the Soviet army who was almost everywhere, and it seemed that it will never retreat from captured buildings and territories, anti-Lithuanian propaganda was spread though all channels available to the Soviets. The situation really resembled a heavily compressed spring, which had to either straighten out or break. And that breakthrough point was, of course, the 1991 August Putsch in Moscow. It seems exactly then a probably once-in-a-lifetime feeling of victorious euphoria overtook us all.

**General, why Lithuania was able to achieve such a rapid withdrawal of the occupation army, because when the last Russian military echelons left our country, the Russian army was not only in Latvia and Estonia, but also in some Central European countries?**

I think the members of our negotiating team which was led by Česlovas Stankevičius (former Minister of National Defence) could tell about it the best. Maybe our negotiators have succeeded in motivating somebody from a Russian army, for example, with building houses for them in the Kaliningrad region or something like that. At the end of August 1993, I studied at the Bundeswehr Academy in Ger-



Chief of Defence Lt Gen Jonas Vytautas Žukas with Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg and President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė. 2018



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” Throughout our history, there have always been such risings in civic consciousness and patriotism, especially when the country or nation reached a critical level of threats and dangers. Let's remember the rebellions of the 19th century, the Wars of Independence, *War after War*, the period of Sajūdis, and the defence of Independence on January 13th. It is exactly the mentioned will to resist, the will to defend your country and home from the enemy, regardless of whether it is a Tsar's gendarme, or bolshevik, or his descendant — soviet occupant.



many, and I clearly remember how I received many greetings from my colleagues and academy friends on the morning of September 1st. It can be said that later there was a calmer phase of development of our armed forces just because there was no occupant's army in Lithuania. However, the challenges we had to face when developing our own armed forces according to Western standards were enormous, because, figuratively, the Soviet army in the Lithuanian Armed Forces was still abundant. On the other hand, we have to understand that we did not have any other experience, because after returning to Lithuania in 1994, I was the first Lithuanian officer who had some experience in Western military studies. Many things had to be learned: procedures, subtleties of military training, languages... Overcoming the trail left by the 50-year of occupation was not that easy.

I would say that the positive changes took place after the first international missions in the Balkans, then in Iraq. Then there were more opportunities to study, participate in various courses in Western countries, and the Lithuanian Armed Forces have already made an obvious step towards a more modern stage of its development.

**General, let's come back to realities. What is your opinion on defensive per-**

it seems to me that so far it is just a lot of political statements and nothing more. There is no common vision, no consensus, nor, moreover, military evaluation of this potential project.

The key question of this vision is whether the entity will be independent, or will duplicate its functions with NATO, what impact the interaction between these two structures would make on it. Therefore, I believe that both Lithuania and other smaller Alliance members are opposed to overlapping defence functions,

discussions. There were also many situations, for example, in the Balkans or Africa, where they could have showed their capabilities. Therefore, maybe, for the sake of demonstrating the political will we should try to involve the EU in those mechanisms that are already in place, rather than thinking about new large scale projects.

Going back to the interaction of the Lithuanian Armed Forces with the other countries' armed units (Public Security Service, State



**spectives of Lithuania: in what direction should the Lithuanian Armed Forces and its interoperability with the other armed units develop, taking into account the presently dangerous situation in our region? What do you think of the ideas regarding the European Union (EU) Army?**

I would say that today's situation is unpredictable. And in terms of the vision of the EU Army

especially when today we can benefit from the most powerful defence organization in the world.

Of course, it may be possible to talk about the creation of forces which NATO do not have, but would it be an EU Army? One example could be EU Combat Groups, which were created almost 15 years ago, and practically have never been used, although there were a lot of

Border Guard Service, and Dignitary Protection Department), which would become subordinate exactly to the Chief of Defence in case of a war or military status declaration, I can say that we have our own agreements, action plans, and since 2014 we have been collaborating intensively in preparing for various possible scenarios. According to the country's defence plan, these forces are fully integrated



returning from emigration to fulfill their duty to the Homeland, remain to serve in the armed forces, sign a contract of professional military service, enter the corps of non-commissioned officers, choose to study at the General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania. I am really delighted that this patriotic enthusiasm does not fade away.

**How do you assess the influence of hostile propaganda to the Lithuanian Armed Forces, with particular emphasis on the endless attempts to falsify the history of Lithuanian freedom fighters? Doesn't this remind the hybrid methods that are particularly active today in Ukraine?**

It has to be understood that some public statements of high ranking persons are more the subservience to audience, i. e. often to the one of that place rather than our local. However, the information war, we can say, is running at very high speeds. For me, it seems that even during the Cold War, when the propaganda contradiction between the West and the so-called "socialist camp" was also intense, there was no use of lies, dirty methods, and false stories in the East, while expressing what you want instead of what truly is. Therefore, in the background of such aggressive propaganda, when the falsification of the facts becomes an ordinary daily tool, it is hardly possible to have any discussion. Where are lies, there is no place for discussion, and attempts to rewrite history are not a "battle of ideas".

You mentioned the attempts to falsify the history of Lithuanian freedom fighters. Of course, this is an integral part of the work of hostile

and each has its own "puzzle" of action when implementing the plan. Besides, in addition to these institutions, we are organizing a number of common exercises of various kinds, in which we are preparing to respond to the wide-scale spectrum of threats that may arise for our country, ranging from non-kinetic and hybrid attacks to open military intervention.

**Obviously, after the beginning of the war in Ukraine, there was a breakthrough in civil consciousness and patriotism in Lithuania. Do you think this is a temporary or permanent phenomenon? Why there was no such commotion, for example, after the 2008 Russian aggression in then Georgia?**

Throughout our history, there have always been such risings in civic consciousness and patriotism, especially when the country or nation reached a critical level of threats and dangers. Let's remember the rebellions of the 19th century, the Wars of Independence, *War after War*, the period of Sąjūdis, and the defence of Independence on January 13th. It is exactly the mentioned will to resist, the will to defend your country and home from the enemy, regardless of whether it is a Tsar's gendarme, or bolshevik, or his descendant — soviet occupant.

Of course, the events of 2008 in Georgia at that time were already a serious alarm, but it was not yet understood as critical. And in

2014, the perception of danger was already adequate, so that was a reason why a desire to serve and defend the Homeland emerged. As a result, even after the re-establishment of compulsory military service so far there are always enough volunteers expressing their desire to serve, and the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union is experiencing an unprecedented rise from the restoration of Independence. It is also important to emphasize that one third of young people, including a number of girls, and those



Photo credit: Sgr. Arnas Čemerka

Photo credit: Sgr. Arnas Čemerka



forces — especially the June Uprising, the activities of the Lithuanian Homeland Army, *War after War* is a huge and particularly painful disturbance to their "peaceful" bolshevik "history". That's why there are and likely will be more attacks against our freedom fighters, "criminalizing" them, and so on. Various so-called black technologies, information channels operating not only abroad, but also here in Lithuania, will be undoubtedly used for this purpose.

Of course, such events as finding the remains of Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, which revealed unspeakable sadism of bolshevik interrogators, the state funeral of this partisan general, a solemn parade of 100th anniversary of restoration of our armed forces is extremely painful stabs for the history of the "state-liberator", which is made of white or, probably, red yarns. However, for this we oppose our national consciousness and our will to resist.

It is important to understand that the aim to break the will and to defend one's country, family, and home, to make people doubt Lithuania, its statehood and future is the main goal of the enemy. Tanks come afterwards, and the way to them is being cleared by the broken will.

” **Crimean annexation and war in eastern Ukraine broke NATO's friendship with Russia in spite the fact that there has been a long dialogue, even cooperation, so Moscow had sufficient access to Alliance structures. In 2014, everyone finally actually saw who they are dealing with.**

**General, what would you wish for the Lithuanian soldiers and all the people of our country as well as the allied troops by finishing your term of tenure as the Chief of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania?**

The service in the Lithuanian Armed Forces was the most important and precious stage of life for me. I am very proud of my comrades, subordinates, soldiers, all with whom I had to serve the Homeland since the very 1990s.

There are indeed a lot of extremely patriotic people in our armed forces, and it is a healthy body.

I would like to express my huge gratitude to my first comrades, troops from the Mechanised Iron Wolf Brigade and the Land Force, to all those with whom we have created the Lithuanian Armed Forces.

After all, how many of our troops went and are still going on various extremely dangerous missions and are ready to serve their duties to the Homeland and defend it for the price of their health and lives!

I would like to wish to keep the unfading patriotism, love for the Homeland and necessary pass it to the future generations.

Do not forget that while facing a threat, the armed forces will be the first one to defend Lithuania, therefore uphold and strengthen the will to resist anyone threatening our Homeland!

**Thank you for the conversation. ■**

**Interviewed by Darius Varanavičius**

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