Lithuanian MilitaryDigest

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NEWS

ILLEGAL MIGRATION IS A TARGET OF DISINFORMATION

LUKASHENKO'S HYBRID OPERATION TARGETS LATVIA, LITHUANIA, POLAND AND WHOLE EUROPEAN UNION



NATO'S PRESENCE

FUZILEIROS: ACTION IN LITHUANIA



SPECIAL

GRAND HETMAN CHODKEVIČIUS — THE LEGEND OF EUROPE IN THE 17TH CENTURY





Military cooperation with the U.S. is increasing

ON AUGUST 17 THE FIRST JOINT LIGHT TACTICAL VEHICLES (JLTVS) PROCURED BY THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WERE UNVEILED PUBLICLY IN RUKLA. AT THE CEREMONY HELD AT THE MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADE IRON WOLF VICE MINSTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE MARGIRIS ABUKEVIČIUS SAID THAT THE ACQUISITION WAS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT STEP IN THE MODERNIZATION OF THE LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES.

"I am really happy to be here on this occasion, presenting in Lithuania the purchased JLTVs. This is an important step towards in the modernization of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. We are very happy about our increasing military cooperation with the U.S., while this project really contributes and shows our willingness and action in protecting the NATO eastern flank," Vice Minister M. Abukevičius said.

The ceremony in Rukla was also attended by Ambassador of the United States to Lithuania HE Robert Gilchrist, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) BG Garrick Harmon, and representatives of the Lithuanian Armed Forces who, in their turn, assured the new JLTVs will significantly increase the Lithuanian Armed Forces capability.

The first JLTV shipment that has arrived in Lithuania includes 50 vehicles. The JLTVs were shipped from the U.S. to Germany by sea and then were brought to Lithuania by car carriers. The first JLTVs were assigned to the Lithuanian Armed Forces training units in Rukla and Kazlų Rūda and personnel training began. Several tens of drivers and 15 technical service personnel have already been fully trained.

The JLTV is currently the most state-of-the-art light tactical vehicle with particularly advanced characteristics. According to the contract signed by the Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania and the United States Government in 2019, 200 such vehicles will

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Illegal Migration is a Target of Disinformation

The illegal breaching of the state border of the Republic of Lithuanian with Belarus, state governance, Lithuania's bilateral relations with China and Belarus, the human rights situation in the country were the main targets, which in received the highest disinformation flow.

Last month, the analysts of the Strategic Communication Department of the Lithuanian Armed Forces identified a total of 433 unique cases with the features of the negative information activity. Compared to July this year, the total number of such cases have insignificantly decreased (a total of 485 cases were recorded in July), however the intensity of disinformation remained high.

Hostile information pressure against Lithuania's actions to tackle the flow of illegal migration across the Lithuanian-Belarusian border was actively pursued in August. Information channels related to the A. Lukashenko and Kremlin regimes have escalated disinformation narratives, spread lies, published misleading content, manipulated facts and interpretations of events, and republished the views of "experts" in favor of the Russian and Belarusian regimes. The aim was to form the image of Lithuania as a non-democratic state, where human rights are violated stating that Lithuania allegedly uses "fascist methods" against persons crossing the state border illegally.

In August 15 – 21, the narrative of the brutal treatment of the illegal migrants in Lithuania has been disseminated in all Belarusian state media channels. Misleading information and lies were published on the official websites of the Belarusian State Border Committee and the State Border Committee.

On August 10, the protest rally at the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania (Seimas), which ended in riots, was actively exploited by the channels of the hostile information and was one of the most escalated topics. Two main false narratives prevailed — Lithuania is an undemocratic state and human rights are systematically violated here, and the country's government allegedly serves only its own interests and not the interests of the state's citizens. The second dominant narrative was related to the decisions of Lithuanian institutions in order to control the Covid-19 virus pandemic. It has been said that by failing to ensure a smooth vaccination process, the country's authorities take the repressive actions.

Another topic, which was highly escalated in August — Lithuania's bilateral relations with China. On July 20, following the Lithuania's official announcement that it will open the Taiwanese diplomatic mission in Vilnius, the Russian and Chinese information channels have selectively provided information on possible economic loss to Lithuania and its foreign policy the whole month of August. Lithuania's business was threatened to have the consequences for allegedly interfering into China's internal affairs and trying to harm its foreign policy. The narrative that Lithuania is a supposedly insignificant state, and its foreign policy is dictated by the interests of the Unites States of America and Lithuania's wish to please the US was the most frequently repeated.

The topics of Lithuania's membership in NATO and NATO as an aggressive Alliance provoking Russia and Belarus by its actions at their border have also continued in August. The Russian-Belarusian military exercises Zapad 2021, which in fact are of the offensive nature, have been called the response to NATO's "aggressive" actions on their borders. ■

Information and photo credits: Lithuanian Armed Forces

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/KARIŠKIŲ ŽODIS



Military cooperation with the U.S. is increasing

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be procured for the Lithuanian Armed Forces. The JLTCs are made by Oshkosh Defense, the manufacturer of choice of the U.S. Government.

The new vehicles will be dedicated to the battalions of the Lithuanian Armed Forces Iron Wolf and Griffin Brigades, with a priority on the national rapid response force.

"The JLTVs are technologically advanced all-terrain vehicles with a high personnel protection. They will increase the current safety level of our troops and our efficiency in surveillance, artillery and air support tasks. This new capability has been manufactured according to the Lithuanian Armed Forces requirements and it will enhance our capacity to perform national defence tasks, to perform tasks in international operations, and last but not least, to be more interoperable with the United States forces," said M. Abukevičius.

"Today we mark the beginning of implementation of the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle project with our strategic ally Lithuania. I would like to say on behalf of the U.S. Government that we are very, very happy that Lithuania conducts its Armed Forces upgrade with U.S. weaponry and equipment," said Ambassador of the United States to Lithuania HE R. Gilchrist at the roll-out ceremony.



"Lithuania is further committing 2 % of your GDP to defence, and the commitment of your country to defence capability modernization strengthens collective security and benefits the entire NATO Alliance. The JLTV acquisition confirms the Lithuanian willingness to defend its territorial integrity against any threat," Ambassador added.

The Joint Light Tactical Vehicles acquisition by the Lithuanian Armed Forces is a part of the Lithuanian Armed Forces modernization programme which also includes procurement of the Vilkas Infantry Fighting Vehicles and PZH 2000 self-propelled howitzers. The JLTVs will supplement and update the ATV fleet in the Lithuanian Armed Forces that currently was made up by HMMWVs ('Hammers').

The all-terrain JLTVs will have mounted turrets and M2 QCB 12.7mm machine guns. The vehicles in the present JLTV shipment and turrets arrived separately, the equipment will be assembled in the nearest while. The contract between Lithuania and the U.S. covers the JLTC platform equipment, weaponry, personnel training, spares and maintenance, transportation, and equipment assembly. The procured JLTVs, equipment, weapons, tools, and spares will be delivered to the Lithuanian Armed Forces in full by 2024. ■

MoD information

Photo credits: A. Pliadis / MoD

US-European momentum on military mobility still stuck in bureaucracy

A marquee cooperation project between the European Union and the Pentagon aimed at cutting red tape during cross-border deployments of military gear in Europe has yet to get off the ground, as negotiations continue about the ground rules for non-EU participants.

At issue is a so-called "administrative arrangement" between members of the EU's various PESCO projects — the bloc's collective effort to strengthen defense cooperation — and outside countries. In the case of the military mobility effort, the Dutch government, as project lead, is tasked with brokering terms between two dozen EU member countries and three non-members: the United States, Canada and Norway.

"The Netherlands is leading the efforts to establish formal documentation, including an administrative arrangement for the Military Mobility PESCO project for the three joining nations and the existing project members," U.S. Defense Department spokeswoman Jessica Maxwell told Defense News. "We hope to conclude this AA this fall and participate in future project meetings."

The aim of the project is to bring the United States to the table when it comes to streamlining the procedures for shipping tanks from, say, Rome to Riga during crises. While such planning has long happened under NATO auspices, adding the EU bureaucracy into the equation would overcome additional obstacles, the thinking goes.

European defense officials have said they consider the capability of quickly moving large numbers of troops and equipment to would-be hotspots a key element in the continent's overall deterrence calculus.

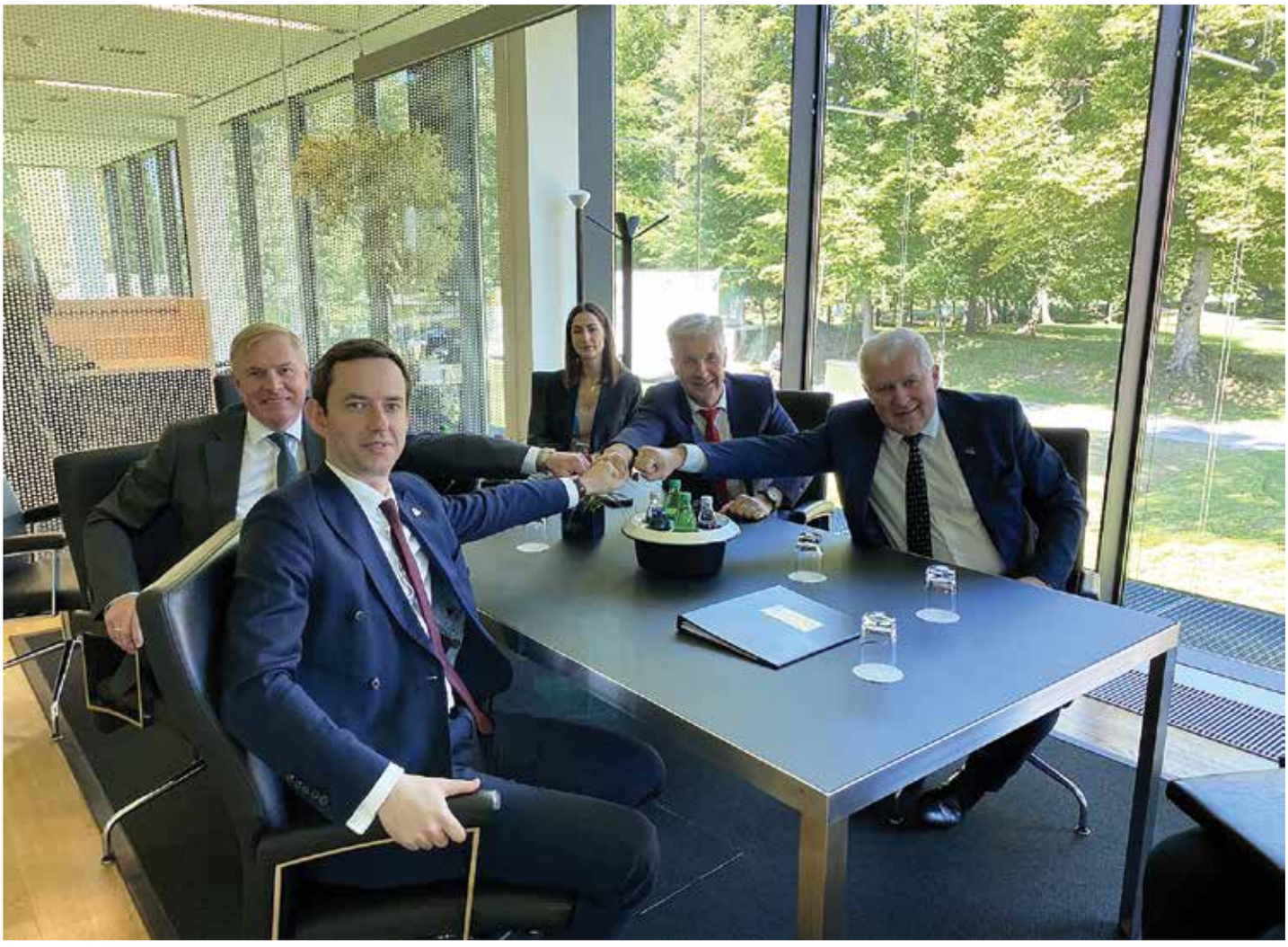
Reports first surfaced in early spring that Pentagon officials were pushing to partake in the EU's military mobility scheme, though a formal invitation didn't come until May.

Senior bloc officials have expressed support for the new transatlantic tie-up, saying it would also pave the way for increased EU-NATO cooperation. But the task of negotiating an administrative arrangement is forcing Europeans to think through the details of letting an outside player into a cooperation scheme that was designed primarily for internal use.

There are also questions about intellectual property rights and liability, for example. In addition, some states have previously indicated discomfort with the idea of allowing a degree of U.S. involvement that could result in American defense industry heavyweights playing a dominant role later on.

Information and photo: www.defensenews.com





Lukashenko's hybrid operation targets Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and whole European Union

Defence Ministers of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland affirmed a shared understanding that the ongoing developments on the Belarusian border are a systematically planned and organized hybrid operation by Alexander Lukashenka 's regime currently targeting Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the European Union as a whole. Ministers discussed illegal migration issue during an informal meeting of EU defence ministers in Ljubljana.

Ministers Arvydas Anušauskas, Artis Pabriks, Kalle Laanet and Mariusz Błaszczak agreed that coinciding in time and place with the Russian-Belarusian strategic military exercise ZAPAD-2021, the situation on the Belarusian border causes additional security risks. The unpredictable activities and lack of transparency on the Belarusian side could potentially lead to an undesired escalation, provocations and incidents on the border. Since July, the hybrid operation targeting Lithuania has further developed with irregular migrants now arriving also to Latvia and Poland.

"The scale of the illegal migration crisis has expanded — although initially this hybrid attack organized by the Lukashenko regime was aimed only towards Lithuania, now there is aggression against Latvia and Poland as well. This may become a security problem affecting not only our region, but also the entire European Union, therefore, in order to prevent it, we must be united and act together," Lithuanian defence minister A. Anušauskas said during a meeting. He also took the opportunity to thank his fellow ministers for the practical support that has been granted to Lithuania so far.

The Baltic States and Poland express unwavering support for one another's national efforts and continue to cooperate closely in seeking ways to strengthen security of their borders. Cooperation takes place in the form of active information exchange as well as mutually provided assistance demonstrating solidarity in this regard. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland also acknowledge EU's and NATO's endorsement of their efforts undertaken as a legitimate reaction to the ongoing hybrid operation conducted by Minsk.

Ministers agreed that the events on the Belarusian border only strengthen the already close cooperation among the four countries. Furthermore, the Baltic States and Poland are closely engaged with other allies, and should the situation aggravate, retain the possibility of addressing it with their EU and NATO allies as appropriate.

Information and photo credit: MoD



NATO Counter Hybrid Support Team in Lithuania

"NATO experts have been working closely with the Lithuanian authorities, sharing information, analysis and experience of countering hybrid threats. NATO continues to stand in solidarity with Lithuania and we will remain in close contact about security issues in the region. NATO will continue to monitor the situation on the Belarus border, which is putting migratory pressure on our Allies Lithuania, Latvia and Poland," said Michael Ruhle, Head of NATO-led Counter Hybrid Support Team. Today, the team he led concluded its work in Lithuania, where it spent nearly a couple of weeks analysing hybrid aggression against Lithuania.

The NATO team of experts, which arrived on 7 September and included experts from NATO countries in cyber security, the Baltic Sea region, policy planning, strategic communications and other areas, aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the security situation, the actions taken against Lithuania, and to make recommendations to Lithuania on how to respond, and to analyse the campaign against Lithuania as a practical case of "hybrid threats", which could be used to draw conclusions for the Alliance in order to be better prepared for similar future challenges.

The NATO Hybrid Threat Support Team in Lithuania met with representatives of state institutions, the military, academia and NGOs, visited Rukla, travelled to the border, and made recommendations to Lithuania following a situation analysis.

"The activation of this NATO support team has not only played an expert advisory role, but also a symbolic one — it shows NATO's involvement and solidarity and the recognition that the Alliance considers the actions against Lithuania as a hybrid attack," said Minister of National Defence Arvydas Anušauskas, thanking the team for their work.

NATO decided to send the support team to Lithuania after receiving an official request from Lithuania. This was unanimously agreed by all NATO allies at the North Atlantic Council in August. According to Minister Anušauskas, the activation of the NATO Counter Hybrid Threat Support Team in Lithuania shows that the Allies are responsibly assessing the geopolitical context of Lithuania and are preparing for any possible incident.

The NATO Counter Hybrid Threat Support Team is an advisory-expert instrument of the Alliance, which a NATO country can request to activate in the event of an extraordinary hybrid situation. The request is made by the Member State to the NATO Secretary General, detailing the assistance required and the areas of need. NATO experts can help with hybrid threats in the areas of cyber security, energy security, counter-terrorism, civil preparedness and strategic communications. The decision to activate an expert group is taken by the North Atlantic Council.

The only activation of a NATO Counter Hybrid Threat Support Team to date has been in Montenegro in 2019, at the request of the Government of Montenegro.

In recent months, the hybrid aggression against Lithuania has been carried out by the Lukashenko regime. More than 4,000 migrants have entered the country illegally this year through the border with Belarus.

MoD information

Photo credit: www.flickr.com





Germany readies frigates for ballistic missile defense missions

The German Navy plans to equip its F124 frigates with new radars that expand the vessels' capabilities into the field of ballistic missile defense, the German military acquisition branch announced Aug. 24.

To that end, the Bundeswehr awarded a €220 million (U.S. $258 million) contract to German sensor specialist Hensoldt in conjunction with Israel Aerospace Industries' Elta Systems. The two companies will enter into a "strategic cooperation," as Hensoldt calls it, to deliver four radar sets based on Germany's TRS-4D product and beefed up with Elta's long-range capabilities.

Officials plan to install the new equipment on three air defense frigates of the Sachsen class between 2024 and 2028, according to a statement from the military acquisition office. A fourth system will be set up on land to help the German Navy train its sailors.

The new radars would elevate the ships' surveillance and target-tracking capabilities for various aerial threats, including ballistic missiles, the office said.

The Navy's foray into ballistic missile defense follows the government's strategy of inserting requisite sensor capabilities into its arsenal whenever substantial weapon upgrades are on the books anyway. Berlin has pledged missile defense contributions to NATO as the alliance assembles a network of sensors and interceptors in Europe meant to one day protect the entire continent from such attacks.

Naval vessels are considered especially desirable in that equation because they can be moved around and seek the most advantageous positions when it comes to detecting and intercepting missiles.

Hensoldt and Elta are already teamed up on an upgrade for the land-based Hughes Air Defense Radars, which marks another step in Berlin's quest for greater ballistic missile defense capabilities.

For years, Germany's missile defense ambitions rested on a replacement of its Patriot fleet with the TLVS weapon, short for Taktisches Luftverteidigungssystem. Officials shelved that program earlier this year to free up money for drone defense, though it's unclear what the Defence Ministry intends to field to that end.

Information and photo: www.defensenews.com



The last victim of the Soviet aggression

LITHUANIA MARKS THE 30TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF A VOLUNTEER SERVICEMAN ARTŪRAS SAKALAUSKAS, WHO WAS SHOT DEFENDING THE SUPREME COUNCIL (THE LITHUANIAN PARLIAMENT) ON AUGUST 21, 1991. HE WAS THE LAST VICTIM OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SOVIET RED ARMY, WHICH WAS WITHDRAWN FROM LITHUANIA ON AUGUST 31, 1993.



Lithuanian volunteers are marching at the Palace of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania (the Parliament) to say goodbye to their colleague, volunteer serviceman Artūras Sakalauskas, who died carrying out his duty in a guard post near the Parliament. Vilnius, August 1991. Photographer Paulius Lileikis (photography from Central State Archive of Lithuania).

Artūras Sakalauskas was a member of Alytus Territorial Unit of National Defence Volunteer Forces. He was born on October 26, 1963 in Alytus, worked in Alytus Car Factory before the fatal events for Lithuanian.

When the Lithuanian Republic declared independence from the Soviet Union on 11 March 1990, and thereafter underwent a difficult period of emergence. The Soviet Union imposed an economic blockade between April and late June. Economic and energy shortages undermined public faith in the newly restored state. The inflation rate reached 100% and continued to increase rapidly.

In January 1991, Soviet tanks and military vehicles rolled into Vilnius. There, thousands of the Lithuanian demonstrators were gathering near the TV-Tower and The Parliament building. A peaceful crowd, with people from all walks of life, who had come to their capital from all parts of their country. They wanted to defend Lithuania´s newly won independence. They were ordinary citizens, who strove for self-determination instead of foreign rule. Citizens, who wanted to take their future in their own hands.

In the early hours of January 13th Soviet soldiers opened fire. Military vehicles drove straight through the lines of peaceful demonstrators. On this cold winter night 30 years ago, 14 people lost their lives. And more than 700 were injured.



Artūras Sakalauskas

A. Sakalauskas was actively involved in the January events in Vilnius and joined the National Volunteer Defence Service in January, 1991. He guarded the Palace of the Supreme Council (the Lithuanian Parliament) and carried out duty in the posts in Kaunas and Sitkunai.

On August 19 he arrived in Vilnius and stood guard for the Parliament for the last time.

During provocation of the Soviet Armed Forces not far away from the Palace of the Supreme Council Artūras Sakalauskas was killed on 21 August, 1991 in an assault of the Russian Special Purpose Division on the Lithuanian-guarded territory in Goštautas street. Two other volunteers of the Alytus team Juozas Alyta and Igoris Kvedaravičius were wounded by Soviet explosive charges.

A friend of A. Sakalauskas' school time, a





Moments of commemorative events of Artūras Sakalauskas's death in Vilnius and his native town Alytus.

volunteer I. Kvederavičius, who was on duty together in Vilnius at that time, remembered:

"In August 21, 1991 we finished our duty at about 6 p.m. We went to eat and then returned to the Palace of the Supreme Council (the Parliament). It was a quiet beautiful evening, and nobody suspected that disaster was coming. Artūras offered to go to the 1st guard post. We did it and talked with the soldiers on duty. It was about half past eleven in the evening. Soon the soldiers passed a Parliament deputy's car by raising the barrier and when we noticed a Russian militia car "Uazik", passing at high speed. At first we didn't understand anything, but then we saw that it was painted in yellow with blue stripes and had an inscription MILICIJA (Polis). Someone shouted that it was so called "OMON" (the Russian Special Purpose Division) and closed the barrier. Then Artūras and I ran to the other side of the barrier and started rolling so-called "hedgehogs" (barriers welded from thick reinforcement and railroad tracks) on the road. Then I told Artūras, "Let's go, we're done" and he replied "We will go soon." I went to help other soldiers who were there and then "Uazik" appeared. We stopped the car and demanded his passengers to get out. They didn't obey and we were trying to force them to get out. They resisted and then a shootout began."

Atrūras Sakalauskas was buried in Alytus, in the cemetery of the Church of the Guardian Angels. To commemorate him, a memorial stone with a metal cross was erected at the place of his death. He was awarded posthumously the 1st degree Order of Vytis Cross, the Medal of the Creator of the Volunteer Army in memory of January 13.

Every year Lithuania marks Artūras Sakalauska's death with commemorative events in Vilnius and his native town Alytus, where his relatives and comrades, leadership of the National Defence Volunteer Forcee, commanding officers of subdivisions deployed in Alytus, and members of public organisations participate.

This year on August 21 St. Mass was held at St. Ignotas Church in Vilnius. Afterwards, flowers were put and cannon-shots fired at the memorial for A.Sakalauskas by the Palace of Parliament. Members of Seimas, representatives of leadership of the Ministry of National Defence and the Armed Forces, commanders of the National Defence Volunteer Force territorial units, volunteers of the 1991 period and participants of January 1991 events gathered to honour the memory of A.Sakalauskas.

On August 8-9 the Great Duchess of Lithuania Birute Battalion hosted A. Sakalauskas Football Tournament with teams of National Defence Volunteer Forces Territorial Units as participants. The winning team of the Great Battle District 8th Territorial Unit was awarded the challenger cup by A.Sakalauskas' parents Genovaite and Pranas Sakalauskai.

By Ilona Skujaitė

Photo credits: Vytautas the Great War Museum, Central State Archive of Lithuania, the National Defence Volunteer Forces, Alfredas Pliadis.





To commemorate Artūras Sakalauskas a memorial stone with a metal cross was erected at the place of his death in Vilnius.

FUZILEIROS: Action in Lithuania

145 PORTUGUESE MARINES (PORT. FUZILEIROS) FROM THE PORTUGUESE NAVY DEPLOYED TO LITHUANIA FOR THREE MONTHS TRAINING MISSION IN THE BEGINNING OF JUNE. ALL THE SUMMER, COVERED IN CAMOUFLAGE PAINT AND PACKED INTO BOATS, THEY HAVE BEEN PRACTICING AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS IN THE BALTIC SEA AND RIVERS OF LITHUANIA, AS WELL AS TRAINING IN THE WOODS AND FIRE RANGES SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH LITHUANIAN TROOPS AND OTHER NATO ALLIES, BASED IN OUR COUNTRY.





CLOSE PARTNESHIP SINCE 2015

Portugal was one of the first countries, which contributed rotational forces to Lithuania in 2015, when NATO summit in Wales 2014 reached agreement on the preparation action plan, which, in addition to other security measures, envisaged stepping up NATO capacities in the Eastern part of the Alliance. It was an important demonstration of solidarity through contribution to deterrence and defence in the Eastern flank of NATO.

Portugal actively takes part in the NATO Assurance Measures with Marine rotations and Air Force Detachments. Four F-16 fighter aircraft and 85 aviators of the Portuguese Air Force are deploying to Lithuania this year as well (from September to December Portuguese troops will be enhancing the NATO Air Policing Mission in the Baltic States, conducted by Spain since the beginning of May).

Portuguese Marines (Fuzileiros) and navy divers have been practicing skills and tactics in Lithuania, which comprised land, sea and air activities. Lieutenant Commander Robert Meijburg Viola, the commander of the Portuguese Marines (Fuzileiros) Contingent, agreed to give more comments on their mission in Lithuania.

FUZILEIROS IN LITHUANIA

Can you briefly introduce the Portuguese contingent, training in Klaipėda now? What are the main military personnel and equipment which you have brought here?

The Portuguese Contingent mission is to contribute to the NATO collective effort in the context of the Assurance Measures by reinforcing the presence of allied forces in Lithuania and participate in combined exercises and training. To comply with those tasks this contingent has a total of 145 men with capability to conduct any kind of operations.

We are organized with two major capacities — a Portuguese Marines Company and a Special Operations Unit. We have diverse equipment and weapons. For mobility we have our light armoured vehicles HMMWV´s, light tactical vehicles for our quick and flexible infiltrations and our Light Inflatable Boats for our amphibious operations. As for weapons we have brought here anti-tank weapons, such as Missel Milan and CARL Gustav, also 60 mm, 80 mm and 120 mm mortars and all the military personal is equipped with their rifle G3 and handgun Glock 17.

What is your home unit?

Our contingent, training in Lithuania, is composed from the Portuguese Marines Company from the Batalhão de Fuzileiros Nº2 and the Special Operations from the Destacamento de Ações Especiais.

What does it mean to be a Fuzileiro?

To become a Fuzileiro you must have self-



Lieutenant Commander Robert Meijburg Viola — Commander of the Portuguese Marine Corps (Fuzileiros) Contingent in Lithuania.

FUZILEIROS — 400 YEARS OLD SPECIAL FORCES



The Portuguese Marine Corps (Portuguese: Corpo de Fuzileiros) is the elite Infantry and Special Forces unit of the Portuguese Navy. It has similar roles to the American Marine Recon and Royal Marine Commandos. The Corps is specialized in amphibious warfare, coastal reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, guerrilla warfare, raids, maritime interdiction and boarding operations. It is an elite light infantry force, operating as a rapid-reaction force. Today's Corpo de Fuzileiros is the premier raid force. The Fuzileiros remains an all-volunteer force with an intensive screening and selection process followed by combat-focused training.

The Portuguese Marines have their direct origin in the oldest permanent military unit of Portugal, the Terço of the Navy of the Crown of Portugal, created in 1621. It should be noted, however, that since 1585 specialized troops existed to provide artillery and riflemen in the Portuguese warships. The Terço of the Navy was soon considered an elite unit, also being responsible for the bodyguard of the King of Portugal.

In the beginning of the 18th century the force was reorganized, being organized in two regiments: The 1st and the 2nd Regiments of the Navy. Later a Regiment of Naval Artillery was added.

The nowadays Marine Corps is made up of an administrative command — Comando do Corpo de Fuzileiros (Marine Corps Command); an instruction unit — Escola de Fuzileiros (Marines School); and a base unit — Base de Fuzileiros (Marines Base). The operational units of the Marines, stationed at the Marines Base, are:

- 1st Marine Battalion;
- 2nd Marine Battalion;
- Naval Police Unit;
- Special Actions Detachment;
- Fire Support Company;
- Tactical Transports Support Company.

Based at the Marines School is the Unidade de Meios de Desembarque (Landing Assets Unit).

When needed, several elements of the operational units can organize themselves into a task-force for amphibious assaults called Batalhão Ligeiro de Desembarque (Assault Light Battalion).

LMD inf.





Symbol — Destacamento de Acções Especiai

confidence, resilience, positive attitude, know how to work in a team, never give up and to be self-disciplined. If you have all these characteristics than you will be a great Fuzileiro for sure.

Why have you chosen this military profession?

I have chosen to become a Fuzileiro, because the Corpo de Fuzileiros (Marine Corps) are one of the elite forces of the Portuguese Navy. Moreover, since I was a small kid, I always loved the sea and adventures. I never would have imagined myself sitting at a desk, so I applied for the Naval Academy and joined the Fuzileiros after finishing it.

Is it a first mission like this in Lithuania for you and your troops? How did you decide who will go to the mission in Lithuania?

The decision who will go to the mission is on a rotational basis. Each year a Portuguese Marines company is on "a stand by" regime for any NATO/EUROPEAN mission. This time we have 42 soldiers, repeating this mission, including myself. I already have been in Lithuania in 2019. Many times, the human factor is the most important, and from my two missions in Lithuania I made some good friends and learned more about the great culture and Lithuanian population.

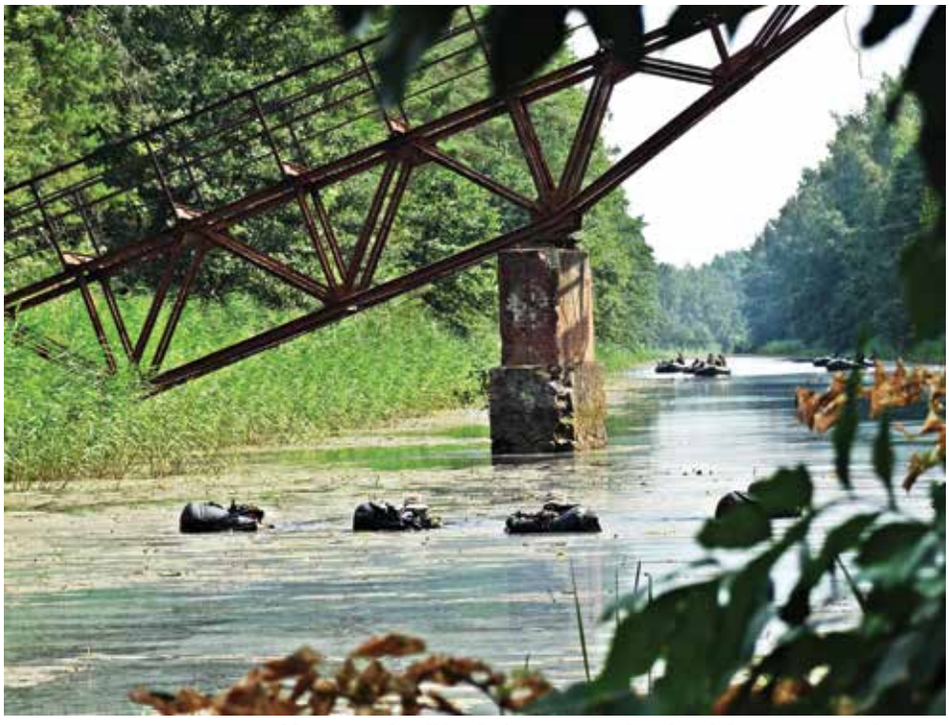


Symbol — Batalhão de Fuzileiros Nº2











In Lithuania, the Portuguese Fuzileiros had an opportunity to use various types of fire ranges for all kind of weapons, and explored their Tactics, Techniques and Procedures in different conditions and environment.

What was your image of Lithuania before arriving here?

Always before deployment we must learn a little bit of the culture and history of the country, so I had a small idea of how the landscape would look like, your hard history, but I didn´t have any clue how you were in terms of personality. The Lithuanian people are not that different from the Portuguese, on a very humble matter I can say that you are a very friendly population and received us very well upon our arrival.

Geographically, Portugal is the most distant country from the threats in this region. So, how do you feel being here, near the Eastern border of the Alliance?

We feel very comfortable, because we know we are not alone. We have been operating in a combined environment, with credibility and we have been developing, consolidating and validating capabilities together with the Lithuanian Armed Forces and other Allied Nations that are stationed in Lithuania.

How can you evaluate the training conditions and possibilities in Lithuania? How do you like the Baltic Sea — can you compare it with your usual environment in Portugal?

Lithuania has excellent training conditions and facilities. The Portuguese Fuzileiros have the opportunity to use different types of fire ranges for all kind of weapons. Also we used CQB (Close Quarter Battle) facilities and have been training with our Light Inflatable Boats in the Sea and rivers. As the terrain is quite differ-





Portuguese Marines (Fuzileiros) and navy divers have been practicing skills and tactics in Lithuania, which comprised land, sea and air activities.





ent as what we have in Portugal, so it allows us to explore and update our Tactics, Techniques and Procedures in different conditions and environment. In Portugal we have the Atlantic Ocean and therefore compared with the Baltic Sea we can operate easier with our boats, conducting amphibious operations.

What are your main tasks and activities here? Are they the same as in Portugal?
Our main task is to reinforce the presence of allied forces in Lithuania and participate in combined exercises and training, fostering interoperability and readiness. During our deployment we had the opportunity to participate in three major exercises — Baltic Fortress, Strong Griffin and Griffin Strike 21. We learned a lot training with the Lithuanian Armed Forces, being able to share experience and work together, sending a strong message that NATO is ready to intervene, when necessary, and Lithuania is not alone.
Talking about our training activities, they are very similar to our usual training objectives. The excellent training areas that Lithuania offers to our military personal is the only difference.

What were your main tasks with Light Inflatable Boats (LIBs) during the Baltic Fortress exercise in the Baltic Sea?
Our main tasks with our boats, belonging from our Amphibious Assault Element, was essentially Harbour protection. We were tasked to reconnaissance all access to Klasco Harbour and therefore we used our LIBs to produce an





INTEL PACKGED regarding access from sea and river. We also were tasked to protect the arrival and departure of all ships to Klasco Pier, having the opportunity to work together with the Shallow Water Unit (SWU). This allowed us to share experience and verify our interoperability, but above all, it strengthened our bounds with Lithuanian Navy. Regarding our Portuguese divers, they reinforced EOD divers squad from LTU, and conducted EOD/IEDD operations close to Klasco Harbour (Land and Sea), contributing for Harbour Protection and freedom of movement for further operations.



What kind of riverine operations and where have you been practicing in Lithuania?

The region of Klaipeda provided us the perfect scenario to conduct all kind of types of Amphibious operations (offshore or Riverine), as Fuzileiros are being an Amphibious Unit. Due to our training objectives, our main focus was on Amphibious Raid, and Techniques, Tactics and Procedures concerning Riverine operations. We conducted several patrols close to Dreverna and Minija river.



Is it a "busy" mission for your troops? Do you have some time to enjoy Lithuania?

We have a strict training rhythm and our daily activities start at 8.30 p.m. from physical training: All Fuzileiros have to maintain their physical standards in order to accomplish their tasks. After physical training we usually have some specific operational activities, such as live fire shooting with all types of weapons,





Close Quarter Battle, Riverine Operations, Motorized Patrols, etc.
In the weekends we have some opportunities to interact with the Lithuania population and have some sightseeing. During this time in Lithuania, the Fuzileiros were invited to participate in some social events like the "Vandens Sporto Šakų Festivalis 2021" and "Šilalės Miesto Bėgimas", allowing a good interaction with Lithuanian culture and sport.

What are the biggest advantages for your soldiers to participate in a mission like this?
Actually, it is a big advantage for all Fuzileiros to participate in these kinds of missions, because they can learn and share their training experience, as well as improve their fighting skills. The linguistic barrier is one of the most crucial points and all Fuzileiros have to learn to communicate and interact in English with the Lithuanian soldiers.
Improving our interoperability, we also have prepared a communication cross-training between the Portuguese Fuzileiros and the Lithuanian Armed Forces' soldiers from the Motorized Infantry Brigade "Griffin". We exchanged knowledge of both nations showing our command-and-control systems, radios and other type of equipment, as well as demonstrating their capabilities.

What was the biggest challenges for your contingent here?
Without any doubts, it was a representation of the Portuguese Marines and our Armed Forces with honour and successful accomplishment of the 3 month long mission.

Does your second mission in Lithuania differ from the first one?
Each mission is different, because of different experience, exercises, military personal, etc., so the answer is yes. Also this mission is different, because in every way we had to adapt to COVID-19 situation and therefore we had to make sure to mitigate all kind of risks. This time I also had an honour to work more closely with an excellent professional Colonel Nerijus Stankevičius, the Commander of the









Lithuanian Armed Forces Motorized Infantry Brigade "Griffin". Since the beginning of this mission, he has been supporting the Portuguese Contingent and has made all his effort to integrate the Fuzileiros alongside "Griffin" Brigade in the most variable multinational exercises, obtaining great results.

What are your impressions about the partnership with the Lithuanian Armed forces and other NATO allies here?

They are all good professionals and we had great training opportunities here. Despite we are an amphibious unit, we could work all together, improving our training skills by sharing experience.

What have you learned from the Lithuanian soldiers and what, in your opinion, our soldiers might have learned from the Portuguese Marine Corps?

We have learned, that Lithuanian Armed Forces are very professional and have great skilled soldiers, sharing with us their tactics, techniques and procedures in different kind of environment. It was very important to participate in three big exercises — Baltic Fortress, Strong Griffin and Griffin Strike — learning how the Lithuanian Armed Forces plan and conduct their actions. I think that Lithuanian soldiers may have learned with us, how the Portuguese Fuzileiros deploy with the Light Inflatable Boats, using them in river operations.

What was the best moment for you in Lithuania during this mission?

I can´t point out the best moment, because there were many high moments during this mission, but mainly our participation on Griffin Strike 21, where it was possible to fire real live ammunition with our mortar 60 mm and anti-tank missel Milan. In general, it was a remarkable experience working with Lithuania Armed Forces and being in contact with the Lithuanian community. ■

By Ilona Skujaitė

Photo credits: The Portuguese Marine Corps





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

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D Negotiation issues

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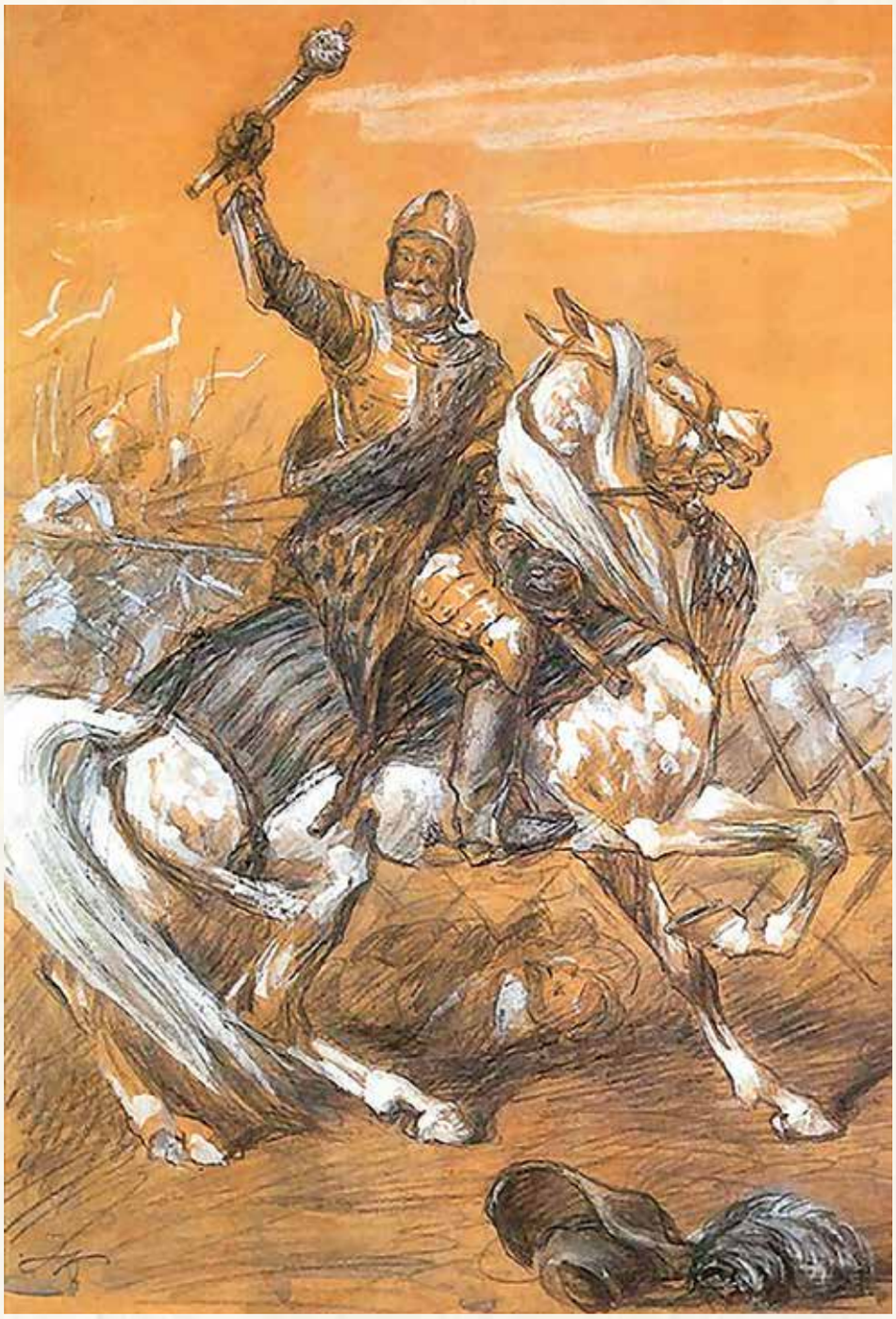
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Grand Hetman Chodkevičius – the legend of Europe in the 17th century

THIS YEAR LITHUANIA MARKS THE 400TH DEATH ANIVERSARY OF GRAND HETMAN OF LITHUANIA JONAS KAROLIS CHODKIEVIČIUS, THE LEGENDARY MILITARY COMMANDER OF THE POLISH–LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH ARMY, REMEMBERING HIS WORKS FOR THE HOMEPALND AND KIRCHOLM BATTLE – ONE OF THE GREATEST TRIUMPHS OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S CAVALRY, WHICH MADE CHODKEVIČIUS FAMOUS WARRIOR OF EUROPE IN THE 17 CENTURY.



Hetman Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius (1561–1621), the Polish-Lithuanian field commander at the Battle of Kircholm. Paintng by Juliusz Kossak.

THE TOP COMMANDER

Jonas Karolis Chodkievičius was a military commander of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth Army, also the Field Hetman of Lithuania (from 1601), the Grand Hetman (it means that he was a Chief of Defence) of Lithuania from 1605. He was one of the most prominent noblemen and military commanders of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth of his era.

Grand hetman Chodkevičius played a major role, often as the top commander of the Commonwealth forces, in the Wallachian campaign of 1599–1600, the Polish–Swedish War of 1600–11, the Polish–Muscovite War of 1605–18, and the Polish–Ottoman War of 1620–21. His most famous victory was the Battle of Kircholm in 1605, in which he dealt a major defeat to a Swedish army three times the size of his own. He died on the front lines during the battle of Chocim, in the besieged Khotyn Fortress, a few days before the Ottomans gave up on the siege and agreed to negotiate.

J. K. Chodkevičius was born around 1561 (exact date of his birth is unknown) in Vilnius. From 1573 he was a student at the Vilnius Jesuit College (later it was reorganizez into the Vilnius University), and from 1586 to 1589, together with his brother Aleksander, he continued his studies abroad at the University of Ingolstadt.

He started his military career soon after returning to the Commonwealth, raising a rota of 50 to 100 men. He gained military experience in the fight against the rebellious Cossacks during the Severyn Nalyvaiko's uprising under Field Crown Hetman Stanisław Żółkiewski.

FIGHT FOR LATVIA AND ESTONIA

In the 17th century Lithuanian–Polish Commonwealth was on a struggel with Sweden over control of Livonia (the teritory of nowadays Latvia and Estonia). This stuglle is known as the Polish–Swedish War (1600–1611). Also it was a dispute over the Swedish throne between Charles IX of Sweden and Sigismund



Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius in battle of Kircholm, 1605.

III of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

This conflict between the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and Sweden traces its roots to the War against Sigismund. In this civil war (1597–1599), Sigismund III Vasa, at one time king of both the Commonwealth and Sweden, lost the throne of Sweden. Few Commonwealth troops participated in that conflict, and it is mostly regarded as a Swedish civil war, not part of the Polish–Swedish wars. After an early stalemate, Sigismund was defeated at the Battle of Stångebro in 1598.



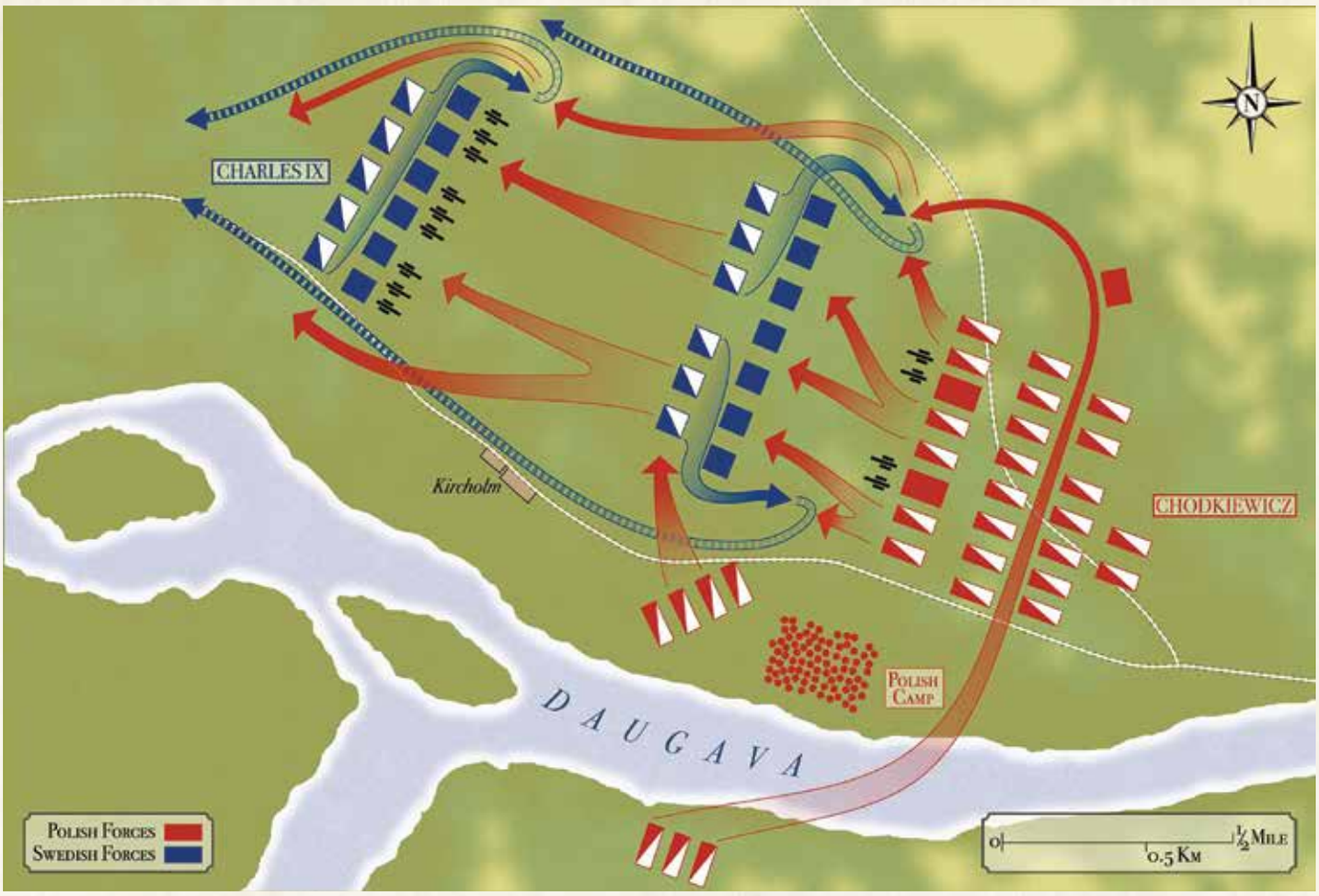


War on costs of the Baltic Sea between uncle and nephew: King Charles IX of Sweden and Sigismund III of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

By 1599 Sigismund was dethroned by his uncle, Duke Charles and forced to retreat to the Commonwealth.This also spelled the end of the short-lived personal union between Lithuania-Poland and Sweden.

However, Sigismund did not give up on regaining the Swedish throne. From then on, most of his policies would revolve around his attempts to conquer Sweden, even though Commonwealth nobility had little will for such a long and bloody conflict. Sigismund began his plans in 1599, when he confirmed the pacta conventa. These documents, signed when he was elected as King of Polish-Lithuanian Comonwealth, promised that the then-Swedish territory of Estonia would become part of the Commonwealth.

Thus the Commonwealth was forced to fight on two fronts, as its armies were also needed south to deal with the Moldavian Magnate Wars, and Swedish forces quickly gained 3:1 numerical superiority. In the beginning of the war, in 1600, although a Commonwealth army under Krzysztof Mikołaj "Piorun" Radziwiłł striking first was able to deal the Swedish forces several defeats in the open fields, Swedes took control not only of Estonia, but of most of Livonia (teritories of nowadays Latvia), the Commonwealth territory south of Estonia (the entire region was known in Poland as Inflanty



The Battle of Kircholm, 27 September 1605, showing the armies deployed at the start of the battle and the direction of the Polish-Lithuanian cavalry charges. Map: Ian Bull.

(German: Livland)). The Polish-Lithuanian Parliament, the Sejm, reacted by increasing funds for the army and recalling forces and commanders from the southern front (deemed less important as most of that war took place outside Commonwealth territory) to the threatened north.

In 1601 Lithuanian Hetman Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius and Polish chancellor Jan Zamoyski, recalled from Moldavia, and arrived to Lithuania to fight the Swedish incursion, which now threatened not only the Estonia promised by Sigismund, but older Lithuanian-Polish territories south of it.



The Battle of Kircholm, 27 September 1605. This exceptionally vivid depiction shows the assault of the Polish-Lithuanian cavalry on the Swedish 'pike-and-shot' infantry blocs. Painting by Pieter Snayers.

UNEQUAL ENEMIES. RATIO 1:3

The Battle of Kircholm (In Lithuanian Salaspilio mūšis) took place in September 27, 1605, and was one of the major battles in the Polish–Swedish War (1600–1611). The battle was decided in 20 minutes by the devastating charge of Polish-Lithuanian cavalry, the Winged Hussars. The Polish-Lithuanian forces were led by Grand Hetman of Lithuania Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius.

On 27 September 1605, the Commonwealth and Swedish forces met near the small town of Kircholm (now Salaspils in Latvia, some 18 km. South East of Riga). The forces of Charles IX of Sweden were numerically superior and were composed of 10,800 men and 11 cannons. The Swedish army included a few thousand German and Dutch mercenaries and even a few hundred Scots.

The Polish Crown declined to raise funds for defence, although Great Hetman of Lithuania Chodkiewicz promised to pay out army wages from his own fortune, thereby gathering at least some army. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth army under command of Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius was composed of

roughly 1,300 infantry (1040 pikeman and 260 musketeer), 2,600 cavalry and only 5 cannons.

However, the Polish-Lithuanian forces were well-rested and their cavalry consisted mostly of superbly trained Winged Hussars or heavy cavalry armed with lances, while the Swedish cavalry were less-well trained, armed with pistols and carbines, on poorer horses, and tired after a long night's march in torrential rain.

Most of the hussars were from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, about 200 were from the Polish Crown, most of them mercenaries or close personal allies of Chodkiewicz. The Polish-Lithuanian forces were also aided by a small number of Tatars and Polish-Lithuanian Cossack horse (a class of light cavalry at this date not to be confused with the Russian Cossacks), used mostly for reconnaissance.

The Swedish forces seem to have been deployed in a checkerboard formation, made up of the infantry regiments formed into 7 or 8 well-spaced independent blocks, with intersecting fields of fire. The flanks were covered by the Swedish and German cavalry and the cannons were placed in front of the cavalry.

Jonas Karolis Chodkevičius deployed his forces in the traditional deep Polish-Lithuanian battle formation — the so-called "Old Polish Order" — with the left wing significantly stronger and commanded by Dąbrowa, while the right wing was composed of a smaller number of Hussars under Paweł Jan Sapieha and the centre, which included Hetman Chodkevičius own company of 300 hussars led by Woyna and a powerful formation of reiters sent by the Duke of Courland. The Lithuanian infantry supported by Poles, mostly armed in Hungarian haiduk-style, drew up in the centre. Some 280 hussars were left as a general reserve under Lacki.



One of Chodkevičius's elite strike force: The Polish-Lithuanian Winged Hussars.



Grand Hetman of Lithuania Jonas Karolis Chodkievičius.

QUICK VICTORY

Hetman Chodkevičius, having smaller forces (approximately a 1:3 disadvantage), used a feint to lure the Swedes off their high position. The Swedes under Charles thought that the Lithuanians and supporting Poles were retreating and therefore advanced, spreading out their formations to give chase. This is what Chodkiewicz was waiting for. The Commonwealth forces now gave fire with their infantry causing the Swedes some losses, at which point the Hussars quickly re-grouped their battle formations and charged at the Swedish lines.

The battle started with the Polish-Lithuanian cavalry charge on the Swedish left flank. At the same time approximately 300 Polish-Lithuanian Hussars charged the Swedish infantry in the centre to prevent them from interfering with the cavalry action on both their flanks. After the Swedish cavalry was pushed back, Chodkevičius ordered his left wing and all of his reserves to attack the opposing right Swedish flank. The Swedish reiters were beaten back on both wings and the infantry in the centre was attacked from three sides simultaneously. Quickly, with Swedish horsemen running back into their own infantry, the Swedes were in panic, and the whole army collapsed in flight. It was at this point that the Swedes suffered their heaviest casualties.

The fighting lasted barely 20 to 30 minutes, yet the Swedish defeat was utter and complete. The army of Charles IX had lost at least half, perhaps as much as two-thirds, its original strength. Of the 11,000 Swedish soldiers mustered at Kircholm on the morning of 27 September 1605, some 8,000 were dead come evening. Not many were made prisoner.

Chodkevičius won this stunning victory for the cost of only 100 men killed and 200 wounded. ■

LMD inf.

Photo credits: Flickr.com



Photo credit: The Portuguese Marine Corps