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**Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia (hereinafter: the Defence Strategy) is the fundamental national development and guidance document in the field of defence. It is derived from the Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the RS, No. 59/19; hereinafter: ReSNV-2).

On the basis of the interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia in the field of defence, and considering the contemporary national security threats and risks, the Defence Strategy provides guidance on the defence policy, the organization and operation of the national defence system, and the development of the defence capabilities required for national defence within the systems of NATO collective defence and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union, and determines the adequate level of defence resources. In addition to guidelines concerning the strengthening of defence capabilities, the document also highlights the risks associated with implementing changes in the defence system and consequently the risks with regard to the pursuit and implementation of the defence interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia.

Dynamic changes in and the uncertainty of the international security environment, combined with the nature of contemporary security risks and threats and their increasing frequency and intensity, require the defence system to be proactive, more flexible and more responsive; require an increase in the scope, spectrum and sustainability of defence capabilities; and require them to be more frequently used.

With its new Defence Strategy, the Republic of Slovenia is upgrading the processes and activities of integrated adaptation to the current and potential security situation at the national level and within NATO and the European Union. This is also based on the experience of the War of Independence in 1991, when Slovenia was able to defend its sovereignty due to a high level of defence preparedness of the state, the operations of the Territorial Defence and the police of the time, and the support of other parts of the national security system, due to the motivation arising from the will of the people as expressed in the plebiscite.

The Defence Strategy is the basis for drafting other guidance documents, as well as for amending and modifying regulatory, doctrinal, planning and other defence-related documents, and for addressing different substantive matters pertaining to the defence system and the defence of the Republic of Slovenia.

**2 THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

The international security environment of the Republic of Slovenia is complex, dynamic, interdependent, and exposed to unforeseeable changes that may have global dimensions. There is no longer a clear division between internal and external security dimensions. The divisions between different dimensions of security and between different manifestations of security threats and risks are also increasingly blurred, so no country is able to provide its defence and security fully independently.

The prevailing long-term trends in the international environment reflect the transformation of the balance of power in the world and the increasingly intense competition and tensions not only between countries, but also between other entities. This takes place in the political, economic, informational and military fields, resulting in a) growing tensions between the most influential countries in the world,

and established democratic values and norms in international relations being undermined; b) increasing socio-economic and political tensions in some countries and societies; and c) an increase in the tendency of authoritarian actors to aggressively use the entire spectrum of available means and capabilities, including the military, to deal with security risks and threats, which they perceive as increasingly difficult and immediate.

Since 2010 there has been a marked destabilization of the Middle East, which has been further destabilized by the Gaza war and the conflict in the Red Sea, and by the destabilization of North and Sub-Saharan Africa, where local and asymmetric threats dominate and constitute a source of security threats for Europe. A similar trend has been observed since 2014 in Eastern Europe, leading to an all-round deterioration of relations between the West and Russia following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in 2022, resulting in the risk of a very large-scale armed conflict. Trends in the international security environment point to a reshaping of the global balance of power, leading to rising tensions between the most influential countries.

Such trends and tensions have short-term and long-term negative impacts on security in the entire Euro-Atlantic area, and consequently on the security of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as on the security and stability of other geopolitical regions in the broader security environment of the Euro-Atlantic area. In this context, the numerous frozen conflicts, which prevent the final stabilization of crisis areas and hamper comprehensive development in the countries or geopolitical regions, also pose a unique security risk and threat. At the same time, they can be misused to potentiate negative security trends in other regions.

The Euro-Atlantic area is marked by intensive political, economic, cultural, scientific-technological, security, defence and other integration of countries and societies, resulting in their all-around interdependence. Nevertheless, under the influence of increasingly complex, diverse and multidimensional threats, mainly from the East and the South, which differ in their nature and intensity, there has been an increase in the vulnerability of European countries to hybrid and other threats and risks, which are multiplicative, have an emphasized transnational dimension, and come from both state and non-state actors.

Political unity and solidarity in the Euro-Atlantic area are key to efficiently deterring such threats and risks and to dealing with them. Equally crucial are collective and common integrated strategies, plans, forces, and capabilities and activities which will enable and ensure timely detection, monitoring and assessment of security threats and risks, a common, unified and rapid response, adaptability, flexibility, resilience, and an adequate level of readiness of the available capabilities and multinational cooperation. In this context certain efforts stand out: to strengthen deterrence and defence posture, plans and readiness for collective defence; to accelerate the development and modernisation of defence capabilities; to increase the defence capacity and resilience of the Member States, and of NATO and the European Union as a whole; to raise the level of readiness and equipment of national security systems and defence forces; and to increase the common defence capabilities pool and to increase investment in defence systems and dedicated industry in most member states.

Subject to the provisions of international law, and the principles of the United Nations Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Republic of Slovenia will continue to uphold international peace, security, and stability. In the future, NATO and the European Union will remain the two key security actors of the Euro-Atlantic area, hence defence and security, as well as prosperity and the stability of this region, depend heavily on the efficiency of NATO and the European Union, their cooperation and harmonization, and the strengthening of cooperation between their members.

In the future, the Republic of Slovenia will continue to focus on armed conflicts and crisis hotspots in those areas which directly affect its national security. At the same time, it will proactively respond to military and other threats and security risks, which are appearing increasingly frequently and in increasingly different forms on the periphery of the Euro-Atlantic area and its wider security environment. The most worrying issue is the re-emergence of large-scale and very intense war on the European continent, with all its actual and potential negative consequences for defence and security, as well as for the stability, prosperity and progress of the Euro-Atlantic area and of the Republic of Slovenia, which calls for an urgent adaptation of the defence and security paradigm.

**3 SECURITY THREATS AND RISKS IN THE FIELD OF DEFENCE**

The spectrum of contemporary threats and risks to national security has broadened considerably. The multiplicative nature and cross-border effects of contemporary threats and risks, supported by emerging and disruptive technologies including artificial intelligence, may increase their intensity and lead to the emergence of new and the transformation of existing security threats and risks. Hybrid forms of security threats and risks may, in specific circumstances, require non-military responses to military threats, military responses to non-military threats, or a combination of both. Among the security threats and risks defined in the ReSNV-2, the defence system must respond, independently or in cooperation with other national security subsystems, and with NATO and the European Union, in particular to the following:

* Military threats,
* Crisis areas,
* Hybrid threats,
* Threats to critical infrastructure,
* Cyber threats and misuse of information technologies and systems,
* Activities of foreign intelligence services,
* Illicit activities concerning conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology,
* International terrorism and violent extremism,
* Illegal migration,
* The impact of climate change on security and defence.

Due to the multidimensional nature of contemporary security threats and risks, the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia with its forces and capabilities may also be used in the response of the state and society to other threats and risks to national security. Here the possibility of multidimensional threats to the Euro-Atlantic area and the consequent urgency to actively participate in the activities of deterrence and collective defence of the Alliance and common defence of the European Union must also be taken into account.

**4 THE DEFENCE POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

The purpose of the defence policy of the Republic of Slovenia, which is based on the identified national interests and objectives in the field of defence, and on the evaluation and assessment of national security threats and risks, is to provide the optimal ways and means for their implementation.

The main objectives of the defence policy of the Republic of Slovenia in the future will be a balanced and coherent development and operation of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia. This will ensure that the state and society are prepared for those threats and risks to national security that require a comprehensive response.

The development and implementation of the defence policy of the Republic of Slovenia will be mainly based on the following principles:

* Comprehensiveness and integration of all defence system stakeholders in providing defence capabilities and national defence capacities;
* Mutuality, solidarity, credibility, and proportional sharing of burden and risks in providing allied deterrence and collective defence, as well as common and international security;
* Timeliness of decision-making, which will increase the time available for defence preparations, as well as strengthening and increasing defence capabilities to face even the most extreme security and military risks and threats;
* Responsiveness and rapid adaptability of all actors of the defence system in all domains and dimensions;
* Timely establishment of planned peacetime defence capabilities and forces and planned defence capabilities and forces for war;
* The appropriateness of defence resources and the efficiency of their management;
* Societal resilience and tenacity, which demonstrate a determination to persevere and the ability to adapt to unpredictable, potentially more extensive and intense threats in the environment, and security, defence and military risks;
* Responsibility, prudence, selectivity and commitment in the pursuit of defence objectives, with a view to avoiding unreasonable risk and preventing adverse effects.

The Republic of Slovenia will address security and military risks and threats to national and international security within the framework of joint action within NATO, the European Union, the United Nations Organization, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

**4.1 The defence interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia**

The defence interests and objectives are derived from the national key strategic interests and national security objectives defined in the ReSNV-2. The defence interests of the Republic of Slovenia are:

* Maintaining the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country,
* A high level of national security as the basis for the security of its citizens and their rights and fundamental freedoms,
* A high level of security of the Euro-Atlantic area and the area of the European Union,
* Peace, security and stability in the international community.

The Republic of Slovenia will realise its defence interests by implementing the following defence objectives:

* To deter military and other threats and risks to national, collective and common security;
* To defend the national independence, inviolability and territorial integrity and the interests within the framework of collective and common defence;
* To ensure the continuous functioning of the state and society.

*FIRST OBJECTIVE: To deter military and other threats and risks to national, collective and common security*

In order to prevent and deter military and other risks and threats to national, collective and common security, the Republic of Slovenia will use all available diplomatic, political, economic, defence, military and other capacities and forms of power for national defence.

The deterrence of military and other threats and risks is based on the defence capabilities of the Republic of Slovenia, its actions and commitments within the deterrence and collective defence of NATO, and on security guarantees and mutual assistance in the field of defence within the European Union.

The capacity of a state to deter military and other threats depends on the common capacity and strength of national defence capabilities and the ability to increase and regenerate them.

*SECOND OBJECTIVE: To defend the national independence, inviolability and territorial integrity and the interests within the framework of collective and common defence*

The defence of the national independence, inviolability and territorial integrity within the framework of collective and common defence will be implemented by the Republic of Slovenia by its defence forces and capabilities, and by the forces and capabilities of the Allied Forces within the NATO system of collective defence, by using the available measures of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and other security mechanisms of the European Union, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The state implements defence against military aggression or the intervention of foreign armed forces on the basis of the readiness, responsiveness, sustainability and interoperability of its defence capabilities, and, when necessary, also by an increase in their scope and structure or mobilization.

The state prepares for defence by the constant establishment and strengthening of defence forces and capabilities, training, exercises, and the adaptation and upgrading of the national defence plan.

*THIRD OBJECTIVE: To ensure the continuous functioning of the state and society*

The Republic of Slovenia will ensure the continuous functioning of the state and society by the appropriate organization, response, functioning and sustainability of the defence system and other (sub)systems of society important for the efficient response of the state to security threats and risks in crises, a state of emergency or war.

The continuous functioning of the state and society is based on the resilience of the state and society to contemporary security threats and risks, for which the planning of activities and preparations, including constant monitoring, already begin in peacetime.

**5 IMPLEMENTING THE DEFENCE OBJECTIVES**

The Republic of Slovenia will implement the defence objectives by:

1. Ensuring and strengthening the national defence capability, preparedness and endurance;
2. Ensuring and strengthening the resilience of the state and society;
3. Implementing national defence by using all the available national resources and by relying on the collective defence of NATO and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union;
4. Strengthening mechanisms and capabilities to ensure peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area;
5. Contributing proactively and prudently to international peace, security and stability;
6. Raising awareness in society of the significance and role of defence.

**5.1 Ensuring and strengthening the national defence capability, preparedness and endurance**

The defence capability, readiness and resilience of the Republic of Slovenia are based on the motivation and involvement of citizens in the defence efforts of the country; on a comprehensive process of national defence planning coordinated with NATO and the European Union; on defence planning and upgrading of defence capabilities; on strengthening military forces; on strengthening the resilience of the state and society; and on defence and security (co)operation within the framework of NATO and the European Union.

Despite technical and technological developments, human beings, or the entire population of the Republic of Slovenia, remain at the forefront of ensuring and strengthening defence capability, readiness and resilience. The involvement of the population in the defence activities of the country must take into account the general characteristics of Slovenian society, as well as global trends and historical experience, and the needs of the entire defence system in terms of human resources for putting defence capabilities in place.

Defence planning establishes the conditions for an effective response to security threats, increasing the capabilities of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia and meeting the defence objectives of NATO and the European Union.

In order to effectively monitor and respond to the rapidly changing security environment, a comprehensive national assessment of the current security risks and threats requiring a defence response will be prepared annually. This assessment will also be based on intelligence and other information and threat assessments within the Alliance and the European Union. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia, when adopting the national security risk and threat assessment, will assign tasks to ministries and government agencies and other bodies and organizations, and will adopt measures and activities to respond to security risks and threats.

Ensuring and strengthening the defence capability and readiness of the state goes beyond the national context, and therefore the planning and development of the defence capabilities of the Republic of Slovenia are relying on the planning processes of NATO and the European Union. This facilitates stronger connectivity and cooperation of the national capabilities with the defence capabilities of other Allies and Member States. In building defence capabilities, the Republic of Slovenia will use the advantages of emerging and disruptive technologies, as well as the optimization options and processes within the framework of collective and common defence.

The Republic of Slovenia is developing military and civilian capabilities to ensure and strengthen the national defence capacity, preparedness and resilience.

The Slovenian Armed Forces are the lead actor in developing military capabilities. Development will be directed towards reaching the planned level of an appropriate size and structure of the Slovenian Armed Forces, and a higher level of their combat power, readiness, responsiveness, and sustainability. The military forces and capabilities of the Republic of Slovenia should be planned prudently and be established on a stable and development-oriented structure. The Republic of Slovenia will have a reasonably wide range of military capabilities capable of responding to both military and non-military threats and risks. Military capabilities are primarily designed for combat. In line with the dynamics of developing their capabilities, the Slovenian Armed Forces will enhance their ability to participate in more demanding operations of higher intensity.

Civil defence capabilities will work towards achieving the highest possible level of resilience of the state and society by carrying out preparation, measures and activities for the operation of the defence system and the national defence, ensuring the continuity of the functioning of authorities, the key functions of the state and society, and the provision of support to the Slovenian Armed Forces and Allied Forces in the Republic of Slovenia under all conditions. Civilian capabilities will also be maintained and upgraded to support the functioning of military capabilities in international operations and missions, and to carry out tasks of stabilization and reconstruction in crisis areas.

Ensuring and strengthening defence capability, readiness and resilience depends on the support of society; timely decision-making on the development of peacetime and wartime defence capabilities; the implementation of organizational solutions which will enable the effective growth of the Slovenian Armed Forces to the required wartime strengths; the establishment and maintenance of adequate defence stocks and reserves, in particular of military weapons and equipment; investment in the development of the Slovenian defence industry; participation in joint multinational defence projects; the strengthening of defence-military competences on a voluntary basis, including, if necessary, through the introduction of defence duties; and the upgrading of civil-military cooperation.

The Republic of Slovenia will increase investment in the development of the Slovenian defence industry with the aim of ensuring an appropriate level of national capacity for the production and maintenance of military equipment, armaments and ammunition for national needs, as well as for the needs of NATO and the European Union. In this way, the Republic of Slovenia will strengthen its defence technological and industrial base, enable the integration of the Slovenian defence industry in the modernization and the development of capabilities of the Slovenian Armed Forces, and increase the autonomy, sustainability and reliability of the defence supply.

The Republic of Slovenia will support the capability, preparedness and endurance for defence by effectively providing intelligence and security support for national, NATO and European Union needs, by upgrading communication and information systems, cyber security and digital transformation, and by strengthening cooperation between entities in these areas at the national, allied, joint and partnership levels. This will support the optimization of defence processes to ensure up-to-date, reliable and timely information, and more effective decision-making.

**5.2 Ensuring and strengthening the resilience of the state and society**

The resilience of the state and society to modern security threats and risks is the basis for the continuity of the state and society, and the foundation for successful deterrence and defence.

The resilience of the state and society is ensured by the resilience of civilian structures and functions and by the resilience of military forces and capabilities.

The resilience of civilian structures and functions will be ensured and strengthened by the continuity of the government, key services and the economy; the protection and operation of critical infrastructure and the smoothest possible functioning of the entire infrastructure; and countering hybrid threats and foreign information manipulation and interference, including psychological defence. Inter-institutional and inter-ministerial coordination at the national level and within NATO and the European Union will be key in this regard.

The resilience of military forces and capabilities will be ensured by further enhancing their robustness, their ability to respond flexibly in the context of different missions, and the ability to operate independently and in an integrated collective or joint manner over prolonged time.

The resilience of civilian structures and functions and the resilience of military forces and capabilities will be integrated and built upon through plans, processes and activities which will ensure the synergies between civilian and military capabilities, and prevent adversaries from exploiting our vulnerabilities.

By strengthening national resilience, the Republic of Slovenia will contribute to and draw from the collective resilience of NATO and the resilience of the European Union as a whole.

**5.3 Implementing national defence by using all the available national resources and by relying on the collective defence of NATO and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union**

The defence of the Republic of Slovenia is based on deterring security threats and risks, and on an adequate level of defence capacity and the readiness and sustainability of national, allied and joint defence capabilities and forces. Our own defence capability, readiness and resilience will be ensured through a reasonable degree of defence independence and autonomy, while relying on NATO collective defence and on the available measures and mechanisms of the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union.

The Republic of Slovenia will conduct national defence within the framework of NATO collective defence, mutual assistance within the European Union, and, if necessary, independently.

National defence is based on a comprehensive and integrated approach, with intensive inter-ministerial and inter-institutional cooperation at the national, allied and joint levels. Defence will thus be carried out by defence forces in direct cooperation with all the other stakeholders of the national security system, as well as NATO collective defence and the mutual assistance of the European Union.

In its defence activities, the Republic of Slovenia aims to contain and neutralize security threats and risks as far away from the national territory as possible, using the least possible force and power. Should security threats and risks reach its national territory, the Republic of Slovenia will not limit the intensity and persistence of the use of all national and other available defence capabilities and resources in the exercise of its defence.

The Republic of Slovenia will adjust the scope and intensity of its defence, conduct it proportionately, asymmetrically if necessary, or even through unconventional action, always taking the international law of armed conflict into account.

In implementing the collective defence of NATO and in the provision of security and defence within the framework of the European Union, the Republic of Slovenia will act credibly, in accordance with its national interests, on the basis of the principles of mutual assistance, in solidarity and in accordance with its capabilities. For the purpose of collective defence, the Republic of Slovenia will provide a proportionate share of the defence effort. When necessary, the Republic of Slovenia will integrate all available national and other available defence capabilities and resources into its defence effort.

**5.4 Strengthening mechanisms and capabilities to ensure peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area**

The Republic of Slovenia will demonstrate its credibility, responsibility and solidarity in providing allied deterrence, collective defence and common security by assuming its proportional burden-sharing and sharing of risks.

In ensuring peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, the Republic of Slovenia will give priority to participation in allied deterrence and defence activities, multinational response forces, command, staff and other structures, international operations and missions, and exercises and training.

The Republic of Slovenia will contribute constructively to the effectiveness of the decision-making and consultative mechanisms within NATO and the European Union. Based on the NATO Strategic Concept, and in line with the commitments of the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence of the European Union, the Republic of Slovenia will also actively carry out support tasks as a host nation, and the development of an integrated military mobility network, the strengthening of maritime security, and the development of a set of tools and mechanisms for countering hybrid threats, strengthening strategic communication processes and capabilities, enhancing preparedness to respond to cyber threats, strengthening the defence technological-industrial base, developing the defence aspects of space as an operational domain, and enhancing the response and adaptation of the defence system to the effects of climate change.

In accordance with its foreign policy and national security interests, the Republic of Slovenia will participate with its defence capabilities in the implementation of international operations and missions in those areas from where potential security threats and risks to the Euro-Atlantic area and national security arise, including, as a priority, the Western Balkans.

**5.5 Contributing proactively and prudently to international peace, security and stability**

While strengthening mechanisms and capacities for ensuring peace, security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, the Republic of Slovenia will actively co-create mechanisms for strengthening peace, security and stability within the framework of the United Nations Organisation, NATO, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and in other international regional initiatives and forms of cooperation.

The Republic of Slovenia will act in the field of defence in a way that will contribute to the implementation, adherence to and the widest possible application of international treaties and agreements in order to prevent illicit activities in the field of conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology, and will actively participate in the setting up of new mechanisms which will require the participation of the defence sector.

When providing defence capabilities for the participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions outside the Euro-Atlantic area, the provisions of the national strategy for the participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions will be taken into account, as well as the political and other guidelines of state authorities.

The comprehensive approach of the Republic of Slovenia in strengthening the defence aspect of international security will be based on regional, bilateral and multinational defence and military cooperation and integration, as well as on strengthening partnership relations. In order to project stability and resilience to third countries, it will be implemented through balanced diplomatic, political, intelligence, defence and military, economic, development and security dimensions of action.

**5.6** **Raising awareness in society of the significance and role of defence**

By improving the organizational and functional integration of all entities of the defence system, and by strengthening civil-military cooperation, the Republic of Slovenia will contribute to raising awareness in society of the significance and role of the defence system and to enhancing its reputation.

The human factor is important in strengthening the defence capability of the country, both physically and, above all, cognitively. Awareness-raising will focus in particular on patriotism and the protection of the fundamental values of Slovenian society and our way of life.

In relation to understanding the role of the defence system in modern times, efforts will be directed towards a comprehensive understanding of defence as the coordinated use of both military and civilian capabilities, in line with current threats and risks to national security. This effort will be based on modern experience and scientific expertise, and on an updated defence education and training system.

The Republic of Slovenia will pay due attention to informing and motivating its citizens on their involvement in the country’s defence efforts. The principle of gender equality will be taken into account. Different forms of voluntary defence and military training will be promoted as early as possible to acquire defence and military competences in accordance with democratic and international legal norms. Specific measures and activities will promote all defence professions and ensure their visibility and reputation in society.

The Republic of Slovenia will promote the strengthening of security culture and patriotism among its citizens by introducing content in the field of active citizenship, security culture and patriotism into the curricula of primary and secondary schools; by implementing voluntary military service and other forms of military training; and by supporting sports, civil society and, in particular, professional veterans’ and patriotic organizations whose activities are of particular importance for defence.

Timely and comprehensive information for the public on defence activities will also contribute to strengthening the image of and confidence in the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia among its citizens.

**6 THE DEFENCE SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

The defence system represents an entire range of political, regulatory, organizational, military, personnel, material and financial, intelligence and security, information and communication, development and research, educational and other activities organized and implemented by the state in order to provide effective deterrence, defence and continuity of the state and society.

The purpose of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia is to provide defence capacity, readiness, responsiveness and resilience of the state for the promotion of national interests and the implementation of defence objectives to safeguard the fundamental values of Slovenian society.

As an integral part of the national security system of the Republic of Slovenia, its defence system is comprised of military and civil defence. The Slovenian Armed Forces are the major pillar of the developing military capabilities and military defence of the country. Civil defence is the major pillar of the developing civilian capabilities and the provision of civilian preparedness and the resilience of the country against different types of contemporary threats and risks in the defence system. The defence system is also supported by activities and capabilities for strategic intelligence activities, defence diplomacy, strategic communications, strategic logistics, information and communication capabilities, and cyber security and defence. In accordance with the regulations in their respective fields, in wartime part of the protection and rescue forces and the police also take part in the defence of the Republic of Slovenia.

The structure and organization of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia will fully and timely reflect changes in the international security environment. The effective functioning of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia will be based on adequate human, financial, material and other resources, the integrity and balance of the defence system structure, appropriate organization, efficient management and administration, balanced development, and an appropriate level of capacity, preparedness, responsiveness and sustainability of the military and civilian capabilities of the state.

The operation of the intelligence and security community will be focused on the timely identification, monitoring, and assessment of threats and risks to the national security of the Republic of Slovenia. The operation and development of all parts of the defence system are increasingly influenced by activities in cyberspace and in space, as new operational domains (in addition to land, air and maritime), as well as activities for countering hybrid threats and strategic communications.

For coordinated response and operation of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia the Ministry of Defence will coordinate and direct defence planning in the country. To ensure the operation of the defence system in peace, crisis, a state of emergency and war, defence plans are drawn up by defence planners, which together with the plan for the use of the Slovenian Armed Forces and the plan of the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Slovenia represent the defence plan of the country. By implementing tasks from the defence plan, the readiness of the country to act in a crisis situation is strengthened, facilitating a transition and operation in a state of emergency or war. The national defence plan is upgraded and amended depending on the threats and risks to the national security.

For operative coordination and management of defence in time of war the Government of the Republic of Slovenia appoints a National Operations Staff for Defence.

**6.1 Military defence**

Military defence is the defence of the country with arms and other military means. It is implemented independently, within the Alliance or on the basis of international treaties. The Slovenian Armed Forces are the major pillar of the military defence of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Slovenian Armed Forces are the most powerful and state’s ultimate instrument of power for the defence of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Slovenia. In this way, the Republic of Slovenia will provide its contribution to the collective defence of NATO and the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union.

The Slovenian Armed Forces constitute the core of the Republic of Slovenia’s defence forces and capabilities, and are the major pillar of developing military capabilities and the military defence of the state. They are assisted, complemented and strengthened in particular by civil defence, as well as other capabilities of the state and society, and of allies and partners.

The tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces are the implementation of military education and training for armed combat and other forms of military defence, ensuring the necessary or required readiness, providing military defence in the event of an attack on the country, the implementation of commitments undertaken by the country in international organizations and international treaties, participation in protection and rescue in the case of natural and other disasters, and, within their capabilities, support to other state bodies and organizations.

**6.2 Civil defence**

Civil defence is a set of preparations, measures, activities and civilian capabilities in peace, crisis, a state of emergency and war, which supports and complements the military defence of the country, ensures continuous functioning of the authorities, and provides support to the Slovenian Armed Forces, which all contributes to the resilience and preparedness of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as to the supply, protection and survival of the population.

Civil defence tasks are carried out by state bodies, companies, institutes and other organizations, local self-government bodies, and other entities carrying out activities relevant to defence.

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia has the principal authority managing and leading preparations and organizing and implementing measures, activities and the tasks of civil defence, which coordinates these with military defence. Ministries are responsible for the state of preparation and functioning in their area of authority. The Ministry of Defence provides expert guidance, coordination and supervision of the preparations, actions and activities of other ministries and other defence planners.

**7 RESOURCES FOR THE OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEFENCE SYSTEM**

The Republic of Slovenia will provide long-term, sufficient, stable and predictable human resources, financial, and material resources, and infrastructure for the operation and development of the defence system.

The process of comprehensive defence planning will ensure the connection and coherence of effort in individual fields of planning, together with the processes of defence planning in NATO and the European Union. Defence planning will also take into account the identified level of national ambition in the field of defence, priority areas in the development of national defence capabilities, and the adopted international commitments of the Republic of Slovenia and the required defence resources.

The defence system will be provided with adequate and sufficient defence resources to adapt its size and structure more efficiently to future security, demographic and technological trends. The objective is to build up defence capabilities over time to ensure an adequate level of defence capability, readiness and resilience, and to ensure our credibility in the framework of collective and common defence.

**7.1 Human resources**

Human resources are a fundamental factor enabling the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia to fulfil its mission. In the context of demographic trends in the Republic of Slovenia and of the further development of the defence system, the basic challenge is to provide an appropriate size, structure and quality of human resources for carrying out tasks within the area of authority of all parts of the defence system.

Determining the target size and structure of human resources in the defence system will be based on a prudent assessment of the trends in defence and military threats and risks, as well as an assessment of the necessary defence capabilities and forces to implement national defence interests and objectives even in the most demanding military and defence scenarios. Considering the deterioration in the international security situation, the intensity and range of tasks related to the defence system are increasing. Because of this, human resources will be replenished for its effective operation, in particular by expanding the Slovenian Armed Forces and complementing the tasks for the operation of the entire defence system.

The unfavourable situation in the field of human resources in the Slovenian Armed Forces will improve only with a comprehensive human resource approach in the entire national security system and wider society, which will also require systemic and normative amendments and changes. This will be a combination of organizational and status measures, incentives, compensations and benefits related to the specifics of the military profession.

Human resources policy in the defence system will be directed in particular towards supplementing human resources and retaining an appropriate personnel level, rejuvenating the structure at all levels, and developing competences within the entire system by promoting the flow of knowledge and personnel development.

**7.2 Financial resources**

The Republic of Slovenia will provide an increase in financial resources for the development of defence capabilities, to an extent which will enable the establishment of adequate forces and capabilities for the implementation of the national defence interests and objectives even in the most difficult military and defence scenarios. The principles of efficiency, rationality and focus on priority areas will be respected in the planning and use of financial resources in the field of defence. In accordance with the trends in the international security environment, the internationally pledged commitments of the Republic of Slovenia, and the political ambition to fill a multi-year development gap of the defence system, the level of defence expenditures will be ensured at the level of at least 2% of the Gross Domestic Product. Efforts will be made to accelerate the growth of defence expenditures. For all the members of the Alliance, this proportion has become the minimum requirement and no longer the upper target level for defence expenditures. This is also the commitment deriving from the new strategic documents of the European Union in the field of defence.

By providing additional and sufficient financial resources for the functioning of society and the state in peace, crisis, a state of emergency and war, the comprehensive readiness of the defence system will be strengthened. Funds will be allocated in the state budget of the Republic of Slovenia for an increase in civilian preparedness and resilience of the state and society. The efficiency of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia will thus be increased and the collective resilience of NATO and the European Union supported.

The structure of the defence budget and defence expenditures will be development driven. The planning of defence funds will be guided by the requirement for an increased proportion of investment costs in overall defence expenditures; investments in major equipment will amount to at least 20% of defence expenditures, and at least 2% of defence expenditures will be on research, development and innovations. In line with contemporary requirements and standards, an important condition for the development of the Slovenian Armed Forces and the entire defence system of the Republic of Slovenia will thus be fulfilled.

**7.3 Material resources**

As part of the process of planning, acquiring, using, transforming, maintaining, and replacing the material resources of the defence system, military and civilian capabilities will be strengthened, taking into account the principles of cost optimization and transparency of procurement. In this way the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia will become better connected to the structures of NATO and the European Union, as well as with the defence systems of its Allies, the Member States of the European Union, and partner countries.

The conditions for the development and operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in accordance with the long-term needs for setting up, in terms of scale and structure, appropriate capabilities and forces for the implementation of the national defence interests and objectives, even in the most difficult military and defence scenarios, will be supported, as a priority, by the modernization of military armaments and equipment, which will prioritize the provision of military capabilities to ensure combat power and adequate military reserves and supplies.

On the basis of bilateral and multilateral agreements and treaties with other member states of NATO and the European Union, the joint procurement instrument will be strengthened, achieving optimization of costs and operational efficiency, and obtaining additional knowledge with regard to the establishment of capacities. Proven military armaments and equipment without development and other risks will be selected on the international market, while at the same time special emphasis will be placed on acquiring material resources developed by the Slovenian defence industry. This will strengthen defence research and development and the industrial and technological base, increasing the defence self-sufficiency of the Republic of Slovenia.

A special segment in all areas of ensuring the resilience of the state and society is the state commodity reserves. The volume and structure of the national commodity reserves are important for the implementation of national defence and the resilience of the state and society in a changed and unstable international security situation.

From the long-term perspective, research, development and innovations will support the development of defence capabilities and the strengthening of the national defence industry and technological base. National research and development institutes will cooperate with development companies, which will be supported by the state. By taking part in international development, research and innovation initiatives within NATO and the European framework, synergies will be reached in fields in which national projects are not economically justified. Projects for multipurpose use and those increasing defence autonomy will also be encouraged.

**7.4 Infrastructure**

Defence infrastructure will provide the conditions for operations, education, training, drills and exercises. It will be adapted to the long-term national defence needs. A scale and set of infrastructure will be established which will enable the performance of all military and other tasks of the defence system in peace, crisis, a state of emergency and war. Infrastructure upgrade and construction will allow for more effective host nation support, military mobility, defence capability and force build-up, and military defence in key directions and areas.

Defence infrastructure will be regionally located and developed to enable operations, education, training, drills and exercises of all parts of the defence system, even if the volume increases and in the event of joint operations of the Slovenian Armed Forces with Allied Forces in the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. The development of the construction of military and civilian infrastructure, equipment and facilities for command, crisis management and control will continue.

A key capability for training the command structure and units of the Slovenian Armed Forces and Allied Forces remains the Postojna Slovenian Armed Forces’ Central Training Area, which will be modernized and adapted to modern military and environmental standards, taking into account the spatial possibilities and security constraints. These standards, possibilities and constraints will also be taken into account at other training areas of the Slovenian Armed Forces in the Republic of Slovenia. The infrastructure of NATO members and partner countries abroad will also be used for training the Slovenian Armed Forces.

In developing defence capabilities, the environmental protection aspect will also be taken into account. In particular, efforts will be made to achieve greater energy efficiency through the introduction of alternative energy sources and self-sufficiency, and the development and deployment of certain technological solutions which will improve environmental protection and reduce the carbon footprint.

**8 RISKS IN IMPLEMENTING CHANGES TO THE DEFENCE SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA AND THE REALIZATION OF DEFENCE OBJECTIVES**

Efforts towards strengthening the defence capabilities of the Republic of Slovenia are based on constant and in-depth assessment of the security environment, as well as threats, defence interests and objectives, the needs and capabilities of the state, appropriate criticism in assessing the state of the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia, and on innovation and determination in adopting development solutions. The main guide in implementing changes is a prudent reorientation towards ensuring a high level of efficiency of the entire defence system, with the clear awareness that the realization of the national defence objectives, even in the most difficult military and defence scenarios, always requires the resilience and durability of the system, which is ensured by sufficient accessibility and availability of resources.

The risks associated with the introduction of changes to the defence system of the Republic of Slovenia and the implementation of defence objectives are mainly linked to:

* Clear political support, and the support of the general and professional public,
* Timely and comprehensive provision of the required human, financial and material resources and infrastructure,
* Inter-ministerial and inter-institutional support,
* Timely and comprehensive fulfilment of the commitments undertaken on the basis of international agreements.

The absence of a broad national political consensus about the set objectives and the necessary changes in the field of defence, and the lack of clear and strong support of the professional and general public, may not only impede the provision of the defence capacity of the state, but also lead to the alienation of the defence system from society. Communication with different types of publics on the defence-related reform efforts must therefore be based on an efficient strategy and approach. Lack of awareness of the importance and role of the defence system and of social responsibility can have a negative impact on the implementation of change and the development of the defence system, and therefore the achievement of the national defence objectives.

If the levels of the planned human, financial and material resources and infrastructure are not attained as planned, additional delays will occur in putting in place key national defence capabilities and the provision of the necessary national defence capability. The ability of the Republic of Slovenia to implement defence objectives may thus be significantly reduced. Delayed establishment of defence capabilities from the perspective of their personnel size, organization, equipment, training level, readiness, responsiveness and sustainability will decrease the national defence capabilities for an efficient response to modern sources of national security threats and risks. This ability will rely in particular on the timely implementation and maintenance of the planned readiness level of the Slovenian Armed Forces for operation in compliance with the national needs, and the requirements and obligations deriving from the adopted NATO capability targets and the commitments undertaken within the European Union. Effective accomplishment of the mission and key tasks will depend on the appropriate use of available defence resources, in particular human and financial resources, and the adequacy of the structure and organization of the Slovenian Armed Forces, as well as the command-and-control processes within it.

An interministerial and comprehensive national approach should be put in place in order to strengthen defence capabilities and provide for an efficient response and the resilience of the Republic of Slovenia to modern sources of threats and risks to national security. This also requires an upgrade of current and the creation of new systemic solutions, which will define the authority for the coordination, preparation and implementation of national security activities.

Late and incomplete fulfilment of the already accepted defence obligations in NATO and the European Union, and on the basis of international treaties, will have a negative impact on the defence capability of the Republic of Slovenia and its resilience, and will also decrease its credibility in these organizations and weaken its position in the international community. Deterrence, the collective defence of NATO and the common defence of the European Union will also be weakened, as well as peace, security and stability in the wider international environment.

**9 IMPLEMENTING, AMENDING AND UPDATING THE STRATEGY**

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia will monitor the implementation of this strategy, and amend and update it in the light of major changes in the international security environment and in accordance with the amendments of the ReSNV-2.

Amendments and updating of all subordinated strategic development and guidance documents will take place on the basis of changes and amendments to the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia.