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**Military Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The Military Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia is the fundamental national military development and guidance document. It is derived from the Resolution on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia, the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia, and the Defence Act, and in concrete terms defines the role and activities of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) as a defence force. The SAF is the strongest instrument of power in the implementation of the national security and defence interests and objectives of the Republic of Slovenia (RS) and the RS’s commitments in NATO and the EU.

The RS secured its statehood and independence through, to a large extent, the skilful use of military power in the independence struggle of the country, which was defended by a mature and united society through armed combat and other forms of resistance. To the changes in the security environment and social reality, states respond, adapt and seek to take part in their creation, preferably in advance and tailored to their own purpose. Their efforts are effective if they find timely answers as to what, how and by what means, and develop appropriate strategies, in the military field with a military strategy.

The changing security environment requires more rapid adaptation of security, defence and military structures in order to ensure comprehensive security and defence. Military threats on Europe’s flanks require the military defence capabilities of the RS to be reinforced. NATO and the EU are strengthening military capabilities and increasing preparedness, resilience and sustainability. NATO has focused on strengthening its deterrence and defence posture, and the EU on enhancing its military capabilities within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). At the same time NATO and the EU are also amending their strategic documents. NATO implements its military strategy through the NATO’s Concept for Deterrence and Defence of the Euro Atlantic Area, and the overall NATO Warfighting Capstone Concept. The EU implements the Strategic Compass through the creation of an overall military concept. The RS has followed these processes by adopting the Resolution on the National Security Strategy in 2019 and the Resolution on the General Long-term Development and Equipping Program of the SAF. These international and national documents and the changes in the security environment constitute the framework for drafting the Military Strategy of the RS.

The Military Strategy defines the military instrument of power and military strategic objectives of the RS, and the ways of their fulfilment. This will be achieved by managing an appropriate military posture, which will deter, contain and address security threats as close as possible to their origin and as far away from the RS and the outer borders of the EU and NATO as possible. In conducting military defence, the RS will rely on the collective defence of NATO and the mutual assistance of the EU, and will also act independently, if necessary. This will include the application of a comprehensive and integrated approach to implement successful defence and maximize the resilience of the state and society.

The Military Strategy of the RS also develops national military strategic thought and links it to the strategic thought and documents of NATO and the EU.

The Military Strategy serves as one of the bases for drafting, amending and supplementing doctrinal, normative, planning and other documents in the fields of defence and the military, and for dealing with various substantive issues concerning the development of the defence and national security system of the RS. It will be implemented through the long-term provision of sufficient, stable and predictable personnel, material, financial and other resources, as well as the normative framework for the further development and operation of the SAF and the defence system. With this Military Strategy, the RS is building on the processes of responding to the current and potential security situations, both independently and within the NATO and EU framework.

**2 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

Slovenia’s military capacity and capabilities have proven to be indispensable for the effective defence of Slovenia’s statehood, national interests and objectives, and for the preservation and protection of the fundamental values of Slovenian society and our way of life.

The defence of the inviolability and integrity of the national territory is one of the most important categories in the Constitution of the RS, providing the basis for the existence of the armed forces. The SAF is, therefore, one of the cornerstones of statehood, individuality and identity of the RS, the Slovenian people and Slovenian society, the security of the RS and its citizens, and the territorial integrity of the RS.

The legitimacy of the SAF as the defence force of the RS in the Slovenian state and society derives from the successful accomplishment of its mission, statutory tasks and Slovenian military traditions. The SAF is a key element and catalyst of national resilience and, in synergy with other instruments of national power, the lead actor of military defence. It co-shapes and strengthens national security and resilience, and the values of society. The security of the state and its citizens is at the centre of military defence and the overall functioning of the SAF. The SAF functions as an integrated element of the national security and defence system of the RS.

The security of the RS is closely linked to the security of the Euro-Atlantic area and the multilateral world order. It is in the strategic interest of the RS to maintain strong Euro-Atlantic relations and to strengthen European defence and military capabilities and their functioning. The efficient operation and development of the SAF is based on the efforts of the RS and its society towards the appropriately organized and prepared defence of the national interests and objectives, and on the comprehensive, integrated connection of the national defence of the RS with NATO’s collective defence and the mutual assistance of the EU, and the solidarity clause of the EU. All this is based on the balanced sharing of the defence and military burdens and risks of the RS with the other members of NATO and the EU.

The territory of the RS lies at the crossroads connecting Western and Central Europe with South-Eastern Europe and the Middle East, Central European continental areas with the Adriatic Sea, and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe with the Po Plain. Its geostrategic, geopolitical and military position in Europe provides the RS with political, economic, social, cultural and other advantages and opportunities, while at the same time posing certain security risks and threats, including military ones. Such a position requires the RS to maintain and develop a credible military power as an irreplaceable element of national power.

The RS integrates an agreed proportionate share of its military forces and capabilities into NATO and the EU. It thus contributes proactively to strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence posture and the EU's mutual assistance, and to maintaining and building peace internationally within the United Nations Organization (UNO), NATO, the EU, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The most efficient means of ensuring the defence of the RS is through collective defence, which is based on unity, solidarity and cohesion, and a strong Euro-Atlantic partnership. In this context, the primary objective is national security, and the primary starting point is collective defence.

The contemporary geopolitical, geo-economic and multipolar global order, involving intense competition between regional and great powers, is a challenge for multilateralism and liberal political and economic order and democratic values. At the same time the arms race has been revived and intensified. Confrontations and conflicts below the threshold of war can occur in various forms and combinations of economic competition, paramilitary and military operations, cyberattacks, information operations and fierce political conflicts. Even if they transform into military conflicts and wars, the adversaries will not only be the states, but also different non-state or transnational actors. The growing military threats on Europe's flanks call for resolute strengthening of the deterrence posture and collective defence within NATO, and, in a complementary way, also have an impact on the development and contribution of the EU’s military capabilities for mutual assistance.

The character of war is also changing due to different ways of influencing and using of force, and due to a number of factors and stakeholders in the contemporary security environment. Modern warfare is characterized by a blurring of the boundaries between the state and the non-state, the public and the private, the covert and the overt, the conventional and the non-conventional, the front and rear areas, the domestic and the foreign, and war and peace themselves.

The expected strategic effects and desired states can also be achieved through technological progress and the expansion of warfare to new domains and dimensions. Military operations are now moving from land, sea and air to the new domains of cyberspace, and are intensifying in the electromagnetic spectrum and cognitive dimensions. The functioning of the military in all domains and dimensions, and the dynamic employment of capabilities in national and international contexts require a high degree of development. All this shifts the focus of the SAF’s development and operation towards technologically advanced capabilities, as well as towards a comprehensive upgrading of the SAF's readiness, responsiveness and sustainability.

In the future security environment, humans remain at the centre of attention despite remarkable technological progress. Only a motivated, educated, trained, modernly equipped, psychophysically fit SAF member, integrated into prepared military units, will be able to contribute to the implementation of Slovenia's national interests and objectives. Modern warfare involves the increased use of (semi)autonomous weapon systems, and humans must retain control over them.

**3 THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT, RISKS AND THREATS**

With regard to the general characteristics of the security environment, the military strategy follows considerations from the revised Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia.

The concentration and growth of local and regional instabilities could easily turn into the military demonstration of power, provocations, threats, armed incidents, large-scale conflicts and wars, due to the conflicting interests of the global centres of power. The war in Ukraine is proof that military threats and conflicts which start with hybrid operations below the threshold of war, aimed in particular at undermining the cohesiveness of society and the stability of the state, can very quickly turn into a prolonged, full-scale war.

The Euro-Atlantic area and the EU area have become even more security-sensitive and at risk. The attitudes of aggressive and competitive countries towards NATO and the EU in future years will be crucial for understanding and for the state of the global strategic context. In a world of competing great powers, non-democratic states with aggressive foreign policy agendas are steadily seeking to expand their power and influence, including in the military sphere. Strategic military rivalries are also emerging in the control of strategic transport routes, cyberspace, information and communication technology and the cognitive aspect, emerging and disruptive technologies, and space. In such a changing international security environment, the interests and objectives of the RS may also be militarily threatened.

Modern military threats stem not only from the physical dimension, but also from other dimensions and domains, where a combination of the soft and the hard approach and operation is used.

Deterrence with conventional and nuclear forces in the Euro-Atlantic area remains a guarantee for military balance and security. Operations below the threshold of war, which are focused on hybrid operations, can disturb this balance and pose a direct threat to peace, security and stability in Europe. There is constant tendency to increase this type of military threat.

By the coordinated use of military, paramilitary and non-military capabilities, disinformation, propaganda, and fuelling uncertainty, adversaries may weaken democratic values, destabilize the way of life of Western societies, undermine confidence in the rule of law and the official institutions of states, destabilize democratically managed systems, limit access to common goods, disrupt or disable the functioning of critical infrastructure, and encourage and direct mass illegal migration. All this can also be intensified through the privatization of violence in the form of private military companies, mercenaries, and so on. Unexpected co-effects of several threats with exceptional negative effects on the world can lead to strategic shocks and wars.

The development of new and emerging and disruptive technologies in cybersecurity, robotics, artificial intelligence, 3D-printing, applied biotechnology, technologies to improve human performance, and quantum and nanotechnologies will have an impact on the autonomy, efficiency, range, speed and lethality of weapon systems. Changes to the security environment and technological development will require fast decision-making and a rapid response to those threats. Technological progress and the accessibility of knowledge, products and technologies to state and non-state actors affect the emergence of new, complex, and hard to predict security challenges and risks in all domains and dimensions. Technological development increases the possibilities of hostile action in information and communication technologies, in cyberspace and in space, which can also represent a direct military threat. The RS, irrespective of its relatively favourable geostrategic position, may thus be directly militarily threatened.

The geostrategic position of the RS and its location deep within the Euro-Atlantic area and the EU determine its security situation. The RS is exposed to threats by various actors (countries, coalitions, competitors, rivals and other non-state actors, in particular proxy forces and terrorists) operating mostly below the threshold of war.

With regard to global security threats, the RS is increasingly exposed to non-conventional military, non-military and asymmetric threats and hybrid operations, while exposure to direct conventional military threats, including the possibility of strikes from a distance, will gradually become increasingly more likely.

Just like other NATO and EU Member States, the RS also faces a number of challenges, threats and risks linked in particular to Europe’s Eastern flanks, including the wider region of Ukraine, the Western Balkans, the Middle East, and North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Eastern flanks of NATO and the EU are facing increased military threats, while the South and South-East are encountering instability and asymmetric threats involving terrorism and elements of military threats. As a consequence of the unfinished stabilization processes in the region of the Western Balkans, diverse forms of radicalization are continuing and the influence of external actors is intensifying. Hence, for the RS the Balkans region represents the nearest potential crisis area, additionally burdened with migration pressure from Africa and the Middle East. Mass, uncontrolled and illegal migration can also be linked to terrorism. The unstable political and security situation and the arms race in South-Eastern Europe are also an indication of increasing latent military threats.

With further aggravation of the international or regional political and security situation, the RS may also be exposed to attacks in cyber and IT space, attacks on critical infrastructure, and terrorism, or even to direct military threats in the case of a serious deterioration in the situation. The escalation of threat intensity leads to deterioration in the security situation, causing major challenges of transition from peace to crisis, a state of emergency or even war, notably with the boundaries between these different states being blurred.

**4 STRATEGIC MILITARY OBJECTIVES**

The strategic military objectives derive from the basic principles written into the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, tasks from the Defence Act, and the national interests and national security objectives, together with the defence objectives stated in the Resolution on the National Security Strategy and the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia.

The mission of the SAF is to ensure the military power of the RS for the implementation and pursuit of its national and common interests and objectives within NATO and the EU. The primary objective of the SAF is to operate in an integrated manner across all domains and dimensions, with an emphasis on the land domain. By contributing militarily to international peace, security and stability, under consideration of international law, the SAF makes a significant contribution to the credibility of the expression and implementation of the RS’s interests. By cooperating with stakeholders in the civil environment, the SAF contributes to the resilience of the state and society.

Through the military instrument of power, the established modes of operation, readiness, responsiveness, sustainability and interoperability of forces intended for national and collective defence, the RS is implementing the following military objectives:

*FIRST OBJECTIVE: Credible and successful deterrence ensured*

Military power, effectively and efficiently integrated and supported in the national security system, NATO and EU, will ensure a credible and effective deterrence and contribute to the NATO and EU deterrence posture.

*SECOND OBJECTIVE: RS’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and other vital interests protected, safeguarded and defended*

Successful deterrence is a guarantee of sovereignty, territorial integrity and ensuring the vital interests of the RS. NATO’s collective defence and the EU’s mutual assistance also constitute the defence of the RS. In the event of a military threat, the territory and citizens of the RS will be defended by relying on these, and in the ultimate case also acting independently, with the SAF in synergy with all the available resources of the country.

*THIRD OBJECTIVE: Credible contribution to collective and common defence and mutual assistance*

In the event of unsuccessful deterrence, an immediate military threat or an attack on an Allied country or partner at the NATO or the EU level, the RS will, within the framework of joint forces, provide a credible military contribution to collective defence and mutual assistance. In this way threats will be deterred and addressed at the place of their origin, as far from the RS as possible.

*FOURTH OBJECTIVE: Visible contribution to international peace, security and stability*

In order to preserve and spread international peace, security and stability, a recognizable military contribution will be made within the framework of the UNO, NATO, the EU, OSCE and various coalitions, and in accordance with international law and national capabilities.

*FIFTH OBJECTIVE: Contribution to the enhanced state and society resilience*

In an uninterrupted manner, the SAF will contribute to the multi-layered resilience of the state and society by organizing the education and training of citizens for military defence and survival in extreme circumstances, and by taking part in civil protection and disaster relief and the protection of the state border and critical infrastructure, especially of facilities important for national defence.

**5 THE SLOVENIAN ARMED FORCES AS A MILITARY INSTRUMENT OF POWER OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

The national power of the RS is ensured through the comprehensive use of instruments of national power and subsystems of national security, and other relevant activities influencing national security. The RS integrates, strengthens and multiplies its instruments of national power within the EU and NATO. The common interests and objectives of NATO Allies are pursued through joint allied power resulting from the comprehensive and coordinated use, in particular, of political and diplomatic, economic, defence and military, information and other instruments of power and defence capabilities.

The SAF is the defence power of the RS, a military instrument of power, and the strongest and ultimate national instrument of power to secure the freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Slovenia, to deter attacks on its territory, and to provide its contribution to the collective defence of NATO and the mutual assistance of the EU. Combat power is at the centre of gravity of the military instrument of power.

The SAF is an important linking and building block of society cohesion, patriotic emotions, national will, and national resilience. In synergy with other stakeholders and instruments of national power, it ensures military defence, and shapes and strengthens national security.

The source of power of the SAF and consequently the RS is based on patriotism and the readiness of the Slovenian citizens and the state to protect the values written into the Constitution of the RS, Slovenian statehood, national identity, culture, and individuality, including by armed combat.

The SAF represents the centre of gravity of defence capabilities; it is in charge of military capability development and national military defence, in which it is supported, complemented and strengthened in particular by civil defence, and additionally by the capabilities of (military) strategic intelligence, military diplomacy, strategic communications, cybersecurity and defence, strategic logistics, and information and communication capabilities, as well as by parts of other subsystems and activities of national security.

The SAF is the vehicle for ensuring, maintaining and increasing the military power of the RS. A contribution to military power is also made by the defence industry, companies, educational institutions, scientific and research centres, non-governmental organizations, and associations carrying out defence-related activities. An important multiplier of military power is civil-military cooperation, in particular with local authorities.

The key criteria of the RS’s military power are the readiness, responsiveness and sustainability of the military forces and capabilities, and the associated parts of subsystems and activities of the national security system. The essential elements of the SAF's combat readiness are the motivation to fight, competence, adaptability, cognitive resilience, vitality and strength of its members, as well as the introduction of technologies which will multiply the efficiency of every SAF member and the military as a whole.

The RS can ensure its credible status within NATO and the EU in particular by establishing and maintaining an agreed proportional share of military forces and capabilities, and a proportional contribution to operations. With its most developed elements, the SAF will be ready for integrated operations across the entire spectrum of warfare and operations in high intensity conflicts, independently or as a part of multinational forces. With other forces and capabilities, the SAF will be capable of accomplishing combat and support tasks in the national territory.

The RS will give priority to developing its military capabilities for national defence in line with its commitments in NATO and the EU. It will primarily develop tactical capabilities and will operate, mainly in the land domain, with the support of elements of the cyber, air, space and maritime domains. On the basis of its credibility and engagement of competent individuals in NATO and the EU, it will also make an impact in all domains, and participate in decision-making at the operational and strategic levels of both organizations. Focusing on the human factor will be key to success.

In peacetime and in crisis the SAF fulfils its tasks with its peacetime structure, which includes the active component, the called-up reserve and soldiers doing voluntary military service and, provided that all the components of military duty are reintroduced, also soldiers doing mandatory military service. The active structure provides military competencies, expertise and skills, and military and combat ethos, which are transferred to other segments of the peacetime structure, through which the combat character of the SAF is also strengthened during peacetime.

With increased threats and a likelihood of a transition from peace to the state of emergency or war, the peacetime structure of the SAF is gradually increased and reorganized into a wartime structure. This increase follows the principle of integrating the regular and reserve structures. For an efficient increase of forces, the peacetime commands and units of SAF are prudently positioned in the national territory, which facilitates their participation in the local social environment, ensuring a multi-layer resilience of the state and society in cooperation with the national authorities and the local community.

The reserve structure comprises various forms of contract reserve and also the mandatory reserve. The reserve structure is not only a source of manpower, but also of quality. It contributes specialist competencies in healthcare, information and communication technology, cybersecurity, logistics, maintenance, innovative technologies, and other areas.

The striking, manoeuvrable part of the SAF is the deployable forces, which are the response and main forces. With their readiness and responsiveness, they make up the first echelon of national defence, provide response forces, pre-positioned forces, and forces for international operations and missions, and are prepared for collective and common defence with part of the affiliated and declared forces. They are manned by the active component, augmented by the contract reserve. At least one half of the land component forces will be deployable, and at least one fifth of them will be high-readiness forces. The developed deployable forces will be able to operate in conventional and asymmetric forms of combat; their military armaments and equipment will facilitate optimum protection and an appropriate level of interoperability. In peacetime, and in particular during the stage of the SAF's increase, the deployable component will already provide training and drills for additional members in order to provide its own sustainability and integrate new members into its structure.

The non-deployable forces, as the territorial part of the SAF, are mainly the augmentative forces designated for military control and the defence of the territory of RS, host nation support, and joint combat and cooperation with the SAF’s deployable forces and the Allied Forces in the RS. As the SAF's increase, the non-deployable forces will conduct training and drills for additional members in order to provide its own sustainability and the manning of units. New members will be integrated into the unified military structure of the SAF.

The conditions for work and development of the SAF are provided by the institutional part of the Armed Forces. The institutional part carries out functions in the areas of military education, training, development, research, simulations, recruitment and human resource management, administrative support, the comprehensive care of SAF members, medical support, infrastructure, supply, equipping and maintenance, information and communications support, financial management, barracks' operations, area logistics, and civil-military cooperation. As part of the forces’ increase, the institutional part of the military education and training will also provide development cores for the increase of SAF forces, while the remaining part of institutional part will carry out training and drills for additional members in order to provide its own sustainability and the development of additional capabilities and forces.

**6 WAYS OF DETERRENCE AND MILITARY DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA, AND OTHER USES OF THE SAF**

The RS carries out deterrence and military defence, and implements the majority of its military strategic objectives primarily within NATO and the EU. Some of the objectives, in particular an efficient military contribution to the enhanced resilience of the state and society, are also accomplished independently. The ways of conducting deterrence and military defence, and other forms of the involvement of the SAF, should reflect the credibility of the RS’s activities and its ability to efficiently support, where necessary, the implementation of its interests and objectives through the comprehensive, integrated and flexible functioning of all the instruments of national power, with an emphasis on the SAF. The concept and ways of implementing military strategic objectives are described below.

The military strategy of the RS also puts into practice the NATO concepts of deterrence and defence and the Warfighting Capstone Concept, which apply also to the RS. In this way, it represents the core and the main guide of applying the military instrument of power for the attainment of military strategic objectives.

By means of a credible military power and very broad and synergic network connections (integration), the RS will deter, withhold and address security threats as far away as possible from the national, EU and NATO territories, and sustain high-level response readiness. In this way, it will reduce its own vulnerability and the vulnerability of its Allies and partners. By constantly maintaining situational awareness and anticipation, and informed decision-making in real time (timeliness), it will extend the timescale available to strengthen and increase defence capacity for facing (the most) extreme security and military threats. The emphasis on deterrence and defence requires responsiveness, flexibility, and rapid adaptability (agility) of operations. Agility refers to the physical and cognitive dimension. The risks arising from forward presence and agility reduce our resilience, while individual and societal resilience at the same time demonstrate our determination to persist and the ability to adapt to more extensive and intense changes in the environment. The operation of the SAF is permeated with prudence, demonstrated in timely and comprehensive assessment of the situation and the circumstances in which the set objectives are achieved, in order to avoid unreasonable risks and prevent side effects. In doing this, we will maximize our strengths and minimize our deficiencies/vulnerabilities, while at the same time seeking to achieve the opposite for our adversaries. All this will be multiplied by the intensive use of strategic communications tools.

Ways of conducting deterrence and military defence, and other forms of using the SAF

The SAF implements military strategic objectives in the following six ways: (1) Putting humans at the centre of SAF operations, (2) Building military capabilities for the future, (3) The ability to increase forces, (4) Managing military posture, (5) The military defence of the RS, (6) Cooperation with other elements of the national security system and civil society.

**6. 1 Putting humans at the centre of SAF operations**

The SAF combines various factors, in which, despite technical and technological development, humans still occupy the foreground. Military power depends on the resilience not only of the members of the SAF but of the entire population of the RS.

Placing humans at the centre of the SAF’s operations should take into account the general characteristics of Slovenian society, as well as global trends, historical experience and the SAF’s needs. These circumstances have an impact on threat perception, motivation for defence, recruitment, education, training, retention and discharge from various forms of military service and, above all, on operations.

In order to recruit and retain personnel in the SAF it is necessary to: ensure human resources through regular information and cooperation with civil society and convincing strategic communication; promote different forms of early, voluntary defence and military training of citizens, in accordance with democratic and international legal norms; meet expectations of individuals as far as possible and harmonize them with the interests of the military organization, recognizing that the military enables the realization of individual interests within unified military units; take care of the competencies of SAF members by providing assistance in acquiring and upgrading them, which will allow the members to develop within the SAF, as well as increasing competitiveness in the labour market and smoothing the transition to a civilian environment; ensure equal conditions for all through the system of career paths, taking into account the required standards pursuant to the principle of “the right person in the right place”; introduce new technologies to relieve individuals and make them more efficient; and strengthen the concept of a citizen in uniform who can choose between different forms of military service as one of the aspects of the life of a socially responsible citizen.

Enhancing the human factor, both from the physical and cognitive perspective, will ensure the accomplishment of the SAF’s mission and tasks, and resilience to the adversaries’ activity, and will enable the effective use and control of weapon systems. This will be a decisive contribution to strengthening the SAF's combat character and creating the conditions for the Allies' supremacy in the operational environment of the future.

The SAF should cooperate with scientific and research institutions and companies at home, and attend relevant education activities abroad, with international activities of SAF members, intelligence and military diplomacy also playing an important role.

The knowledge and competencies acquired should be properly analysed, managed and applied. Recruiting people and the process of their transformation into competent members of the SAF is a basic activity which enables the SAF’s operation.

In dealing with people, emphasis should be particularly placed on ethics, morale, patriotism, values and commitment to the SAF. Leadership has a distinct role to play in this and in the development of human resources in general. Commanders and leaders should lead by personal example and common standards when working with people and carrying out tasks.

* 1. **Building military capabilities for the future**

Capabilities should be built with prudence on the basis of past experience and with a view towards the future. In building the SAF, a stable yet development-oriented structure should be pursued, allowing for agile adaptation and the implementation of changes, depending on circumstances and development trends. Integrity and interoperability, as well as strict enforcement of NATO standards and new technologies and capabilities as an added value to military activities, will be provided.

The RS will provide a reasonably wide range of military capabilities, which will be able to respond to the threats and challenges of the present and the future. The ultimate goal of capacity-building is to ensure a credible military force primarily intended for combat. Part of the forces will allow the SAF to (co)operate with other stakeholders of the national security system in addressing non-military threats.

Transparent procurement of modern weapons and equipment, along with their integration and maintenance, investment in innovations and development, the gradual and prudent building of Slovenia's defence industry, and cooperation in joint multinational projects will be the components of the long-term establishment of modern and efficient SAF capabilities, and the support of the society for the development of these capabilities.

The provision of personnel, finances, material and other resources, and the normative framework throughout the entire life cycle of capabilities, should already be detailed in the process of making decisions on capability development. At the same time, decisions will also have to be made on the involvement of strategic partners in such a way that the acquired equipment and armaments will facilitate the compatibility and interoperability, first of the declared forces and, to the greatest extent possible, of the entire SAF.

The perception of capability and the power of the state and the military is closely related to membership of alliances and international establishments. The level of integration and interoperability attained in this regard is significant. The RS will gradually achieve this through common development, procurement and training with its allies and partners, and will thus also optimize the maintenance of weapon systems and equipment, and supply.

**6.3 Ensuring the ability to increase forces**

The SAF must ensure and maintain the ability to renew (regenerate) and strengthen qualitative and quantitative capabilities. The bigger and more expressed the threats to the RS, the greater the need for the resilience and increase in military power.

The ability to grow will be ensured by sufficiently complementing the permanent component and the contract reserve, as well as the further development and implementation of various forms of the contract reserve and possibly also a compulsory reserve of the SAF. The increase will predominantly occur on a voluntary basis and through the use of knowledge and skills acquired in civilian life. Based on the decisions of the competent authorities, the increase may also be based on a compulsory reserve and the possibility of selective or general military obligation and the introduction of all components of military, material and work duties. The SAF strengthened in this way will also be closely connected to Allies and partners in NATO and the EU.

In peacetime, the SAF already establishes conditions, prepares analyses, and develops concepts, plans, programs and an organizational structure for planning, which will enable the SAF to grow to a necessary size. These documents will envisage a multi-phased and gradual increase, depending on the situation. Each member of the SAF peacetime component will have their role in the increase. All units will have permanent development cores within their structures, which will ensure the conditions for the increase.

The RS, and in particular the SAF, will devote appropriate attention to informing, motivating, training and offering drills for citizens interested in gaining military competences. It will support and use organizations, institutions, companies and associations developing military-relevant competences, such as medical, cyber, shooting, IT, wilderness survival skills, and so on.

The preconditions for a timely increase in military power are the continuous maintenance of situational awareness, timely preparation of the threat assessment, a clear and rapid process of strategic decision-making, the integration of the increase into the SAF's peacetime structure, and the establishment of an infrastructure and other material conditions facilitating the increase. Here, the connection between the SAF on the one hand, and individuals and society on the other, is very important.

**6.4 Managing military posture individually, with allies and partners**

The military postureof the SAF is an integral part of the broader military posture of NATO and the EU, Allied Forces and partner forces, which in particular ensures successful deterrence, and contributes to the fulfilment of other objectives. Efficient management of military posture ensures the most optimal deployment and use of SAF forces and capabilities. Particular attention should be paid to transitions from peace to crises, a state of emergency and war. This is the foundation for carrying out military activities successfully and effectively across the full spectrum of operation at home and abroad, independently, in close cooperation with other stakeholders of the national security system of the RS, and with Allied Forces and partner military (and other) forces and capabilities.

Through continuous participation in alliances, partnerships and coalitions, with a priority focus on NATO and the EU, and in particular by ensuring a credible contribution to international operations, missions, activities and other alliances, the SAF actively supports common efforts for maintaining and strengthening regional and global peace, security and stability. In accordance with the interests and objectives of the RS, the SAF will develop, enhance and upgrade bi- and multilateral cooperation within the wider Western Balkans region. All this ensures forward-oriented defence, expands the peace, security and stability belt around the RS, the EU and NATO, and directly enhances the national security of the RS.

The future operating environment (the environment of SAF operation) dictates the maintenance of military posture, which will be comprehensively integrated into the national and international environments, in all areas, domains and dimensions of operation and levels of warfare. A prudent, agile and decisive approach will clearly demonstrate the political will of the Republic of Slovenia, and enable forces and capabilities to have a preventive and early confrontation with all threats, based on intelligence information that is as comprehensive as possible.

A timely and appropriate response of the SAF depends on the appropriate operation of intelligence bodies. Cooperation with the national intelligence community and foreign sources of information, and connection and synchronization with the system for monitoring and exchanging NATO and EU intelligence, ensure threat detection, early warning and informing, situational awareness, and a comprehensive understanding and prediction of the operating environment.

The SAF will manage its military posture by:

* Participating in the further development and use of a more robust and integrated intelligence and reconnaissance system, and paying particular attention to identifying and responding to non-geographical threats;
* Using and developing forces and capabilities for preventive and continuous threat management, in particular with regard to the objective of deterrence, and readiness for an appropriate and flexible response to unpredictable events;
* Synchronizing strategic communication at all levels, knowledge of target groups and the operating environment, precise planning, and the ability to influence the behaviour of target populations;
* Continuously providing appropriate contributions to operations, missions, activities, response forces and other commitments, in accordance with the specified national interests of the RS;
* Further developing the host nation support system and being prepared to carry out such tasks, providing military mobility through the RS, and cooperating with security and other bodies in the RS;
* Persistently enhancing the range, complexity and closeness to real-life situations of collective training and exercises at national and international levels, including proactive cooperation with NATO and the EU;
* Continually developing, amending and implementing national home defence, which will be harmonized with NATO and EU plans and will include required domains;
* Seeking opportunities for assuming a more visible role in individual areas within NATO and the EU;
* Strengthening and using the national defence industry, research and development institutions, and innovative approaches as the factors of social resilience and influence enhancement in NATO and the EU.

A precondition for efficient management of military posture is the achievement and maintenance of the combat readiness, responsiveness and sustainability of the SAF. This is the centre of gravity of the military instrument of power and must become a basic activity and part of military culture, regardless of other tasks. Basic readiness elements are appropriate manning and material replenishment, constructed military infrastructure, appropriate skill and training level, built capabilities, achieved standards, and the feasibility of plans of use and operations. Appropriate readiness enables the responsiveness of forces.

Strategic communications, coordinated with Allies and partners, must be part of and support military posture. They must function as an effect multiplier, especially for maintaining the confidence of the Slovenian public and strengthening deterrence.

**6.5 The military defence of the Republic of Slovenia by relying on NATO and the EU**

On the foundation of the RS’s legal framework and the provisions of the North Atlantic Treaty and the Treaty of Lisbon, the military defence of the RS is predominantly based on the deterrence of a potential adversary. This means that, in accordance with the tasks set out in the Defence Act and Article 3 of the North Atlantic Treaty, it is based on an appropriate level of its own defence capability, and, in accordance with Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, on collective defence, and on the basis of Article 42.7 of the Lisbon Treaty, on mutual assistance. If necessary, the RS will participate with comprehensive and integrated operation in the collective defence of its Allies and mutual assistance in the EU.

The concept, plan and design of the military defence of the RS will be such that it will be able to respond to military threats or an armed attack on the country within collective defence, mutual assistance or independently. In terms of the country’s military strength, the scope and structure of the SAF, the command system, the readiness, responsiveness and resilience, and membership of NATO and the EU, military defence has primarily a deterrent character with the aim of withstanding an attack or preventing control or any other exploitation of the territory of the RS. In the event of a military threat or attack, the SAF, with the support of all the other defence and national security stakeholders, and by engaging in an integrated approach to defence, will defend the country and its citizens resolutely and steadfastly, with the aim of providing the time and conditions for the operation of the Alliance and the mutual assistance of the EU, and, in cooperation with them, safeguarding the sovereignty, territorial integrity and other vital interests of the RS.

The military aspect of the national security of the RS will be enhanced by credible and successful operation in NATO and the EU, with an emphasis on deterrence, and with an effective and successful military posture of the RS.

The operation of the SAF as the entity responsible for military defence is based on a comprehensive and integrated approach. The SAF can only carry out military defence successfully with the effective functioning of many functions of the state, including material and medical support, provision of energy, transport and information, and communication support, among others. In this the SAF is mainly supported by civil defence. It is important that civil defence contributes to the operational capabilities of the SAF in various phases of readiness and increase. The planning of civil defence operations is based on the timely, demonstrated requirements of the SAF, and constant coordination with civil defence entities. A comprehensive and integrated approach is taken by connecting the SAF to other instruments of national power, and the integration of the SAF into larger military formations, together with Allies and partners.

In the event of unsuccessful deterrence, military defence is carried out through direct defence within the framework of NATO’s collective defence and the mutual assistance of the EU, or by independent national defence, which may include unconventional operations in accordance with the security situation.

The SAF will:

* Operate in accordance with situational awareness, the timely identification of security threats, an analytical assessment of the situation, and a prediction of the development of the situation;
* Continually deter military threats through the readiness, responsiveness and sustainability of its forces;
* Address threats to the RS as far away from the territory of the RS as possible, by identifying and neutralizing military threats within collective and mutual assistance;
* Cooperate with other RS, EU and NATO stakeholders in responding to security threats and challenges with elements of military threat, including operating below the threshold of war;
* Carry out an increase in and the mobilization of forces in the event of an exacerbation of the security situation;
* Prevent direct military threats to the RS through the timely deployment of an increased size of forces, and carry out military defence of the RS together with Allies and partners;
* Provide conditions for operation in all phases of the implementation of military defence, whereby it will be primarily supported by civil defence and allies;
* Support the implementation of a comprehensive defence concept of the RS as an approach of the entire country to national defence;
* Carry out military defence in unfavourable circumstances, including unconventional operations, independently or together with Allies and partners, until sovereignty is restored in the entire territory of the RS.

**6.6 Cooperation of the SAF with other elements of the national security system and civil society**

Supporting other elements of the national security system in non-military tasks is not the SAF’s main task; however, the SAF is always ready to cooperate with them with part of its forces, in order to strengthen national resilience. Multidimensional resilience of the state and society contributes to the ability to deter and defend against any form of attack. The SAF will devote special attention to civil protection and disaster relief, and the synergy of operations with internal security. This will strengthen people’s protection and security, and consequently contribute to a stable and secure environment.

Military defence is complemented by civil defence, which facilitates synergies when facing both military and non-military threats. The elements of civil defence, including economic defence, psychological defence, and other non-military forms of defence, support the SAF, Allied Forces and partner forces in the conduct of deterrence and defence through actions, activities and capabilities.

The military defence of the country and the activities of the SAF and its Allies will be supported and reinforced by civil defence measures and activities and civilian capabilities. Many functions in society support military operations, primarily in the areas of energy supply, healthcare, transport, Information Communication Technology (ICT) support, water and food supply, as well as other needs. The contribution of civil defence to building and sustaining the increased size and structure of the SAF is of paramount importance. A timely and comprehensive demonstration of the needs of the SAF and its Allies is a necessary input to civil defence planning and operations.

As a part of the comprehensive operation of the defence forces, the national military defence may involve parts of organizations and associations active in the area of defence, as well as self-organized citizens, who will be integrated into a unified SAF chain of command. To this end, the SAF will strengthen its engagement with society and promote a holistic and integrated approach to national security and defence, seeking synergies in the areas of infrastructure, education and training, and joint planning.

With an adaptable organizational structure, the SAF will be ready for permanent, effective and integrated operation with other stakeholders of the national security system and local communities. In this way, it will contribute to the preparedness of its citizens for their country’s defence, and to the awareness and resilience of society.

Deterrence, military defence and other uses of the SAF are planned through a deliberate and comprehensive military planning process. The SAF Action Plan Group, Crisis Response Measures, Organization and Mobilization Development, and the SAF Mobilization Plan make up the SAF Deployment Plan, which is one of the pillars of the Defence Plan of the RS. The SAF will review the SAF Deployment Plan cyclically and adapt and upgrade it as necessary.

The SAF will proactively contribute, together with other instruments of national power, to ensuring an effective response to modern threats. One of the key factors of this approach is informing and influencing the selected public through coordinated strategic communications.

**7 IMPERATIVES OF THE SAF’S DEVELOPMENT**

The imperatives of the development and operation of the SAF determine what needs to be ensured to achieve the desired military effects in the future. The effects will be achieved independently, while within NATO and the EU they will ensure a decisive military advantage in the increasingly complex operating environment. With regard to this, it is key for the SAF to maintain strategic partnerships in the Alliance, the EU and in the region.

To implement the national security and defence interests and objectives of the RS, its commitments in NATO and the EU, and its credibility and military strategic objectives, the RS will allocate a sufficient proportion of Gross Domestic Product to the field of defence. The SAF should be appropriately manned with members of the regular and contract reserve component, which will provide, maintain and develop sufficient military capabilities and forces for implementing peacetime tasks, and provide the capacity to increase the forces.

The fundamental imperative will be providing the right people with appropriate competences and knowledge for working in a competitive environment and unclear situations, and using modern technology in a multi-domain and multidimensional environment. The continuous development of personnel will be ensured, and their cognitive capacities will be strengthened for resilience and responsiveness to modern threats and the control of remotely operated, robotized and autonomous combat systems. The strengthening of professionalism will be a continuous process.

Rapid societal change linked to advances in science and technology is an important factor influencing military action. Actors that can use technology to develop new capabilities will have a significant advantage. SAF service members will need to be information literate and digitally connected, able to operate intuitively in an information environment, with the ability to operate off-grid in the event of disruption or incapacitation, and in geographically separated territory. In such an environment, providing personnel with the appropriate intellectual and psychological capabilities and skills will be a major challenge.

Challenges in SAF operations will be new weapon systems (robotic and autonomous systems, artificial intelligence, cybernetics, systems supporting the space domain, hypersonic weapons, multi-purpose systems, quantum technologies) and the cognitive dimension, in particular information overload in the decision-making and decision-transfer process. An additional impact factor linked to technological development is convergence. Most new technology is linked and intertwined with other technologies. Future convergences are unpredictable and potentially threatening, in particular in the fields of biotechnology and related biosciences. Monitoring trends in the development of emerging military technologies will be key to identifying capability gaps, which will inform the development and building up future forces.

Operating in a highly competitive information environment, where information is no longer a mere amplifier of other sources of power but a power in itself, requires the development of technologies and capabilities to deliver impact in the cognitive domain. New technologies, in particular those which influence the behaviour of target populations, point to a fundamental change in future warfare.

The SAF will be able to operate in the physical, virtual and cognitive dimensions, independently, and in cooperation with Allies and partners. Within this framework, some of our members will take part in a multi-domain command, providing some of the information that is strategically important to the RS. The rapid acquisition, secure sharing, analysis and use of information will be essential. This will require bringing together different actors in the military and civilian environment, at home and abroad, to enable common understanding and relevant planning to achieve appropriate effects.

To enhance its influence among its Allies and partners, the SAF will seek untapped opportunities, which will enable it to promote the national interests and objectives. The SAF will develop capabilities based on comparative advantages and of special national importance.

The SAF will also increasingly strengthen its fighting power by introducing remotely controlled robotic and autonomous systems that need to be controlled by humans. Supported by these systems, the SAF will progressively ensure decisive manoeuvres. Non-kinetic capabilities will become increasingly important in the physical dimension, and especially in the virtual and cognitive dimensions.

An important factor influencing the fighting power of the SAF will be changes in the environment and the manner of warfare, which is continuously being modified and upgraded by potential adversaries. New doctrines and capabilities may represent completely different challenges and threats that the Allies will face in a multi-domain and multi-dimensional environment.

The development of modern technologies and changes in the operational environment must also be accompanied by regulations governing SAF operations at the national and international level. The SAF will need appropriate support from the competent authorities to complement and upgrade the regulations.

In order to further develop professionalism and achieve higher standards of individual and unit readiness, responsiveness, resilience and interoperability, and to carry out different forms of military service, labour and other regulations need to be better adapted to the nature of a professional armed forces, supplemented by various forms of contract reserve.

**8 CONCLUSION AND HOW TO PROCEED**

The Military Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia is a document that defines, at the strategic level, the implementation of military defence and the use of the SAF as a military instrument of power of the RS. The Military Strategy fills a previous gap in the strategic documents. It provides a link to this type of document in NATO and the EU, and provides information to other stakeholders in the national security system.

The military strategic thought systematically and formally recognized in the Military Strategy of the RS will be implemented through military education and training, the renewal of concepts and doctrines, and the development of concrete plans for the use and operation of the SAF. It is the basis for the SAF’s participation in the development of strategic, development and guidance documents of the national security and defence system.

The Military Strategy of the RS will be implemented through the long-term provision of sufficient and predictable personnel, material, financial and other resources, as well as the normative framework for the further development and operation of the SAF and the defence system. It should therefore be understood and used as a complementary document to the Resolution on the General Long-term Development and Equipping Program of the Slovenian Armed Forces, which defines in detail the capabilities and resources for military defence, and to the Military Doctrine (2006), which will be amended.

The Military Strategy of the RS is also significant in terms of some of the important innovations it introduces. It points out that in the modern security environment, military threats will mostly be part of other threats, which will be pursued below the threshold of war, with an upward trend. It clearly defines that the primary objective of the SAF is national security, and that the primary starting point for its operation is collective defence. It establishes the conditions for aligning national security documents with the new NATO and EU concepts and operation plans. It stresses that people and their perceptions are key to ensuring security. It highlights the importance of non-physical factors and the impact of technological developments on threats and providing security in the modern security environment. It stipulates that in peacetime and crisis, the SAF will fulfil its tasks with a peacetime structure, which will gradually increase with the escalation of threats and the probability of a transition from peace to war, and will be transformed into a wartime structure according to the principle of integration of the regular and reserve components. It highlights the need for an integrated approach, and the cooperation of all instruments of state power and the power of citizens in responding to contemporary security challenges and in managing military posture, deterrence and the conduct of military defence independently, in NATO and in the EU.

A key role in the Military Strategy of the RS has been played by the process of its development, which has contributed to the streamlining of military strategic thought and its alignment with the basic planning documents in the area of defence. As such, it provides a sufficiently solid and modern starting point for the operation and use of the SAF, mainly through the concept of integrated action with other stakeholders within the national security system of the RS, and within NATO and the EU.

Lack of awareness and understanding of security trends and threats is a risk to national security.

Failure to achieve military strategic objectives will increase the risk of not being able to preserve the fundamental values of the Slovenian society and our way of life, and of protecting and defending national interests and objectives.

The military strategy and its implementation will better prepare the RS for possible extreme defence and military challenges in the future.