

Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Defence of the Visegrad Group

Litoměřice, 4th May 2012

1. We, the Ministers of Defence of the Visegrad Group, met on 3rd and 4th May 2012, in Litoměřice, the Czech Republic, to discuss the current state and the future of defence cooperation between the V4 countries.
2. We have reaffirmed our commitment expressed in the joint V4 declaration “*Responsibility for a Strong NATO*” to further strengthen, through bilateral and regional and wider multinational cooperation, our collective defence capabilities; enhance interoperability of our armed forces and play a more active role within the international community, especially in NATO and the EU.
3. We are committed to delivering through the NATO Defence Planning Process our national capabilities necessary to contribute to the agreed Level of Ambition of the Alliance. In this respect we recognise the importance of mutual cooperation and coordination, especially considering the current budgetary realities.
4. In our agenda, we covered the following items: Capability development, interoperability, joint training and exercises, potential joint acquisitions, partnership cooperation and the mission in Afghanistan. We coordinated our national positions ahead of the upcoming NATO Chicago Summit where decisions will be made regarding the afore-mentioned areas.
5. We remain committed to strengthening our national **defence capabilities to be offered both to NATO and the EU**. Through involvement in specific projects, we are ready to contribute to international initiatives, such as Smart Defence under the auspices of NATO or Pooling & Sharing within the EU.
6. We welcome the progress achieved in the establishment of the **Visegrad Group European Union Battlegroup (V4 EU BG) in the first half of 2016 under Polish leadership** that will exceed 3,000 personnel. We agreed to use this project as a vehicle for increasing our combat capacity also through the live exercise of the V4 EU BG in the second half of 2015, which is further supported by enhanced cooperation in the field of common logistics. We will continue to assess potential participation of our partners to this project.
7. We will continue to strengthen our cooperation through projects where our countries actively participate and that have already produced results. These include: The NATO Centres of Excellence in V4 countries, the Multinational Logistics Coordination Centre, the NATO Multinational Military Police Battalion and the Deployable CIS (Communication Information System)

Module. We reaffirm our determination to capitalize on and further develop these achievements.

8. We have identified several areas with a **potential for intensified cooperation** through specific individual commitments, among others:
 - Air controller training (FAC/JTAC);
 - Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear defence (CBRN);
 - Helicopter pilot training;
 - Logistics cooperation;
 - Medical treatment facilities;
 - Multinational experimentation;
 - Training in Counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) and Explosive Ordnance Devices (EOD).
9. Our contribution to the security of **Afghanistan** has been significant. Over time, we have gradually increased our military and civilian efforts, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Currently, together we have over **3,600** troops deployed in the NATO ISAF operation. Afghanistan has also been an important driver in the transformation of our armed forces. We will continue to work together on using the lessons learned in Afghanistan in our future cooperation.
10. Furthermore, we are committed to contributing to the sustainability of the Afghan National Security Forces, which we see as a vital precondition for a successful transition. The involvement of our military expertise, particularly through the use of our training and mentoring capacities, will help to build a safe and stable Afghanistan.
11. As the ISAF mission in Afghanistan moves to its final stage by the end of 2014, we consider **exercises**, both specialised and at a **NATO Response Force** level, to be an appropriate mechanism to ensure the continued transformation of our armed forces and an instrument to maintain and further develop the **interoperability** of our forces. In this context, we are determined to provide substantial force contributions to the STEADFAST JAZZ 2013 exercise as well as to other multinational military exercises in support of **Article V** scenarios in our region, such as:
 - CAPABLE LOGISTICIAN 2013 (coordinated by Prague-based MLCC, taking place in Slovakia) focusing on common logistics;
 - DUNAJ (Hungary in 2012) which will bring our engineers together;
 - CRYSTAL EAGLE (Poland in 2012) with participation of the NATO Multinational Military Police Battalion.

12. We consider NATO Defence Planning Process as a basic instrument for delivering capabilities within the Alliance; therefore our national defence planning processes need to be aligned with the NDPP. We have tasked our experts to explore ways to better **harmonise our national defence planning cycles and plans** in order to identify opportunities for further cooperation in areas such as equipment life cycle management; strategic transportation; air defence; CBRN; quality assurance or cyber defence. We also endorse the role of defence planning as a prerequisite for possible **joint acquisitions**.
13. We want to create synergies in providing **assistance in defence sector reform to partner nations**. We discussed the willingness to develop a comprehensive menu of training, education and assistance opportunities to be made available to our partners with Euro-Atlantic aspirations.
14. We welcome the initiative of the **Defence Austerity V4 (DAV4)** project as a source of inspiration and will discuss its further development.
15. We expressed our thanks to the Czech Presidency of the V4 and expressed our readiness to continue the development of defence cooperation between the Visegrad Group countries during the upcoming Polish Presidency.

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Tomasz Siemoniak

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Csaba Hende

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Peter Brňo

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Alexandr Vondra

on behalf of Martin Glváč