

Joint Communiqué of the Visegrad Group Ministers of Defence
23 April, 2015
Tomášov

We, the Ministers of Defence of the Visegrad Group, met on 23 April 2015 in Tomášov (Slovak Republic) to evaluate the actions and results of the current Slovak Presidency and to decide on the future of our defence cooperation.

To implement the objectives established in the Long Term Vision of the Visegrad Countries on Deepening their Defence Cooperation, we endorsed the Action Plan of the Visegrad Group Defence Cooperation. It also takes into account proposals put forward in the New Opening Concept. Its main purpose is to ensure the continuity of V4 defence cooperation, to proceed with existing projects and initiatives, and finally to turn prospective activities and efforts of the rotating Presidencies into tangible results. We truly believe this framework document is the most suitable tool for enhancing V4 defence cooperation. We are committed to the regular updating of the document by each Presidency in order to ensure its relevance.

Furthermore, the V4 Training and Exercise Strategy was endorsed to increase interoperability among the V4 countries' armed forces and thus visibly contributing to NATO's robust exercise program. The Strategy tasks V4 planners to prepare exercise plans every four years, starting with the first cycle 2016 – 2020. To ensure the implementation of the Strategy, we hereby task our Chiefs of Defence to prepare and endorse the 2016 – 2020 Midterm Plan of Training Opportunities.

Willing to support national defence educational systems of the V4 countries, we agreed to establish the Visegrad Group Military Educational Platform (VIGMILEP) in order to coordinate efforts regarding the use, planning, pooling and/or sharing of V4 professional military education and research capabilities, to promote quality assurance systems, and to guarantee the best achievable level of education and training of military officers and other experts in the area of security and defence according to EU/NATO standards.

During the Slovak Presidency, we put into place new formats of cooperation including that of the Senior Body at the level of State Secretaries/Policy Directors as well as the V4 Planning Group (V4 PG) at the national planning and procurement expert level. As a result of their work we believe the following areas are to be considered the most promising for further cooperation:

- Training and Exercises
- Joint Logistics Support Group
- CBRN
- Joint Terminal Attack Controllers
- Special Operations Tactical Training



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The project of Advanced Ground Combat Vehicle was recognised as another area with a high potential for intensive cooperation among V4 countries and is thus worth further discussion. In addition, this project might serve as a vehicle to initiate more intensive cooperation among V4 defence industries.

In identifying these areas we also take into consideration the fact that regionally developed capabilities can be offered as a joint V4 contribution to fulfil capability gaps within multinational initiatives. In order to further support the work of the V4 PG, we agreed to establish working teams for each of the above mentioned areas. We hereby task the Senior Body to oversee the process of creating structures to provide the best suited solutions in these areas under the lead of a facilitating nation.

Regarding Cross-Border Operations (CBO), we shared already existing bilateral agreements among each other with the main aim to harmonise texts with the currently prepared agreements. Bilateral agreements should serve as a first step towards developing regional cooperation. We supported today the idea of “V4 Cross-Border Operations” and we hereby task our military experts to analyse feasibility of conducting joint V4 airspace protection. Their initial conclusions should be presented during the Prime Ministers’ meeting at the end of the Slovak Presidency.

We continue to seek common solutions to meet the commitments made at the NATO Summit in Wales. Especially, we are determined to find a common approach to implementing Readiness Action Plan-related measures on the NATO Response Force, Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, NATO Force Integration Units and increase the readiness of the Multinational Corps Northeast in Szczecin. In this regard, we discussed possible V4 activities related to the establishment of NATO Force Integration Units with the aim to identify the way of how the Visegrad Group could contribute. We tasked our Defence Policy Directors to coordinate further work on this issue. It is our understanding that compatibility between NFIUs’ tasks and the V4 Training and Exercise Strategy should be used to the fullest possible extent. In light of the recent security situation developments, we will in depth analyse all options related to the establishment of the Permanent V4 Modular Force operational for NATO and EU Rapid Reaction Forces as well as for crisis management tasks. We are determined to contribute through our common effort to the success of the Warsaw Summit.

We discussed the shared approach on how to contribute on a sustainable basis to ongoing NATO’s assurance measures under the Visegrad Group heading. This year the V4 European Union Battlegroup (V4 EU BG) certification exercise COMMON CHALLENGE 2015 will take place together with NATO High Visibility Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 2015. We also envisage to organise high level political consultations in order to discuss the most important issues concerning possible deployment of the V4 EU BG. We appreciate all the efforts and work done throughout the preparation phase of the joint Battlegroup and we are ready to start mutual consultations on the preparation of the V4 EU BG 2019 under Polish leadership.



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We have tasked our national experts to evaluate the on-going changes of NATO and EU Rapid Response capabilities and their effect on our future commitments. They also need to identify solutions in order to align our commitments for strengthening future contributions in the best possible manner (NATO Response Force – NRF, Very High Readiness Joint Task Force – VJTF, EU BG, operations, training and exercises).

Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine as well as provocative activities along the eastern border of NATO have profoundly challenged the security architecture in our region. Therefore, we are continuing to provide strong support to Ukraine to improve its own security by contributing to NATO trust funds, providing humanitarian assistance and conducting expert military courses at our national training facilities. We will continue to support Ukraine in its efforts and the implementation of wide-ranging reforms in the security sector. Ukraine also participates in the V4 EU BG.

We support the strengthening of the Common Security and Defence Policy in the EU. In this regard, the conclusions of the June 2015 European Council should provide further strategic impetus to its development. Decision on drafting a new European security strategy that addresses changing security environment, including unveiling crisis in our Eastern and Southern neighbourhood, will send a strong political message that EU is determined to remain relevant player in the area of defence and security. In this regard, we would like to draw attention to EU Partnerships, namely that of EU-NATO, as well as to regional cooperation in line with harmonisation of NATO and EU actions.

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