



CEPI

**CENTRAL EUROPEAN
POLICY INSTITUTE**

Member of
STRATEGY COUNCIL

75 SOLUTIONS FOR SLOVAKIA'S DEFENCE

Jaroslav Nad', Marian Majer, Milan Šuplata

75 SOLUTIONS FOR SLOVAKIA'S DEFENCE

Ten years after the country's accession to NATO, the situation of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic and the Defence Sector is quite unflattering. It is a reflection of the disconnect between the modernisation requirements of the Slovak Armed Forces and the resources available to carry this out. The lack of political interest, inadequate allocation of funds, serious shortcomings in strategic and defence planning, the absence of comprehensive projects for systemic armaments as well as long-term instability in personnel are some of the reasons why Slovakia today lags behind most of its allies in terms of overall military preparedness as well as the quality of equipment and armament. The Central European Policy Institute (CEPI) drew attention to this fact in May 2014 at a press conference where they presented a document entitled „Ten problems of Slovakia's defence“.

In association with renowned experts we are today putting forward our proposal of 75 solutions for the key areas of the country's defence. Like the problems identified, these solutions are a non-exhaustive list. This initiative is not meant to replace the processes and mechanisms that are the responsibilities of the state, but rather to augment these with a broad expert and public discussion in Slovakia about defence and security as well as to propose specific solutions from an expert viewpoint.

STRATEGY AND PLANNING

One of the long-standing issues is strategic disinterest in defence among most of the leading representatives of the country. This is further exacerbated by the fact that defence legislation and institutional mechanisms for the formulation of defence policy are fundamentally outmoded. This is why it is necessary for all levels of governance to pay adequate attention not only to the formulation of strategies, plans and concepts, but also to follow through with implementation once they are adopted. Attention must also be paid to updating strategic papers and legislation and the institutional mechanisms of decision-making. With regard to strategy and planning we recommend:

1. Setting up a permanent [state authority](#) or an institutionalised inter-ministerial [working party](#) authorised to draw up, with the involvement of a broader-based expert community, a new Security Strategy for the Slovak Republic, a new Defence Strategy of the Slovak Republic as well as work on visions for future defence development. We recommend that the adoption of a legal basis for setting-up [specialist committees](#) with presidential, governmental or parliamentary mandate to review essential issues of the security and defence policy be assessed.
2. The introduction, in line with the model applied in NATO and the EU, of a binding transparent mechanism within the Defence Ministry and sector [for processing documents](#) (strategic, conceptual, and planning) with the engagement of representatives of all relevant branches of the Defence Sector, including the General Staff.
3. The introduction of regular official [consultations between the President](#) and the Chief of Defence Staff. To institute regular meetings between the [Defence Minister College](#) and leading representatives of the Ministry's relevant sections with a view to ensuring a high level of expertise input to documents adopted. [Regular coordination meetings involving selected departments of the Defence Ministry sector](#) where key issues will be discussed, respective positions aligned and information shared should be held.
4. [The existing legislation](#) governing the Slovak Armed Forces be amended or new legislation be adopted so that the legislation reflects developments and changes in the security environment and the current requirements of the Armed Forces, including the involvement of the Slovak Armed Forces in NATO and EU Response Forces. Defence legislation should be adapted with a view to [clearly defining the processes](#) for the submission of strategic documents and modernisation plans for adoption by the Government, parliamentary committees and the Parliament as a whole.
5. [Defence policy orientation](#) for the forthcoming year (with a view to the following year) and defence budgeting for the next six years at least be drawn up and submitted on an annual basis on a set date
6. Slovakia's [Security System Concept](#), including a transversal analytical centre at government level with a view to enhancing the state's capability to adequately respond to crisis situations be adopted as soon as possible. The legislative status of the [Slovak Security Council](#) should be reviewed in order to strengthen its decision-making powers and increase the frequency of its sessions.
7. A [process of strategic defence reviews](#) at regular intervals covering the assessment of security environment, long-term defence policy objectives as well as the development of defence and the Armed Forces be enshrined within Slo-

vakia's defence institutions. The result of the strategic defence review – 'The White Paper on defence of the Slovak Republic – should be submitted to the Parliament for adoption. The aim being the attainment of political consensus on the key issues of the country's defence over the term of a government.

8. A [defence development plan](#) up to the year 2025 be submitted at governmental and parliamentary levels.
9. Slovakia's [classified information protection system](#) with those of NATO and the EU be synchronised. Relationships between related classified information subsystems should be identified in order to ensure their intercommunications and synergy. Relevant documents that deal with the protection of classified information in the Defence Sector (i.e. the concept, the list of classified information, guidelines, and methodology) should be revised.

INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION

The insufficient transparency in defence policy objectives as well as the divergent views and stances of government ministers and less predictable government's position on defence and security matters has eroded the confidence of the allies and partners. This is why it is necessary to take steps that ensure Slovakia is seen as a country with clear and credible positions and policies in order to reinforce confidence. With regard to international relations we recommend:

10. That a framework national position of our [contribution to NATO and EU agendas](#) on key security issues be prepared and updated regularly.
11. A specific [action plan for defence cooperation](#) (multinational as well as bilateral) within the scope of smart defence, pooling and sharing of capabilities be submitted and regularly updated.
12. Regular, adequately represented, attendance at [NATO and EU negotiations](#). When allocating financial resources to the Ministry and Defence Sector for travel and meetings abroad, priority should be given to attending meetings of NATO committees, the EU and other international organisations of which Slovakia is a member.
13. A parliamentary mandate including the approval of funding to enhance the credibility of [Slovakia's international commitments](#), including regional cooperation projects, be obtained.
14. The engagement of the [diplomatic corps](#) accredited to the Slovak Republic in the activities of the Defence Ministry be increased up to the same standard as the allies and partners do it. A long-term schedule to give regular briefings on topical issues to the military Diplomatic Corps by leading representatives of the Defence Ministry and the General Staff should be introduced.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The key challenge faced by the Slovak Defence Sector is a lack of financial resources resulting from the declining share of GDP allocated for military spending. Military spending has been cut by a third and went down to a critical level of one per cent after 2009. It is necessary not only to stop this decline, but to also provide for a significant increase in military spending, especially in light of the need for the extensive modernisation of the armaments of the Slovak Armed Forces. With regard to the financial aspects we recommend:

15. Signing a political agreement between the governing political party and the opposition on a [mechanism for financing defence](#) and by means of a constitutional law, specify ways to gradually increase military expenditure. The aim being the fulfilment of the collective defence commitments, 2% of GDP for defence, 20% of which will be allocated to ensuring adequate military modernisation.
16. An annual binding procurement plan covering a 3-year period including funding arrangements be submitted. Expenditure planning with a 6-year view in order to provide for [long-term procurement planning](#) should be maintained.
17. [Transparency](#) in providing information on military expenditure be improved. The transparency of national information provided about Slovakia's financial and strategic plans to NATO and the EU should be increased.
18. The [operational deployment](#) of Slovak Armed Forces' contribution to NATO and EU Response Forces from sources other than the Defence Ministry budget be funded. The [modernisation](#) of the key types of military equipment should be funded from sources other than the Defence Ministry budget by means of contracts monitored by the Government.
19. [Regular meetings](#) between the members of the Parliamentary Finance and Budget Committee and the Defence and Security Committee and the leading representatives of the Defence Ministry and the Armed Forces be initiated in order to share information on the priorities and plans of the Defence Sector.

SYSTEMIC MODERNIZATION

In the near term, the modernisation of equipment and armament must be an absolute priority to the leadership of the country and the Defence Sector. That process must be based on a thorough and systemic analysis of deficiencies in defence capabilities, the options to address them, the life cycles of the individual weapons systems, the capacity of the training facilities and requirements for deploying these weapon systems in international environment. Capabilities development projects must be based on a sequence of steps covering visions, strategies, concepts and long-term plans, to armament plans, research and development as well as procurement. At the same time, it is essential to address the

need to update the individual types of armament, equipment and material, while avoiding inefficient partial and often temporary improvements that are non-effectual, logistically demanding and unnecessarily expensive in terms of operating. It is required to as much as possible eliminate ad hoc provisions for operational requirements that are often made to the detriment of planned and systemic procurement. With regard to armament we recommend:

20. The thorough application of [standardised NATO procedures and methods](#) when modernising equipment and armament. Broadly implement the principles of scientific, comprehensive and collective assessment with a view to eliminating unnecessary influences. The function of the [Military and Technical Development Council](#) as an advisory body to the Defence Minister should be reinstated.
21. Decisions to be made about the Armed Forces development and strategic projects are based on broad [political consensus](#) since such investments of public funds often span more than one term of office. Modernisation plans be discussed and approved at the [government and parliamentary levels](#) in order to make them binding and thus facilitate systemic financial planning and procurement processes. These steps would go a long way to ensuring the stability of projects, structures, personnel and primarily financing. This has not been the case in the past and it led to significant financial and time losses. Ensure [public support](#) for the implementation of modernisation projects.
22. It is essential to base modernisation plans on the [realities of the Armed Forces](#) and their individual capabilities. Bias in their assessment and the politically motivated attempts to paint a rosy picture of our capabilities hamper the ability to make appropriate decisions as well as create unnecessary political pressure.
23. [Generation replacement in modernisation](#), while thoroughly assessing the capacity of economically efficient and militarily acceptable modernisation of the existing armament, equipment and ammunition be given preference.
24. Focus on modernisation projects that [maintain the key capabilities](#) of the Slovak Armed Forces by taking into consideration the lifecycles of the individual weapons systems and their needs, i.e. helicopter aviation, radar systems, transport aviation, fighter aviation, ground equipment, and air defence.
25. The dependence on the [Russian Federation](#) for the supply of spare parts and ammunition be reduced by procuring new military equipment primarily originating from NATO and EU countries.
26. Other NATO [countries that operate Russian equipment](#) with a view to examining the possibility of mutual exchange of spare parts and repairs be worked with. This form of cooperation should at least begin with the Visegrad 4 group, possibly expanding to other countries.
27. NATO Support Agency ([NSPA](#)) and European Defence Agency ([EDA](#)) be used more extensively in procuring defence arma-

ment, equipment and material, improving time and financial efficiency, transparency, interoperability and possibility to get contracts for the domestic defence industry. Plans should be made sufficiently in advance, procurement should be harmonised with the Alliance partners, building on the experiences of other countries, and using our official representation in Brussels.

28. A course of action be prepared to use more extensively NATO Security Investment Program ([NSIP](#)), including the list of potential new projects for infrastructure modernisation. The organisational unit previously responsible for the planning and implementation of NSIP projects within the Defence Sector should be re-established. Specific NSIP-funded [infrastructure building/modernisation projects](#) should be submitted.
29. The possibilities for [regional cooperation](#) in the modernisation processes be examined. This should involve deepening defence cooperation with the Visegrad region countries, while taking into consideration their individual priorities and specificities.
30. In line with the EU market rules, direct and efficient modernisation-related cooperation between the Defence Sector and the [domestic defence industry](#) be provided for. This should include the timely announcements of procurement plans as well as setting up a platform for transparent and open interactions between leading representatives of the Defence Sector and the defence industry.
31. The powers of the Slovak [Chief of Defence Staff and National Armaments Director](#) be reinstated, notably the substantive scope of powers, financial responsibility and budget disposal powers to bring it into line with the standards applicable in other NATO member countries.

MANAGEMENT RATIONALISATION

In spite of a series of initiatives taken in recent years to reduce the scale of defence infrastructure, it is still too extensive. Before further rationalisation is done, the ownership of any unused or abandoned infrastructure needs to be addressed by selling or assigning such assets. This would save money that would be otherwise used for maintenance. It is also necessary to address the outstanding issues around the functioning of semi-budgetary and budgetary organisations within the Defence Sector. With regard to infrastructure we recommend:

32. Consideration be given to the inclusion of the Defence Sector infrastructure into a broader state infrastructure framework and/or provide for infrastructure sharing by the individual ministries and their sectors. Re-consider in that respect older ideas of creating so-called [government town](#) in order to achieve significant savings over a long period.
33. [Plans](#) are drawn up [for the further rationalisation of military bases and facilities](#) so that by 2018 they would be in line with the actual requirements of the Slovak Armed Forces. Such

plan must include a proposal to address ownership rights, which will help with the rationalisation process.

34. The [number of leisure time facilities](#) within the Ministry of Defence portfolio be [reduced](#).
35. The number of [military airports](#) be cut from three to two in line with NATO recommendations based on the assessments presented to the Ministry of Defence and stated in the previous conceptual documents.
36. The [air squadron of the Ministry of the Interior and that of the Ministry of Defence](#) be merged in line with the standards in other NATO member countries.
37. That the monitoring and control of budgetary and semi-budgetary organisations within the Ministry of Defence portfolio be centralised in order to streamline their functions.
38. The following systemic measures be adopted with regards to budgetary and semi-budgetary organisations: the transparency of the operations of [Vojenské lesy a majetky a.s.](#) (company in charge of military forests and assets) needs to be increased, measures designed to depoliticise the [military health care system](#) need to be adopted, the future of the [Military Archive](#) with a view to preserving historical military documents should be addressed, a conclusion on the [future of the sports club VSC Dukla](#) needs to be reached, in the event that it remains in the sector, adequate provisions for its financing should be made.
39. Progress be made in the [ICT area, outsourcing and the reduction of the bureaucratic burden](#) on the Defence Sector with a view to simplifying processes and making long-term savings.

PERSONNEL STABILITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Personnel changes and insufficient professional development of competences of civil servants have resulted in a reduced capacity of the state to make decisions in the security policy area. It is therefore necessary to focus on the education and training provided to civilian and military staff as well as on creating appropriate conditions for their work. Equally important is the expansion of cooperation between the Defence Sector and other institutions that perform security and defence functions with expert community working outside the civil service sector. With regard to personnel we recommend:

40. That the four years of preparations to adopt a new [Act on civil service for professional soldiers](#) be finalised in order to comprehensively lay out the activities and of tasks to be performed by professional soldiers. The Act should maintain a balance between tasks, powers and responsibilities and adequate evaluation of individual military competences.
41. A [personnel management strategy](#) for civilian employees of the

Ministry of Defence should be drawn up and should include obligatory security and defence-related career training with a view to ensuring long-term and motivating career development in the defence and security sectors. An [amendment to the Civil Service Act](#) should be initiated to cover this.

42. More emphasis should be put on personnel stability and growth through [thorough planning](#) of short-term and medium-term courses and rotation of staff on secondment to institutions abroad.
43. A [permanent advisory body](#) to the Defence Minister consisting of security and defence policy experts (former Armed Forces staff, generals, representatives from NGOs, academia, etc.) who will be regularly consulted about decisions with significant effects on the objectives, policies and functioning of the Defence Sector should be set up.
44. The [national security course](#) offered by the Armed Forces Academy of General M.R.Stefanik (AOS) be reinstated and courses taken in renowned educational institutions abroad be incorporated. This course should be offered as a part of training for civil servants from various ministries involved with security and defence matters.
45. The introduction of a [rotation of civilian and military staff](#) from the Ministry of Defence and General Staff between the individual components of the sector in the form of regular short-term placements.
46. A strict requirement for [security clearance](#) and access to classified information for selected staff in all state administration and local administration offices, whose jobs involve state security and defence, civil protection and crisis management, with a view of engaging them in the formulation of the security and defence policy and dealing with crisis situations.
47. [The Institute for Security and Defence Studies](#) should be made subordinate to the Defence Minister and more intensively involved in the formulation of strategic, conceptual and planning documents in the field of security and defence at sectorial and national levels.
48. The [system of internships](#) for university undergraduates and NGO staff in all Ministry of Defence units should be institutionalised so that they could be involved in the work process. Internships are to become an integral part of the personnel policy (preparation of a new generation of experts) and communication strategy.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PREPAREDNESS

Preparedness of soldiers is one of the key prerequisites for the country's adequate defensive capacity as well as appropriate contribution to collective defence and security in line with our commitments. To enhance that capacity, it is necessary to make better use of regional cooperation possibilities and international

exercises, innovative methods of education, and to pay attention to the training of civilian staff within and outside the Defence Sector. With regard to education and training we recommend:

49. **Transparency** in the evaluation of compliance with military tasks and preparedness of troops be **increased**. Regular provision of information by the Chief of Defence Staff **to the President, Government and Parliament** on the condition of the Armed Forces should be introduced.
50. Slovakia get involved systemically in large **international exercises**, at least those taking place in the V4 and Central Europe region. Long-term plans for participation with the V4 partners should be made. We should send such types and numbers of troops to such exercises that reflect realistic requirements of the Armed Forces and not on the basis of the lowest costs and easiest availability. **Funds** available after the ISAF mission completion should be transferred to the benefit of training intensification.
51. Slovak soldiers be provided with the possibility to get involved in **NATO's online distributed exercises** by putting in place basic communication infrastructure that facilitate working with classified information. The creation of courses involving **distance learning via the Internet** should be initiated, reducing education costs as well as soldiers' isolation from their work places.
52. A **customer-oriented package** be created in respect of **the comprehensive use of the Lešť training facility** and other military specialist facilities (e.g. Zemianske Kostol'any, Nováky and Záhorie) by potential foreign users.
53. The intensity of **crisis management exercises** at national and international levels be improved, paying special attention to exercises targeted at the defence of Slovakia's territory and/or the territory of its allies in accordance with Article 5 of the Washington Treaty.
54. The formation of **active reserves** and corresponding legislation be addressed so that they could provide the Slovak Armed Forces with additional capabilities in times of crises. Active reserves should not be designed as a social policy instrument.
55. The educational and training mobility of soldiers (particularly officers) and civilian staff be boosted – including a better use of the **military Erasmus** programme as well as attendance of good quality specialised courses abroad. The partners should be approached with a proposal for the creation of a **Visegrad programme for defence mobility**, enabling intensive and efficient mobility within the region.
56. Regional cooperation in the area of training and education be deepened by offering joint **Visegrad courses and exercises**, while fully utilising the capacity of the Armed Forces Academy. Within the V4 group a more substantial **harmonisation of education programmes and training** programmes should be initiated, bringing them closer to NATO standards.
57. Support be given to the establishment of a **joint Visegrad education centre** in the town of Liptovský Mikuláš and/or a joint military academy with a view to making efficient use of funds

and improving the quality of services provided. Within the V4 cooperation efforts, a **regional International Staff Officer Course (ISOC)** should be offered. Currently such course is offered to Partnership for Peace countries and other allies and partners by Slovakia on its own.

58. A comprehensive strategy for **enhancing language training** offered to soldiers with a view to improving interoperability be prepared. Courses offered by AOS should be translated into the English language, making them more attractive to foreign students and improving teacher mobility. Staff exercises as well as other training formats and methods should be carried out in the English language.
59. The life-long learning system be improved by **assessing professional knowledge**. Such tests should become part of individual evaluation for professional soldiers as well as regular evaluation of military units. The conditions should be made more **motivating** through career growth, secondments and placements abroad, and financial remuneration.
60. Attention be paid to the vocational training of officers in particular, but also civilian staff and key persons outside the Defence Sector, notably those working in political parties and in public administration.

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

Professional military intelligence is a key capability of the Armed Forces, becoming even more prominent when it is necessary to respond to a crisis situation, such as the current conflict in Ukraine. It is necessary to put an end to the politicisation of this unit and re-focus on its development exclusively on the professional basis. With regard to military intelligence we recommend:

61. A **professional team** be built by strictly adhering to personnel selection criteria in order to ensure the international acceptance of the service. Emphasis should be placed on the required education in the field of intelligence as well as personal integrity and clean records.
62. The rapid and unjustified promotion of young intelligence staff to high-ranking officers and temporary assign high ranking officers to Military Intelligence be stopped in order to **halt the tendency of decreasing qualitative requirements** for the work of higher-ranking officers.
63. The numbers of staff responsible for **counter-intelligence service** (in line with the decrease in numbers of the Slovak Armed Forces) be reduced and the number of staff in charge of **military intelligence** operation be increased in line with standards in NATO member countries.
64. A **flexible personnel and competence model** be introduced, enabling efficient interactions between the Military Intelligence and the General Staff intelligence units.
65. A **plan for the provision of intelligence** to other Defence Sector units be drawn up annually in order to use such information in background documents at international negotiations. It

is important to improve the [focus of intelligence information provision](#) on information relevant for the real implementation of the security and defence policy.

66. The parliamentary oversight of the intelligence services be strengthened by introducing a second layer of control in the form of a [special commission](#) of the Parliament consisting of deputies and security experts, while all commission members must have security clearance with the highest level of Top Secret.
67. Regular (twice a year) detailed [reporting on the use of funds](#) for the operation of the military intelligence to the Parliamentary Committee for the Control of the Activities of the Military Intelligence.
68. [Publicly scrutinised measures](#) be carried out with a view to preventing the potential for non-transparent disposal and management of state assets and/or the abuse of wiretapping and other means of surveillance. [The Military Intelligence budget should be declassified.](#)

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

To ensure appropriate provision of information to the lay and expert public on the priorities, plans and implementation of the key activities of the Defence Sector, it is essential to implement public information mechanisms that will enhance the transparency of the sector's activities and operations as well as all decisions adopted. That is the only way of avoiding misgivings and suspicions that have cyclically emerged with regard to this sector in the last decade. With regard to public diplomacy we recommend:

69. The [Comprehensive Defence Assessment](#) be publicly presented by the Defence Minister and Chief of Defence Staff and explanatory and assessing presentation be made to the plenary session of the Parliament on an annual basis.

Its unsubstantiated classification should be cancelled since it is a standard transparency instrument of public diplomacy.

70. Thorough and [regular reporting to the Government](#) by the Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministers following any key international meetings (such as NATO summit, European Council meetings, meetings of defence and foreign affairs ministers of NATO and EU countries) be re-introduced.
71. The [Communication strategy of the Ministry of Defence](#) be updated along with annually updated action plans. Communication should be decentralised and individual communicators, including professional soldiers, should be provided with professional training.
72. The regular attendance of national and international [conferences](#) by leading representatives of the Defence Sector to communicate with the expert public.
73. Regular visits by military units with the participation of leading officials of the Ministry of Defence to [secondary schools](#) be arranged for. The benefits of the re-introduction of [wearing military uniform](#) in public as an instrument for strengthening pride in being a professional soldier should be considered and assessed.
74. The existing Ministry of Defence Declaration on [cooperation with non-governmental non-profit organisations](#) be implemented. Semi-annual meetings with NGOs should be held in order to share information on forthcoming activities and in cooperation with the NGO sector. Plans should be made for the annual participation of the Defence Minister and other leading officials of the Defence Ministry in major public diplomacy events in the field of security and defence.
75. The maximum transparency requirement be complied with and applied to the Defence Ministry [grant system](#) for NGOs. It is also important to comply with the legal requirements for time limits and other aspects of the grant provision process.

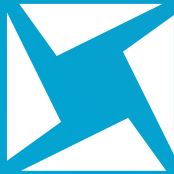
Jaroslav Nad', Marian Majer, Milan Šuplata

Special thanks for their help and advice during the preparations of the text of this publication go to Vladimír Bednár, Gen. Lubomír Bulík, Matej Kováč, Gabriel Merňák, Martin Muránsky, Mário Nicolini, Róbert Radič, Lubomír Tokár, Ján Veteráni and a number of other experts caring about the improvement of the state's defence.

www.cepolicy.org
info@cepolicy.org
www.facebook.com/cepolicy
www.twitter.com/cepolicy



The Central European Policy Institute (CEPI) is a regional think-tank based in Bratislava, Slovakia. Its main objective is to help decision-makers and opinion-makers in Central Europe - and in V4 countries in particular - to craft common responses to current challenges and strengthen their voice in EU and NATO debates.



CEPI

**CENTRAL EUROPEAN
POLICY INSTITUTE**

**Member of
STRATEGY COUNCIL**



STRATEGY COUNCIL

EMPOWERING CENTRAL EUROPE IN GLOBAL AFFAIRS