

THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITHUANIAN ARMED FORCES: VIEW AHEAD

Giedre Statkeviciute *

I. Introduction

The process of the restoration of the Lithuanian Armed Forces commenced in 1990. Defence structure redevelopment rather than structure reform was the main issue. It was necessary to develop the basic legislation to regulate the place and objectives of the military structures within the Lithuanian democratic society. From the very beginning there was a clear desire to develop Lithuanian Armed Forces to be compatible to the models operated by other western countries. Therefore, it could be said that the development of a national defence system is resting on two cornerstones: enhancement of the country's self-defence capability and development of a defence system interoperable with NATO.

A defence budget growth that will enable us to achieve our strategic objectives is being supported by a favourable economic and political climate in the country. Lithuania's dynamic economic development allows us to increase defence spending substantially. On a current basis, Lithuania has increased its defence budget twice in 1998. Now it makes up 1.5 per cent of the GDP. This growth will continue and we will reach the level of 2 per cent by 2001.

Understanding that integration into the Western European security structures demands that Lithuania becomes a security provider able to share all obligations in this area, Lithuania pays great attention to the interoperability with NATO. Two important tasks have already been accomplished: Democratic and civilian control over the Armed forces and the adoption of a national security strategy. This has led to a complete revision of the military strategy and to a new force structure. The integration process towards NATO serves as a very strong factor to determine the modernisation of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. This is a long-term process, but the steps already taken have been very successful. The co-operation with NATO troops and participation in operations under NATO command provide Lithuanian soldiers with skills and experience, which are essential to the development of an overall interoperability with NATO forces.

By establishing effective chains of command, adjusting the planning, program and budget process, by improving various procedures, the military training and quality of life of the officers and soldiers, Lithuania has made significant progress in many areas.

II. The Command and Control System

The structural development of the Lithuanian Armed Forces is based on the new Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. The Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service outlines a new concept of command and control which adopts the unified command concept in accordance with Lithuanian National Plans and NATO standards. The new command and control structure consists of:

- The strategic level of command – development of military strategy; this function will be fulfilled by the President, the Minister of National Defence, the State Defence Council, the Commander of Armed Forces and by the Defence Staff;
- The operational level of command – planning and command of military operations; this function will be fulfilled by the Field Forces Commander, the commanders of other arms and branches of the regular forces and by the Commander of the National Defence Volunteer Forces;

- The tactical level of command – execution of the operational plans by the combat units.

This new command and control structure provides for a clear operational chain of command and preserves civilian control over the military.

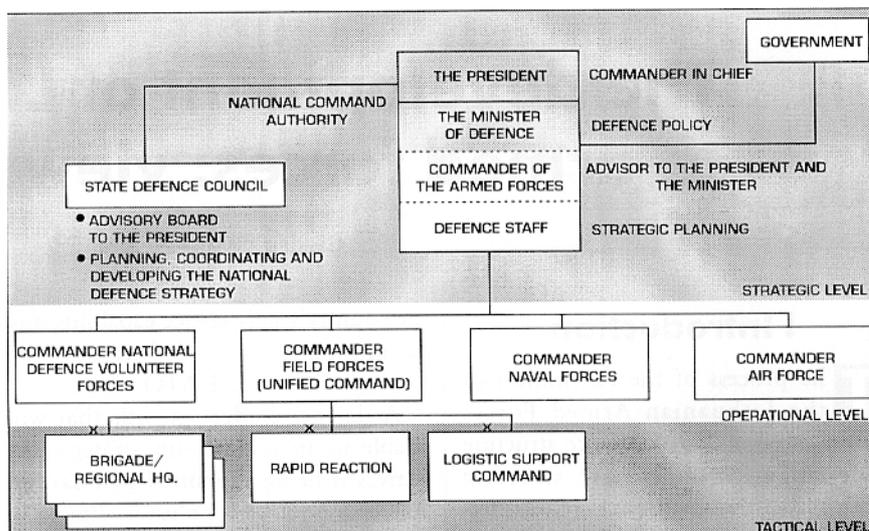


Fig 1 National defence structure: chain of command by 2008

According to the Law the President and the Minister of National Defence together constitute the National Command Authority. They exercise their authority and control over the Armed Forces through a single chain of command. The chain of operational command goes from the President to the Minister of National Defence, and then to the Commander of the Armed Forces. In special cases the chain of operational command can go directly to the Field Forces Commander and the commanders of other arms and branches of the regular forces, or the Commander of the National Defence Volunteer Forces.

The Commander of the Armed Forces as the highest military officer exercises command authority over military forces. He develops Military Defence Strategy, provides advice to the President and the Minister of National Defence on military matters, serves as a member of the State Defence Council and is responsible for recruitment, organisation, training, supply and administration of forces for sustained combat, and provides the forces required for the Field Forces Commander.

The Field Forces Commander exercises operational authority over units assigned by the Ministry of National Defence. He is responsible for integrating personnel and equipment to create efficient and effective combat forces. The Field Forces Commander also develops the tactical doctrine of operations to assure a well co-ordinated and cohesive operational capability of the forces assigned to his administration.

III. The development of structures adaptable to NATO

Regional HQ Concept

In order to optimise command and control of units located in different regions of Lithuania, to strengthen their combat potential and to assure independent capability to perform combat assignments, a territorial defence concept has been adopted. This consist of three military regions:

- Western Military Region;
- Central Military Region;
- Eastern Military Region.

One military region is equal to the size of a brigade. Each brigade will consist of three motorised infantry battalions, support and anti-aircraft units. Separate Jaeger and Engineer battalions will be incorporated into the structure of Central Military Region. It is also planned to form up to ten brigades of the active mobilisation reserve to enable the brigades of the military regions to be expanded into division in the event of war. In this case the motorised infantry battalions would form separate brigades. It is also intended to form a Rapid Reaction Brigade that will be deployed in central territories of the country in order to react quickly to a military invasion. This brigade will be finally established by the year 2008.

The Headquarters of the military regions will also be responsible for the operational command over the units of the National Defence Volunteers Forces deployed in the military regions. The commander of the regional National Defence Volunteer Forces unit (NDVF district) who performs administrative functions will be included in the



Fig 2. Territorial structure 1998-2008

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

Headquarters of the brigade/military region. This structure will facilitate the integration of the National Defence Volunteers Forces into the overall Military Defence Strategy as a component of a single military force through the military region headquarters concept.

Standard Battalion Structure

The ongoing reorganisation of the standard battalion is aimed at achieving compatibility with NATO structures and should result in a significant increase in combat readiness and capability. Firstly, all motorised infantry battalions will have a unified structure and a more effective headquarters able to operate in all circumstances. Secondly, combat units of the battalions will be separated from the support units, i.e. support functions have to belong to specialised units. Furthermore, in peacetime each battalion will function as a training centre for conscripts, to provide them with specific military skills and to prepare them for the reserve. Finally, it is planned to supplement the structure of each battalion with a heavy weapons company, which will include anti-aircraft, anti-tank and heavy mortar platoons. In the event of war, the medical, communications and engineer units will become parts of the standard battalion.

IV. The development of credible armed forces: Our priorities

Command Control and Communications

A well-developed modern communications and information system is a crucial factor in a modern warfare. Lithuania therefore attaches great importance to the modernisation and further development of a communications and information system. At present, Lithuania does not possess a fully developed system to ensure effective guidance, transmission of commands and delivery of information to any point of the state's territory. One of the main ambitions in the development of the Lithuanian defence structure is to change this situation. This is obviously in line with the ultimate objectives to build credible Armed Forces and to prepare for integration into NATO.

A contract has been signed with the HARRIS Corporation to supply radio stations. In order to fulfil requirements of the Planning and Review Process program, new radio stations will be operational in the Panevėžys battalion and in the command post of the "Iron Wolf" infantry brigade by the end of the third quarter of 1999. These radio stations will be the first to correspond to NATO standards at the tactical level.

The sea coast surveillance system run by the Navy with modern communications systems have been installed completely. In addition, modern radio stations will be purchased for ships and coastal services. As a result Lithuania will have a complete communications system which meets all requirements of Naval Forces.

One of the main requirements of the programme to develop the communications and information system is to assure the command and control of sub-units in peace, during local conflicts and aggression. In any case the requirements for transfer of information at the strategic, operational and tactical levels are quite different, so the communications and information system has to be divided into subsystems adequate at the specific command level. The experience of small countries within NATO demonstrates that the creation of communications and information systems is very expensive. Therefore the Lithuanian system will need to make maximum use of existing commercial and governmental communications systems, within which independent defence system components will be created.

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

A powerful strategic-operational defence system telecommunications-information network will be created over a six years period establishing a reliable connection between Armed Forces Headquarters and military units.

The provision of mobile tactical communications networks for subunits will depend on each subunit's location and importance. At present all units use communications equipment produced in the former Soviet Union. This equipment will be changed gradually into a modern communication system corresponding to NATO standards and will also be delivered to other units, and to the National Defence Volunteers Forces. The process of subunit tactical network modernisation will be completed within 1½ to 2 years. All tactical communications networks for the regular army will be modernised over a 10-year period.

Enhancement of Unit Capability

The Armed Forces units must be prepared for various contingencies, rapid regrouping, and be armed with modern infantry weapons. It is necessary to implement a number of initiatives to develop the Armed Forces in this direction. The enhancement of the defence capability must be based upon qualitative reforms throughout the whole of the Armed Forces.

The armament acquisition is based on the following three important qualitative principles:

- To reduce the diversity of weapon systems and types;
- to acquire armaments cost-effective to maintain;
- to provide the Armed Forces with modern weapons corresponding to NATO standards.

In line with the strategy of reorganising the armed forces, communications equipment will be acquired, which will further enhance interaction between units.

Qualitative changes must be implemented to guarantee the efficiency of the armed forces. Mobilisation, manoeuvring, co-ordination of actions and a good logistics system are important features of modern armed forces. The development of the transport sector will help to secure these features.

The qualitative changes in this sector are based on the following principles:

- To reduce the diversity of military transport equipment;
- to acquire new or almost new transport equipment, which during their 15-20 life will require minimal maintenance expenditure;
- to acquire transport equipment corresponding to NATO standards;
- to create three centres of transport services and repairs in the Western, Central and Eastern Military Regions;
- to acquire civil and dual-purpose specialised transport equipment in order to improve cost-effectiveness.

The Armed Forces reorganisation plan will be completed in three implementation periods. During the first period, new units would be supplied with weapons and equipment corresponding to NATO standards. During the second period, those units still using old equipment will be rearmed. During the third period, support and supply units will be formed, as well as such units requiring a large financial investment, e.g. heavy armour etc.

In the coming years the defence budget is expected to receive a higher level of resources for armament programmes, for the communication and information system development, for interoperability with NATO and the preparation of the mobilisation reserve.

Logistic/Infrastructure

Logistics

Logistics is a major consideration in the construction of the national defence capacity. Proper functioning of the logistic branch is vitally important for the operations of the military units to be effective and for the Armed Forces as a whole. The main purpose of the logistics organisation is to provide forces with armaments, equipment, means of transportation, medical supplies and all necessary commodities; to exercise control over their exploitation; to maintain installations; and to resolve environmental problems caused by military activities. The Department of Logistics in the Ministry of National Defence carries out central planning and management of logistics.

Modernisation of the logistics system is one of the priorities of Lithuania. This is one of the areas where PARP Interoperability Objectives have to be implemented. NATO conceptions of logistics and the experience of the Alliance members in the field of logistics are analysed and this will help to develop the Lithuanian logistics systems. It is of utmost importance to adopt working instructions, to improve formal documents, to prepare a supply strategy and to familiarise personnel with NATO procedures. Priority will be given to combat units; to units participating in the Planning and Review Process (PARP) programme and to newly established or reorganised units.

The plan for the development of the logistics branch will be carried out in three stages:

- *The first stage (1998-1999):* The development of a management structure. At this stage the Directorate of Logistics at the Defence Staff will be established. It will be responsible for planning supply operations, for analysing the needs of the Armed Forces, for managing financial resources, and for controlling supplies to military units and exercises. The Department of Logistics will be further expanded to include a codification division and the system of military depots and cargo grounds will be improved.
- *The second stage (1999-2000):* The development of the central military depot (Arsenal Depot) and its transformation into a logistics battalion. The Arsenal Depot installations will be reconstructed, security systems, service roads and loading procedures will be improved, and the Transportation Service will be developed.
- *The third stage (2000-2002):* The establishment of the Combat Support Battalion as the basis of the Transportation Service. In peacetime this battalion will be responsible for the transportation of dangerous and other military loads, the support of transportation for military units, for controlling the movements of military transport and for the technical maintenance of military vehicles. In wartime the battalion will be responsible for providing armaments, equipment, medicine and foodstuffs, and for the transportation of personnel. The battalion will also be responsible for the evacuation of personnel and equipment to the rear.

Having completed these development tasks, Lithuania will have an effectively managed logistics branch that is compatible with NATO standards. The branch will be able to properly support military operations both in peace and war, and it will enable the Armed Forces to participate in joint military operations together with NATO members.

Infrastructure

The plans for developing military infrastructure will concentrate on the construction of new facilities. Only those parts of the existing infrastructure, which are vitally important or conveniently located and require only little investment, will be reconstructed.

The financial resources for new infrastructure will be devoted mainly to the construction of military camps and housing. The construction of military camps will be undertaken simultaneously with the

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

formation of new battalions. This strategy is an important part of the Quality of Life issue, as a new infrastructure will improve living and working conditions thereby enhancing the attractiveness of military service.

Training facilities are another important issue. Lithuania's whole network of training centres and establishments is being reorganised. The formation and improvement of the Conscripts Training Centre, Peacekeeping Forces Training Centre, of training centres of the National Defence Volunteer Forces and the battalion training establishments are particularly important. This network will play a vital role in enhancing the readiness of conscripts and of the mobilisation reserve, and in improving the skills of professional soldiers, NCO's and officers.

Air Defence

The Lithuanian Air Defence structure will consist of air surveillance and air control systems, the air force, anti-aircraft units, and a communications and management system. The structure will also use the capabilities of civilian radar and navigation systems. It will be compatible and able to exchange information with the corresponding structures in other countries (Estonia, Latvia, Poland, etc.).

The following steps are necessary in order to enhance the air defence capabilities and prepare Lithuania's Air Defence system for integration into NATO:

- Implementation of the BALTNET project: The establishment of a Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Centre, and the creation of a network of radar companies and their connections to the Regional Air Surveillance Co-ordination Centre;
- the connection of Lithuanian and Polish Air Defence Systems through the line of exchange of radar data;
- the completion of the procurement plan;
- systematic improvement of unit infrastructure;
- achieving interoperability with NATO standards of aircraft and airfields maintenance equipment;
- enhancement of combat readiness of personnel at all levels;
- personnel training at various academies and military schools as well as courses abroad (in Poland, Czech Republic, USA, Germany, France, Hungary);
- personnel training in spoken, technical and operational English language (courses in Lithuania and abroad);
- preparation of documents compatible with STANAG;
- improvement of the legal basis for the development of an Air Defence structure;
- active participation in international exercises.

Assuming adequate financing and material support, the whole Air Defence System should be operational by the year 2005. It will then be capable of ensuring the control and defence of Lithuania's air space, of exchanging information with neighbouring states (Poland, Estonia and Latvia) and of operating as an integral part of the NATO Air Defence System.

Language Training

The foreign language capability is one of the key factors that determine whether the Armed Forces can participate in joint NATO operations and missions. The success of such programmes as PFP and of multilateral projects such as BALTBAT, BALTNET or BALTRON heavily depends on foreign language skills. Therefore, the personnel's ability to communicate using the languages of NATO members (especially English) is of great importance in the process of integration into the Alliance.

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

Language training is one of the constituent parts of Lithuania's preparation for NATO membership. The requirement for senior officers and to highest ranks to speak at least one NATO language has been enshrined in the Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. The programme of officers' and civil servants' English language training is currently being implemented in full. The main goal of this programme is to gradually increase the level of proficiency in English until NATO standards are met. The United Kingdom, Canada and the United States render their assistance to this programme.

Currently there are seven English Language-Training centres in the defence structure of Lithuania. Each centre has 20 students and courses with the duration of 3 month are held 3 times a year.

V. Development of Procedures for Officer Selection, Evaluation, Education, Promotion and Rotation

Selection

Currently officers' selection is executed according to an established order that corresponds with the basic principles of selection established in the national legal acts. The posting of officers is decentralised for almost all posts. Units and services in the national defence structure search for appropriate candidates themselves. A centralised search for suitable officers is used when peacekeeping subunits need to be formed or personnel have to be provided for the Ministry of National Defence and the Defence Staff. As a general rule, officers accept posts on a voluntary basis and are selected on the basis of their education, state of health, military and professional fitness and moral characteristics. An officer who applies for a particular post must have undertaken compulsory military service, and must possess appropriate educational qualifications and military experience to meet the requirements of the job.

Evaluation

The quality and efficiency of the professional armed service is highly dependent upon the procedures for evaluating officers and soldiers, in other words - their certification. The Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service, which was adopted in 1998, introduced certification of all soldiers. The previous order of evaluation, which only required the suitability of higher rank officers to be evaluated, was completely changed. At present, the main objective is to start applying certification for all soldiers serving in professional service.

The regulations require soldiers to be subject to certification at least once every twelve months. Moreover the participation and responsibility of immediate superiors in certification process will be increased. The regulations also require that more attention be paid to the soldier's knowledge of English language and his service potential. The Ministry of Defence will control the whole certification process.

Promotion

The new Military Service Law stipulates that a post occupied by an officer must correspond to his rank. It is necessary, therefore, to introduce a more rigorous promotion procedure. In line with the law and with the regulations for conferring a higher rank, promotion will be granted according to the basic principles of selection taking into consideration the needs of the Armed Forces, the limited numbers of officer appointments and the number of staff available.

VII. Military Academy Programme of Instruction Reform

The preparation and education of commissioned officers is one of the most important areas in the development of Lithuania's Armed Forces, as it significantly contributes to building national defence capacities.

Currently the Military Academy offers various officer courses: the traditional four-year course for cadets, a two-year course for cadets and a course for university graduates. The two-year course for cadets, established to meet platoon leader requirements in units, will be introduced in the near future.

The Military Academy's primary purpose is to prepare platoon leaders. Advanced military training for company grade officers is planned. This training will focus on preparing officers as company commanders and battalion staff officers.

VIII. Reserve Force

The basic principles of the organisation and composition of the active reserve forces are fixed in the Law on National Defence Organisation and Military Service. This law defines that the active reserve forces are part of the military reserve and are composed of reserve personnel who have completed military service and have all the necessary military skills.

Personnel of the reserve will be called up periodically for military training and exercises in order to maintain and refresh their skills. There will be two readiness groups of reservists formed on the basis of age: 1) up to 35 years old - will be called up twice a year, 2) from 35 to 45 years old - will be called up once a year.

From 1999 onwards there will be compulsory military exercises for personnel that have not undertaken military service. Upon completion of these exercises the personnel will be included in the individual military reserve but would only be called up in the event of total mobilisation. These measures will help to fill out the legal acts on universal compulsory military service, thus putting into practice the concept of total defence and increased combat potential in the event of war.

From 1999 onwards the preparation of reservists will start at the Military Academy, the Non-Commissioned Officers' School and at the National Defence Volunteer Forces Training Centres. Having completed their introductory training, officers and non-commissioned officers of the reserve will have to enhance their qualifications periodically at courses in the training centres. Furthermore those military officers and non-commissioned officers designated to the reserve corps will be sent on specialised courses at Lithuanian universities. This programme was launched in autumn 1998. This is a significant step towards enlarging the reserve forces, as university students were previously exempted from military service.

In conclusion it should be noted that the system of reserve forces has been designed to meet the imperative to build credible Armed Forces and to implement the doctrine of total defence. There is a clear need to create a prepared reserve force.

IX. Planning, Programming and Budgeting

Defence Planning

Building national defence capabilities requires substantial financial resources. This is the prerequisite for successful implementation of the ultimate strategic objectives – the ability to repel any military aggression and to prepare for integration into NATO. Therefore the Government of Lithuania is determined to continually increase the resources allocated to defence. In line with a broad agreement between all parliamentary political parties, Lithuania's defence budget has been increased from 0.9 per cent of GDP in 1997 to 1.5 per cent in 1999. Lithuania's defence strategy and the Government's three-year term budget project anticipate a growth of defence spending up to 2 per cent of GDP by 2001. National defence plans provide that until 2008 Lithuania will assign approximately 30-33% of its defence expenditures for capital investment purposes, of which 13-15 % will be allotted for construction and 18-20% for procurement and modernisation of equipment. Given that the defence share of GDP will increase, it is expected that investment expenditure in 2005-2008 will reach 100-140 million USD per year, in 1998 prices. Political stability and dynamic economic development is a precondition for this growth, which will enable the development of a whole range of new projects and the formation of additional battalions compatible with NATO standards.

The priority areas for financing are fixed in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania. There are four major areas of defence expenditure:

1. *Improvement of the defence capabilities* which includes the development of infrastructure (military construction, training facilities, new military camps etc.), establishment of a new force structure (three levels of command, brigade/regional HQ concept etc.) and improvement of force readiness through training, purchases of new communications equipment and anti-tank weapons.
2. *Integration to NATO*. The main costs are related to the achievement of the PARP Interoperability Objectives and to participation in international operations and exercises.
3. *International agreements*. This area of expenditure includes the financial costs of co-operation in accordance with PfP, implementation of bilateral and multilateral projects such as BALTNET, LITPOLBAT, BALTRON, BALTBAT and the Baltic Defence College.
4. *Aid to the civil authorities*, which includes the improvement of the civil defence and Search and Rescue operations in accordance with ICAO requirements.

We are currently implementing a clear and comprehensive defence planning system to take forward NATO integration and development of Lithuania's Armed Forces. This system will consist of two closely related processes: First, a one-year planning, programming and budgeting cycle that would flow from a set of agreed political goals, via a resource programme to the defence budget; and second, a longer-term programme encompassing not only defence but also broader security issues. This process will lead to improved visibility and management of decision making and to the enhanced transparency of the defence budget.

Ten years Defence Enhancement Programmes

To build the national defence capabilities the Lithuanian Ministry of National Defence develops ten-year defence enhancement programmes, which are part of the Long-term National Security Programmes. These programmes will provide comprehensive guidance for the strategic development of the Lithuanian Defence System. Long-term planning is very important when

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

considering the perspective of integration into NATO, as it is an inherent part of the Alliance's development. The programmes under preparation clearly reflect the priorities in building the Lithuanian Defence System and enhancing national security.

At the given moment 7 programmes are prepared, which will be implemented until 2008:

- Development of the Armed Forces
- Development of the Defence Infrastructure;
- Development of the Defence Industry;
- Air Space Control System Development and its Integration into NATO Air Space Control System;
- Enhancement of Interoperability with NATO;
- Development of Science of War and Defence Technologies;
- Development of a Unified Civil Defence and Rescue System.

The Programme of Development of the Armed Forces identifies means and financial resources for the long-term development of Lithuania's Defence System. This programme includes military and civil defence specialist training, material-technical supply of the National Defence System, development of transportation services, creation of communication and information system, medical supply for the Armed Forces and reserve, and armament for the Armed Forces. The implementation of this programme will encompass the structural, quantitative and qualitative aspects and should increase significantly the defence capabilities of Lithuania.

The Programme of Development of Infrastructure is aimed at the improvement (reconstruction and renovation) of existing military camps and the construction of new facilities. The programme is especially important as it covers housing issues, the establishment of training infrastructure and the deployment of new battalions.

The objective of *the Programme of Development of Defence Industry* is to establish industrial structures to satisfy the minimal needs of the Armed Forces. It is not intended to develop industries for manufacturing armaments (weapons, aircraft, etc.). The main emphasis will be on the production of ammunition, some equipment (simulators for training, fragmentation vests, etc.), and the maintenance and modernisation of military equipment. This will ensure a minimum amount of supply autonomy. In line with the programme to develop defence technologies, the production of more sophisticated equipment will be considered in the future.

The Air Space Control System Development Programme is currently being established. The system consists of four components: Air space surveillance; air force; anti-aircraft units; command, control and communications network.

Lithuania's control of her airspace rests on the following main principles:

- Close co-operation with civil structures integrating both military and civil air space surveillance information systems;
- A linkage between BALTNET and corresponding Western European and NATO systems. This will facilitate the integration of the national system into NATO networks;
- Adherence to the standards and requirements of the NATO NADC.

The aim of *the Development of Science of war and Defence Technologies Programme* is to create a state defence strategy based upon the science of war and to introduce new technologies into the national armed forces. This programme will create the opportunity to employ the scientific potential of Lithuania: Currently the achievements of Lithuanian scholars in laser and other technologies are

Baltic Defence Review 1/1999

used only by foreign countries. These are the priorities that have been identified and which should be implemented by 2008.

The Programme of a Unified Civil Defence and Rescue System is designed to protect the population from dangerous situations during peacetime, crisis and in the event of war. This system will improve and monitor the readiness of all rescue services to react to natural disasters, catastrophes or to armed conflict. It will also ensure that the public will be warned and kept informed of hazardous situations. The programme is aimed at integrating both state institutions (the Emergency Control Centre, the Department of Civil Defence, the Armed Forces, ministerial organisations and local authorities) and volunteers from public organisations into a unified system of civil defence.

.....

The foreign experts have positively assessed Lithuania's progress. Lithuanian Armed Forces have been evaluated as the most advanced among the Baltic States. This is very encouraging. By improving her military strength, Lithuania aims to deter any external challenge to her sovereignty and territorial integrity. Alongside with this activity Lithuania will act as active security provider in the European and transatlantic security system.

* Giedre Statkeviciute is the Head of the Security Policy Division of the Policy and Planning Department in the Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania. She is a master of history from Vilnius University and has previously been employed at the System Analysis and Development Programmes Department as Senior Executive Officer, (MOD).