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un citās starptautiskajās organizācijās Vīnē  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE  
and other International Organizations in Vienna*

No. EDSO-7745

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to all Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE and, has the honour to submit, in reference to decision FSC.DEC/2/09 of the Forum for Security Co-operation, the reply of the Republic of Latvia to **the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security** for the year 2024.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all the Permanent Delegations and Missions to the OSCE and to the Conflict Prevention Centre of the OSCE the assurances of its highest consideration.

Vienna, April 12, 2024



**To: All Permanent Missions and  
Delegations to the OSCE,  
CPC of the OSCE**



**QUESTIONNAIRE  
ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT  
ON POLITICO-MILITARY ASPECTS OF SECURITY**

**Section I: Inter-State elements**

**1. Account of measures to prevent and combat terrorism**

1.1. To which agreements and arrangements (universal, regional, subregional and bilateral) related to preventing and combating terrorism is your State a party?

Latvia is a state party to universal international instruments related to the prevention of terrorism:

1. Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, Tokyo, 14 September 1963,
2. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, the Hague, 16 December 1970,
3. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, Montreal, 23 September 1971,
4. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, New York, 14 December 1973,
5. Convention against the Taking of Hostages, New York, 17 December 1979,
6. Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, New York/Vienna, 3 March 1980,
7. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, Supplementary to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation, Montreal, 24 February 1988,
8. Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, Rome, 10 March 1988,
9. Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, Rome, 10 March 1988,
10. Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection, Montréal, 1 March 1991,
11. International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, New York, 15 January 1997,
12. International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, New York, 9 December 1999,
13. International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, New York, 13 April 2005,
14. Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, adopted on 8 July 2005,
15. Protocol of 2005 to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Maritime Navigation, London, 14 October 2005,

16. Protocol of 2005 to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf, London, 14 October 2005,
17. European Convention on Extradition (1957),
18. Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition (1975),
19. Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition (1978),
20. Third Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition (2010),
21. Fourth Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Extradition (2012),
22. UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000).

Latvia has established operational national passenger name record (PNR) system. It was introduced according to EU Directive 2016/681 of 27th April 2016 on the use of PNR data for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of terrorist offences and serious crime. Therefore, it is fully compliant with Resolution 2396 (2017).

Latvia has taken all necessary measures to comply with UN Security Council resolutions 1373, 1624, 1787, 2178, 2322, 2341, 2396, 2462 and other relevant resolutions.

Latvia is a state party also to the following regional legal instruments adopted under the auspices of the Council of Europe:

1. Convention of Cybercrime, Budapest, 23 November 2001,
2. Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems, Strasbourg, 28 January 2003,
3. European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 20 April 1959,
4. European Convention on the International Validity of Criminal Judgments, The Hague, 28 May 1970,
5. European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 15 May 1972,
6. European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, Strasbourg, 27 January 1977,
7. Additional Protocol to the European Convention on the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 17 March 1978,
8. Second Additional Protocol to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 8 November 2001,
9. Protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, Strasbourg, 15 May 2003,
10. Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, Warsaw, 16 May 2005,
11. Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism, Warsaw, 16 May 2005,
12. Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, Riga, 22 October 2015,
13. Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime, Strasbourg, 8.XI.1990

Latvia has signed the following bilateral treaties on counter-terrorism measures:

1. Agreement between the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Poland on Cooperation in Combatting Crime, Riga, 14 July 1994,
2. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Finland on Cooperation in Crime Prevention, Helsinki, 27, June 1996,
3. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Hungary on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, Riga, 6 March 1997,
4. Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Turkey on Fighting against International Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, International Terrorism and Organized Crime, Riga, 4 June 1997,
5. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the State of Israel on Cooperation in Combating Illicit Trafficking and Abuse of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Terrorism and other Serious Crimes, Jerusalem, 27 July 1998,
6. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Slovak Republic on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and other Organized Crime, Riga, 24 May 1999,
7. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Cabinet of Minister of Ukraine on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking of Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Organized Crime, Kiev, 24 February 2000,
8. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Czech Republic on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Organized Crime, Prague, 14 November 2000,
9. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Croatia on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, Zagreb, 23 February 2001,
10. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium on Police Cooperation, Brussels, 16 October 2001,
11. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Georgia on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, Tbilisi, 26 October 2001,
12. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Cooperation in Combating Organized Crime, Terrorism and Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Tashkent, 17 June 2002,
13. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Moldova on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Traffic in Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Organized Crime, Chisinau, 29 May 2003,
14. Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Kingdom of Spain on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Other Crime, Madrid, 24 November 2003,

15. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Austrian Federal Government concerning Cooperation between Police Services, Riga, 20 January 2004,
16. Letter of Agreement on Law Enforcement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the United States of America, Riga, 27 September 2004 and Amendment 1 to the Letter of Agreement on Law Enforcement of September 2004 between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the United States of America, Riga, 4 September 2019;
17. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on cooperation in the fight against terrorism, the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and precursors and organized crime Astana, 8 October 2004,
18. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Organized Crime, Riga, 11 April 2005,
19. Agreement between the Republic of Latvia and the Swiss Confederation on Police Cooperation in Combating Crime, 23 May 2005,
20. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Other Serious Crimes, Riga, 13 September 2005,
21. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Organized Crime, Baku, 3 October 2005,
22. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on Cooperation in Combating Organized Crime and Other Offences and on Joint Actions in Border Regions, Vilnius, 7 June 2006,
23. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Estonia on Cross-Border Cooperation in Combating Crime, Vilnius, 7 June 2006,
24. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation in the Fight against Organized Crime, Illicit Traffic of Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Terrorism and Other Crime, Minsk, 17 May 2007,
25. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of Malta on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Organized Crime, Brussels, 24 July 2008,
26. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the United States of America on Enhancing Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Serious Crime, Riga, 29 September 2008,
27. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Armenia on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and Other Crimes, Yerevan, 10 December 2009,
28. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism,

Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors, Tirana, 16 December 2009,

29. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in Combating Crime, in Particular in its Organized Forms, Moscow, 20 December 2010,
30. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of Turkmenistan on Co-operation in Combating Terrorism, Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and other Crime, Ashgabat, 14 May 2013,
31. Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism Organized Crime and Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursors and other Crimes, Dushanbe, 10 June 2014.

1.2. What national legislation has been adopted in your State to implement the above-mentioned agreements and arrangements?

The following legislative acts are the main legislative background for implementation of the norms of the conventions and the legal instruments of the international organizations:

1. The suppression of terrorism falls under Chapter IX<sup>1</sup> of the Latvian Criminal Law. Sections 79.<sup>1</sup>, 79.<sup>2</sup>, 79.<sup>3</sup>, 79.<sup>4</sup>, 79.<sup>5</sup> and 79.<sup>6</sup> establishes the penalty for terrorism, for organization of a terrorist group with certain purpose and for involvement in such a group, the financing of terrorism, recruitment training and self-training for terrorism, traveling for terrorism purpose as well as justification of terrorism, invitation to or threats of terrorism. Moreover, Sections 241, 243–245 establish a penalty for offences committed to cyber safety.
2. The Commercial Law regulates commercial activities as such while the Credit Institution Law determine the legal status of credit institutions, governs the activities, liability and supervision of such institutions, as well as determining the rights, duties and liability of such persons to whom the requirements of this Law apply. There are also related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, Regulations of the Financial and Capital Market Commission and of the Bank of Latvia (*Latvijas Banka*).
3. Law on the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism and Proliferation Financing, adopted on 17 July 2008 which purpose is to prevent money laundering and terrorism financing and:
  - Ten related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (e.g. No.138 “Regulations on States and International Organizations that have compiled lists of persons suspected of participating in terrorist activities or production, possession, transfer, use or proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” issued on 8 March 2016; No.1092 “Procedure to be followed by State and Municipal Institutions in Providing Information to the Office of the Prevention of Laundering Proceeds Derived from Criminal Activity” issued on 22 December 2008; No. 550 “Rules on the procedure and content of the submission of suspicious transaction reports and threshold crossing declarations” was issued on 17 August 2021),
  - Eleven Normative Regulations of the Finance and Capital Market Commission (e.g., Cabinet Regulation No. 396 “Regulations Regarding the Requirements for Updating Information in the Shared Know-Your-Customer Utility and the Licensing and Supervision of the Shared Know-Your-Customer Utility Service Provider” adopted 5 July 2022),

4. Regulations issued by the Bank of Latvia. Law on Operation of the Schengen Information System, adopted on 14 June 2007, which purpose is to ensure the use of the system for strengthening of public order and security in the Member States, and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers:
  - No.639 “Procedures for the Entering, Correction and Deletion of Alerts in the Schengen Information System, as well as Ensuring Accessibility of Supplementary Information between the SIRENE Latvia Bureau and Procedures for the Exchange of Supplementary Information of Institutions and Authorities” Regulations issued on 18 September 2007,
  - No.622 “Procedures for the Request and Issue of Information Regarding a Data Subject that is kept in the Schengen Information System and the SIRENE Information System” issued on 11 September 2007.
5. The Law on Radiation Safety and Nuclear Safety, adopted on 26 October 2000 and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, e.g., Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 4 November 2002, No.508” Requirements for Physical Protection of Sources of Ionising Radiation”. The purpose of this Law is to ensure the protection of people and the environment from the adverse effects of ionising radiation and to specify the duties and rights of State institutions, natural persons and legal persons in the field of radiation safety and nuclear safety. The Law prescribes the safety requirements for sources of ionising radiation and activities with them and proposes specific requirements for ionising radiation objects of national significance, and prescribes the division of duties among the State authorities in the field of radiation safety and nuclear safety.
6. Account Register Law, adopted on 23 November 2016 and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. The purpose of this Law is to establish and maintain the account register and ensure processing of data of a person's account with a view: to prevent the use of the Latvian and international financial system in criminal activities, including money laundering, terrorism and proliferation financing, and to ensure international co-operation in this field; to protect State and public security, etc.
7. Law On the Circulation of Goods of Strategic Significance, adopted on 21 June 2007, which purpose is to ensure controlled circulation of goods of strategic significance according to the national and international interests of the Republic of Latvia, the requirements of international export control regimes and to deflect the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as well as deflect the threat of international terrorism and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers.
8. Law on the Handling of Weapons (adopted on 14 March 2019) transposes Council Directive No 91/477/EEC on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons and two Directives, that amend it (Directive of the European Parliament and Council No 2008/51/EC and Directive of the European Parliament and Council No 2017/853) and Commission Implementing Directive No 2019/69 laying down technical specifications for alarm and signal weapons under Council Directive 91/477/EEC on control of the acquisition and possession of weapons, and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. The purpose of the Law is to determine the rights and obligations of State and local government authorities and private individuals in relation to the handling of weapons, ammunition, their components, and special means in Latvia, as well as to determine the classification of such objects and the prohibitions and restrictions in relation to such objects in order to guarantee personal and public safety. Legislation issued based on the Law of Handling of Weapons:



- Sixteen Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (e.g., No.210 “Rules on the movement of arms and ammunition” issued on 21 May 2019; No.157 “Regulation on the Procedure for Issuing a Certificate of Deactivation of Firearms and High-Energy Pneumatic Weapons and the State Fee” issued on 16 April 2019; No.182 “Procedures for Marking Firearms, Their Essential Components and Ammunition, High-Energy Pneumatic Weapons, Gas Weapons and Signal Weapons” issued on 30 April 2019).
9. Law On the Security of Information Technologies, adopted on 28 October 2010 and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. The purpose of this Law is to improve the security of information technologies, laying down the most important requirements in order to guarantee the receipt of such essential services, in the supply of which such technologies are used.
  10. Law on International Sanctions and National Sanctions of the Republic of Latvia adopted on 4 February 2016 and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. The purpose of this Law is to ensure peace, security and rule of law in accordance with the international obligations and national interests of Latvia, when introducing international sanctions, imposing national sanctions, or in the cases specified in this Law when the sanctions imposed by the European Union (EU) or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are being imposed.
  11. Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 11 February 2021, No. 95 “Procedures for Reporting Regarding Explosive Precursors”.
  12. Instruction issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 5 August 2008, No 12 “Instruction Regarding Actions of Responsible Institutions in the Event of Finding a Substance or Object of Unknown Origin if It is Suspected that It Contains Explosive, Radioactive, Dangerous Chemical or Biological Substances, as well as if Indications of Terrorist Attack is Detected”.
  13. Aircraft Passenger Data Processing Law adopted on 10 January 2017 and related Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers. The purpose of the law is to ensure processing of passenger data for the prevention and detection of terrorism and serious or especially serious crimes, and for the prevention of threats to national security.

1.3. What are the roles and missions of military, paramilitary and security forces and the police in preventing and combating terrorism in your State?

The State Security Service (VDD) is responsible for the coordination of activities of State and local government institutions and other legal persons in the field of counterterrorism as well as analysis of implementation of State’s policy in this field.

VDD is counterintelligence and internal security service, which gathers the information from different sources, carries out its analysis, informs senior officials about the threats identified to the national security as well as takes measures to neutralize them. VDD is a subject of operational activities, and it has the right to conduct pre-trial investigations regarding criminal offenses committed in the area of national security (espionage, terrorism, disclosure of state secrets etc.) or in national security institutions, or other criminal offences within its competence and in cases where the investigation has been ordered by the Prosecutor General. VDD is responsible for:

- Counterterrorism;
- Counterintelligence;
- Economic security;
- Protection of the constitutional order;
- Protection of the state secrets;

- Protection of the high officials (dignitary protection);
- Prevention of the crimes that threaten national security and the rule of law (espionage, dissemination of state secret, counterfeiting, distribution of radioactive, chemical and other arms, unauthorized distribution of explosive substances etc.).

VDD functions in the field of counterterrorism:

- Counterintelligence and operational activities to fight terrorism;
- Counterintelligence and operational activities to fight illegal distribution of explosive, nuclear, chemical weapons, radiological materials, dual-use goods, firearms;
- Coordination of activities of state and local government institutions as well as other legal entities in the field of counterterrorism and the analysis of implementation of the State policy in this field.

A special department of VDD – the Counterterrorism Centre (CTC), ensures the coordination of functions in the field of counterterrorism.

The main functions of the CTC are:

- Monitoring of terrorism threats (information analysis and assessment of possible threats of terrorism);
- Planning and coordination of counterterrorism measures (preventive and responsive);
- Planning and organization of counterterrorism training and exercises;
- Control of objects (critical infrastructure and soft targets) at risk of terrorism;
- Coordination of terrorism threat level and the implementation of the National counterterrorism plan;
- Passenger Name Record.

The principal task of the Latvian National Armed Forces (LNAF) is to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Latvian state and its population against aggression. This also includes the participation in the prevention of situations, which constitute a threat to the state in accordance with the procedures specified in laws and regulations.

The Ministry of Defence and LNAF prepares the Military Threat Analysis, develops the State Defence Concept and State Defence plan, the LNAF Development Plan and the LNAF Mobilisation Plan. The Ministry of Defence is involved in monitoring the international security environment and in elaborating the threat assessment as well as in taking part in the development of the national counter-terrorism system. The Ministry of Defence also ensures the participation of the Latvia in international security and defence measures as well as plans LNAF participation in international operations (that can contribute also to counter-terrorism efforts). Section 6.<sup>1</sup> of the National Armed Forces Law defines that while fulfilling its tasks the LNAF shall provide support to, e.g.:

1. the State Security Service – in anti-terrorism measures, as well as measures for the prevention or combating of threats of terrorism;
2. the system of civil protection – in preventive and reactive measures, in measures for the elimination of consequences caused by emergency situations, as well as search and rescue operations;
3. The State Police – for ensuring public order and safety;
4. The State Border Guard – in ensuring the inviolability of the State border;
5. State security institutions - for the performance of national security measures.

Section 17 of the National Armed Forces Law stipulates that in the case of threat of terrorism, the Minister of Defence upon the request of the Minister of the Interior shall order the

Commander of the LNAF to provide support to the measures led by the State Security Service for the prevention or combating of the threat of terrorism, determining the tasks to be performed, the time and the place. The leader of the abovementioned measures is responsible for the orders issued to the LNAF units involved in the measures for the prevention or combating the threat of terrorism.

1.4 Provide any additional relevant information on national efforts to prevent and combat terrorism, e.g., those pertaining inter alia to:

- Financing of terrorism;
- Border controls;
- Travel document security;
- Container and supply chain security;
- Security of radioactive sources;
- Use of the Internet and other information networks for terrorist purposes;
- Legal co-operation including extradition;
- Safe havens and shelter to terrorists and terrorist organizations.

Taking into consideration the Committee's of experts on the evaluation of anti-money laundering measures and the financing of terrorism (Moneyval) 5th Round Mutual Evaluation Report on Latvia and assessments of experts as well as evaluating the current legal framework, Latvia has decided to take an all-government approach on improving legal framework and the actual effectiveness of applying legal tools to further improve actions, means and capabilities for countering terrorism financing.

As there is a possibility (although it remains low) that radicalized persons might use chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear material to commit terrorist acts, but the potential consequences and magnitude, both social and financial could be severe, authorities of the counter-terrorism system cooperate to prevent such materials being used for terrorist purposes. To ensure these measures, international and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms have been established and national response algorithms (Instruction of Cabinet of Ministers No. 12 "Instruction on the action of the responsible Institutions in case the event of finding a substance or object of unknown origin, if it is suspected that it contains explosive, radioactive, dangerous chemical or biological substances, as well as if signs indications of a terrorist attack are detected", issued on 5 August, 2008) have been developed in cooperation with the State Police, the State Fire and Rescue Service, radiation control and nuclear safety authorities, for coordinated and effective response to potential CBRN threats.

To prevent illegal entry by terrorists, Latvia is bound not only by national entry bans established in accordance with the provisions of Section 61 of the Immigration Law of the Republic of Latvia, but also by international sanctions (including entry bans) that are included in the Schengen Information System (SIS). To effectively screen persons for potential links to terrorism prior to their entry into Latvia, checks in the SIS are performed whenever a decision on issuance of visa or admission of a person in the country is being adopted but it helps to identify a person only if his/her potential links have been already established and data on this person have been included into SIS. According to the Cabinet of Ministers (26 May, 2008) Regulation No.365 "Procedures by which an Assessment of Accessible Information is Performed in Reviewing the Documents of a Third-country National Requesting a Visa or Residence Permit", every visa or residence permit application that has been submitted by a person who is a citizen of a country with an increased risk of terrorism, is checked additionally by the competent state security institutions.

Regarding identification (travel) documents, Latvia issues secure personal identification documents. The passport and eID card are issued on the basis of data entered in the Integrated Migration Information System, such as the fact of a person's birth or of marriage. The

Integrated Migration Information System enables authorities to verify the authenticity of the issuer of the identity document. In terms of document security, innovative, multi-level security features are incorporated into identity documents that meet the highest security standards. If an identity document is lost or stolen and the fact is reported to the authorities, the information on the lost or stolen identity document is entered in the “Invalid Document Register” subsystem of the Integrated Migration Information System.

Legal co-operation including extradition most often takes place between EU Member States, utilizing the mechanisms established within EU, such as European Judicial Network (EJN) and Eurojust. There is an EJN national contact point in every EU member state therefore it is an effective mechanism for consulting on legal requirements for mutual legal assistance. Latvia has seconded a prosecutor to Eurojust, which is an agency that facilitates preparatory meetings for investigators and prosecutors to plan important transnational joint-operations and is often used as a platform where prosecutors can discuss relevant information on mutual legal assistance. With regard to third countries or countries with which Latvia does not have a bilateral agreement on co-operation in criminal matters, the Office of the Prosecutor-General plays a pivotal role in coordinating such co-operation.

Additionally, the respective state institutions are working in each of the above-mentioned fields to combat and prevent terrorism.

## **2. Stationing of armed forces on foreign territory**

### **2.1 Provide information on stationing of your States armed forces on the territory of other participating States in accordance with freely negotiated agreements as well as in accordance with international law.**

Participation of military personnel or units (contingent) in international operations as well as joint military training of units is regulated by the Law “Participation of the Latvian National Armed Forces in International Operations”.

The Minister of Defence takes the decision on participation of units of LNAF in joint military training, whether in Latvia or abroad, after coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and/or the Ministry of Interior. There are two exceptions when the decision is taken by the Cabinet of Ministers: 1. the number of foreign military personnel exceeds 500 persons in joint military training in the territory of Latvia; 2. units of LNAF participate in joint military training in non-EU or non-NATO countries.

The Law “Participation of the Latvian National Armed Forces in International Operations” stipulates that the contingent of LNAF participates in international operations in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations (UN), in accordance with the international agreements binding to the Republic of Latvia and laws of the Republic of Latvia, as well as a decision of the *Saeima* (The Parliament), the Cabinet of Ministers or - in the case specifically provided for in the law - the Minister of Defence on participation of the contingent of LNAF in international operations.

Section 5 of the Law “Participation of the Latvian National Armed Forces in International Operations” provides that upon a request of a foreign country for the need of first aid, the Minister of Defence may approve the participation of a specially trained contingent. This decision allows LNAF contingent to participate in international rescue operations and international humanitarian operations in member states of NATO or EU.

LNAF continued their participation in international operations in 2023. Throughout the year Latvia was engaged in seven military operations – NATO Mission Iraq (NMI), NATO Mission in Kosovo (KFOR), EU Naval Force – Mediterranean Operation IRINI, EU Military assistance mission to Ukraine (EUMAM), Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq and Kuwait and the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Israel. In year 2023, Latvia joined United

Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Additionally, Latvia has contributed troops to the NATO Response Force, to the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), to the EU Battle Group, and to the United Kingdom led Joint Expeditionary forces (JEF).

Taking into account that the Republic of Latvia is a member of NATO and has acceded to NATO basic treaties (e.g., the NATO SOFA) the provisions of these international treaties have been implemented.

### **3. Implementation of other international commitments related to the Code of Conduct**

#### 3.1 Provide information on how your State ensures that commitments in the field of arms control, disarmament and confidence and security-building as an element of indivisible security are implemented in good faith.

Arms control, disarmament and confidence and security building measures are significant elements of Latvia's security policy. Latvia works closely with its partners bilaterally and multilaterally, including in Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO. Latvia is a member of all of the main international treaties, conventions and initiatives on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament:

- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;
- Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty;
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Biological and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction;
- Convention on the Prohibition of Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction;
- Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof.

Latvia is also the Subscribing State to the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Latvia follows the principles of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and supports the Proliferation Security Initiative and Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Latvia's national legislation is adapted accordingly.

Latvia supports relevant non-proliferation and disarmament resolutions at the UN General Assembly First Committee.

Latvia has developed and implemented a strict and effective export control system to deflect the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and also to deflect the threat of international terrorism. The national regulations and practices of import, export and transit of arms complies with the principles and norms of the EU. Latvia participates in the main international export control regimes: Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement. Latvia chaired the NSG for the period from June 2018 to June 2019 and was chairing the Experts Group of the Wassenaar Arrangement in 2019-2020. Latvia also is interested to join the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Latvia submitted its original application for membership in the MTCR in 2003, and provided an updated version of Latvia's application to the MTCR on 22 July 2015. Latvia's export control policy is in full compliance with the MTCR guidelines. Latvia pays particular attention to the concerns posed by illicit trafficking and uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Latvia is a State Party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and held the chairmanship of the ATT from August 2018 to August 2019. Latvia is contributing to the efforts in making export control of legal transactions of arms a harmonized practice within the UN. Latvia submits annual reports on arms export and import to the UN Register of Conventional Arms, and to OSCE on the implementation of Code of Conduct on Politico-Military aspects of Security, and OSCE Document on Principles Governing the

Conventional Arms Transfers. In addition, Latvia took up the chairmanship of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems in 2020.

### 3.2 Provide information on how your State pursues arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures with a view to enhancing security and stability in the OSCE area.

Latvia actively participates in the OSCE Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence and Security –Building Measures implementation. Latvia is also a member of the Open Skies Treaty.

Latvia is in the process of establishing a digital National Weapons Register to improve capability of combatting illicit trafficking and uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons as well as to improve ability to control lawful handling of small arms and light weapons. The register is expected to be implemented by mid-2023 and will provide law enforcement and other competent authorities with effective tools to trace light weapons and ammunition through the lifecycle and throughout the market.

## **Section II: Intra-State elements**

### **1. National planning and decision-making process**

#### 1.1 What is the national planning and decision-making process in determining/approving military posture and defence expenditures in your State?

Latvia has an effective defence planning system that is compatible with NATO defence planning process and requirements. It is based on the overarching state defence principles and NATO recommendations, and provides a framework for annual planning cycle. National defence capability objectives, as set out in the LNAF Development Plan, are synchronized with NATO Capability Targets contributing to a well-coordinated capability development across the Alliance. Consequently, it ensures that the available resources deliver the maximum defence capabilities. Moreover, Latvia executes its defence planning to fulfil national operational requirements as well as commitments towards international security and stability. Regular reviews and assessments allow adjusting the resource allocation taking into consideration the changes in the security environment and the economic development of the country.

The defence planning system is based on a hierarchy of defence planning documents that are split between the different levels of security policy, defence policy and defence planning.

The key planning documents at the security policy level are:

*The National Security Threat Analysis* is a comprehensive assessment, which identifies the existing and potential specific threats or risk factors to national security. Analysis is prepared by the Constitution Protection Bureau in cooperation with the Latvian State Security Service and the Military Intelligence and Security Service, coordinated by the Council of State Security Institutions. It is examined by the Cabinet of Ministers and the National Security Council.

*The National Security Concept* is prepared based on the National Security Threat Analysis. This document determines the basic strategic principles and priorities for the prevention of threat to national security. The last National Security Concept was approved on September 28, 2023.

The defence policy documents are as follows:

*The Military Threat Analysis* is an assessment of the possibility of military aggression against Latvia that is prepared by the Military Intelligence and Security Service, annually examined by the National Security Council and by the Cabinet of Ministers.

*The State Defence Concept* is a document drawn up on the basis of the Military Threat Analysis, and determines the basic strategic principles within mid-term priorities and measures of the

State military defence during peacetime, threat to national security and a time of war. *Saeima* (The Parliament) adopted the last State Defence Concept on October 5, 2023.

The defence planning documents are:

*The National Security Plan* is based on the strategy and principles determined by the National Security Concept, it includes specific measures for neutralization and prevention of a threats to national security and is drawn up and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers within a year after the approval of the National Security Concept. *Saeima* adopted the current National Security Concept on September 28, 2023.

*The State Defence Plan* is prepared based on the Military Threat Analysis and the principles determined in the State Defence Concept. It determines specific State defence measures, priorities and necessary resources, as well as the necessary readiness and activities of the LNAF, institutions exercising State authority and administration, local governments, and natural and legal persons in regards to State defence. The State Defence Plan is drawn up by the Ministry of Defence in co-operation with other ministries and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

*Counter-terrorism strategy of Latvia for 2021-2026* is a policy planning document where seven strategic counter-terrorism directions have been identified based on the analysis of the terrorism threat situation. The actions are expected to be taken in the following areas: enhancement of international cooperation, prevention of radicalization, freedom restriction of terrorists, improvement of protection of terrorism risk objects, development of counter-terrorism plans. Trends of the terrorist threats in Europe and in Latvia as well as the terrorist threat forecasts for the situational development in Latvia and Europe of the VDD and partner services have been taken into account to determine the strategic directions. All counter-terrorism areas of action are equally important and complement various elements of the counter-terrorism system. The Cabinet of Ministers approved the last Counter-terrorism strategy of Latvia 2021-2026 on November 2, 2021.

The Ministry of Defence develops and implements the State defence policy, plans resources necessary for State defence and submits relevant proposals to the Cabinet of Ministers.

*The LNAF Development Plan* determines development objectives, the capabilities to be developed and action of the LNAF in the long-term (12 years), development priorities, tasks, terms of performance, as well as the mutual connection in the planning and budget development in the middle-term (4 years). The Cabinet of Ministers approved the last LNAF Development Plan on December 10, 2020. The LNAF Development Plan for the next 12-year cycle is currently under development.

On the basis of the development plan of the LNAF, the Joint Headquarters of the LNAF shall each year develop the annual development plan of the LNAF in which the tasks and measures of the LNAF for the next year shall be determined in accordance with the funds allocated. The annual development plan of the LNAF shall be approved by the Minister of Defence.

1.2 How does your State ensure that its military capabilities take into account the legitimate security concerns of other States as well as the need to contribute to international security and stability?

Latvia actively participates in a broad range of global and regional multilateral organizations aimed at strengthening international security, cooperation and rule of law including the UN, NATO, the EU and the OSCE.

As it is stated in 2.1 of Section I, of this Questionnaire, the contingent of LNAF participate in international operations in compliance with the Charter of the UN, in accordance with the international agreements binding to the Republic of Latvia and laws of the Republic of Latvia.

Participation of the LNAF in international operations is possible only in accordance with political decisions of the Saeima (The Parliament), the Cabinet of Ministers, or in special cases - the Minister of Defence.

## **2. Existing structures and processes**

### **2.1 What are the constitutionally established procedures for ensuring democratic political control of military, paramilitary and internal security forces, intelligence services and the police?**

#### **(i) Military Forces**

The legal basis for democratic control is embedded in the Constitution and in legislative acts that determine the responsibility of the armed forces thus ensuring democratic control over the LNAF.

Participation of the LNAF in international operations is possible only in accordance with political decisions of the *Saeima* (The Parliament), the Cabinet of Ministers, or in special cases - the Minister of Defence. This constitutional and legal framework provides transparency and clear division of power between the President, the Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers including the Minister of Defence.

The Minister of Defence performs civil control over the LNAF. The Minister of Defence is a civilian, who symbolizes and executes the democratic control over the LNAF. The Minister of Defence is politically responsible for his or her actions. The management of LNAF is exercised by the Commander of the LNAF who is subordinated to the Minister of Defence. The division of responsibilities is set in the National Security Law and in the National Armed Forces Law.

The civilian control of the activities of the LNAF within the scope of their competence is performed by the Minister of Defence, the State Audit Office, the Cabinet of Ministers, the President and the Parliament. The internal control of the activities of the LNAF is performed by the Commander of the LNAF.

#### **(ii) Paramilitary Forces**

In the territory of the Republic of Latvia there are no forces defined as paramilitary forces.

#### **(iii) Internal Security Forces, Intelligence Services**

The National Security Law defines that the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB), the State Security Service (VDD) and the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MIDD) are State security institutions, and their competence and democratic political control over them are governed by special laws.

The MIDD is a state security institution and it operates under the supervision of the Minister of Defence. The VDD operates under the supervision of the Minister of Interior and the SAB is supervised by the Cabinet of Ministers. The National Security Council has the right to request State security institutions all the existing information at their disposal, which concerns national security interests. The *Saeima* (the Parliament) and the National Security Committee of the Parliament performs parliamentary control over the activities of State security institutions and the *Saeima* supervises the use of budgetary funds granted for the needs of national security.

#### **(iv) Police**

The legal basis for police activities is embedded in the Constitution, the Law on Police, the Investigatory Operations Law, as well as in other laws, regulations and international treaties regulating the protection of the national security and economic sovereignty.



According to Section 38 of the Law on Police, the Cabinet of Ministers, the Minister of the Interior and local government institutions control the activities of the police within the scope of their competence.

2.2 How is the fulfilment of these procedures ensured, and which constitutionally established authorities/institutions are responsible for exercising these procedures?

Please refer to the information provided to question 2.1 in Section II.

2.3 What are the roles and missions of military, paramilitary and security forces, and how does your State control that such forces act solely within the constitutional framework?

**(i) Military Forces**

Section 6 of the National Armed Forces Law, regulates the tasks of the LNAF. The main tasks of the LNAF are the following:

- to ensure the inviolability of the land, airspace, and territorial waters;
- to participate in international military operations according to the procedures specified in the laws and international agreements;
- to participate in the prevention of situations that constitute a threat to the State in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

The units (sub-units) of the LNAF may become involved in the performance of other tasks not provided for in the National Armed Forces Law by an order of the Cabinet of Ministers.

The Minister of Defence controls the execution of the above-mentioned tasks by the LNAF. The Ministry of Defence has an assisting structure to ensure the legality of actions of the LNAF – the Audit and Inspection Department of the Ministry of Defence. In order to enforce the law, the Military Police shall operate with the rights of investigative institutions and investigatory operations subject in the regular composition of forces of the National Armed Forces. **(ii)**

**Paramilitary Forces**

Not applicable.

**(iii) Security Forces**

The National Security Law specifies the State security institutions. In addition, State Police and State Border Guard can be named as the State Security forces. The competence of the State Security Forces and the control over them is determined by such laws as the Law on State Security Institutions, the Law on Police, the Law on Career Course of Service of Officials with Special Service Ranks Working in Institutions of the System of the Ministry of the Interior and the Prisons Administration, the Law on State Border of the Republic of Latvia, the State Border Guard Law and other legal acts.

**3. Procedures related to different forces personnel**

3.1 What kind of procedures for recruitment and call-up of personnel for service in your military, paramilitary and internal security forces does your State have?

**(i) Military**

The LNAF are formed by regular forces, the National Defence Service (NDS), the National Guard and reserve of the National Armed Forces. In peacetime, personnel of the regular forces of the LNAF shall be formed by professional service soldiers, NDS conscripts, military and civilian employees. The National Armed Forces' reserve is composed of reserve soldiers and reservists.

In peacetime units are recruited from Latvian citizens who are:

- accepted into professional service,
- drafted into the National Defence Service,

- 18 to 27 years old and voluntarily joins the (NDS),
- employed in civil positions provided for in the staff list,
- employed in military positions.

LNAF are based on a volunteer military service system. Professional service soldiers fulfil service in accordance with a professional service contract. Civilian employees perform a specific job (work) on the basis of an employment contract in units (sub-units) in civil positions of staff in accordance with laws and regulations governing employment legal relationships. Military employees on the basis of an employment contract perform positions of military personnel in the National Armed Forces and in institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Defense determined by the Minister of Defense.

In accordance with the Military Service Law (MSL), Latvian citizens from 18 years of age may be accepted into professional service or drafted into the NDS if they meet the requirements stipulated by the Minister of Defence for the state of health, education, professional and physical preparedness, knowledge of the official language, and moral and psychological characteristics. Those Latvian citizens who are successfully recruited in LNAF, except of NDS soldiers, specialist officers, specialist non-commissioned officers, and specialist soldiers, may serve not less than five years until the attainment of the maximum age determined for professional service in this Law.

Overall, in LNAF are 4 NDS formats:

1. Service in LNAF for 11 months – After the 11 months service it is possible to sign a professional service contract.
2. Service in the National Guard for 5 years (No less than 21 days each year, no more than 7 days collective training);
3. Reserve officer program, by receiving a military training alongside the studies in the University. (In 5 years, a total of 180 days for training and service);
4. Civil service (alternative service) in state institutions under the LV MoD for 11 months.

MSL states, that norms of the laws and regulations governing employment legal relationships shall not apply to a soldier, except, e.g., for the norms that determine a prohibition of different treatment. The Labour Law states principle of equal rights, e.g., everyone has an equal right to work, to fair, safe and healthy working conditions, to fair work remuneration and these rights shall be ensured without any direct or indirect discrimination – irrespective of a person's race, skin color, gender, age, disability, religious, political or other conviction, ethnic or social origin, property or marital status, sexual orientation or other circumstances.

By December 2006, the last conscripts finished their military service, and on 1 January 2007, Latvia became country that has solely professional armed forces. After the full-scale invasion in Ukraine started and geopolitical situation in the region became more complicated, the Republic of Latvia changed its attitude towards security provision and in 2023 became a first state in NATO that re-established the conscription service or so-called National Defence Service (NDS). At this moment NAF are formed by regular forces, the National Defence Service, the National Guard and reserve of the NAF.

#### **(ii) Paramilitary Forces**

Not applicable.

#### **(iii) Security Forces**

The Law “On State Security Institutions”, the Law “On Police”, Law on the Career Course of Service of Officials with Special Service Ranks Working in Institutions of the System of the

Ministry of the Interior and the Prisons Administration and other legal acts regulate the recruitment procedures for the police and other interior security institutions.

### 3.2 What kind of exemptions or alternatives to military service does your State have?

In accordance with the Law on State Defence Service, National Defence Service is performed in one of the following ways:

- 1) 11 months in the regular forces of the National Armed Forces or the National Guard unit (hereinafter - the National Armed Forces unit);
- 2) five years in the National Guard as a whole, performing service tasks for no less than 21 days of individual training and no more than seven days of collective training each year;
- 3) within five years, complete the reserve officer program intended for university and college students in a military educational institution and a unit of the National Armed Forces, the total time of training and service assignments is not less than 180 days.

Persons subject to the National Defence Service, who cannot perform state defense military service due to their thoughts, conscience or religious beliefs, may be replaced by alternative service in accordance with the procedures specified in this law. Alternative service is performed for 11 months in the institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Defense.

The manner in which a citizen performs the National Defence Service is determined taking into account the priorities set by the National Armed Forces and the provision of personnel necessary for the performance of the tasks set by the National Armed Forces.

A citizen who learns the profession of a doctor, physician's assistant or nurse while studying in a medical program may choose one of the types of the National Defence Service mentioned before, regardless of the priorities set by the National Armed Forces. Taking into account the students' professional knowledge and skills, they can be appointed to positions related to the relevant field.

Volunteers may apply to the National Guard, which is a component of LNAF, the objective of which is to involve the citizens of Latvia in the defence of the State territory and society and which participates in the planning and execution of the State defence tasks in accordance with the tasks determined in the Law. These includes e.g. participation in international operations and rapid reaction forces, participation in the provision of host nation support, participation in accident, fire-fighting and rescue work and measures for elimination of the consequences of events that have caused emergency situations, as well as destruction of explosive objects and performance of blasting work and provision of support to State and local government institutions in crime prevention, guaranteeing of public order and security.

### 3.3 What are the legal and administrative procedures to protect the rights of all forces personnel as well as conscripts?

Legal and administrative procedures protecting the rights of all military personnel are regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, MSL, the National Guard of the Republic of Latvia Law, the National Armed Forces Law, the Law on Service Pensions for Military Persons, the Law On Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities, the Law on National Referendums, Legislative Initiatives and European Citizens' Initiative, the Law on the Election of the *Saeima*, Law on the Election of Local Government Councils, Internal rules of the Ministry of Defence No 21-NOT "Rules of Procedure of the Military Service System", as well as various governmental regulations on provisions catering, insurance and compensation for military personnel.

The principles of equality are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia which requires all human beings within Latvia to be equal before the law and the courts, human rights shall be realised without discrimination of any kind. The same principles also provide the Labor Law – everyone has an equal right to work, to fair, safe and healthy working conditions, as well as to fair remuneration. This right shall be ensured without any direct or indirect discrimination.

MSL provides that norms of laws and regulations governing employment relationship shall not apply to a soldier, except for provisions governing the prohibition of different treatment and some periods of leaves.

A soldier in LNAF is under the protection of the State. His or her life, freedom, honor and dignity are protected by law. A soldier has the right to be a member of such associations and foundations, which do not have a political nature, as well as to establish associations and foundations for soldiers and participate in other non-political activities if such activities do not interfere with the performance of service duties.

Soldiers have the right to nominate a representative in each unit from amongst their number to protect the interests of soldiers and to solve practical issues in relationships with the unit commander (superior officer) and higher officials. The representative of soldiers shall exercise his or her powers in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the Minister of Defence.

A soldier has the right to appeal the decisions of officials taken in respect of him or her to a court if such decisions restrict his or her rights or infringe upon his or her honor and dignity without grounds and if he or she has utilized all means to dispute the decision in accordance with subordination procedures to higher officials, including the Minister of Defence.

A soldier has no right to refuse to perform military service on religious grounds, and to utilize his or her service position to impose his or her religious conviction on others. A soldier's private property and its administration shall not be an obstacle or impediment to the performance of military service or to the transfer of the soldier from one unit to another.

Soldier's remuneration is governed by the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities, Law on State Defence Service and related regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers.

#### **4. Implementation of other political norms, principles, decisions and international humanitarian law**

##### **4.1. How does your State ensure that International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Law of War are made widely available, e.g., through military training programs and regulations?**

Latvia is a state party to all Geneva Conventions and its Additional Protocols. Moreover, Latvia is a party to many other international legal instruments in the field of humanitarian law, such as the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its five Protocols. Latvia is also a state-party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

International rules, conventions and commitments governing armed conflict are incorporated in the national legal acts.

IHL aspects are included in all career-training programs in the National Defence Academy as well as in training programs for soldiers before the deployment to NATO operations.

##### **4.2 What has been done to ensure that armed forces personnel are aware of being individually accountable under national and international law for their actions?**

According to the Military Disciplinary Liability Law each soldier and national guardsman shall be personally liable for the compliance with military discipline. Military discipline constitutes compliance with the procedures and instructions laid down in laws and regulations, military

rules, and by orders or commands of a commander (superior officer) during the performance of military service and service in the National Guard. A soldier or a national guardsman who has breached laws and regulations or service requirements specified in the order or command of his or her commander (superior officer), irrespective of the service rank and position, shall be subject to disciplinary liability, administrative liability, or criminal liability, and also shall be financially liable for the loss (damage) caused. A soldier and a national guardsman shall be subject to disciplinary liability in accordance with the procedures laid down in this Law. Holding of the soldier or national guardsman liable to disciplinary action shall not release him or her from potential criminal liability and civil liability.

According to MSL, the National Guard of the Republic of Latvia Law and the Law on State Defence Service a soldier and a national guardsman shall be held subject to disciplinary liability, administrative liability or criminal liability for unlawful actions, compensation for material losses caused shall be collected from him or her in accordance with the procedures laid down in laws and regulations.

According to the Law on State Defence Service the person performing the alternative service is responsible for the direct damages caused to the institution where he performs the alternative service due to his or her illegal, culpable conduct.

For inappropriate performance of the alternative service and violation of the rules of the institution's internal work order, the person performing alternative service may be given a character remark or reprimand, indicating circumstances indication the commission of violation. The head of the institution issues a remark or reprimand no later than one month from the day the violation was discovered. Before issuing a remark or a reprimand, the institution informs the person performing the alternative service in writing of the nature of the violation committed by him/her and then requests a written explanation from him/her about the violation.

4.3 How does your State ensure that armed forces are not used to limit the peaceful and lawful exercise of human and civil rights by persons as individuals or as representatives of groups nor to deprive them of national, religious, cultural, linguistic or ethnic identity?

Please refer to the information provided to questions 2.1 and 2.3 in Section II.

4.4 What has been done to provide for the individual service member's exercise of his or her civil rights and how does your State ensure that the country's armed forces are politically neutral?

As stipulated in Section 15 of the Military Service Law, soldiers are prohibited from:

1. Engaging in political activities, joining trade unions, organizing strikes and participating in them;
2. Combining the performance of military service with another position or work not permitted by law;
3. Being a representative of another person in matters related to a unit (institution) in which he or she holds a position;
4. Taking part, personally or through the intermediation of another person, in transactions, upon the entering into or the fulfilment of which soldiers may unlawfully utilize their service position or come into a conflict of interest.

Soldier's rights to vote, to be nominated as candidates are set in laws listed in question 3.3 of Section II. A soldier may participate in the activities of an association or foundation during free time of the service, has a right to freedom of religion and belief in faith. The commander of a unit may release a soldier from the duties of direct service to participate in religious activities if it does not interfere with the performance of the tasks of the unit (sub-unit).

#### 4.5 How does your State ensure that its defence policy and doctrine are consistent with international law?

According to the place of international law in the Latvian legal system, the Latvian international obligations prevail the national law in case of any collision of legal norms. International law and the international obligations that the Republic of Latvia has undertaken are considered when drafting defence policy and doctrines (i.e. international humanitarian law, arms control treaties, human rights conventions, the UN Charter and customary international law).

### **Section III: Public access and contact information**

#### **1. Public access**

##### 1.1. How is the public informed about the provisions of the Code of Conduct?

The Ministry of Defence of Latvia and National Armed Forces do not provide any specific information on the Code of Conduct. General information on cooperation within the OSCE is published on the official website of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia.

##### 1.2. What additional information related to the Code of Conduct, e.g., replies to the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct, is made publicly available in your State?

Please refer to the information provided to question 1.1. in Section III.

##### 1.3. How does your State ensure public access to information related to your State's armed forces?

Public access to information on LNAF is organized according to Freedom of Information Law and the Law on the Press and Other Mass Media.

Among the main activities of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia and LNAF in order to ensure public access to information are:

- Website of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia [www.mod.gov.lv](http://www.mod.gov.lv) (in Latvian and English);
- Website of the National Armed Forces [www.mil.lv](http://www.mil.lv) (in Latvian);
- News portal of defence sector [www.sargs.lv/](http://www.sargs.lv/) (in Latvian);
- Social media activities:

National Armed Forces

[twitter.com/Latvijas\\_armija](https://twitter.com/Latvijas_armija)

[www.facebook.com/pages/Latvijasarmija](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Latvijasarmija)

[www.flickr.com/photos/latvijas\\_armija](https://www.flickr.com/photos/latvijas_armija)

[www.youtube.com/LatvijasArmija](https://www.youtube.com/LatvijasArmija)

[www.instagram.com/latvijas\\_armija](https://www.instagram.com/latvijas_armija)

[vm.tiktok.com/GptVJ1/](https://vm.tiktok.com/GptVJ1/)

Ministry of Defence

[twitter.com/Aizsardzibasmin](https://twitter.com/Aizsardzibasmin)

[www.facebook.com/Aizsardzibasministrija](https://www.facebook.com/Aizsardzibasministrija)

[www.flickr.com/photos/aizsardzibas\\_ministrija](https://www.flickr.com/photos/aizsardzibas_ministrija)

News portal of defence sector

[www.facebook.com/Sargs.lv](https://www.facebook.com/Sargs.lv)

#### **2. Contact information**

##### 2.1 Provide information on the national point of contact for the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

###### **Defence Policy Department**

Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Latvia, Phone: (+371) 67335096

## IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSCR 1325 “WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY” IN THE LATVIAN NATIONAL ARMED FORCES

This document provides an indicative list of issues, which aims at providing useful information on Women, Peace and Security aspects for participating States replying to the Questionnaire on the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

It is structured around the four pillars of UNSCR 1325 (Prevention, Participation, Protection and Sustaining Peace) and is set out in two parts for each pillar:

- PART A Checklist of key commitments and measures taken by participating States
- PART B More detailed information for sharing good practice between participating States.

### 3.1. PREVENTION

#### **A. Checklist of key commitments taken by participating States** LIST OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND ARRANGEMENTS

Please indicate if your State is party to the following universal and regional legal instruments relevant to protecting women, peace and security. If your State is not a party to a treaty, but considers becoming a party, kindly indicate at which stage is such consideration (e.g., undergoing inter-ministerial co-ordination, approved by government and sent to parliament, approved by parliament and awaiting enactment by president, etc.)

	<b>Name of the treaty</b>	Party by: ratification <b>P(R)</b> , accession <b>P(a)</b> , succession <b>P(s)</b> , acceptance <b>P(A)</b> , approval <b>P(AA)</b> , or <b>Not party</b>	Law and date of ratification, accession, succession, acceptance, or approval
<b>Universal legal instruments</b>			
1.	Protocol Supplementary to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000)	<b>P(R)</b>	Law on the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime to Prevent,

			Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children <sup>1</sup> 29.05.2004
2.	United Nations Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)	P(R)	04.05.1990
<b>The Council of Europe legal instruments</b>			
3.	European Convention Against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005) CETS No: 197	P(R)	Law on the Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings <sup>2</sup> 13.02.2008.
4.	European Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (2011) CETS No: 210	P(R)	Law on the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence <sup>3</sup> (Law entered into force on 27.12.2023.)  Ratification 10.01.2024.

<sup>1</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/87670-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizacijas-konvencijas-pret-transnacionalo-organizeto-noziedzibu-protokolu-par-cilveku-tirdzniecibas>

<sup>2</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/170681-par-eiropas-padomes-konvenciju-par-cinu-pret-cilveku-tirdzniecibu>

<sup>3</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/348233-par-eiropas-padomes-konvenciju-par-vardarbibas-pret-sievietem-un-vardarbibas-gimene-noversanu-un-apkarosanu>



			Entry into force 01.05.2024.
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	<b>Other arrangements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
5.	National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325	x	
6.	National legislation to implement the UN CEDAW convention (if a party), with particular reference to combating discrimination in employment, education, access to health services and participation in institutions ensuring democratic oversight and public scrutiny of the security sector.	x	
7.	Other related information, clarification or details to share:		

#### B. Checklist of key measures taken by participating States

Please indicate if your State has the following preventative measures in place. More detailed information of the preventative measure can be included in Part B below.

	<b>Type of Measure</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1.	Mechanism to assess risk of abuse of small arms to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence and violence against women and children	x	
2.	Inclusion of women's organisations and women in religious, ethnic minority or community groups in measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to counter and prevent terrorism and violent extremism</li> <li>- to raise awareness of the potential risks of exploitation and radicalization<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>	x	
3.	Inclusion of gender perspective and special needs of women and girls in a national counter-terrorism strategy <sup>5</sup>	x	
4.	Inclusion of specific matters related to the protection of women's and girl's rights in the basic education of armed forces.	x	

<sup>4</sup> See also similar question 3a in form to input to UN SG UNSCR 1325 report.

<sup>5</sup> See also similar question 3a in form to input to UN SG UNSCR 1325 report.

5.	Availability of specialised in-service training for armed forces personnel on the protection of women's and girl's rights.	x	
6.	Inclusion of specific matters related to the protection of women's and girl's rights in the pre-deployment training for international peacekeeping missions.	x	
7.	Plans to address and gather information from local women's populations in areas at risk of conflicts.	x	
8.	Mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the implementation of gender mainstreaming into operations	x	
9.	Feedback mechanisms: - from operations to chiefs of defence or military planners - between forces leading multi-national missions and forces providing personnel to such missions	x	
10.	Membership of a regional network or leadership network such as the WPS Chiefs of Defence Network	x	
11.	<p><b>Other related information, clarification or details to share:</b></p> <p>The principles of UNSCR 1325 are enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia which requires all persons within Latvia to be equal before the law and the courts and human rights shall be implemented without any discrimination. This also refers to gender equality. The Constitution of the Republic of Latvia provides equal rights for both – men and women– to participate in the activities covered by this Resolution.</p> <p>The principles of UNSCR 1325 are incorporated in regulatory provisions, and gender equality at the Ministry of Defence and its subordinated institutions including the LNAF is fully respected.</p> <p>Latvia also has implemented a policy planning document in the field of gender equality: “Plan for promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men for 2021-2023”. The adoption of a new “Plan for promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men for 2024-2027” is currently pending. The Plans consist of a comprehensive overview of Latvia's planned activities to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men. The Plans are created by the Ministry of Welfare and involve, both, the public and the non-governmental sector.</p> <p>Additionally, the “Plan for the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence for the period from 2024 to 2029” is currently being adopted by the competent institutions in Latvia.</p>		

### **C. More detailed information for sharing good practice between participating States**

#### **1. National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325**

In 2020, the Government approved Latvia's National Action Plan on the Implementation of the UNSCR 1325 in Latvia for the term of 2020-2025 (hereinafter – the Plan). The Plan was drafted under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Plan envisages three main tasks: (1) raising public awareness of gender equality issues and the elimination of gender-based violence, especially in the younger generation; (2) training for the Defence and Home affairs sector, including the establishment of a gender adviser's position; and (3) transfer of Latvia's experience and knowledge.

The tasks are implemented in cooperation with the line ministries and non-governmental organizations. Training on gender equality and elimination of gender-based violence in the Latvian Defence and Home affairs sector will involve international cooperation.

Promoting women's empowerment and equal opportunities is one of the priorities of Latvia's foreign policy in international organisations and in development cooperation. Latvia has high rates of female professional representation - representation of women in leading positions, scientific research and policy, being among leaders in the EU. The National Armed Forces of Latvia remains one of the leading NATO armed forces in terms of female representation.

Currently we are in the process of conducting a midterm evaluation of the Plan, together with state institutions and the non-governmental sector. That will help to identify what aspects of the Plan have already been implemented and what is yet to be implemented. This evaluation will be important for a potential second Latvia's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

## **2. Measures to prevent sexual and gender-based harm in conflict**

In the framework of Latvia's National Action Plan for the term of 2020-2025, an appropriate training for the defence and home affairs sector, including the establishment of a gender adviser's position, is foreseen.

There is formal procedure for reporting sexual harassment through General Inspection at the Ministry of Defence. In Latvian National Armed Forces investigating body is Investigation Service under the Military Police. But there are no specifically appointed personnel to deal with or to whom to report sexual harassment.

Latvia believes that it is important to address the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in conflicts at the international level. In addition to our development cooperation activities (e.g., providing assistance, including psychosocial support and rehabilitation to Ukrainian women who have suffered from wartime sexual violence), we also aim to highlight this topic during Latvia's campaign in its candidacy to UN Security Council (term of 2026-2027).

## **3 Leadership, accountability and assurance**

The gender perspective is usually consideration with rights of every soldier, there are usually no specific directives or procedures.

Latvia is an active participant of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network, where our National Focal Points from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participate in sharing good practices. Additionally, we regularly exchange on good practices in various formats, notably, between the Nordic-Baltic countries; between Latvia and Canada; Latvia and Germany, also within the UN Commission on the Status of Women, etc.

In addition, one of our tasks within the Plan is to transfer Latvia's experience and knowledge further. Within the context of development cooperation projects, Latvian NGOs (e.g., Centre

“Marta”, the Centre works with helping survivors of sexual and gender-based violence crimes) regularly share their expertise with countries in Central Asia.

#### 4 Sharing of good practice

There is an opportunity to take specific courses on gender issues, also representatives of Armed Forces are involved in seminars, round-table discussions etc. with other institutions and civil sector.

### 3.2 PARTICIPATION

#### A. Checklist of key measures taken by participating States

Please indicate if your State has the following measures in place to increase women’s participation in security forces and decision making, including at all stages of any peace-making process. More detailed information of such measure can be included in Part B below.

	Type of Measure	Yes	No
1.	Collection and monitoring of sex disaggregated statistics on applicants to armed forces	x	
2.	Policies to attract female candidates (targeted campaigns, review of accession tests etc)	x	
3.	Policies to promote equal opportunities for women and men across the security sector	x	
4.	Collection and monitoring of sex disaggregated statistics of armed forces personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- By rank</li> <li>- By promotion</li> <li>- By retention</li> </ul>	x	
5.	Collection and monitoring of sex disaggregated statistics of complaints by armed forces personnel of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discrimination</li> <li>- sexual harassment</li> <li>- gender based harassment</li> <li>- sexual violence</li> <li>- gender-based violence</li> </ul>	x	
6.	Collection and monitoring of sex disaggregated statistics of complaints by civilian personnel in the security sector of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discrimination</li> <li>- sexual harassment</li> <li>- gender based harassment</li> <li>- sexual violence</li> <li>- gender-based violence</li> </ul>	x	

7.	Anonymous staff surveys/climate assessment surveys or similar (monitoring incidences of behaviour contrary to military standards of conduct)	x	
8.	Collection and monitoring of sex-disaggregated statistics of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- personnel deployed on operations and peace-keeping missions</li> <li>- and by rank</li> </ul>	x	
9.	Collection and monitoring of sex-disaggregated statistics of decision makers in the security sector	x	
10.	Other related information, clarification or details to share:		

B. More detailed information for sharing good practice on participative measures between participating States

**1. Measures to increase the number of women in general and in decision-making positions in the armed forces and the Ministry of Defence (and other security forces-optional).**

In Latvia's National Armed Forces 16% of professional soldiers are women of whom 20% are officers.

## 2. Measures to increase the numbers of women and specialist WPS advisers in peacekeeping forces.<sup>6</sup>

In 2023 there were 12 women deployed in NATO operations, which equals to 8.8% of total number of Latvian soldiers serving in NATO operations.

2023	
Rank	Number
OF-2	1
OF-1	1
OR-7	2
OR-4	1
OR-3	6
OR-2	1

## 3. Democratic oversight of Security Forces and WPS

Latvia's National Action Plan for the term of 2020-2025 determines the reporting mechanism. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has to submit to the Cabinet of Ministers a mid-term evaluation of the implementation by the end of 2024 and a general evaluation of the implementation and impact of the plan in 2026.

### 3.3 PROTECTION

#### A. Checklist of measures taken by participating States

Please indicate if your State has the following protective measures in place. More detailed information of the protective measure can be included in Part B below.

	Type of Measure	Yes	No
1.	Specialist Advisers on WPS: - Gender Advisers - Gender Focal Points - Women Protection Advisers		x
2.	Policies to protect women and others in conflict and post-conflict areas from sexual abuse and exploitation by your state's security personnel <sup>7</sup>	NA	
3.	Policies which set out the duties of commanders and other superiors to prevent abuse or exploitation by their subordinates.	x	

<sup>6</sup> See also similar question B1 in form to input to UN SG UNSCR 1325 report.

<sup>7</sup> See also similar question B2 in form to input to UN SG UNSCR 1325 report as well as question 3a in NATO Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Implementation Progress Report.

4.	Collection and monitoring of reported cases of exploitation and abuse allegedly perpetrated by military, para-military and security forces: -referred -investigated - acted upon	x	
5.	Measures to increase your State's capacity to investigate alleged violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in areas of conflict or post-conflict including sexual and gender-based violence <sup>8</sup>	x	
6.	National legislation conferring powers to prosecute alleged extra-terrestrial violations of human rights	NA	
7.	Other related information, clarification or details to share:  In the framework of Latvia's National Action Plan for the term of 2020-2025 the establishment of a gender adviser's position, is foreseen.		

B. More detailed information for sharing good practice on protective measures between participating States

**1. Measures to embed protection of women and girls in operations and international missions**

NA

**2. Investigating alleged violations**

NA

**3. Other measures to protect women and girls**

NA

**3.4 SUSTAINING PEACE**

**A. Checklist of key measures taken by participating States**

Please indicate if your State has the following measures in place to sustain peace, especially with regard to relief and recovery and to post-conflict situations. More detailed information of such measures can be included in Part B below.

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<sup>8</sup> See also similar question 4a in Similar question in NATO Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Implementation Progress Report.

	<b>Type of Measure</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
1.	Measures to ensure the involvement of women from the outset in seeking a peaceful settlement of potential or actual conflicts.		
2.	Measures to support those who have experienced sexual or gender-based violence during or post-conflict to support their recovery from trauma		
3.	Measures to support the role of women as agents of change and transformation in areas emerging from conflict		
4.	Measures to support capacity building in the security and other sectors of fragile states or post-conflict situations to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially relating to women and girls		
5.	<p>Other related information, clarification or details to share:</p> <p>Promoting women's empowerment and equal opportunities is one of the priorities of Latvia's foreign policy in international organisations and in development cooperation. The participation of Latvian women in the composition of civilian experts in international missions - the proportion of women in the amount of 20%</p>		