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LATVIJAS REPUBLIKAS PASTĀVĪGĀ PĀRSTĀVNICĪBA ANO, EDSO UN CITĀS
STARPTAUTISKAJĀS ORGANIZĀCIJĀS VĪNĒ
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA TO THE UN, OSCE AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA

Verbal Note

No. 2.3.5.-174

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, in accordance with the FSC Decision 2/09, has the honour to transmit herewith Latvia's response to the Questionnaire on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations 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, 13 July, 2010

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

Vienna

LATVIA

**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?

For the present Latvia has signed and ratified 13 international conventions and 1 protocol on counter-terrorism measures:

- Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, Tokyo, 14 September 1963, ratified by Latvia on March 24, 1997.
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft, the Hague, 16 December 1970, ratified by Latvia on March 24, 1997.
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation, Montreal, 23 September, 1971, (as well as its amendment - the Protocol combating unlawful violation in international civil airports, Montreal, 24 March, 1997) ratified by Latvia on March 24, 1997.
- European Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism, Strasbourg, 27 January 1977, ratified by Latvia on March 4, 1999.
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, Including Diplomatic Agents (New York 1973, 14 December), ratified by Latvia on August 29, 1991.
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Explosions of Terrorists Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in resolution 54/109 of 15 December 1997, ratified by Latvia on October 24, 2002.
- Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (Montréal 1 March 1991), ratified by Latvia on April 29, 1998.
- International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in resolution 54/109 of 9 December 1999, ratified by Latvia on September 26, 2002.
- International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, New York, 12 January 1998, ratified by Latvia on October 24, 2002.
- Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime navigation, Rome, 10 March 1988, ratified by Latvia on October 31, 2002.
- International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations 18 December 1979, ratified by Latvia on September 26, 2002.
- Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on March 3, 1980.
- Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on March 10, 1988.
- Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism Adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations 13 April 2005, ratified by Latvia on June 1, 2006.

Latvia has implemented the legal instruments of the Council of Europe, the European Union and other international organizations. Currently, Latvia has signed and ratified 10 Conventions of the Council of Europe:

- Convention of Cybercrime, Budapest, 23 November 2001, ratified by Latvia in 14 February, 2007, entry into force in Latvia on June 1, 2007.
- European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 20 April 1959, ratified by Latvia in 2 June 1997, entry into force in Latvia on August 31, 1997.
- European Code of Social Security, Strasbourg, 16 April 1964, signed by Latvia on November 28, 2003.
- European Convention on the International Validity of Criminal Judgements, The Hague, 25 May 1970, ratified by Latvia in 29 July 2003, entry into force in Latvia on October 30, 2003.
- European Convention on the Transfer of Proceedings in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 15 May 1972, ratified by Latvia 2 June 1997, entry into force in Latvia on September 3, 1997.
- European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, Strasbourg, 27 January 1977, ratified by Latvia 20 April 1999, entry into force in Latvia on July 21, 1999.
- Additional Protocol to the European Convention on the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, Strasbourg, 17 March 1978, ratified by Latvia in 2 June 1997, entry into force in Latvia on August 31, 1997.
- Protocol amending the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, Strasbourg, 15 May 2003, ratified by Latvia on February 8, 2005.
- Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, Warsaw, 16 May 2005, signed by Latvia on May 19, 2006.
- 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, signed by Latvia on May 19, 2006.

Latvia has signed bilateral treaties on counter-terrorism measures with Austria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Spain, Slovenia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Germany, the Slovak Republic, Cyprus and Malta.

On October 21, 2004 Saeima (national parliament) supported the accession of the Republic of Latvia to the Protocol amending the European Convention on the suppression of terrorism, the aim of which is to strengthen the fight with terrorism.

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.

- The Criminal Law contains special Article 88 on terrorism, Article 88¹ on terrorism financing, Article 88² which stipulates liability for summoning to terrorism or threats of terror, Article 88³ on recruiting and training for acts of terror.
- The Law On Prevention Of Legalization Of Proceeds Of Crime And Financing Of Terrorism. Purpose of this Law is to prevent legalization of proceeds of crime and financing of terrorism.
- The Commercial Law, The Credit institution Law. Both Laws determines the legal status of credit institutions, regulates their operations, liability and supervision, as well as determining the rights, duties and liability of those persons to whom the requirements of this Law are related.

- Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 2008.12.22., Nr.1071 „Regulations about list of indications of strange transactions and order how reports on strange or suspicious transactions has to be provided”.
- The Law On Radiation Safety and Nuclear Safety. The Law prescribes the safety requirements for sources of ionising radiation and activities with these 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.
- Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers on 2002.11.3. Nr.508 „Rules for physical security of sources of ionization rays”.
- Law On the Handling of Weapons. The purpose of this Law is to determine the rights and obligations of natural persons and legal persons in relation to the handling of weapons, components thereof, munitions, explosives, explosive devices, special means or pyrotechnic articles in the Republic of Latvia, as well as to specify the classification of such objects in order to ensure the safety of persons and the public.
- Law On Cyber Security is made and given for approval in Saeima (Latvian parliament).

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 leading service regarding terrorism prevention and combating in Latvia is Latvian Security Police (DP). DP is domestic intelligence and security service with rights of police agency. DP is responsible for:

- Counterterrorism;
- Counterintelligence;
- Protection of the constitutional order;
- Protection of the state secrets;
- Protection of the Prime Minister and other state officials, as well as representatives of foreign and international organizations and institutions.

DP is the only security/intelligence service of Latvia which has also rights of law enforcement. DP has rights to perform pre – trial investigations regarding crimes against national security (spying, terrorism, disclosure of state secrets, hate crimes, sabotage etc).

From point of terrorism combating DP is responsible for counterintelligence and operational activities to fight terrorism, illegal distribution of arms, explosive, nuclear, chemical, radiological materials.

From point of terrorism prevention, in accordance with the Law on Security and Intelligence Services, DP is the main counterterrorism authority and is delegated to perform coordination of activities of state and municipal institutions as well as other legal entities in the field of counterterrorism. The mentioned task is ensured by special department of DP – Counterterrorism Center (PTC).

The main functions of the PTC are:

- Terrorism threat monitoring (all sources information analysis, assessment and prognosis);
- Coordination of development of the national counterterrorism system;
- Coordination of development of the national level terrorism prevention measures;
- Coordination of development of the national level terrorism response measures;

- Providing of protective security advices to the critical infrastructure objects;
- Conducting of counterterrorism trainings and exercises;
- Coordination of implementation of terrorism prevention plans in case of increasing terrorism threats;
- Coordination of implementation of terrorism response plans in case of occurred or imminent terrorist attack.

One of the National Armed Force tasks is to perform special state defence and security operations and participate in the execution of counter-terrorist measures. 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 participation of the National Armed Forces in international operations contributing to counter-terrorism efforts.

Article 6.¹ of Law of the National Armed Forces defines, that in case of threats of terror the National Armed Forces supports the measures taken by DP to prevent or manage threats of terror.

Article 17 of the Law of the National Armed Forces defines, that in case of threats of terror the Minister of Defence upon the request of the Minister of the Interior instructs the Commander of the National Armed Forces to provide support to the measures taken by DP to prevent or manage threats of terror, providing the tasks, the time and the place. The head of the mentioned tasks is responsible for the orders given to the National Armed Force's units involved in the measures to prevent and manage threats of terror.

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.*

Please refer to information provided to question 1.1-1.3.

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 the military personnel or units in international operations is regulated by the Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations. The Cabinet of the Ministers regulates participation of the military personnel and units of the National Armed Forces (NAF) in the international military exercises which take place outside the territory of Latvia. For instance, participation in the 26 international military exercises in 2010 is regulated by the decision No 148 of the Cabinet of the Ministers, adopted in 15.03.2010.

There are two options for the military exercises conducted within the territory of Latvia: if the number of foreign military personnel doesn't exceed 500 people, the decision is made by the Minister of Defence in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs. For instance, in 2010 the Minister of Defence allowed to organize in Latvia 9 international military exercises with the participation of foreign military personnel less than 500 people.

If the number of foreign military personnel participating in the military exercises exceeds 500 people the decision shall be made by the Cabinet of the Ministers. 2 military exercises with the participation of foreign military personnel more than 500 people were accepted by the Cabinet of the Ministers in 2010.

The Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations stipulates that units of the National Armed Forces participate in international operations within the mandate of the United Nations or other international organizations or according to the international agreements binding to the Republic of Latvia and according to the laws of the Republic of Latvia, as well as according to decisions on the participation of united of armed forces in international operations made by the Saeima, the Cabinet of Ministers or, in the special cases defined by law, by the Minister of Defence.

Article 5 of the Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations provides that in case of a demand from a foreign country the Minister of Defence may decide on the participation of individual specially trained units of the National Armed Forces in international rescue operations and international humanitarian operations in NATO or EU member states.

Regarding transit procedures through the territory of Latvia the law On the Status of Foreign Military Forces in the Republic of Latvia, sets up two options: if the amount of the military forces using the territory of Latvia as a transit state exceeds 500 people the permission is given by the Cabinet of the Ministers. If the amount of the military forces using the territory of Latvia as a transit state doesn't exceed 500 people, the permission is given by the Minister of Defence in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The National Armed Forces are participating in the ISAF international military operation according to the annual decision of the Parliament and in OSCE according to the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Taking into account that the Republic of Latvia is a member of NATO and has undertaken commitment of all NATO basic treaties (i.e. NATO SOFA) as well as PfP SOFA, the provisions of these important international treaties will apply.

** Participating States are encouraged to highlight major changes or updates in their replies to the questionnaire, as appropriate.*

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 building are elements of the Latvian security policy. Latvia works closely with its partners in international (bilateral and multilateral) formats, including OSCE and NATO. Latvia is also part of the major international treaties prohibiting weapons of mass destruction. Latvia shares the international concerns on the proliferation of weapons and participates in discussions on disarmament and arms control issues.

Latvia's arms-control system is based on its export control system that respects the EU regulations and the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports.

Latvia respects the non-proliferation treaties (e.g. BTWC, CWC, NPT, CCWC, Ottawa Convention).

This mechanism is stipulated by the existing national procedures (please see II.2.)

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 regards the OSCE arms control and confidence and security building measures (CSBMs) as important security policy documents.

Latvia actively participates in Vienna Document inspections and is a member of Open Skies programme.

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 planning requirements. It is based on the main state defence principles and NATO recommendations, and provides a framework for an annual planning cycle. Consequently, it ensures that the available resources deliver the maximum defence capability. Regular reviews of the plans are carried out, which allows adjusting the resource allocations 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 divided between the levels of security policy, defence policy and defence planning.

The major planning documents at the security policy level are:

The State Risk Analysis is a comprehensive assessment of the existing and potential risk factors to national security that is prepared by the Information Analysis Service and is approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The National Security Concept is based on the State Risk Analysis; this document determines the basic strategic principles, priorities and measures for the prevention of crises and threats to national security. The National Security Concept was approved by the Parliament on October 2, 2008.

The defence policy documents are as follows:

The Military Threat Analysis is an assessment of the possibility of military aggression against Latvia which is prepared by the Ministry of Defence and is approved on an annual basis by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The State Defence Concept is drafted on the basis of the Military Threat Analysis and determines the basic strategic principles, priorities and guidelines to ensure state military defence. The State Defence Concept was accepted by Parliament on June 19, 2008.

The *State Defence Plan* is based on the principles listed in the State Defence Concept and the Military Threat Analysis. The *State Defence Plan* sets forth specific state defence measures, priorities and necessary resources required for crisis prevention and management. In addition it outlines the responsibilities of the National Armed Forces, state institutions, local governments, and individual and legal entities in state defence.

Based on the documents above, the National Armed Forces prepares defence planning documents – implementation plans for the principles set out by security and defence policy:

The National Armed Forces Development Plan determines development aims and future capabilities in the long term (12 years) and sets affordable priorities, tasks and timelines for National Armed Forces development in the medium term (4 years).

The National Armed Forces Annual Plan is a one-year plan that sets tasks for the following year.

These plans are the basis for the annual budgeting process.

The operational planning of state defence is done on the basis of defence policy documents. The Operational Concept, the National Armed Forces Operational Study and the State Defence Operational Plan are prepared in accordance with the principles set out by the State Defence Concept and the Military Threat Analysis.

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?

Long-term capability development process in Latvia is based on the Military Threat Assessment (updated annually) and the State Defence Concept (updated once in four years).

The Military Threat Assessment presents an analysis of regional and international security developments and, inter alia, outlines instability regions that in future (over the next twenty years) might require military involvement. The State Defence Concept is developed to outline the fundamental strategic principles, priorities and measures for ensuring national defence. The Concept is prepared taking into account the Military Threat Assessment and documents defining NATO and EU security and defence policy.

Based on both evaluations, defence planners define what kind of capabilities will be needed to conduct future operations.

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

Latvia has established democratic control over the NAF. The fundamentals of democratic control are embedded in the Constitution and additional legislative acts that determine the responsibility of armed forces.

Participation of the National Armed Forces in international operations is possible only in accordance with political decisions of the Parliament or/and Government or in special cases defined by law, by the Minister of Defence. The constitutional and legal framework provides transparency and clear division of power between the President, the Parliament and the Government including Minister of Defence.

The civilian Minister of Defence symbolises and executes the democratic control over the National Armed Forces. The Minister of Defence is politically responsible to the Parliament. The Commander of the National Armed Forces is directly subordinated to the Minister of Defence. The Commander of the National Armed Forces, in accordance with the Minister's directives, executes the operational command over the National Armed Forces.

The division of responsibilities is clarified in the Law on National Security and in the Law on the National Armed Forces. The Parliament also approved the Mobilisation Law, which is a part of the legal base of the defence system based on democratic control over the military.

Article 19 of the Law on the National Armed Forces regulates the civilian control over the National Armed Forces, and determines the competence and control of the Defence Minister, State Control Authority, the Government, State President and the Parliament over the armed forces. The Commander of the National Armed Forces carries out the internal control over the forces.

(ii) paramilitary forces

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

The Law on National Armed Forces defines that in wartime or in case of emergency the Defence department of the Bank of Latvia and during war time the Border Guard will be included into the National Armed Forces.

(iii) internal security forces

The Law on the National Armed Forces defines that tasks of the Military Police are to perform special operations in interests of state defence and security, to ensure protection of the highest state officials (also foreign). The greatest role in internal security is played by the land forces who participate in counter-terrorism activities etc. However, units of the National Armed Forces have certain tasks concerning internal security.

The Law on National Security defines that the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB), the Security Police and the Military Intelligence and Security Service are internal security authorities and their activities are governed by special laws and regulations.

(iv) intelligence services

The national security system contains 3 separate intelligence services - the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB), the Military Intelligence and Security Service and the Security Police.

The Military Intelligence and Security Service is a state security authority under the supervision of the Ministry of Defence. The Security Police is under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior. The Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB) is the under supervision of the Cabinet of Ministers and the supervision is carried out by the Minister of Justice.

The National Security Council controls all these services. The National Security Commission of the Parliament provides parliamentary control over the State Security services.

(v) police

The legal basis for the police activities is provided by the Constitution, the Law on National Security Institutions, the Law on Police, the Law on Operational Acts, other laws and internal regulations, as well as international treaties regulating the protection of the national security and economic sovereignty.

According to Article 38 of the Law on Police, the Government, the Minister of the Interior and local authorities control the activities of the police within 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

The Law on the National Armed Forces, Chapter II, Article 6, is regulating the tasks of the National Armed Forces.

(1) The main tasks of the National Armed Forces are the following:

- to ensure the inviolability of the land territory, the water aquatorium and the airspace of the State;
- to participate in international military operations according to the procedures specified in the law and international agreements; and
- to participate in the prevention of situations that constitute a threat to the State according to the procedures specified in regulatory enactments.

(2) The units (sub-units) of the NAF may become involved in the performance of other tasks not stipulated this Law but only by an order of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Participation of the military personnel in international operations is regulated by the Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations.

The Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations stipulates that units of the National Armed Forces participate in international operations within the mandate of the United Nations or other international organizations or according to the international agreements binding to the Republic of Latvia and according to the laws of the Republic of Latvia, as well as according to decisions on the participation of united of armed forces in international operations made by the Saeima, the Cabinet of Ministers or, in the special cases defined by law, by the Minister of Defence.

Article 5 of the Law on the Participation of the National Armed Forces of Latvia in the International Operations provides that in case of a demand from a foreign country the Minister of Defence may decide on the participation of individual specially trained units of the National Armed Forces in international rescue operations and international humanitarian operations in NATO or EU member states.

The Minister of Defence controls the execution of the above mentioned tasks and missions by the NAF. The Ministry has assisting structures to ensure the legality of actions of the National Armed Forces – the Inspector General in the Ministry of Defence and National Armed Forces. There is also the Military Police subordinated to the Commander of National Armed Forces.

(ii) paramilitary forces

The Law on the National Armed Forces makes the provision that in wartime or in case of emergency the Defence department of the Bank of Latvia and the Border Guard shall be included into the National Armed Forces.

(iii) security forces

The Law on National Security defines that the Constitution Protection Bureau (SAB), the Military Intelligence and Security Service and the Security Police are internal security authorities and their activities are governed by special laws.

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

By December 2006, when the last conscripts finished their military service, Latvia became the first country in the Baltic Sea region that has solely professional armed forces. According to the State Defence Concept that was approved by Saeima on June 19, 2008, total number of personnel of NAF is not exceeding 20 000 – 5800 of those are soldiers of professional service and the rest consists of land guards, and civil and military officials.

(ii) paramilitary forces

Not applicable

(iii) security forces

The Law on National Security Institutions, the Law on Police, the Internal Regulation on the Interior Institutions 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?

Due to transition to professional military, there is no need for alternatives to compulsory military service and they will be abolished.

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 forces personnel are regulated by the Law on Military Service, on National Guard, the Law on National Armed Forces, the Law on Military Personnel's Service Pensions, as well as various governmental regulations on the military personnel's provisions, catering, insurance and rewarding.

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

4.1 How does your State ensure that International Humanitarian Law and Law of War are made widely available, e.g., through military training programmes and regulations?

The core instruments of the international humanitarian law (Geneva Conventions and Additional protocols) have been ratified by the Parliament. Other international rules, conventions and commitments governing armed conflict are incorporated in the national legal acts.

National Defence Academy has a course on international defence related legislation including International Humanitarian Law, Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects and other international rules, conventions and commitments governing armed conflicts.

Latvia follows the principles set out in the OSCE Code of Conduct.

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?

Please refer to the information provided to question 4.2 in Section II.

Units to be deployed abroad are also briefed on international humanitarian law, war crimes and individual responsibility and command responsibility.

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; and

4) taking part, personally or through the intermediation of another person, in transactions, upon the entering into or the fulfillment of which soldiers may unlawfully utilize their service position or come into a conflict of interest.

Since this and other restrictions established under Latvian legislation are taken into account, the individual service member is free to exercise his or her civil rights.

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

International law and the international obligations that the Republic of Latvia has undertaken are to be obliged, therefore defence policy and doctrine is drafted taking into account relevant international law and obligations taken on by the Republic of Latvia (i.e. international humanitarian law, arms control treaties, human right 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?

Ministry of Defence of Latvia and National Armed Forces do not provide any specific information on the Code of Conduct. General information on cooperation with the OSCE as well as link to the organization's website is published on the official website of the Ministry of Defence of Latvia www.mod.gov.lv.

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?

N/A

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

Public access to information on the National Armed Forces is organised according to Freedom of Information Law and Law on the Press and Other Mass Media.

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

- Press releases and replies to the information enquiries received from the journalists;
- Annual Reports on Armed Forces Development and State Defence Policy;
- Official website of the National Armed Forces www.mil.lv (available in Latvian only).

2. Contact information

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

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