

## EDITORIAL

### 30 YEARS OF SLOVENIA'S INDEPENDENCE AND ITS SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

Every year, the first issue of Contemporary Military Challenges is published in May. This year, May is particularly important for Slovenia and especially for the Slovenian Armed Forces. Thirty years have passed since the first training of Slovenian military recruits on Slovenian territory. The beginning of this training additionally enraged the then authorities, especially the Yugoslav People's Army, and led to what is today known as the Pekre events. The first victim of the independence process fell, and the tensions due to the events that followed grew. They escalated into an armed conflict and a war, which fortunately did not last long. The independence process, however, began much earlier, before May of 1991, and ended with the departure of the last soldier of the former Yugoslav army from Slovenia in October of the same year. The thirtieth anniversary of Slovenian independence is an important milestone in Slovenian history. Unfortunately, this year it will not be commemorated as it should be as the COVID-19 pandemic has severely restricted us from socializing and celebration. It has also brought new circumstances and insights in many areas, where the resilience of the society and security should be particularly emphasized.

The understanding and functioning of our national security system has been greatly influenced by the European migrant crisis in 2015, illegal migration, which is still underway, and the pandemic that has no end in sight. In the second semester of this year, Slovenia will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. All of the above brings challenges as well as opportunities. We have learned a lot from the above, one of the most important findings being that it is good to be self-sufficient and be able to take care of oneself are good. In a situation where all countries, not just EU members, are facing problems, it is very useful to be autonomous and independent of others. The various mechanisms of the European Union, NATO and some other international security organizations operate on the principles of solidarity, assistance and burden-sharing. However, it is very hard to share when everybody is lacking in something. The challenge for the future is certainly to anticipate trends, especially in

security, to prepare accordingly, to own as much of what you need for yourself and for the functioning of your country, and, if possible, help other countries as well. It is the Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union that requires more investment in the security and defence of countries, as well as in strengthening our common resilience. This has been included in several directives and other documents of the European Union, continually pointed out by its representatives; yet, according to the facts there is still a steady decline in this area. Perhaps Slovenia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union is the right opportunity to pay more attention to this topic.

This year, May is also important for the Contemporary Military Challenges. Following last year's indexing of the publication in the Crossref database, all articles that are available from the Digital Library of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia will, as of May 2021, also be available from the Military and Government Collection of the EBSCO database and in Air University Library Index in Military Periodicals. This will enable a greater exchange of views, opinions and ideas between Slovenian and foreign authors in the security, defence and military domains.

In the Slovenian Armed Forces, a Military Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia is being drafted, and the now retired Brigadier General Branimir Furlan is writing a book on military strategy. Hence, there will be more than enough opportunities for interesting military-related reading. The issues of our publication will contribute to this as well.

In this issue, **Pavel Vuk** writes about the *Evolution of the concept of strategy and its relating with the politics*. He begins by explaining the historical aspect, when military leaders still consider the combat strategy to be a necessary concept, and gradually moves into the strategy as a way of shaping the public policy and reflecting the political will of the ruling elite. More on how successful countries are in implementing their strategies can be found in the article.

**Valerija Bernik** writes about the *Perspectives and challenges of Slovenian military education system*. In her article, we learn a lot about the latest changes in the Slovenian Armed Forces in this regard. The author participated in the process of establishing the Higher Military Vocational School (NCO College) and acts as its Head. However, the establishment of the school is not the end, but the beginning of a new path and new opportunities for military education.

In her article *Activities of the Slovenian Armed Forces during the COVID-19 epidemic*, **Tanja Kremžar Kovač** writes about the experiences of the Slovenian Armed Forces in these exceptional circumstances. The mission of international operations and missions continues despite the epidemic and the various restrictions on movement and travel bans. The armed forces must remain active and effective

regardless of the various obstacles. Her article describes in detail how the Slovenian Armed Forces have managed to achieve this.

**Marjan Horvat** focused on an ever-topical issue. *Leadership in the Slovenian Armed Forces* touches upon some new, as well as some already known topics. Leadership is an area that has never been sufficiently researched and which, despite continuous training and many years of practice, can never be mastered enough. Therefore, every effort dedicated to making progress in leadership is a good investment in every organization, especially in the Slovenian Armed Forces.

The COVID-19 epidemic prevents us from properly commemorating the 30th anniversary of our country's independence this year, so we may do so on some other occasion. However, remembering important events and personalities is essential for a nation's consciousness and patriotism. **Jerica Pavšič** and **Zvezdan Marković** write about this in their article *Forms of collective remembrance of General Maister*, where they establish how we have been remembering this important figure, his actions and consequences that mainly reflect in the territorial integrity of our country.