



Aizsardzības ministrija

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

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Rīga, 20-04-2020

Dear Mr. Kevin J. Scheid,

The contribution of the Alliance to global security and safety is invaluable and we appreciate greatly all multinational projects and initiatives, which add to deterrence and defense of our region and beyond. In this respect, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the close and longstanding cooperation with NATO Communications and Information Agency. Your efforts to sustain technological advantages of the Alliance are crucial to address our joint security challenges of today.

The security context has progressed along with the technological advancement, therefore shared understanding and common approach are vital for Allies to exploit opportunities and address the challenges this alteration has brought forward. The deployment of apt infrastructure and enabled use of operational 5th generation wireless technology could play a significant role in sustaining NATO's technological edge.

Latvia is one of the first countries in the world to implement 5th generation network and aims to maintain this leadership role in Europe and worldwide. Moreover, Latvian government together with the relevant industry representatives work closely to involve as many stakeholders as possible into the development of a holistic and integrated approach to 5G. For instance, last year the Ministry of Economics in cooperation with the Electronic Communications Office of Latvia, industry and the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office in Latvia, organized the first-ever hackathon devoted to 5G policymakers. Hackathon took place on the sidelines of the newly established annual Baltic Sea Region 5G-ecosystem forum "Techritory". It resulted in feasible recommendations for shaping a better environment for the creation of 5G-enabled innovation, testing, and deployment, thus boosting the region's competitiveness globally.

Likewise, technological improvements derived from the use of 5G networks in the military realm could prove highly beneficial in increasing the speed of data exchange, ensuring high quality soldier training and simulation in virtual environment and optimizing wireless communications. The use of 5G can also contribute to the opening up of a wide range of possibilities for the use of drones, robots and sensors as well as reducing the cost of the necessary infrastructure. However, existing and possible vulnerabilities and potential threats, especially cyberattacks, require further research and in-depth analysis resulting in practical guidance and secure solutions.

Taking into account all of the aforementioned, Latvia is looking for opportunities to work jointly with the NATO Communications and Information Agency and other interested members to explore possible applications of 5G technology to military needs and requirements in the light of current technological developments. I would welcome any opportunity to discuss with the Agency potential ways forward in this respect, including common objectives and outcomes to achieve. I am sure that an effective and swift implementation of improved, sustainable and future proofed 5G network solutions will aid the capability gaps and improve overall capabilities and interoperability of the Allied forces.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Sincerely,

Jānis Garisons
State Secretary

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Garisons', written in a cursive style.

Kevin J. Scheid
General Manager
NATO Communications and Information Agency