



## **The U.S.-Czech Security Partnership**

As a partner and a NATO ally, the United States has worked closely with the Czechs on our shared security for over 20 years. The partnership began as then-Czechoslovak Armed Forces emerged from the Warsaw Pact era and the U.S. aided a process of democratization and restructuring. The Czechs worked side by side with U.S. and Coalition soldiers to liberate Kuwait. The relationship continued through U.S. support for Czech accession to the NATO Alliance, and the Czechs' promotion of peace and stability in the Balkans. In recent years, the Czech Republic has committed its military forces to vital efforts in Kosovo, Iraq, Mali, the Sinai, and Afghanistan.

Examples of U.S.-Czech cooperation include:

**Ukraine.** Czech FM Zaoralek has been vociferous in denouncing Russian aggression in Ukraine. The Czech military sent observers to join the OSCE monitoring mission in Southern and Eastern Ukraine. The Czech government has supported the wider EU effort to enact sanctions on Russia. Further, the Czechs have planned a series of activities demonstrating their strong commitment to the Alliance, including an extended air policing mission over Iceland, increased military exercises in the Baltics, and large "snap" joint exercises with Slovakia.

**Helicopter Capacity.** The Czech Republic is a NATO leader in operation, training and maintenance of Mi-17, Mi-171, and other helicopters. The U.S. and the other members of the alliance heavily rely on Czech capability in this regard. The U.S. has supported the development of this Czech capability through various efforts, including grants under the U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and 1206 programs.

**First NATO Smart Defense LOI.** On February 21, 2013, the Czech Republic signed a letter of intent with the United States for the Multinational Aviation Training Center (MATC). The MATC is the first Tier-1 NATO Smart Defense initiative in which the United States has formally agreed to participate. The MATC is a Czech-led initiative to train pilots and maintenance personnel on the Mi-series helicopter platform. Slovakia, Croatia, and Hungary have also signed the letter of intent. Project teams are currently working on a memorandum of understanding, with MATC initial operating capability projected for 2015.

**CBRN Defense.** Defense against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons (CBRN) is an area in which the Czech military is a world leader. The Czech Republic hosts NATO's Joint CBRN Center of Excellence in Vyškov. The U.S. partners in the effort, providing a senior officer who serves as the Center's Chief of Staff. U.S. security assistance funds recently provided the Czech CBRN Brigade with a state-of-the-art mobile laboratory to increase detection capabilities.

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**Reciprocal Defense Procurement Agreement.** In April 2012, the Czech Republic and the U.S. signed a Reciprocal Defense Procurement Agreement (RDPA) allowing Czech firms to bid on U.S. defense contracts.

**Special Forces.** The Czech Special Forces are highly capable. The U.S. supports the development of Czech Special Forces capacity by training, planning, and operating together, as well as through grants and other forms of support. For example, under the 1206 program, the U.S. recently provided a substantial grant to enhance special operations aviation capability and to procure the ScanEagle remotely piloted aircraft to support intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities for the post-2014 Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan.

**Education and Training.** In FY14, the U.S. trained and educated over 350 Czech soldiers and airmen through 1206 funding, the Coalition Readiness Support Program, and International Military Education and Training (IMET) Programs.

**Military-to-Military Contacts.** The U.S. and Czech militaries train, plan and work side by side year-round, both bilaterally and as part of NATO. Dozens of “mil-to-mil” contacts happen annually. An excellent example of U.S.-Czech military-to-military cooperation is the State Partnership Program with the Texas and Nebraska National Guards.

**Security Assistance.** Embassy Prague, through its Office of Defense Cooperation, administers millions of dollars annually in Security Assistance, in the form of Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, Section 1206, and the Coalition Readiness Support Program. The Czech Republic is one of the largest per capita recipients of security assistance in Europe and these programs have successfully enhanced Czech and U.S. military interoperability.

**Research and Development.** The Central and Eastern European regional engagement office of the Office of Naval Research Global is headquartered in Prague and works throughout the Czech Republic to advance our shared research and development capacity for the mutual benefit of both nations. The ONR team has established a number of relationships with Czech scientists and research institutions on projects of mutual interest.

**Transition, Reconstruction, and Peacekeeping.** The Czech Republic is a valuable ally in Afghanistan and has committed to an “in-together, out-together” strategy. Post-2014, the Czech Republic has committed \$1 million a year for the Afghan National Security Forces and \$1 million a year for humanitarian and development assistance in Afghanistan. The Czech military currently has over 270 soldiers deployed to ISAF where they train Afghan pilots and maintenance personnel, provide base defense, medical services, and train Afghan special operations forces.