



30

GODINA
ORUŽANIH SNAGA
REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE

YEARS OF THE
CROATIAN ARMED
FORCES

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PREDGOVOR



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**predsjednik Republike Hrvatske
i vrhovni zapovjednik OSRH
Zoran Milanović**

**President of the Republic of Croatia
and Supreme Commander of CAF
Zoran Milanović**

Gotovo sam siguran kako se u stoljeću iza nas samo dva puta dogodilo da cijele nacije duguju toliko puno tako malom broju dobrih, hrabrih ljudi. Prvi put u ljeto 1940. o čemu je Winston Churchill rekao - nikad u povijesti ljudskih sukoba mnogobrojni nisu toliko puno dugovali nekolicini. Mislio je na pilote RAF-a koji su obranili britansko nebo. Nama je bliže, važnije i za pamtiti hrabre, uporne i časne ljude koji su 1991. stali u obranu mlade hrvatske države. Bili su hrvatski branitelji u trenutku kad ih je naša nacija najviše trebala, postali su junaci i njima, tom malom broju dobrih ljudi dugujemo slobodnu, samostalnu i demokratsku Republiku Hrvatsku. Bili su i temelj na kojem je stvorena moderna Hrvatska vojska, najprije ona srčana braniteljska, potom hrabra oslobodilačka, a danas moćna i sigurna oružana snaga.

U 30 godina postojanja i razvoja, Hrvatska vojska nije imala luksuz za polagane i dugotrajne vježbe, pripreme i opremanje. Najprije se morala brzo ustrojiti i osloniti prije svega na srce i ljubav prema domovini, a onda iskoristiti ratom stečeno iskustvo i znanje da bi se mogla pridružiti društvu modernih zapadnih oružanih snaga u okviru NATO saveza. I uspjela je, u Domovinskom ratu, i u vremenu demokratske i ekonomske gradnje naše države. Ne samo da se brzo opremila, profesionalizirala i prilagodila euroatlantskim standardima, nego je postala i pouzdan partner najboljim vojskama svijeta, a naši vojnici uzor u spremnosti i profesionalnosti. Naša zastava zahvaljujući Hrvatskoj vojsci u mirovnim misijama zavijorila se na visovima Hindukuša, na Golanu, u srcu Afrike, širom svijeta. U ovih 30 godina naučili smo da su ljudi najveća vrijednost Hrvatske vojske. Vojnici i vojnkinje stavljeni su zato na prvo mjesto: sustav školovanja je unaprijeđen, mladi časnici upućivani su u druge zemlje na temeljno i napredno školovanje, omogućeno im je stručno usavršavanje. Koliko god važan bio razvoj Hrvatske vojske kroz modernizaciju i opremanje – a vrijeme je za to - nikad dosta novih znanja i vještina. Tko se ne mijenja, tko se ne prilagođava stalno i neprestano, plaća visoku cijenu.

Imao sam čast više puta slušati prisegu mladih ljudi koji su se odlučili za najteži, vojnički poziv. Slušajući kako izgovaraju riječi prisege čuo sam glas koji je dolazio iz vremena prije 30 godina, kao da očevi te djece govore o domovini, slobodi i ponosu. U njima, tim djevojkama i mladićima, u njihovim pogledima vidio sam one časne, uporne i nestvarno hrabre ljude, vidio sam opet onu nekolicinu kojoj dugujemo svi mi. I znao sam da našu budućnost prepuštamo u sigurne ruke, ruke koje će biti domovini vjerne!

FOREWORD

I am certain that only twice during the century behind us entire nations owed to the few, brave people. The first such time was in summer 1940, when Winston Churchill stated: "Never was so much owed by so many to so few". Churchill referred to the pilots of the Royal Air Force, who defended the British skies.

For us it is closer and more important to remember the brave, persistent and honourable people who defended the young state of Croatia. They defended Croatia just when the Croatian nation needed them the most, they turned into heroes and we are indebted to the few good people for the freedom and independence and democracy of Croatia. They were the cornerstone upon which the modern Croatian Armed Forces were built, first the courageous defenders and nowadays a powerful and confident military force.

Over the 30-year existence and development the Croatian Armed Forces were not allowed to take slow and lengthy exercises, preparations and equipping.

They first had to organise quickly, relying only on the courage and patriotism, and to make use of the experience and knowledge gathered in the war to join the club of the modern western armed forces within NATO Alliance. And they succeeded, both during the Homeland War and during the democratic and economic development of our country. The Croatian Armed Forces not only got equipped and professional and adapted to the Euro-Atlantic standards but also developed into a credible partner to the best armies of the world, and Croatian soldiers have set a model of readiness and professionalism. Thanks to the Croatian Armed Forces the Croatian flag was hoisted in the heights of Hindukush, in the Golan Heights, in the heart of Africa and elsewhere around the world.

We have realised over the past 30 years that the members of the Croatian Armed Forces are their utmost value. The greatest attention is dedicated to young servicemen and servicewomen: the education system has been upgraded, young officers have attended basic and advanced education programmes in foreign countries and they have been offered opportunities to further hone their skills and expertise.

However important the development through modernisation and equipping – and now is the time for that – there is always the need to acquire new knowledge and new skills. One can never get too much of new expertise and skills. Those who do not change and do not adapt constantly and tirelessly pay a high price.

I have had the honour on several occasions to attend the oath taking by the young people who chose the hardest career path – the military profession. Listening to them recite the oath I heard the voice from the times 30 years ago, as if it was their fathers talking Homeland, freedom and pride. The look in the eyes of the young servicemen and servicewomen reflected the honourable, persistent and incredibly brave people, I saw the few people that we owe so much to. And I knew that we were putting our future into safe hands, faithful to the Homeland!



FOTO: JOSIP KOPI

**ministar obrane Republike Hrvatske
dr. sc. Mario Banožić**

Mario Banožić, Dr.Sc., Defence Minister

Poštovani čitatelji, ova monografija svjedočanstvo je slavnog puta izgradnje i razvoja Hrvatske vojske od njezinih početaka i Domovinskog rata do danas. Iza djela opisanih u monografiji stoji golem trud, rad i odricanje, ali prije svega hrvatski branitelji i njihova velika žrtva. Naša tridesetogodišnja povijest ne bi bila ovako slavna da nije bilo hrabrih hrvatskih branitelja koji su u Domovinskom ratu položili svoje živote na oltar domovine. Neka i ova monografija pridonese očuvanju uspomene na njih i njihova junačka djela.

Početakom devedesetih godina hrvatski narod želio je mirnim putem raskinuti odnose s Jugoslavijom te nastaviti živjeti u miru i slobodi na svojoj zemlji i u svojoj domovini. Nakon napada na hrvatske institucije i hrvatske redarstvenike u Pakracu, na Plitvicama, a posebno nakon napada na hrvatske policajce u Borovu Selu, bilo je jasno da slobodu i opstojnost Republike Hrvatske i našeg naroda može izboriti jedino oružana sila. Temelji takve oružane sile, odnosno današnje Hrvatske vojske, postavljeni su 28. svibnja 1991. godine kad su se hrabri mladići iz cijele Hrvatske postrojili na stadionu u Kranjčevićevoj te prisegnuli na vjernost domovini. Iako uglavnom nisu imali potrebna vojna iskustva, znanja i naoružanje kakve je imao neprijatelj, to ih nije spriječilo da se suprotstave velikosrpskoj politici i zločinačkoj Jugoslavenskoj narodnoj armiji diljem cijele Lijepe Naše. Početne neuspjehe vrlo su brzo zamijenile uspješne obrambene operacije, a zatim i pobjedničke oslobodilačke operacije. Vrhunac osposobljenosti i opremljenosti Hrvatska vojska pokazala je 1995. godine u pobjedničkim vojno-redarstvenim operacijama Bljesak i Oluja. Planiranjem, pripremom i provedbom navedenih operacija, Hrvatska vojska pokazala je hrvatskom narodu i cijelom svijetu da Republika Hrvatska posjeduje respektabilnu oružanu silu sposobnu i spremnu osloboditi svaki okupirani dio hrvatskog teritorija.

Godine nakon Domovinskog rata donijele su Hrvatskoj vojsci nove zadaće i izazove. Uslijedila je transformacija ratnog ustroja u mirnodopski, a težište hrvatskih vojnika stavljeno je na obuku i izobrazbu kako bi se prilagodili i pripremili za inozemne aktivnosti.

Iskustvo Domovinskog rata, opremljenost te do-

kazana osposobljenost, profesionalnost i požrtvornost hrvatskih vojnika svrstale su Hrvatsku vojsku u pouzdanog i odgovornog saveznika u svijetu. Hrvatski vojnici počinju već 1999. godine sudjelovati u misijama i operacijama potpore miru te tako pridonositi globalnoj sigurnosti.

Cilj koji se devedesetih godina hrvatskim braniteljima činio dalekim i nedostižnim, ostvaren je 2009. godine kad Republika Hrvatska postaje ravnopravna članica najjačeg vojno-političkog saveza u povijesti čovječanstva. Sudjelovanjem u operacijama, misijama i aktivnostima, od Baltika do Afganistana, Republika Hrvatska se tijekom dosadašnjeg članstva u NATO savezu pokazala kao odgovoran i vjerodostojan saveznik na kojeg se uvijek može računati.

Članstvo u NATO savezu te trenutačno dostignuta razina osposobljenosti i opremljenosti jamče hrvatskom narodu stabilnost i sigurnost. Iako je Hrvatska danas sigurna, ne smijemo zanemariti globalne izazove na koje nije imuna ni naša zemlja. Zato se moramo konstantno usavršavati i opremiti kako bismo izvršili sve zadaće koje narod od nas očekuje.

Ljudi, hrvatski vojnici, u ovih trideset godina bili su i ostatak najvredniji dio našeg sustava. Ulaganje u njihova znanja i vještine presudno je u današnjem vremenu kad protivnik nije tako jasno definiran, kao primjerice u Domovinskom ratu, i kad je važna učinkovita i pravodobna reakcija radi zaštite nacionalnih interesa. Stoga smo, nakon trideset godina transformacije i prilagodbe obrazovnog sustava, 2021. godine osnovali Sveučilište za obranu i sigurnost "Dr. Franjo Tuđman" koje će u nadolazećim godinama zasigurno biti dodatni pokretač razvoja Hrvatske vojske.

Kao institucija u koju hrvatski narod ima najviše povjerenja, Hrvatska vojska i u mirnodopskim uvjetima dokazuje kako joj je pomoć hrvatskom narodu jedna od primarnih zadaća. Veliki šumski požari, poplave, snježne padaline, nedavni potresi i pandemija još su jednom pokazale nesebičnost i požrtvornost hrvatskih vojnika. Drage vojnkinje i vojnici, hvala vam za vaše predane godine službe i za sva vaša odricanja tijekom služenja hrvatskom narodu. Uz vas se osjećamo bolje i sigurnije! Ostanite i dalje domovini vjerni!

FOREWORD

Dear readers, this monograph is a testimony of the glorious path of growth and development of the Croatian Armed Forces since their beginning and the Homeland War to this date. Behind this monograph are hard work, effort, and dedication, but primarily the Croatian defenders and their huge sacrifice. Our 30-year old history would not be so glorious without the brave Croatian defenders, who built their lives into the Homeland. We wish this monograph helped guarding the memory of them and of their heroic exploits. In the early 1990s the Croatian nation wanted to sever the relations with Yugoslavia peacefully and to continue living in peace and freedom on its soil and in its Homeland. After the Croatian institutions and policemen were attacked in Pakrac, Plitvice and at Borovo Selo in particular, it became clear that freedom and existence of the Republic of Croatia could only be obtained with the use of an armed force. The foundations of the armed force – the present Croatian Armed Force – were laid on 28 May 1991, when brave men from all over Croatia lined up in the football stadium in Kranjčevićeva street in Zagreb, and took an oath of allegiance to the Homeland. Albeit lacking the necessary military expertise, experience and armament as the enemy had, it was no obstacle to oppose the Serbian expansionism and the Yugoslav National Army across the country. The initial fails were soon followed by successful defensive operations first, and by victorious liberating operations. In the victorious military and police operations “Lightning” and “Storm” conducted in 1995, the Croatian Armed Forces displayed top-level preparedness and equippedness. The planning, preparation and execution of the operations showed to the world that the Republic of Croatia had a respectable military force capable and ready to liberate inch by inch of the occupied territory. The post-war years brought new missions and challenges to the Croatian Armed Forces. They had to undergo reorganisation from the war time structure to the peace time organisation, and the focus for the Croatian soldiers was placed on education and training, to enable them to adapt and prepare for international activities. The experience from the Homeland War, the equippedness and evinced trainedness, professionalism and sacrifice of the Croatian soldiers earned

the Croatian Armed Forces the image of a reliable and responsible ally at the international level. Croatian soldiers joined peace support missions and operations in 1999, giving their contribution to the global security.

The goal that appeared so distant and hardly attainable in the 1990s was fulfilled in 2009, when the Republic of Croatia became a full member of the strongest military and political alliance in the world history. By participating in operations, missions and activities conducted from the Baltic to Afghanistan, the Republic of Croatia has during its membership in NATO confirmed itself as a responsible and credible allied to be counted on at all times.

NATO membership and the attained level of trainedness and equippedness are a guarantee of stability and security for the Croatian people. Although Croatia is safe today, we must not ignore the global threats to which neither Croatia is safe from. Therefore, we have to continue developing and equipping to complete all the missions the Croatian people expect us to do.

The human potential, the Croatian soldiers have been and remain the most valuable component of the system over the past 30 years. Investing into their expertise and skills is of crucial importance today, when adversaries are no longer clearly defined, as it was for instance in the Homeland War, and when it takes an effective and timely response to protect the national interests. Therefore, after 30 years of reorganisation and adaptation of the education system, in the course of 2021 we have founded the Defence and Security University “Dr Franjo Tuđman”, which will undoubtedly serve an additional engine of development of the Croatian Armed Forces.

As the institution most trusted by the Croatian nation, the Croatian Armed Forces have proved during the peace time too that one of its primary missions was to provide assistance to the people. Large forest fires, floods, heavy snowfall, recent earthquakes and the pandemic proved the selflessness and humanity of Croatian soldiers.

Dear servicewomen and servicemen, I am expressing gratitude for your years spent in service of the Croatian people and for your sacrifice. With you defending us we feel better and stronger. Remain loyal soldiers of the Homeland!

PREDGOVOR

FOREWORD



FOTO: JOSIP KOPIL

načelnik Glavnog stožera Oružanih snaga RH
admiral Robert Hranj

Chief of the General Staff of the Croatian Armed
Forces admiral Robert Hranj

Opstati na svojoj grudi, na ovom raskrižju civilizacija i kultura nije bilo lako. Od prvih naseljavanja ovih prostora pa sve do danas Hrvati su se borili za opstanak, spremni na obranu svoje zemlje od različitih osvajača.

Prije točno trideset godina, pred predsjednikom Republike i vrhovnim zapovjednikom Oružanih snaga dr. Franjom Tuđmanom prisegnuli su prvi hrvatski vojnici. Utemeljenjem suverene i neovisne suvremene hrvatske države i stvaranjem moderne oružane sile te vraćanjem Hrvatske u okvire njezinih granica - ostvarili smo san brojnih generacija hrvatskog naroda. Hrvatska vojska ispunila je temeljni i najvažniji cilj svake vojne organizacije - zaustaviti agresora, obraniti i osloboditi svoju zemlju te očuvati njezinu suverenost. U tom pothvatu imali smo brojne žrtve. Hvala im što su darovali svoj život da bismo mi danas, u miru, živjeli u slobodnoj i demokratskoj hrvatskoj državi. Danas trebamo biti ponosni na ostvareno, na veliku pobjedu naše vojske u stvaranju i obrani domovine.

U godinama nakon Domovinskog rata Oružane snage započele su proces transformacije. Cilj je bio stvoriti učinkovitu oružanu silu koja će moći odgovoriti svim zadaćama koje se pred nju postave. U tim naporima dragocjena pomoć bila su i iskustva iz Domovinskog rata. Obrambeni sustav usmjerio je svoje napore prema ostvarivanju kompatibilnosti s oružanim snagama Sjevernoatlantskog saveza, stalnom i sustavnom obukom i školovanjem dostignute su zahtjevane sposobnosti. Profesionalnost i obučenost hrvatskih vojnika danas je prepoznata u svijetu gdje hrvatski vojnici pridonoseći svjetskom miru i stabilnosti aktivno sudjeluje u brojnim međunarodnim operacijama i misijama potpore miru.

Ovom monografijom prisjećamo se trideset godina tijekom kojih su Oružane snage stasale u modernu oružanu silu koja je temeljena na iskustvima stečenim u Domovinskom ratu. U proteklih 30 godina uspjeli smo ratnika dragovoljca pretvoriti u vojnika profesionalca spremnog na sve izazove koji su pred njega postavljeni. Hrvatski je vojnici danas osposobljen za zadaće u svim uvjetima, u zemlji i u inozemstvu, vrhunski opremljen i obučen korača ravnopravno uz bok vojnicima najjačih svjetskih oružanih sila. Oružane snage RH prepoznate su kao kvalitetne, profesionalne i učinkovite snage i poželjan su partner u održavanju stabilnosti i mira u svijetu.

The survival in this sacred land at the crossroads of civilisations and cultures has never been easy. Since this territory was inhabited to this day Croats had to struggle to survive, ready to defend their country from various invaders.

Precisely 30 years ago the first Croatian soldiers took their oath of allegiance before the President of the Republic and the Supreme Commander of the Croatian Armed Forces dr. Franjo Tuđman. Having created sovereign and independent Croatian state, established a modern armed force and restored Croatia within its national borders we have made the dream of so many generations of the Croatian people a reality.

The Croatian Armed Forces have fulfilled the fundamental goal of each military organisation – they halted the aggressor, defended and liberated their homeland and safeguarded its sovereignty. The pursuit of the goal took numerous victims. We owe them gratitude for sacrificing their lives so that we may live in peace in a free and democratic Croatian state. We need to be proud of our achievements, of the magnificent victory of our armed forces in the defence of the homeland.

During the post-war years the Croatian Armed Forces underwent the reorganisation. The goal was to establish an efficient armed force capable of responding to any tasks assigned to them. The experience from the Homeland War was valuable in the efforts. The defence system invested efforts in achieving compatibility with the armed forces of the NATO member nations, and systematised training and education helped acquire the required capabilities. Professionalism and trainedness of Croatian soldiers have been recognised worldwide, where Croatian soldiers have contributed to the world peace and stability by participating in numerous international peace support operations and missions.

With this monograph we are reflecting on the past 30 years, during which time the Croatian Armed Forces have grown into a modern armed force, founded on the experiences from the Homeland War. Over the past 30 years we have managed to transform volunteer soldiers into professional soldiers, ready for any challenges placed before them. The present generations of Croatian soldiers are trained to execute tasks in any conditions, at home and abroad, and top-trained and equipped, serving on an equal basis with the members of the world's strongest armed forces. The Croatian Armed Forces have been recognised worldwide as capable, professional and efficient armed force and are respected partner in keeping stability and peace in the world.