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### **BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE – CHANGE FROM WITHIN**

The Report of the Commission on the Defence Forces has delivered a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Óglaigh na hÉireann. We should now, each one of us, be prepared and primed for what will be a journey of modernisation and force transformation over the coming years.

The Government has approved a decision for the Defence Forces to step up to Level of Ambition 2, as described by the Commission in their report. This decision will positively transform the development of military capability across the three Services. Notably, the Government has also committed and approved a funding increase to reach a defence budget of circa €1.5bn over a 6-year period. The General Staff welcome these decisions, and fully acknowledge the very positive benefits and resources that can now be generated. We are also extremely conscious of the considerable body of work that will have to be undertaken in order to modernise our Force to the desired standards. I have no doubt that in order to reach this level of ambition we will require the dedication, endurance and support of all members of Óglaigh na hÉireann.

My priority, and that of the General Staff, is to commence this process of transformation by implementing the key Human Resource and Organisational Culture changes that are outlined in the Government approved High Level Action Plan (HLAP). Formation and Unit Commanders will now commence briefings to all personnel in all locations concerning the contents of the HLAP and the actions proposed therein. For example, initiatives relating to allowances, including the application of the full rate of MSA for 3\* Ptes, are prioritised. The implementation of gender perspective policies and the introduction and application of the Working Time Directive will both be progressed in adherence to best practice. Expanded recruitment and induction capacity will also be increasingly enabled. This will involve the commitment of additional personnel and financial resources to progress the development of training infrastructure, training land facilities and training instructor capacities, all geared towards increasing our strength to 11,500 over the period of transformation. This is one of our key challenges.

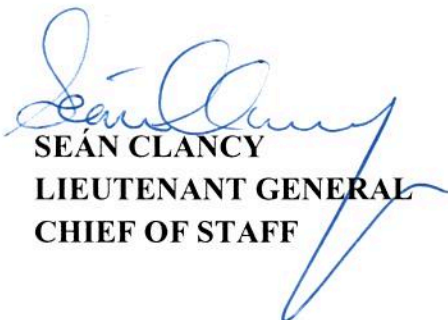
The early actions specified in the HLAP also include the establishment of a Capability Development structure, which will ensure that the projects and resources that you require, to develop a fit-for-purpose Defence Forces, are delivered in a prioritised and timely fashion. An Office of Reserve Affairs will be established to develop an RDF regeneration plan that seeks to enable the Reserve to support PDF units in the conduct of operational tasks. An integrated radar system will be procured to enable situational awareness and early warning in the land, maritime and air domains. A Force redesign of the Army will be conducted with a view to ensuring that Army structures and capabilities are in adherence with international best practice and can deliver





the capabilities required to fulfil Army assigned tasks on-island and overseas. This will include a review of routine ATCP tasks and overseas deployment options to give the Army the time and space it requires to truly consolidate its resources and regenerate capabilities and skills. Innovative approaches for addressing technician vacancies will also be examined and progressed. Our future Force must be aligned to address changing national interests and missions.

Finally, as your Chief of Staff, I want to assure you that it is the General Staff's intent to approach this implementation process, and the opportunities it presents, in a proactive and positive manner. Organisational change by its very nature is disruptive, this must be expected, but the reform and modernisation of existing structures, including new staffing arrangements and capabilities will ultimately benefit the Force and the personnel who serve in it. I truly believe, with your support, that we can absorb these challenges, while continuing to operate and deliver on the provision of a safe, secure and stable environment for Irish citizens and for the State. At the conclusion of this process, we will have a Defence Forces that is agile and responsive, a partner of choice and interoperable with other military forces when required. It is the General Staff's ambition to deliver a Defence Forces equipped with the levers and resources required to address and deter threats, to meet and deliver our career and life balance expectations, and enhance our operational outputs, both at home and overseas.



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