

**Address by the Minister of Defence Vlado Misajlovski on the DV day of the
"FLASH 26" exercise
TA Krivolak • 27 April 2026**

Dear President Siljanovska-Davkova,
Dear Chief of the General Staff, Major General Lafchiski,
Dear Representative from JFC Naples,
Distinguished friends,
Distinguished Generals.
Distinguished Members of Parliament,
Dear guests thank you for coming here today,

Naturally, I would like to extend a huge gratitude and ask you to give a round of applause to these wonderful people and everyone who participated in the past few days. What an honour! It is an honour to be the Minister of such an Army! Chief, Generals, hats off to you! You are truly the pride of the country!

Today, here at the Army Training Area Krivolak, our largest training area and one of the capacities for which we are recognized in the Alliance, we all witnessed not only a demonstration of capabilities, but also of discipline, precision and true professionalism. We witnessed what we as leadership constantly are saying – and that is the fact that our Macedonian soldiers operate in accordance with the highest NATO standards, demonstrating that their excellence is not a goal to be achieved, but a reality.

The NATO evaluation process that in the month of April proved one great truth – and that is that the members of the Light Infantry Battalion Group and all other units that served as support during the evaluation are “mission capable,” that is, combat ready. An evaluation level which I never doubted, at any moment that they would receive.

From this podium, I extend my congratulations to each and every Macedonian soldier and to all others involved in the greatest success achieved to date.

My assessment from the very beginning was based on two key aspects.

The first is the professionalism of the Macedonian soldiers that I firmly believe in. Their motivation and dedication to be the best, to be the guarantor of the security of our homeland, their readiness and capability that they demonstrate at home and as part of the Alliance are more than obvious.

The second is the modernization process that allowed us to see the new strengthened capacities of the Army at this exercise. We are investing a lot – in new individual weapons, in new and advanced capacities, in strong cyber defence, in new armoured vehicles, engineering machines, UAVs, etc. For all this, we have a plan that we are consistently following and we have strong support from both the President and the Government, for which I am immensely grateful. Their support has allowed us to have a stable growth of the defence budget and serious investments in new and sophisticated equipment that reach 32.5 percent of the budget of the Ministry.

I congratulate all the army members involved in the organization and implementation of this exercise. A truly complex task considering that over 1,500 army members worked on a fictitious scenario with 25 events and over 100 incidents. Your dedication was visible today and during the implementation of the exercise, which ended in complete success.

The confirmation of this greatest success comes precisely from the NATO monitoring team, which verified the final evaluation report, carried out according to 799 criteria, following the highest NATO standards.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Macedonian Army is taking a historic step forward in terms of its capacities and capabilities. We are operating with new, sophisticated equipment like any other

NATO army. Our members are on the same level as the rest of the Alliance. We have full interoperability, which allows us to jointly defend what we hold most sacred, which is freedom, our homeland, our democracy. To defend our values that are rooted in the Macedonian society.

In times of serious geopolitical changes and instability, having an Army that is capable of being the guarantor of the security of the country and, at the same time, being capable of acting as one with the armies of allied countries is an honour and a privilege!

From this podium, I will send another message, and that is that we are not stopping here. We will continue with strong investments in the Army, because security is paramount for us. It is the foundation of social and economic development. We will continue with the procurement of new equipment, we will continue with training and exercises, and we will continue with the care for each army member because their motivation and dedication are the key ingredients for a strong Army.

Thank you!