**About the conference:**

The 9th international conference represents the continuation of a series of successful conferences held in 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018. It is also one of the biggest events related to the issues of terrorism and other security threats in this part of Europe. Owing to the quality of the conference, the list of participating countries and international organisations has been expanding through the years. So far, conference participants included representatives of the UN, the EU, NATO, OSCE and other regional organizations, such as RACVIAC and COE for Defence against Terrorism from Ankara, a NATO-accredited Centre of Excellence for Defence against Terrorism. Opening lectures have thus been given by senior representatives of the Republic of Slovenia, such as Dr. Danilo Türk, President of the Republic of Slovenia, Prof. Dr. Ernest Petrič, President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia, current Ministers of Defence, U.S. Ambassadors to Slovenia and many others. Each conference was attended by over 230 delegates from Slovenia and abroad.

**PURPOSE:**

This year's topic of the international conference is dedicated to the extremely pressing issues related to violent extremism in cyberspace and possible negative influences on operational continuity of national and European critical infrastructure, and other associated security risks faced by countries in Europe.

The title of the international conference is **"Violent Extremism and Radicalization as Important Factor Regarding Cyber Terrorism Threats to Critical Infrastructure Operating and Security Implications to Europe "**.

Terrorism, extremism, radicalism, cyber risks and the protection of critical infrastructure are just the tip of the iceberg of risks faced by the countries in Europe on a daily basis.

The task of any democratic country is to take all necessary measures on its territory, through its national security system, for safe and normal operation of the community. We are all aware that this is by no means an easy task.

Concerted action of authorities and services at national and international levels responsible for preventing terrorist threats is the basic requirement which can significantly contribute to a more effective response and mitigation of adverse effects. For a long time already, the international community has accepted the fact that an effective system of international response to threats to international security can only be successful as much as individual countries are successful, including those which are less well-prepared**.** This fact is even more pertinent when dealing with cyberspace and associated risks.

The resulting international cooperation will be addressed at the 9th traditional International Conference organised in Slovenia by the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia, the U.S. Embassy and the Joint Special Operations University from Tampa. The event introduces additional qualities in the process of managing complex security risks. These qualities are reflected in the following aspects:

* Acquisition of new knowledge and experience in the field of ensuring international security.
* Mutual exchange of opinions and transfer of good practices.
* Identification of relevant experts from the academic and operational levels who expand the network of contacts necessary for successful international and regional cooperation in countering terrorism, cyber threats and related problems of radicalization and extremism.
* Assistance to security structures of European countries in the development and upgrade of national mechanisms for ensuring national security and coordination with international partners.

The focus of the conference will primarily be on the national and international mechanisms for coordination and exchange of good practices in relation to the prevention of violent extremism and cyber threats. All these processes will be discussed in the framework of critical infrastructure risk management.