

Statement on the occasion of opening and launching the CIHOL (20. 6. 2019)

I assume that as a soldier, especially when wearing a uniform, I am expected to have rather laconic or *spartan* statement. Thus, I will be very brief and will leave the floor for academics.

In the long run, I am convinced that the military has to prevent its separation from the rest of society, all the more so in the area of education. Some of the future threats are less clear than in the past, but it can be the very reason to take them seriously. War, or armed conflicts in particular, are typical for their permanent metamorphosis into new forms. No army that wants to defend its state successfully can do so without adaptation and, above all, without anticipation of these changes. And where else better to find an inspiration and innovation than in academia.

Establishment of the Centre for International Humanitarian and Operational Law is a great example of the fact that we have something to say to each other and that it is possible to mutually benefit from the connection of theoretical knowledge of academics and practical experience of soldiers. I do not refer only to the dissemination of international law, which is a commitment of the Czech Republic. Most of all, I refer to the ability not to fall behind and to look for new ways, to learn and to understand that defending a state more than anything else requires a strong persuasion among society of the need to protect values on which our state stands.

Pavel Kolář

brigadier general Ing. Pavel Kolář, Director of the Special Forces Directorate of the Ministry of Defence & Armed Forces