

Ceremonial handover of the combat flag to the Union of Officers and Warrant Officers of the Army of the Czech Republic

Prague, June 1st, 2017

A ceremonial handover of the combat flag to the Union of Officers and Warrant Officers of the Army of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as „Union“) took place with the participation of the members of the Union and invited VIP guests in conformity with the in advance prepared program published and indicated on the invitations sent to all invited participants of this ceremonial gathering. The whole event was moderated by Miroslav Vaňura.

After the participants took place in the hall and after arrival of the invited guests the Honour guard unit of the Army of the Czech Republic brought through the center of the hall behind the music of the Hussite chant the combat flag of the Union and took the place with it on the right side in front of the hall.

Col. JUDr. Svetozár Plesník, President of the Central Council of the Union made an oral report to the present first deputy of the Chief of Staff Lt.Gen. Ing. Jiří Baloun. This report opened the ceremonial handover and Col. JUDr. Svetozár Plesník gave a brief welcome speech by which he sincerely welcomed the present participants, in particular the representative of the Ministry of Defense and of the Army of the Czech Republic Lt.Gen. Jiří Baloun, Brig.Gen. Jaromír Alan and the Col. of the Chief of Staff PhDr. Eduard Stehlík, PhD., MBA as well as the first deputy of the Police of the Czech Republic Brig.Gen. Martin Vondrášek, and other invited eminent guests.

In his welcome speech Col. JUDr. Svetozár Plesník emphasized the extraordinary importance of handover of this first combat flag to the present Union since this Union the activity of which was restored in the form of a civic association on May 27, 1993 is a successor and follower of the Union of Czechoslovakian Officers and of the Union of Czechoslovakian Warrant Officers from the period 1918 – 1949 and builds on their historical legacy. The President of the Central Council of the Union thanked nominally to all active supporters of this important event., in particular to the management of the Magistrate of the capital city of Prague, to Mr. Pavel Elis, Director-General of the Prague Energy Enterprise, to Ing. Andrej Babiš, to the management of the South Bohemia region, to the Association of Defense and Security Association, to the firm Velebný&Family. He also addressed his sincere thanks to Bc. Libor Hadrava, Prague City Councillor in charge of Public Safety and Crime Prevention under whose auspices this ceremonial event was held.

After the welcoming speech the moderator called for the execution of the ceremony of the combat flag handover. The ceremony took place in the front of the hall where Brig.Gen. Jiří Baloun took over the combat flag from the standard-bearer of the

Honour guard unit and passed it over to the hands of the President of the Central Council of the Union. Subsequently, the President waved the combat flag from both sides in honour to show it to all the participants. Thereafter, he again handed the combat flag to the standard-bearer and Brig.Gen. Jiří Baloun congratulated to the President of the Union Central Council on the granting of the Union combat flag.

Mr. Miroslav Vaňura, the moderator, then shortly introduced the forthcoming planned ceremonial act during which the first deputy of the Czech Republic Police President Lt.Gen. Martin Vondrášek came to the combat flag and decorated it with the Honourable ribbon of the Police President.

The following point on the agenda of the ceremonial gathering was the appreciation of the proposed members of the Union. On this occasion, four distinguished members of the Union from its Tábor branch were awarded Memorial Medal of the Union for Merit.

After the performance of these ceremonial acts some VIP guests presented their greeting speeches. Since there were also some foreign representatives (military attachés in the Czech Republic and a representative of the friendly Italian union) the presented greeting speeches were translated and Maj. Radim J. Marušák took the role of interpreter from and into English.

The first deputy of the Chief of Staff of the Army of the Czech Republic Lt.Gen. Jiří Baloun wished to the Union every success in all its endeavours and he stressed in particular that only activities being not only formal ones are likely to bring expected results.

The first deputy of the Police President Brig.Gen. Martin Vondrášek reminded in his greeting speech traditionally very good relations and close collaboration between the Union and various units of the Police of the Czech Republic.

Lt.Cdr. Filippo Giuseppe Imbalzano, representative of the Italian Union of Reserve Officers (UNUCI), immediate past President of the Gaming Initiative who mentioned and appreciated in his greeting speech long-term contacts and collaboration between UNUCI and the Union set forth not only by the valid Memorandum on mutual close collaboration within the framework of the Gaming Initiative but also by a common patronage on the Italian war cemetery in Milovice performed by the Czech-Italian Association of Memories on the said military cemetery. On this occasion he also announced that the Italian Union of Reserve Officers (UNUCI) granted honourable membership in UNUCI to the Union members, namely to Col. Svetozár Plesník, to Lt.Col. Miroslav Tlamicha and to Maj. Radim J. Marušák for a long-term collaboration and development of mutual relations between both national unions. The membership cards were handed over to the said Union members by the present generals.

After the speeches presented by the distinguished guests, the official part of the ceremonial event. was closed by the National anthem of the Czech Republic and the moderator invited the present participants to a small banquet.

Capt. (ret.) Ing. Ivan Lamprecht