

## **Activities of Czech Military Units Abroad**

During World War I (1914-1918), Czechoslovak politicians in exile pursued the creation of an independent Czechoslovak state. One of the main tasks was to build an autonomous national army, one whose soldiers – Czech and Slovak volunteers (the term 'legionnaires' came into use only after the war) - would join battle alongside the Allies. The Czechoslovak legions paid a high price for their country's freedom.

More than two decades later, members of the Czechoslovak army fought again for Czechoslovakia's restoration. During World War II, thousands of soldiers abroad laid down their lives for freedom on the battlefields of Western Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, the former Soviet Union and a number of other places.

Since its founding, the Czech Republic has taken part in ensuring international security through the participation of its armed forces in international peacekeeping operations. Our important contributions to NATO and EU missions have included special forces, a provincial reconstruction team, transport helicopters, field hospitals, military police and chemical units. The activities of observers on UN missions can also be considered important. Our soldiers have earned credit and acknowledgement in the fulfillment of difficult combat and humanitarian tasks. Unfortunately, while building the good name of the Czech Republic, some have paid the highest price.

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