REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE
AND DIGITAL AFFAIRS

NATO Science for Peace and Security
(SPS) Programme NATO Headquarters
Boulevard Léopold III
1110 Brussels

Our Ref 16.11.2026 No 2-7/26-8295-1

End-user letter of support – "The Polar Silk Road and NATO's Northern Flank: Geoeconomic Coercion, Undersea Infrastructure Protection and Psychological Defence in the Arctic–Baltic Security Space" (POLARIS)

Dear Sir or Madam

The Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Estonia supports the above multi-year project proposal, submitted to the NATO SPS Programme by the University of Tartu (NATO Project Director: Dr Elo Süld, Centre for Asian Studies) together with its international partners from NATO member and partner countries. The Ministry confirms its interest in acting as an end-user of the project's results.

Recent incidents in the Baltic Sea, in which undersea cables and pipelines were damaged by vessels sailing under foreign flags, have shown the limits of existing legal frameworks. Questions of criminal jurisdiction at sea, the investigation of incidents involving the shadow fleet, the collection of evidence and cooperation with other states remain difficult in practice. Estonia has started to address these questions in its own criminal law, but further research and international comparison are needed.

The Ministry is particularly interested in the following results of the project:
1. the legal and policy toolkit for the protection of undersea infrastructure, including the analysis of criminal jurisdiction, investigation and prosecution in cases of sabotage and the handling of the shadow fleet;
2. the comparison of legal and policy approaches in the Nordic–Baltic region and among NATO Allies and partners;
3. the two tabletop exercises, in which the legal response to an attack on undersea infrastructure is tested together with other authorities.

The Ministry intends to take part in the project by:
- providing expert feedback on the draft legal and policy toolkit;
- taking part in the tabletop exercises where the legal response to infrastructure incidents is discussed;
- taking part in the seminar for Estonian officials on the project's findings.

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This letter expresses the Ministry's support and interest only and does not create any financial or legal obligation for the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs of the Republic of Estonia.

Yours faithfully,

(signed digitally)

Tiina Uudeberg
Secretary General
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