


The Nato tunnel



The Defense Cooperation Agreement with the U.S. was [signed by Pres. Petr Pavel on Aug. 1](#), and a public discussion can now begin about what the document actually means. Ret. Brig. Gen. František Mičánek, who is dean emeritus of the Nato Defense College of Rome, jumped the gun a bit by saying in [Právo](#) on the day of the signing that Czechs need to be told that their rights can be curtailed once Nato training exercises begin and the D1 highway and rail lines from west to east are closed to public use. Ex-Army Chief of Staff [Jiří Šedivý](#) said that massive spending will likely be needed to bring highways, bridges, tunnels and airports into conformity with the sizes and weights of Nato equipment. Defense Min. [Jana Černochová of ODS](#) and [Interior Min. Vít Rakušan of STAN](#) have already spoken publicly about counting certain defense-related items toward the 2% Nato commitment. This is perhaps the next big tunnel of Czech business: Getting the defense ministry and Fiala cabinet to approve and fast-track all kinds of "defense-related" spending, even if [Nato rules](#) ultimately don't allow it to count toward the 2% commitment.

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