

**Brigadier General Meelis Kiili, Commandant, Baltic Defence College**

Brigadier General Meelis Kiili was born on 20th of March 1965 in. He is married to Silva and is the father of two daughters Annika and Astrid. He graduated from Estonian University of Agriculture in 1991 as power engineer and worked as a Power Management Engineer until 1993. During his studies he was drafted to Soviet Army for two years compulsory conscription what he completed in 1986. He actively participated in events, including defending vital infrastructure in 1991 coup d'état, which eventually led to re-establishment of independent Republic of Estonia. He is active member of Estonian Defence League from 1993. He served as Chief of Staff of Lääne-Viru District in 1993 until 1994. During this time he also completed an Officer's Course and was promoted to the rank of ensign. In 1994, he joined the Baltic Battalion, completed the British Royal Marines Course in 1995 and was appointed as a Training Officer of Estonian Company until 1996. When his company was fully trained, it deployed to UNIFIL and BG Kiili was appointed as the Second in Command of Estonian Contingent in South Lebanon from 1996 – 1997. After returning from Lebanon, he was transferred to the newly established Estonian Peace Operations Centre and he served there as the Chief of Staff and acting Commander until 1998 when he took full command of this unit. His next assignment was in NATO Regional Headquarters in Northwood, UK where he was a staff officer from 2000 – 2003. On completion of this international duty, he moved on to higher echelons of Estonian Defence Forces and served in Estonian Land Forces Headquarters where he worked his way from being a G3 Operations Officer up to Chief of Staff and later Acting Commander of Land Forces. In 2006 he continued his career in the General Staff of Estonian Defence forces as Deputy Chief of Staff. One of his primary duties was to generate deployable forces to theatres where Estonia was participating. From 2008 – 2011 he was appointed as the Defence Attaché to United States of America and Canada. Upon his return to Estonia he assumed the command of Baltic Defence College. He is himself a former student of Baltic Defence College and has also graduated from NATO Defence College in Rome, Italy and United States Army War College. His hobbies are reading and strolling in the forest.