

# Hungarian officer becomes 43rd inductee into the International Hall of Fame

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by Suzanne Reynolds, Public Affairs



Hungarian Defense Forces strategic leader becomes the 43<sup>rd</sup> inductee into the International Hall of Fame.

The War College leadership, student body, and faculty honored Gen. Tibor Benko, Chief of Defense of the Hungarian Defense Forces and USAWC 2001 graduate, with induction into the International Hall of Fame on Apr. 23 in Bliss Hall.

"Gen. Benko exemplified the tenants of the United States Army War College through his leadership of his nation's armed forces and in doing so has greatly honored his alma mater," said Col. John

Burbank, director, International Fellows Program. "His connection to this institution and to you, as future strategic leaders, remains paramount as we face the dangers and new challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century together."

Benko's career spans 34 years starting as a platoon leader and then brigade commander at the 36<sup>th</sup> Artillery Regiment in Kiskunhalas, commander of the 5<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade in Debrecen, acting commander of the Hungarian Land Forces Command, commander (land forces) of the Joint Force Command and presently as chief of defense.

The Hall of Fame recognizes graduates who have held the highest positions in their nation's armed forces or an equivalent position by rank or responsibility in a multinational military organization.

### ***Gen. Tibor Benko expressed thanks and reminisced about his time at The Army War College 12 years ago—***

"It is a great feeling to breathe the air of the Army War College again," said Benko.

Benko thanked his former faculty members, classmates and sponsors for attending the ceremony.

"I was fortunate to be a student here, and I can tell you that I spent a year here that was not only successful but unforgettable," said Benko. "I



experienced and learned a lot here which I could use very effectively in my previous positions and currently, as well. I made excellent friends from the one year from among both American and international students.”

**Photos by Megan Clugh,**

**USAWC Photo Lab**

The atmosphere of this auditorium is just like it was back then—and sitting there among you are the top military leaders to be, he said.

“It is here where strategic leadership and management skills come together, this is something you have already learned about,” said Benko.

Benko spoke of the Hungarian officer who will come to The War College for the next resident course and provided an overview of his nation’s military.

Hungary is a small country without large armed forces, but within the alliance it is not the size of the country but the contribution to the common cause that matters, said Benko. Hungarian forces are present in Afghanistan, Mali and other regions of Africa, Cypress, China, and were also involved in Kosovo and Iraq.

“We field over 160 positions at various NATO commands and headquarters,” said Benko. “We operate a NATO military medical excellence center and we are responsible for organizing and managing international C-IED course, just to mention some of our contributions.”

Benko also discussed the partnership with the Ohio National Guard which celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year of working together.

Benko outlined the capabilities his country could offer within alliances and in the international area to include a joint engineer battalion with Slovakia, Romania and Ukraine for flood disasters, a multinational land force with Italy and Slovenia, policing missions in 2015 and a partnership with Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 2016.

He closed his remarks by thanking the War College for the honor and reminded students to take full advantage of their year here, which he called the best of his life.