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THE ROLE OF ARMY OF REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA IN DEALING WITH THE SECURITY CHALLENGES POSED BY MIGRATION CRISIS

Prof. Metodija DOJCHINOVSKI, PhD

Military Academy "General Mihailo Apostolski" - Skopje

Email: m_dojcinovski@yahoo.com

Maja TIMOVSKA, PhD

Protection and Rescue Directorate

Email: timovskam@yahoo.com

Petar TASHEVSKI

Army of Republic of Macedonia

Email: petartasevski@gmail.com

Abstract: *This work refers to the engagement of Macedonian Army in tackling the problem of migrant crisis, which is a product of security threats, risks, hazards and challenges in Syria and Iraq, and the possible harmful consequences for the security of local and regional level, which are reflected through the illegal transit of possible members of the armed groups primarily in the Islamic state towards Western Europe and their stay in the Republic Macedonia smuggling of weapons of mass destruction, trafficking of drugs and others. In the paper they discuss the issues related to national documents, norms, rules and regulations that indicate the security challenges in Republic of Macedonia and the region, the role of the Army in crisis management, the current security situation related to migrants and consideration of all forms of engaging the Army in dealing with migrant crisis to assist the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia. Following the analysis of the data we are coming to the conclusion that the new security environment and new security threats demand further transformation of the Army as a pillar of the security system of the Republic Macedonia. Expected implications of the study are that Army of republic Macedonia has facilities and capabilities to reduce the adverse consequences of the current crisis with the wave of migrants from the Middle East, but that additional steps that will lead to successful implementation of the given tasks.*

Keywords: *Army of Republic of Macedonia, security, migrants, Islamic State, Terrorism*

Introduction

In 2010 when the countries of North Africa and the Middle East faced with a process known as the "Arab Spring", where protesters with various forms of civil resistance fought to overthrow the secular autocratic regimes in most of the world public aroused hope for democratic change and prosperity of these regions.

Few people at the time could have guessed that the process called "Arab Spring", where the main maxim of the opposition forces was overthrowing secular regimes, will become fertile ground for the development of militant Islamism and spreading intolerance towards all who disagree with the radical interpretation the Quran. They have created an array of dysfunctional states where operating more than 100 radical terrorist groups¹.

The benefits of globalization have been completely abused by terrorists, criminals, radical religious leaders who have successfully made the mobilization of young Muslims with radical views of almost the entire world in the name of establishing and spreading Islamic state that would be spread on the territory of Asia, Africa and Europe, with center in modern-day Iraq and Syria where the basis for regulation shall be in accordance with the radical (sharia) interpretation of the holy Quran².

So far, in Syrian conflict has been killed more than 100,000 people and displaced millions from their homes, but some estimates put the worst comes. World leaders and international public appalled by the scenes who daily come from Syria complex about two things. The first is that to stop refugee wave must stop military actions, and the second is that Islamic State is supported neither by the US nor Russia nor the EU³.

Migration crisis as a security challenge

Europe and of course Balkan countries faced with security challenges which the fore, migrant crisis and aspirations for ISIS penetration in Europe. These challenges undoubtedly have a strong impact on the economy and sustainable development, but what is much worse is the effect of ISIS aimed at breaking down the societies based on universal values and principles that protect UN.

Migration crisis is mainly a consequence of the conflict in Syria and Iraq, and poor security situation in the countries of North Africa and the Middle East. Every day we are watching news about the activity of terrorist fighters who are fighting for the ideas of the Islamic State. In imposing its bleak vision chosen means of achieving that goal. Serve the spread of ethnic and religious intolerance and violence, although violence in the name of any religion is violence against the same religion⁴.

Macedonia with its position as a crossroads and constitutes ideal transit route for migrants on the road to the EU. There is some estimates that in 2015, as of 30.10.

¹ NATO 2020: assured security; dynamic engagement, analysis and recommendations of the group of experts on a new strategic concept for NATO, 17 MAY 2010

² Patrick Cockburn, The Rise of Islamic State: ISIS and the New Sunni Revolution, Verso, 2015

³ <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/vise-lica-sirjske-opozicije>

⁴ <http://www.president.gov.mk/mk/2011-06-17-09-55-07/2011-07-19-10-40-39.html>, speech of President Ivanov on leaders meeting in Brussell about migrant wave throw Balkan route

Through Republic of Macedonia transited 424,000 migrants, and that since July, when started the registration of migrants in accordance with the law on asylum, a total of 182,000 transited through the border with Greece⁵.

Response to the migrant crisis in Macedonia

The security challenges in Macedonia and the region were estimated at the national documents in the area of security, primarily *government concept*⁶ adopted in 2003 and *security strategy*⁷ adopted in 2010. The engagement of the military in crisis situations is regulated by several laws, and we can mention: the Defense Law, the Crisis Management Law, state border Law. Also the engagement of the ARM units in special situations are governed by internal guidelines and rules describing the procedures for dealing in various situations.

Realizing the danger of the uncontrolled entering and passing of migrants, on the proposal of the Government, by the Parliament was introduced a state of emergency, in order to create better conditions to strengthen the supervision and control of the border area in the region of Gevgelija and Tabanovci.

Although control of the state borders is duty of Macedonia's Ministry of Interior, in particular the Border Police, we witness in some countries of South East and Central Europe, most governments have taken legal measures to engaging their armies to support police dealing with migrants.

There are some examples. Greece used the army special forces to assist to police at the escalation of the security situation on the island of Lesbos. Bulgaria has sent armed forces of the border with Macedonia by blocking potentially sent migrants to Bulgaria and further engage to secure the fence installed to Turkey. Army of Hungary on the proposal of the government and parliamentary approval put a fence along the border with Serbia and Croatia. There are many more examples of use of army as

⁵ Official data obtained by Anastasia Ilieska, state secretary of the Ministry of Macedonia regional roundtable on the refugee crisis on the topic of security challenges for Macedonia and the day 28/10/2015 at the Hotel Stone Bridge, Skopje.

⁶ Threats from illegal migrant processes and hazards associated with transnational terrorism were provided in 2003, which can be seen in the adoption of governmental conception of security, where clearly highlights the trend of globalization of the world brings threats caused by the widening gap between rich and poor and the internationalization of certain dangers, the most extreme of which are international terrorism and organized crime. In addition, the expansion and illegal migration and trafficking in drugs, weapons, people and strategic materials. It also increased the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction wielded by countries with undemocratic regimes.

⁷ The adoption of the Strategy for Security in 2010 were further defined the characteristics of the security environment in which it is Macedonia, where emphasis was given to the interests of the Republic of Macedonia in dealing with security risks, which defined the place and role of the Army in support of national security. In the Security Strategy states that in the event of a crisis army will support the police forces and state institutions and provides assistance during natural disasters and epidemics, technological and other risks and crises.

support of police in Czech Republic, Austria, Croatia and Slovenia, in aim to deal with the huge refugee flow.

Engaging the Army in support of Police

The engagement of Macedonian Army was announced by President Ivanov in mid-July 2015 to protect the border line length of about 50 km where refugees come mainly from Greece to Macedonia⁸.

Based on the decision of the President of Macedonia⁹, GS assess and Chief of Staff issue an order to engage the Army on the southern border with Greece. The engagement of the Army were directly dependent on the needs on the ground and requirements of police. Army on the ground, sent several specialties to be able to perform tasks without major problems. Logistics in this situation had a big role as to support the ARM who perform duties and in support of the Interior Ministry and other government institution as well as international humanitarian organizations and NGOs from the Macedonia and abroad¹⁰.

In coordination with Border Police, the Army received a certain area of responsibility where conduct joint control of the border, and additionally, Army conduct independent activities of patrolling and border controls that directly affect the improvement of the security situation in south border.

Army based its decision on hiring perform preparatory activities as part of their contracted capacities and abilities to support police. Since the introduction of the crisis and the decision to use Army to support police on the ground is the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade (or shortly 1.mpbr).

1.mpbr as higher joint tactical unit as part of Joint Operational Command presents main fighting force of the Army that provides ready forces for protection and support national interests and provides support during natural disasters, epidemics and other hazards¹¹.

Within its competence the 1. mpbr among other support forces police in handling threats, risks and threats to the security of the Republic of Macedonia, and also provides support to the state government, local government, citizens and non-

⁸ <http://www.president.gov.mk/mk/2011-06-17-09-55-07/2011-07-19-10-40-39/3479.html>

⁹ On August 19, 2015, the Government adopted a decision declaring a crisis situation for a period of 30 days on the southern and northern border state due to massive illegal entry of foreign citizens from the territory of the EU and NATO.

¹⁰ <http://reporter.mk/2015/08/27/%Do%Bo%D1%80%Do%BC-%Do%BD%Do%BoDo%B3%D1%80%Do%Bo%Do%BD%Do%B8%D1%86%Do%Bo%D1%82%Do%Bo-%Do%BE%D1%81%D1%82%Do%Bo%Do%BD%D1%83%Do%B2%Do%Bo%Do%BC%Do%B5-%D1%81%Do%B5-%Do%B4%Do%BE%Do%B4%Do%B5%Do%BA%Do%Bo/>

¹¹ http://www.arm.mil.mk/baza/edinici/zok/zok_1mpbr_index.html

governmental organizations and institutions in dealing with natural disasters and epidemics, tactical-technological and other accidents. 1st brigade support the forces of the Interior Ministry in dealing with various forms of endangering the security of the territory of Macedonia is realized through its subordinate units.

Mission units¹² of the composition of the 1st brigade is clearly defined core tasks including would emphasize the following:

- control of territory, closing routes and providing areas-Combat service support units in peacetime, crisis and wartime,
- Implementation of command and control, support the forces of the Interior Ministry in dealing with threats, risks and hazards,
- support of state government and local governments in dealing with natural disasters and epidemics, technical - technological accidents and other accidents,
- Making a humanitarian logistics operations in support of civil authorities in times of danger and rehabilitation of consequences of natural disasters and acts of war,
- Assistance to civilian authorities in the reconstruction of infrastructure facilities of the consequences of natural disasters and acts of war¹³.
- Execution of tactical actions and tasks of atomic, radiological and chemical decontamination units in the organization and conducting of decontamination of weapon, land and buildings.

The use of army in migrant crisis is in accordance to the decision to use it and it is very important to use appropriate in dependence of the nature and severity of the crisis.

Army in tactical point of view has more options to make actions toward terrain and migrants as is follow:

- **Securing** which means holding the specific positions on the field, with or without the use of force.
- **Detention**, meaning the presence of military forces of a space.
- **Canalizing**, which is achieved by using various types of natural and man-made obstacles to direct migrants to legal passage.
- **Clearing**, eliminating organized resistance in the designated area to break the mob and impose order.

¹² http://www.arm.mil.mk/baza/edinici/zok/zok_3mpbn_index.html

¹³ http://www.arm.mil.mk/baza/edinici/zok/zok_inzbn_index.html

- **Blocking**, which means disabling access to illegal migrants to a particular space and movement of a given direction.
- **Suppression** when applying physical force, use of non-lethal weapons on a group of illegal migrants and make them to depart from a certain area.
- **Disabling** in certain situations when the situation requires in order to prevent further escalation by applying nonfatal disabling weapons are violent people who relate to the security forces.
- **Destruction**, tactical procedure would be realized in the event of a direct threat to the security forces by terrorists implicated among migrants in the final hand involves the use of lethal weapons.¹⁴

Despite these combat actions, army on ground conducts series of activities to ensure successful operation of facilities for reception, registration and transport of migrants¹⁵.

President Ivanov on his speech on army day this year recalled that the Army is only part of the institutional capacity of the national power of states which have to face and respond to threats. Strong message was that the army must be projected increased budget and continually upgraded and modernized.

Although the primary Army mission is the defense of the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty, unitary character of the state and protection of the population against external threats, assess threats will give direction as the Army is transformed to respond in performing operations for civil defense the state.

President Ivanov asked the Ministry of Defence as soon as possible to begin the procedure for the preparation of a new defense strategy that will give a new vision to the development and functioning of the defense system.

President Ivanov as Supreme Commander in his speech on the occasion of the Day of the Army indicated of needs of this document which will be prescribed obligations to build up institutions to face the current threats in the answer must be timely and predictive, and that intelligence a and special operations will be the best weapon in today's security environment.

Estimates indicates that the refugee crises will continue in the future, and it is necessary deployment of military capabilities in accordance with the current way of

¹⁴ Slobodan Cvetkovic, Tactics as art, Skopje, 2002

¹⁵ Adjacent to the abandoned facility to Vinojug established transit center, 'whose establishment largely contributed engineer units have given the composition of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade. Here they'll mention that they made the way to the transit center and provided assistance to set up tents and other temporary structures.

engagement, but depending on developments multiple uses of the same, not excluding here and setting wire fence in case Germany to stop reception of migrants in the case of chain closing of borders in the countries of southeast Balkans.

Conclusion

Army plays an important role in dealing with migrant crisis which pose global problem today. For successful implementation of specified activities, primarily need to improve coordination with all parties present on the ground, first and foremost with police forces.

The cooperation between the involved army and police forces on the ground should be accomplished methodically and continuously through daily contacts and exchange of information on occurrences and events in the areas of responsibility within the coordinating meetings at all levels. It is necessary and cooperation to exchange experiences and knowledge and coordination of joint activities and actions.

It needs updating internal documents which lay down procedures for hiring military forces providing border from illegal bystanders. It is necessary to allocate more funding for defense for the purchase of new and modern systems, and to maintain the existing order to be unhindered exploitation.

For better control of difficult parts of the border security forces must use modern thermal cameras and other modern technical equipment. It takes additional costs to Macedonia not provided with the budget for 2015. .

Military intelligence, together with partner agencies should answer the question to you in the ranks of migrants there are members of ISIS, detecting the "returnees" from Syria, making the final measure will prevent attacks against critical infrastructure in the territory of the Republic Macedonia and abroad and verify the opinion of President Ivanov that intelligence is key in the fight against asymmetric threats.

The engagement of the army units in support of the police attempt to act on this phenomenon at the local level, but on a global level to overcome this problem it is necessary to come to a common position as acceptable to impose a cessation of hostilities in Syria, and in this case taking into account the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Macedonia and participating in the coalition in the fight against the Islamic State, should not exclude the possibility of involvement of Army in peacekeeping mission in Syria led by the UN, NATO or the EU.

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