

Postmodern Openings

ISSN: 2068 – 0236 (print), ISSN: 2069 – 9387
(electronic)

Covered in: Index Copernicus, Ideas RePeC, EconPapers,
Socionet, Ulrich Pro Quest, Cabell, SSRN, Appreciative
Inquiry Commons, Journalseek, Scipio, CEEOL, EBSCO

PERSPECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA UNDER THE NEW REGIONAL SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

Gheorghe MEREUȚĂ

Postmodern Openings, 2014, Volume 5, Issue 4, December,
pp: 31-42

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://postmodernopenings.com>

Published by:
Lumen Publishing House
On behalf of:
Lumen Research Center in Social and Humanistic Sciences

Perspectives of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova under The New Regional Security Architecture

Gheorghe MEREUȚĂ¹

Abstract

Currently, the security complex from the South-East Europe, situated in the area of modern confrontation between the major European powers (Germany, Russia, Great Britain and France), is undergoing a profound political, economic and military restructuring. The USA and NATO, within the UN and OSCE, as well as through other institutions, control the most significant local developments.

The concept was imposed by the new politico-military coordinates in Europe and in the world, the limitations of armaments, and the new military relations established in the world.

National Army of the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter National Army) passes through a complex process of restructuring / modernization.

Implemented operational measures and actions, and those that need to be implemented in the next period, refer to the development in the security environment in the area of interest of the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords:

Regional security environment, vulnerabilities, concept of military security, operationalization of the National Army, Army report–civil society, action strategy.

¹ Colonel (r), docent, PhD in Military Sciences, Armed Forces Military Academy "Alexandru cel Bun", Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, e-mail: mereuta52@mail.ru, phone: +37369217189.

General background

South East Europe forms a security complex well individualized from the geographical point of view. In terms of state, this space is severely fragmented (Albania, Greece, former Yugoslav Republic, Turkey, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Slovenia, Romania and obviously, Moldova). Balkan states work within OSCE and are included in the Balkan Stability Pact; many countries are part of the NATO bloc and joined the EU. Others are included in the EU and NATO expanding processes.

Currently, the security complex from the South-East Europe, situated in the area of modern confrontation between the major European powers (Germany, Russia, Great Britain and France), is undergoing a profound political, economic and military restructuring.

The USA and NATO, within the UN and OSCE, as well as through other institutions, control the most significant local developments, oriented towards:

- preventing, stopping and management of armed and political conflicts;
- the democratization of Balkan countries;
- the development of market economies and open society;
- integration into regional European and Euro-Atlantic Security structures.

Southeast Europe displays persistent and various vulnerabilities.

Balkans were considered for decades the "powder keg of Europe", which was confirmed by the events of the last decade of the twentieth century. The many vulnerabilities which have diverse origins adversely affect the southeast area of European security.

From the economic and social point of view, for instance, we can draw a number of factors, such as:

- relative poverty;
- poorly developed infrastructure;
- lack of capital necessary for the investments in the industrial upgrading and for promoting the services;
- a marketplace relatively "unsafe and poor" for major western investors ;
- the important place occupied by the "black economy" in the economic dynamics of the region etc.

These vulnerabilities can be completed with:

- negative impact of local wars and armed conflicts (Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia) on national economies;
- some unfavorable results obtained as a the result of applying the modernizing reforms in the former socialist states;
- consequences of economic globalization and regionalization processes;
- very worrisome is the energy dependency of Balkans on Arab and Russian oil, and on natural gas transported from Ukraine and Russia;
- persistence of tensions and ethnocultural and territorial disputes ;
- slow pace of building a regional security system etc.

Economic vulnerabilities of Southeast Europe is a serious handicap in the East European competition towards the accession to NATO and the EU.

This economic handicap increases the states' dependence in the region on large foreign investors and prevent the formation of a solid economic base of its own.

From the political point of view, the main shortcoming of the Balkan security complex lies in the inability of its components (nation-states, federations) to prevent and manage local crises.

Very worrying is the fact that the process of reshaping the political-territorial region has not been completed so far.

From a military perspective, the Balkan states do not have the resources and mechanisms needed to manage and resolve the ample crises, nor do they have the opportunity to counteract by their own forces, external aggression.

The degree of political and military instability in Southeast Europe is underlined by the creation of some areas of "traditional" conflict or potential conflict with its own physiognomy.

Economic, political, military, ethnocultural tensions have accumulated in this field over time. A vulnerability of the Balkans – encountered in other areas of Europe's security - is a whole history of territorial disputes and ethnocultural and religious conflicts.

In conclusion it should be mentioned that the unresolved ethno cultural tensions of Southeast Europe in terms of modern democratic values and collaboration between countries, within a medium term, will result in "labeling" and Balkans gaining position as a space of insecurity.

Concepts, definitions

Military security concept designates a condition characterized by lack of dangers and threats to the existence and the management of actions contributing to the achievement of such a situation. This must be done so that a country can act unhindered to promote its own interests, in compliance with national and international standards. Military dimension, however, is not unique to the security of a country. Under the current circumstances, political, economic, social, environmental dimensions of, etc. become at least as important. Military institution is a state orfanism. But it exceeds the mere condition of *state instrument* due to its functions in society and its quality of military power of the nation. Therefore, the relationship army - society is one of a special kind, with many valences and conditions. Unfortunately, very often, this relationship of the greatest importance for setting up a credible system of national and regional security is understood and treated simplistically.

Within the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova, the purpose of the state action within national development lies in "building a stable, prosperous and democratic state , able to participate effectively in the dynamics of international life".

Fundamental interests concerned are: maintaining integrity, unity, sovereignty and independence; guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms and well-being and security of citizens; affirmation of national identity and promote it as part of the community of democratic values; environmental protection.

Republic of Moldova in a new format of regional security

Republic of Moldova must act, through its defense policy, as part of national and regional security in order to: integrate into European structures; reform of the military body to develop a credible, modern and efficient defense capability; strengthen democratic civilian control over the armed forces, in accordance with the principles and values of democracy; strengthen the country's status as a security generator by maintaining and improving the contribution to regional stability.

The reform of the military area and its influence on civil society requires:

- Status of the military personnel and their position in society;
- Conversion of defense industry through social, economic and political engagement;

- The fight against corruption in the army amid combating this phenomenon at national level;
- Military rights and obligations of citizens as well as civil rights and obligations of the military.

Military Strategy of the Republic of Moldova states: "The fundamental objective of national defense is to achieve the necessary and appropriate military capacity to defend national sovereignty and independence, territorial integrity and unity, constitutional democracy and the rule of law." As military objectives of national interest are emerged:

- Conflict prevention and crisis management, which could directly affect the security of the Republic of Moldova;
- Support public authorities in civil emergencies and humanitarian actions;
- Prevent, deter and thwart any possible armed aggression against the state;
- Increase the contribution to regional stability.

National Army of the Republic of Moldova (hereinafter National Army) crosses a complex restructuring / modernization process. Operational measures and actions implemented and to be implemented in the next period are actually considered the developments in the security environment area of the area of interest of the Republic of Moldova.

The operationalization of the future structure of the National Army essential element of the reform goes through a process of conceptual clarification, identification of objectives, tasks and requirements, depending on the evolving strategic environment and, not least, the correlation with the resources available for national security.

Currently it is suggested a clear vision of the ultimate goal of restructuring and modernization. This approach moves the focus, until recently, the military defense security by setting up an army, to be directly involved through its specific means to promote and support stability and security in Europe. National Army soldiers participate in various multinational operations under UN and OSCE peacekeeping operations in order to maintain stability on the continent.

By going through this process, operationalization is essential, National Army must become a modern and credible force to be

equipped with advanced and modern equipment as well as trained according to NATO standards.

The main objectives of the operationalization are the basics containing general aims of all the measures and actions that were carried out systematically and will continue to be carried out until the end of the current military modernization process. This process will allow Republic of Moldova to consolidate its position *as generator of regional security* and to avoid its consumer condition.

At the same time, efficiency of army's efforts it is required thus to provide the ability to lead the commands and troops needed to deter aggression, credible defense of the country for participation in conflict prevention, crisis management and regional collective defense and for the settlement of civil emergencies. The operationalization of the National Army, essential component of the reform, must have as finality the achievement structures more compact, efficient, effective, flexible and compatible with NATO standards.

Analyzing the role of the army in society, it is particularly important to analyze relational binomial army - civil society, as one of the main potentiators of stability and national security. This relationship takes place in two ways: indirect influence exercised by civil society on the military, as an essential element in ensuring the preservation of the constitutional role of the army in security and national defense and military influence on society as one of the main factors of socialization.

Civil-military relations

The study of the army- society report is justified by the current situation and trends of most armies of the world: radical change in the organizational structure as a consequence of abandoning the model of mass army. In this context, the trends of structure and operational modernization are valid for National Army as well Structure and operational, for example:

1. Decline the mass army and the transition to professional army:
 - the process is gradual, taking place on a longer time;
 - restructuring and adaptation in accordance with the needs of society by changing organizational structure, size, resources and missions of the armed forces;
 - although many developed democratic states give up the mandatory incorporation in favor of voluntary recruitment (this

happened in the USA in 1973 in the UK in 1967, in Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium in 1975, in France in 1990, in Romania in 2005), we are firmly convinced (for several reasons) that we still need to maintain the constituency system;

- the trend is to shift from a military force mobilization (Mobilization Force) to one permanent (being in force), capable of rapid intervention.

2. Reduction of the civilian and military sphere:

- military profession involves interference with civil social structures;
- increasing interdependence with civil society, which could lead to alterations in the internal structure of the army;
- increasing the professionalisation of military personnel as a result of the increasing complexity of military technology and the considerable employment of the civilian technicians in military structures.

3. Change in the recruitment of officers and military career guide:

- it has lately been noticed two trends in recruiting of the military personnel in the National Army: on the one hand, volunteering has increased the individual quality of recruits, and on the other hand, the social quality of the coming personnel in the army has decreased in comparison with other areas facing civilian life;
- an alternative concept to the military service appeared, applicable to the reserves, specifically “the second career”, which implies identifying in the civilian life a second occupation independent of a permanent retirement pay.

4. Change the army missions depending on their current importance:

- to prevent wars;
- to maintain internal and international social stability (*peace-keeping*);
- military assistance, response to emergencies, etc.

In this context we need to analyze the power of the civilian institutions over the army. According to S. E. Finer (Sava et al, 1998, pp. 256-257), „the involvement of the army in social life happens when the political institutions are weak and lack legitimacy, and their way of participation depends on the main sources of weakness at the level of

civilian structures, on the uncontrolled mobilization of the population and on the democratization of violence”.

However, if this situation is not identified, we can talk about the existence of civilian control (Huntington, 1998, pp. 312-313), „which aims at maintaining at an optimum level or even minimize the power of the military.”

The subjective civilian control consists in minimizing the civilian power, that is, of one or several civilian groups, in the absence of a professional officers’ corps. The subjective civilian control implies relations of power among civilian groups, some of them claiming it as a means to enhance power to the detriment of the others.

One of the first aspects of the army analysis as a social institution in direct connection with the civil society refers to the *correlation between the army and the population* through the socio-demographic determinations.

Specialized studies (Stoian, 1985, p. 80) established „the existence of some factors that determine army organization depending on the social and demographic context:

1. The determinant nature of the people versus the army:
 - the demographic structure of the population and the army;
 - rate of natural increase of the population;
 - number of active population able to participate in combat;
 - psychological characteristics of the population (determination, firmness, spirit of sacrifice).
2. Economic, technical and scientific potential of the country;
3. The military system of organization, mobilization and training of the population;
4. The attitude of the population towards the goals of the war”.

We should also take into account the active influence exercised by the army over the population in the form of socializing. „Socialization represents a psychosocial process of transmitting-assimilating the attitudes, values, concepts or models of behavior specific to a group or a community in order to formulate, adapt and socially integrate a person” (Vlăsceanu, 1998, pp. 546-547). This aspect means individual’s socialization, both those involved directly in the military institution’s work, as well as the citizens, who strongly condition the military organization from two points of view: the size and the structure of the military structure and the values, norms, attitudes that characterize the military model.

„The military socializing is specific to the secondary socializing process and can be defined as a set of processes for learning and internalizing the military norms and values, for learning the military specific behavior, processes that can be organized or spontaneous, conscious or unconscious” (Iliescu, 2000, pp. 55-65).

Another direction of modernization and restructuring the National Army is structuring it according to the principle of *defensive sufficiency*, a concept valid only in peacetime. It means, essentially, keeping some quantities of armed forces and armament, and organizing them in defensive structures, which should not become an offensive peril to any country, ensuring, concurrently, a reaction capability in case of aggression upon its own territory and accomplishing the mission of defending the country.

The concept is complex, quite confusing and very transparent to meanings. The mighty peril is when it can be unfavorable to the one who adopted it, especially when it does not have enough technological flexibility, as in the case of the National Army. In this case, sufficiency, instead of being a minimum quantitative option compensated 100% by a maximum qualitative possibility, remains a minimization in a minimization, that is poverty in poverty.

Sufficiency for defense (defensive sufficiency), as a doctrinal option, should be based more as a military option, on the strategy of rapid actions. Without some very competitive military structures, some advanced technologies and, obviously, some leadership structures capable to materialize it, such a strategy is inconceivable. Thus, a modern army at present and especially a future one is operationalizing it according to the rapid actions strategy.

Possible actions on behalf of somebody could not be but very rapid actions, with a strictly limited objective to create an accomplished fact or determine the reaction of the rapid forces of the international community.

Such a possibility is not excluded, and we consider that it should not be excluded, regardless of how good and stable the relations are in the region. Turkey and Greece have also their own specific problems regarding the political, military and geostrategic situation at the moment, as well as the unpredictable perspective of their evolution. The events in Ukraine make the army develop its own strategic concept. NATO would be, for some of these countries, sort of an umbrella. An umbrella under

which national economies can be reestablished and peacefully develop future strategies. That is why, a real competition for entering NATO began, dimmed or annealed, somehow, by the American initiative *Partnership for Peace*, an action that offers an effective change of cooperation, of harmonizing the fears, but, also, the interests.

That is why, national security strategy and doctrine concepts aim, on the one hand, to draw the attention of the West and, on the other hand, to attempt to get rid of slogans and prejudice, at least until a safe space is created, which would allow such a projection over the future. One of these doctrines adopted the principle of circular defensive sufficiency. The country declared that it does not have enemies at the moment and did not define the image of a potential enemy.

It is normal, though, at one moment or another, to take measures, according to some risks that it considers a priority, or some goals that it considers a priority. In our region, it is not possible for a country or another to go straight to aggression against another in a couple of hours. Although, analytically speaking, such a possibility should also not be completely excluded. However, the international situation, the evolution of events and NATO presence in the region does not encourage such actions. It even discourages them.

Rapid type actions exist in the total war too, of a popular type. The total war is not a type of conflict based on the strategy of rapid actions. Total war is a war that is expected to be carried to the technological inferiority. Therefore, in the modern technological epoch it's hard to tell if such a war does or does not have any real chance. The cruelties of the war in the former Yugoslavia indicate that in a life and death confrontation, the belligerents are not impressed by the humanitarian issues. The rapid actions at the strategic level aren't just carried with tanks running on the streets. With all the seeming dysfunction between the total war and the rapid actions strategy, these concepts are not mutually exclusive. Total war, as a complete and complex reaction, in all plans, with the rapid actions from the opponent, in turn; it cannot be conceived without calling for rapid actions. In some doctrines emerged the concept of self-sufficiency for defense or defensive. The concept was imposed by the new political and military coordinates in Europe and in the world, by weapons limitations, by new to military relations that had been established in the world.

Conclusions

1. The variety of the defenselessness in the security space of South-Eastern Europe that still keeps the position of insecurity, requiring the modernization and reorganization of the national army of the Republic of Moldova to meet NATO standards and turning it into a security army.

2. The time that we go through is marked by a substantial shift from massiveness to versatility, from armies based on number force to armies based on the quality of the armed services. Rapid Action Forces represent the model of an effective army of present and of the future.

3. Rapid Action Force is a complex war structure in times of peace. There will be no peace and there will be no war, without it in the future. It is also a tool of deterrence of war and, at the same time, can be an effective tool to maintain and enforce peace.

4. The general trend in all modern armies is establishing some rapid reaction or transformation structures of the armed forces in rapid action armies (forces). Rapid reaction must be complex designed, not only through armed faculties, but by all possible means, including through the direct psychological deterrent systems, and the endowment of this force must be on the extent of the tasks to be carried out.

References

- Sava, N. I., Tibil, G., Zulea, M. (1998). *Armata și societatea. Culegere de texte de sociologie militară*. București: Ed. Info-Team.
- Huntington, S. P. (1998). Securitatea națională și relațiile civil-militare. In Sava, N. I., Tibil, G., Zulea, M. (coord.) *Armata și societatea. Culegere de texte de sociologie militară*. București: Ed. Info-Team.
- Stoian, T. (coord.), (1985). *Interacțiunea dintre armată și societate*. București: Ed. Militară.
- Vlăsceanu, L. (1998). *Socializare*. Dicționar de sociologie, Coord.: Cătălin Zamfir și Lazăr Vlăsceanu. București: Ed. Babel.
- Iliescu, G. (2000). Aspecte teoretico-metodologice privind conexiunile dintre socializare și integrarea oamenilor în domeniul militar. *Buletin informativ. Sesiunea de comunicări științifice a AISM*.

Biodata



George MEREUȚĂ, born on August 7, 1952, Doctor of Military Sciences, Associate Professor at the Department of Military Art, Military Academy of the Armed Forces. He holds the position of Associate Professor since 01.09.2005.

Colonel (r) George Mereuță has worked within the National Army as chief of the artillery department in the Armed Forces Military Academy, later on as chief of military education department of the Ministry of Defence.

He presented his PhD dissertation in the field of military science on "Human Resources Management - enhancer factor of a state's military capacity" in the Scientific Council of the National Defence University "Carol I" in Bucharest, Romania, in 2005, which was recognized and equated by the National Council for Accreditation and Attestation of the Republic of Moldova.

He has been teaching for 20 years, published 26 scientific and methodical research papers.

Mereuță George as head of military education department of the Ministry of Defence has contributed directly to the establishment of the Military Academy has developed educational programs and plans.

Also, through personal insistence, the language learning course and the advanced course of military training were opened and are still operating, developing programs and curricula concerned.

George Mereuță actively participates in conferences and scientific sessions in Moldova and abroad, publishes articles in scientific editions and periodicals in Chisinau.

He manages the annual scientific theses of the military students and of the master theses.