

## **PARTICULARITIES OF PREPARING ROMANIA'S TERRITORY IN CASE OF THE COUNTRY'S IMPLICATION IN A HYBRID WAR**

**Daniel-Cornel ȘTEFĂNESCU**

"Henri Coandă" Air Force Academy, Brașov, Romania

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***Abstract:** Situated at the sensitive border between information warfare and special forces, still unframed in a tight definition and precise patterns by the military analysts, the hybrid war arouses interest for the political, economic, and social and media areas of responsibility.*

*Based on the characteristics of military conflicts of the early twenty-first century, the article highlights the main tactics used in hybrid war, conducted most often in a covered manner. Classical laws of war have been abandoned somewhere, in history. Propaganda, diplomatic duplicity, deliveries of concealed weapons, demonstrations of force, not the least the cyber attacks, however, all represent a range of threats against the world countries in general, and against our country, in particular.*

*Romania, a NATO member state, and an important strategic point in the wider Black Sea region, needs a new approach to hybrid conflict. And this can only be achieved through the combined efforts of specialized security structures and those of the civil society.*

***Keywords:** information operations; hybrid war; cross-border crime; national interest*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Today's world is the arena of the struggle for power and influence in all areas of human activity. This struggle was manifested constant over the life of humanity and, most likely, will continue to occur as long as shall endure mankind, because human beings want to impose their will on their neighbors not only in individual relationships but also in the intercommunal[1].

The beginning of the twenty-first century represents an international environment which, through the application of the "chaos theory" globally, on behalf of an alleged "order in disorder", is characterized by major changes and rapid situations in time and space, hidden tacit fighting, sometimes with harsh nuances, based on ethnic and religious disputes, fundamentalist propaganda, serious economic weaknesses, poverty, tensions over border disagreements, expanding organized crime, cyber-crime, etc. It is an "ongoing war", generated by permanent confrontation "between individuals, between communities (states, alliances, religious entities, ethnic, professional, etc.), between individuals and communities to impose their interests on multiple fronts: power, influence, territories and resources (human, material and financial)".

New types of conflicts have shown that armies structured on Clausewitzian concepts presented insufficient capacity to meet the new challenges of the war. The current war requires a rethinking of the structure of the armed forces and a continuous adjustment of them to the evolution of its national and international security environment, to the actual requirements of the battlefield.

## 2. HYBRID WAR

War is defined as a social-historical phenomenon, the manifestation of the sharpest conflicting political relations between large groups of people (classes, nations, states, coalitions of states) militarily organized, which uses means and violent methods to achieve economic, political, territorial or religious goals. Some thinkers have claimed the eternity of war, pretending that it would be generated by the very biological "nature" of a human being (the biological design - Gobineau, Chamberlain, Steinmetz, Gumplowicz, Lagorgette Mahan, Wilkinson) or psychological (psychological design - Tarde, Aron); others argue the need for war for the moral purification of society (Hegel, Nietzsche) or for the spiritual "recovery" of peoples (Ferrero), considering it as a driver of social and technological progress, or a regulating factor of the demographic process (demographic concept of Bouthoul)[2].

The soldiers describe war as a particularly violent and costly manifestation of the existing conflict at some point, between large groups of people (states, peoples, nations), structured and equipped with weapons and military techniques, and that use armed struggle to achieve those objectives[3].

Currently, there are views that the future war will be waged against a faceless enemy or that it will be "hybrid" (a combination between the classical war and the non-conventional one, to create hardships for the armies of powerful states that cannot be defeated in direct confrontation conducted following the international laws of war).

The concept of "hybrid war" still lacks a universally accepted definition and, until recently, it was not even included in the military or security doctrines. "Hybrid Wars" are undeclared confrontation by countries where the military component is not assumed explicitly and, it is not unique.

In a hybrid war, both military and especially non-military weaknesses (societal) are "exploited" and the aggressor is trying to capitalize them based on ethnic and religious tensions, weak and corrupt institutions, economic and energy dependence on others. Based on these weaknesses, a hybrid war involves various actions, from terrorism to media propaganda, through irregular and not assumed military action[4].

The new type of war is not limited to the battlefield physically; war actions normally associated with military efforts will expand to other areas such as economy and material resources, religion, culture, environment and information networks.

Hybrid wars include the following tactics:

a) information operations involving a mixture of propaganda, disinformation, diplomatic duplicity, manipulation of media and simple lies, all of which being designed to confuse and divide opinion in the targeted country, trying to exploit political, economic, regional, ethnic and social environments;

b) Psychological Operations using media controlled by the state and its agents of influence, in order to create a favorable climate, instigate the subversive actions of the targeted state's population, through "controlled chaos", intimidate the support networks of civilians (as military contractors), support refugee flows and other actions to diminish the government's ability to resist against the targeted actions of unreported opponents;

c) Concealed deliveries of weapons under the guise of humanitarian aid to distressed populations. This tactic involves offering help to territories that have created conditions for a humanitarian crisis in the first place, thus allowing the initiating state to offer "bullets and bandages";

d) Economic destabilization involving formal sanctions, stopping the work of the people working abroad, threats to reduce energy sales and other vital commercial

elements, as well as implicit or explicit supplementary economic constraints to weaken the target population and deter any foreign intervention on its behalf;

e) Employment of paramilitary forces, unreported military personnel, lacking military insignia, badges or official affiliations, reserves, soldiers on active duty on "holiday" other "volunteers" who join irregular local units and other regional militants, including criminal gangs;

f) "Partial denial" by using irregular forces, patriots, hackers who do not belong to governmental agencies, as well as other groups that are not officially part of the originator state's government or its armed forces;

g) Demonstrations of force involving exercises, military deployments and other intimidation activities that disrupt the military response of the target state and discourage third-party involvement by threats of conflict escalation;

h) The cyber attacks against critical networks of public and private infrastructure that delay and disrupt the target state's response to the actions of the initiator state, together with cyber disruptions or other attacks limiting the NATO access to communications, information and other critical networks

### **3. THREATS TO ROMANIA'S SECURITY**

Romania is located in an area where stability is always a problem and neighbors from the east are in conflict, generated by the policy pursued by Russia. It owes a policy of stability and cooperation regarding the implementation of NATO's and EU's similar policies, being interested in having democratic and stable states in its proximity[5].

Romania's national defense "is defined as the country's defense by fully using military, civil, economic and psychological availabilities, to ensure resistance against any threat"[6].

The national security is the prerequisite for the existence of the Romanian state and nation, being a fundamental objective of governing; it encompasses the values, interests and national objectives.

For the time being, at the level of security strategies in areas of interest for Romania, there are identified risks and threats of political, economic, social and military nature, capable of jeopardizing the national security of our country: regional instability; proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; international terrorism structured in cross-border networks; dissemination of weapons of mass destruction and related production technologies; Transnational Organized Crime; ineffective government.

Threats to Romania's security[7]:

- destabilizing actions at the eastern border;
- frozen conflicts in the Black Sea region and instability in the Western Balkans;
- dissensions on energy markets and competing projects of some state or non-state actors;
- cyber-threats to the information infrastructure of strategic interest of public institutions and companies;
- terrorism;
- proliferation of WMD, their means of delivery and trafficking of dual-use items;
- proliferation and development of terrorist networks, transnational organized crime, illegal people trafficking, drugs, weapons and ammunition, radioactive and strategic materials;
- clandestine migration and the emergence of massive flows of refugees;
- actions of incitement to extremism, intolerance, separatism and xenophobia that might affect Romanian and the promotion of its democratic values;

## SOCIO – HUMANITIES

- economic and financial aggression;
- informative hostile actions.

### **Risks[8]:**

- regional instability, settlement of frozen conflicts, ensuring the energy security, protection of the Romanian communities' rights and of economic activities undertaken in the Romanian Exclusive Economic Zone at the Black Sea;

- failing to achieve the development objectives of the country due to: economic difficulties, massive development of the underground economy and corruption, tax evasion, poor infrastructure, low resistance to major turbulence on foreign markets, especially in the area of banking and finances;

- risks of social nature (demographic decline, labor migration, environment degradation, deficiencies in the national systems of health, education and social assistance);

- radicalization of extremist entities

- cross-border criminality, ranging from trafficking of drugs, people, weapons and goods, illegal migration to economic and financial crime;

- illicit smuggling of conventional arms.

### **Vulnerabilities[9]:**

- limited capacity of state institutions with regard to the European funds absorption, use of public money, energy, critical infrastructure, agriculture, environmental protection, justice, health, education and scientific research;

- capability of central and local administration to implement both national and European public policies;

- inter-institutional response to crises, influenced by quantitative and qualitative shortage of resources;

- corruption.

## 4. PARTICULARITIES

The methods of action in the hybrid war include over-national combinations of state and non-state actors, over-the art combinations using platforms to attack across the spectrum of conflict, and over-level combinations, to enable small tactical units to obtain direct strategic effects. For the implementation of these methods, there are included the omni-directionality, synchronization, limited objectives, unlimited measures, asymmetry, multidimensional coordination, regulation and control.

Military structures, in their attempt to respond the war and crisis situations, should change their physiognomy gradually, so that to be numerically smaller, flexible, mobile, modular, self-sustaining, with a larger combative capacity, fit to conduct military action far from the homeland, in very diverse geophysical and psychosocial environments.

The current military conflicts oppose individuals, groups and transnational groups, supported by states or international organizations that carry out specific combat actions, both locally, in the conflict zone, and globally. We face different forms of violence such as terrorism, insurgency, crime, focused on targeted areas (cyber attacks) and disorder through intimidation or interference.

The military operations will increasingly depend on other components and non-military capabilities; in addition to the intelligence community, they will involve collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well, with other state or private power structures, decentralized, at the tactical level. The comprehensive approach will mean, in fact, a symmetrical, balanced response to asymmetric and chaotic threats.

In this context, the approach will focus on a series of measures / actions of security structures, as follows:

- an inter-institutional collaboration to identify and meet the strategic objectives of national security;
- development of intelligence systems, able to detect hazards, risks and threats, in due time, so as to prevent their occurrence, combining military means with civilian instruments;
- a real multi-annual budgetary planning, with investment programs able to increase the capabilities of the armed forces to react in case of asymmetric and hybrid threats;
- identification of and countering the activities led by the organized cross-border crime network and dismantling of criminal groups;
- border security, especially the Eastern one, annihilation of illegal migration, human trafficking and other risks impacting on national security;
- increasing the response capacity and emergency management;
- identification of any interference affecting the strategic economic and financial decision and fighting against ample evasion acts;
- identification of and counteracting asymmetric and hybrid actions;
- terrorism prevention and fighting;
- knowledge of, prevention and elimination of risks and threats generated by hostile informative actions, ensuring counterintelligence protection of national interests;
- identification of and fighting against organized cross-border crime networks that run activities with high economic and social risk;
- knowledge of the objectives, resources and development directions of clandestine weapons programs or WMD, conventional carriers, as well as countering illegal shipments of strategic goods;
- promotion of policies to ensure the reduction of developmental disparities between different regions of the country;
- prevention of and fighting against threat generating factors to food security and environmental security of the population;
- support of public diplomacy actions to promote the national security interests and in support of the undertaken objectives, in cooperation with other public or private institutions.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Hybrid war can be described as an optimized form of war, in which combatants employ all available resources, both conventional and unconventional, in a unique cultural context, having the purpose to produce specific effects against a conventional adversary.

It is a war of the non contact type, conducted by means of smart weapons systems, new technologies, with long-range capabilities and highly precise strikes, UAVs, offensive and defensive cyber techniques, information operations, psychological influencing and large-scale propaganda, strategic communication techniques that appeal to the next-generation information technology, provisions of international law that "are used to support the legitimacy of own actions and illegitimacy of its opponent (enemy) actions"[10].

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