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POLAND'S MINISTRY OF DEFENCE CONCEPT FOR TERRITORIAL DEFENCE FORCES

Summary:

A rapid change in the geopolitical sphere – precisely in Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova – caused by an aggressive posture of Russian Federation (RF) and difficulties accelerated by an immigration crisis in Europe, for which one more time Russians play a significant role, have induced an evolution of adhering the Polish Armed Forces (PAF) to the new security circumstances. The perspective projected by RF for reshaping the order of current World with its invading foreign policy challenging equally: close neighbours as well as other partners regardless of their attitude towards recognition of RF's hostile behaviour aiming at an economic, diplomatic, social and military pressure have irreversibly acquired analysts' attention on today's security.

Having considered basic variables affecting the European security, this is indispensable assumption that strengthening the Polish Armed Forces (PAF) with additional capabilities will contribute to the intentional tendency subjected by armies in time of instability and threat.

Consequently, Poland has stepped up and decided to reinforce its PAF by forming an additional component in response to the current challenges. A five-phases deliberate process was triggered with a following procedural cycle: 1. Analysing; 2. Planning; 3. Execution; 4. Assessment; and 5. Implementation. It is flexible enough for any corrections coming from practical effecting, lessons identified and finally lessons learned. The analysis serving as inputs for activating this cycle was performed by the Territorial Defence Bureau experts of Polish Ministry of Defence (POL MOD).

The aim of this study is to show some aspects of an official concept of POL MOD on the development of the Territorial Defence Forces (TDF) in Poland and basic characteristics related to the synergy gained with non-military system¹. TDF are mainly considered as a capability reinforcing PAF by complementing operational forces, nevertheless the added value is to be gained by

¹ In accordance with the variables identified by *The Development Strategy of National Security System of the Republic of Poland 2022* – approved by Ministers' Council on 9 April 2013, Warsaw, p. 36.

achieving a suitable interaction with non-military actors i.e.: government administration, government organizations (GOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the other players for having a possible crisis solved in a comprehensive manner.

Keywords:

national security system, territorial defence, interoperability, planning process.

Introduction

Recent conflicts have shown a determination of various state and non-state actors for pursuing their interests irrespectively of number of victims, scope of damages as well as spend finances. No values are respected once the crisis is started and easily avalanched even though the international community is heavily engaged. The weakness of the United Nations and/or other international subject related organizations is virtually touchable due to archaic legislative procedures usually not meeting contemporary requirements. The examples pointing at oppressor states commonly being assigned as judges in their cases prove an inefficiency of the international law intending to be the foundation for the World's order. Ukrainian crisis has proven enough multiyear effects of a permanent leverage provided by RF to its close neighbour. Through 25 years, RF has been exploiting multiple oppressing tolls in order to keep the Ukrainian nation under permanent psychological pressure giving little space to the democratic and free political and economic development. The result has been damaging for this fledgling statehood and ending up with invasion and annexation some of its territory.

There is no doubt that this kind of scenario might be happening to any RF's neighbouring country depending upon the weakness of the state and a geopolitical condition. The irresistible tendency of RF's foreign policy is clearly proven and has nothing in common with Russian narrative on peaceful solutions and care about nations torn by war zones.

Indeed, threat coming from RF's posture must be considered in various domains complementing and crossing each other. In NATO, therefore, the operating environment² is usually described by a number of interconnected elements including political, military, economic, social, information and infrastructure (PMESII)³. From this perspective, the most significant for PAF is a

² The operating environment is defined as: a composite of the conditions, circumstances and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander. *Political guidance on ways to improve NATO's involvement in Stabilization and Reconstruction*, Brussels 2011, paragraph 17.

³ NATO has defined six domains of State's existence: Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information and Infrastructure. See: *AJP-0.1(E) Draft*, NSA 2016, p. 1-5.

military domain incorporating operational forces and new-born TDF that both are principally a core of a national security system⁴. The term of a national security system is defined as the system incorporating external and internal security elements directed for providing the national security in connection with socio-economic development. The national security system's goal is an appropriate preparation and exploitation of resources, being at the state's disposal, for counteraction against threats striking at the existence of the Polish nation and statehood, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereignty, efficient state's administration and socio-economic development. Indeed, knowing that it is interconnected with the other domains, PAF have to be prepared for comprehensive response to the emerging challenges.

TDF as the fifth integral part of PAF – mission, goals and tasks

Territorial defence has many definitions nevertheless the basic one was described as a common form of a military preparation and exploitation of a society for providing local protection and security provisions⁵. The other description gives a perspective on TDF by defining them as a part of armed forces predicted for conducting tasks connected with the defence of particular regions within the country's territory. They are formed with local human resources and materials and composed of different units and services. TDF are designed for regular and irregular combat operations within areas of responsibility and for support of operational forces as well as for providing support to the civil defence structure in rescue operations⁶.

Based on a prolific assessment of contemporary and future threats, Minister of National Defence has been eligible to sign the concept on forming TDF⁷ in Poland on 25 April 2016. The foundation for creating TDF is setting the assumption that TDF are to be the fifth component of PAF (see figure 1 below)⁸. TDF are neither an inferior nor a better part of PAF but just equally trained and engaged in the potentially assigned tasks to them that are going to be performed in operating environment.

⁴ *The Development Strategy...*, p. 13.

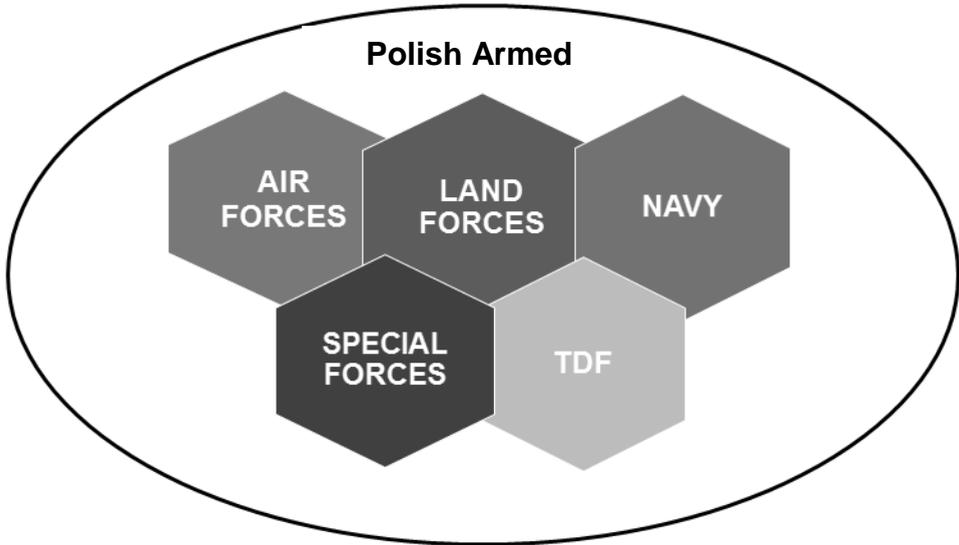
⁵ J. Marczak, R. Jakubczak, *Strategic Report: Polish Armed Forces in the second decade of the 21st century. A Strategic Concept of Territorial Defence*, Warsaw 2014, p. 77.

⁶ *Dictionary for a national security terminology*, 6th edition, Warsaw 2008, p. 167.

⁷ It is related to G. Kwaśniak, *Concept on forming TDF (Stage I 2016-2017)*, Warsaw 2016.

⁸ *DT 3.40.1 TDF Manual (Draft)*, Bydgoszcz, November 2016, p. 2-3.

Figure 1. Components of the Polish Armed Forces, including TDF



Source: Work of Territorial Defence Bureau

Looking at the perspective of TDF's engagement, it distinguishes the necessity of having their units acting within permanent areas of responsibility (PAOR) due to their personnel descending from territorial system. The overwhelming number of TDF's soldiers would have its origin in the regions allocated to PAORs that is why the rule linking personnel with regions and estates is justified and has got many benefits. TDF's linkages to the regions will strengthen social connections setting the patriotic examples of devotional service to the country. This would reinforce the social perception on well provided security in a safekeeping area. Furthermore, TDF may positively influence a local economic development contributing by it to the increase of regional GDP.

TDF are prepared for defending a country locally and regionally and for supporting non-military system by being an active part of a national crisis response system described in Poland as a crisis management.⁹ Consequently, TDF will offer additional capabilities to the Alliance's common defence by

⁹ Crisis management is the activity of the public administration constituting an element of the national security management which is enclosing prevention of crisis situations, control by planned activities, response to the crisis situations and reconstructing infrastructure to the point of pre-crisis conditions. *Crisis Management Act, 26 April 2007* (JoL no 89, 590, with subsequent amendments).

making an interoperability¹⁰ of primary importance based on NATO's standards and requirements.

In accordance with POL MOD Concept on forming TDF, the fifth component of PAF will be composed of 17 Territorial Defence Brigades (TDBs)¹¹. Some 53 thousands soldiers are to be serving within TDF's structure mainly prepared for defending country locally and regionally and for supporting non-military system by being an active part of a crisis response process. Both approaches of employing TDF personnel are at stake because a core of the structure is incorporating highly trained professional soldiers, tasks of whom consequently are aiming at integration territorial service soldiers selected from motivated volunteers.

TDF consist of units and subunits formed by local personnel and resources of PAF. A mission of TDF is to reinforce a deterring capability of PAF in order to ensure the ability for preserving the integrity of Poland's territory and to strengthen a national situational awareness and socio-territorial links. During peace time it is shown by a durable building respected force, appearance of invincible PAF and participation in activities guaranteeing protection to the society and its belongings as well as establishing of secured and safe environment. By crisis time, this mission is perceived as a readiness for carrying out combat operations and immediate response to the emergent situations, including prevention, counteraction and mitigation of crisis' effects. And finally during a war time, TDF's mission is conducted by setting out the regional defence system in cities and towns including provisions for security of significant infrastructure – defended from the perspective of military purposes and economic use, reinforcement of borders and creating the circumstances for freedom of movement of PAF¹².

This will be done in cooperation with other components and services as well as local government administration, civilian services, GOs and NGOs in support to the Polish society in any moment of a crisis development and regardless of its momentum.

The abovementioned missions are determined by strategic goals which will synchronise deliberately planned tasks for the achievement necessary capabilities of TDF. The first strategic goal is held as multiplying the capability of PAF. In order to prepare the optimal circumstances for full exploitation of PAF's operational capabilities, TDF is planned to be equipped with modular weaponry completing the capacity of PAF and allowing TDF's soldiers to conduct a wide array of regular and irregular operations within PAORs. The second strategic goal of TDF would aim at promoting a patriotic posture of a local

¹⁰ Interoperability stands for the ability to act together coherently, effectively and efficiently to achieve Allied tactical, operational and strategic objectives. *AAP-6 (2014) NATO Glossary of terminology and definitions*, 2014, p. 223.

¹¹ G. Kwaśniak, *op. cit.*

¹² *DT 3.40.1 TDF Manual (Draft)*, p. 2-1.

society which is the foundation for national willingness of defending Fatherland.

Based on the missions and strategic goals, particular tasks are assigned to TDF, separately and respectively for peace, crisis and war time. Nevertheless, all of the tasks were designed for reinforcing a national defence system in response to the current and future threats. TDF's tasks include conducting irregular and unconventional activities; information operations countering adversary's propaganda and disinformation; being a part of counterterrorism and countersabotage operations; non-military crisis response operations; and activities aiming at strengthening patriotism, ethical and moral values.

Forming process and capability building

TDF are different from operational forces in many aspects indicating more flexible structure, equipment and their functioning. They have some of higher freedom of manoeuvre at a tactical level due to expectations of an immediate engagement. This is supported by perfect knowledge on a local geography and its usage for defence. The literature of a subject might also point at light equipment and high effectiveness of TDF's capabilities directed against armoured adversary and his low-altitude aircrafts¹³. TDF base on ubiquitous presence by their dense deployment to any corner of the country and relatively low cost of their maintenance. Moreover, a strict cooperation with civilian players would minimize possibilities for an adversary's aggression.

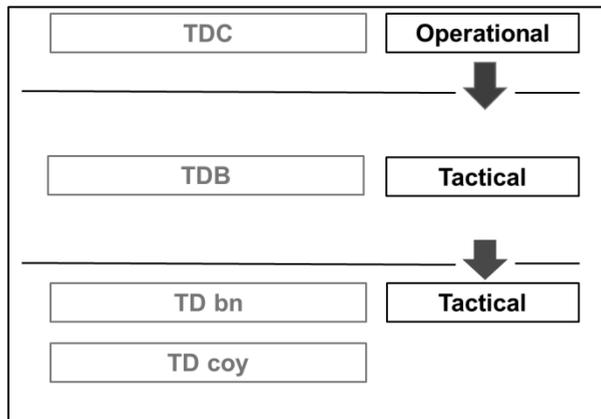
POL MON has decided that TDF are to be formed by the process composed of four stages¹⁴. The first one has already been induced during 2016. In the end of 2016, three TDF Brigades were deployed to the eastern flank of Poland's territory. Next TDBs are going to be built respectively: in 2017 – three TDBs; in 2018 – five TDBs; and in 2019 – last six TDBs. In total seventeen TDBs will be built and together with Territorial Defence Command (TDC) will compose the entire TD system in military domain. As it was mentioned above, this needs to be supported by other civilian components and selectively taken players who are crucial in order to solve a crisis in a comprehensive manner.

Despite the TDF's units and subunits has already been stipulated, it might be assumed that an ongoing Strategic Defence Review will answer questions on the conclusive chain of command designed for PAF. However, the imperative is that TDF will serve on possibly two levels – tactical for TDB and operational for TDC. It is shown by figure 2.

¹³ K. Loftek, *Concept on Revitalization of Territorial Defence as one of milestones for security of Eastern Poland*, Warsaw 2014, p. 217.

¹⁴ G. Kwaśniak, *op. cit.*

Figure 2. Planned levels of TDF's structure



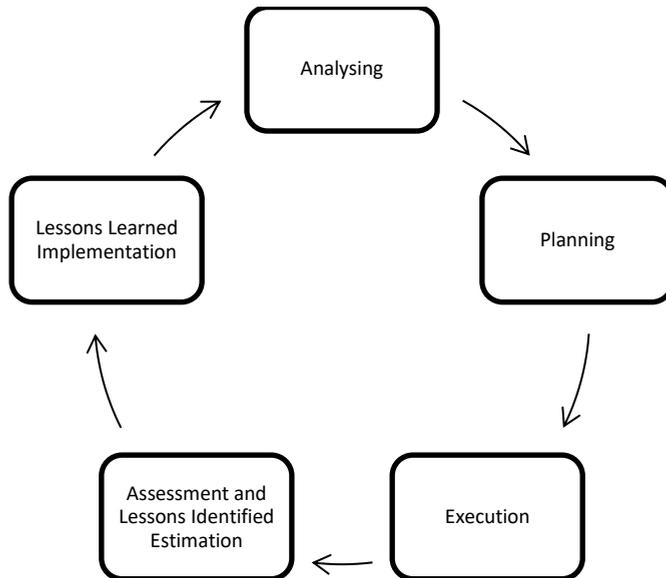
Source: Own work on the basis of G. Kwaśniak, *op. cit.*

Having specified TDF's mission, goals and particular tasks, POL MOD planners were faced with requirements of capability building process. A formula of Doctrine, Organization, Training, Material, Leadership, Personnel, Facilities and Interoperability (DOTMLPFI) was undertaken as the most efficient methodology. Having said so, DOTMLPFI would perfectly allow us to complete the specifications for new TDF's units and subunits once it is supported by a process based on analysing-planning-execution-assessment-implementation circle. Figure 3 schematizes this process.

Considering a doctrinal dimension, rudimentary conditions for existence of TDF are specified within an act titled *Common Defence Obligation of the Republic of Poland*¹⁵ which has already been approved by both Chambers of Poland's Parliament and then signed by the President of Poland. The document puts its emphasis on unusual circumstances identified for territorial duty volunteers and their employers. A harmonising rules and synergic effort were agreed in order to encourage both parties for devotion and benefits at once. An enacted act will pave the way for any other executive papers which will constitute the development and engagement of TDF.

¹⁵ *The act on Common Defence Obligation of the Republic of Poland*, signed by the President of Poland on 21 December 2016 (previous JoL of 2016 item 1534 with subsequent amendments).

Figure 3. A cycle of TDF forming



Source: Own work.

As it is well understood, some characteristics are applied to any Armed Forces around the World however, we can distinguish the specifics related to TDF. Organizational challenges have to be balanced with a respected coefficient: costs vs. effect, due to imposed geographical and social restraints. All those known and unknown factors determining conditions for effectively constructed structure and procedures must be converted into successful project called TDF in the context of a quality of service, proficiency, allegiance and efficiency.

Having got more challenges i.e. time limitations, demanding operational and tactical tasks as well as a terrain constrained by PAOR, explicit methods of education and training must be employed. Therefore, e-learning system was designed for gaining a basic level of knowledge by territorial service soldiers. This will be supported with an employment of Mobile Training Teams (MTT) to create best possible conditions for preparation of TDF's personnel for accomplishing TDF's duty. Moreover, MTT will initially fill the gap when TDF's units are deprived of specific SMEs i.e. those who are solely preserved for Special Operation Forces.

Training and education are firmly connected to another sphere of a capability building – leadership. Having well trained, mentally and physically resisted TDF's leading personnel is the cornerstone for any military structure. Durability against variables coming from external environment will determine unchanged approach towards educational model of PAF's officers and NCOs. In

this case, leadership efficiency of superiors is considered as a platform enabling subordinated personnel to conduct their daily missions with a full acceptance and satisfaction.

TDF's successful engagement will not be conceivable without suitable equipment. Units have to meet requirements of both NATO's and national standards. This is entrenched into ability to cooperate in specific and often distinguished scenarios of current battle-space. The mentioned above an interoperability definition of NATO plays a significant role in here pointing at the necessity of being a part of joint forces modelled by crisis' circumstances. That is why TDF's units and subunits must be characterized by multi-functionality and capability for defending a country's territory and reinforcing operational forces¹⁶. TDF's weaponry system has to be flexible enough for performing appropriate manoeuvres related to the joint fire and tactical movement. These require modern and standardized equipment on every level of TDF's structure and well organized and lenient logistical support. A tendency of having mobile and light TDF's units and subunits able to call for precise support will be practised during joint and common exercises in near future.

Capability building process cannot be considered without personnel. The criteria for recruitment and selection are transparent and clear. All standards prepared for candidates to TDF are described in order to give them the opportunity for self-development and future acquiring new skills. They include basic rules such as: having a Polish citizenship, being eighteen-year-old, mentally and physically fit and other characteristics which enable to consider every applicant thoroughly¹⁷. But most importantly these rules will open the career path of territorial defence service soldiers that would make provisions for volunteers' settlement. However, the theoretical approach even written down in an executive documents and training doctrines must address practical behaviour of TDF's soldiers that is based on commonly recognized ethical and moral rules injected into TDF's DNA. TDF are constructed for connecting Polish society. The written rules do not discriminate any religion, candidate's beliefs, race and/or political conveniences. But the foundation is that TDF is similarly apolitical as it is in case of the entire PAF. This imposes on officers, NCOs and other TDF's soldiers transparent behaviour which could not be exploited against Polish society.

Conclusion

The level of an external threat constitutes the attitude of any society towards privilege of defending its country. Among the other countries, Poland has admitted changes in geopolitical sphere by adopting a defensive posture visualised with strengthening its national security system. Amid this adoption,

¹⁶ W. Lidwa, *Cooperation in a land combat*, Toruń 2000, p. 66.

¹⁷ *The act on Common Defence Obligation...*

recently created TDF are the most significant power contributing through PAF to the national defence system. Next to Land Forces, Navy, Air Forces and Special Operation Forces, TDF are the fifth equally prepared and used component of PAF.

Since an iron curtain's collapse, Poland has undergone a comprehensive modernization including its military domain. NATO's standards forced us to challenge a post-soviet way of thinking what positively made its stamp on the quality of PAF's engagement. Polish soldiers have proved their loyalty, devotion and professionalism by serving in the most demanding battle-spaces around the World giving the notion to Poland's society of being pleased and proud of.

And moreover, having reached the level of 2 % GDP, Poland has created the best possible conditions for development of its armed forces in a democratic country. This practice is appreciated by NATO and allows PAF to expand the capability with TDF as a new component and upgrading of operational forces, simultaneously. Both ways of development of PAF are appropriate and operationally justified. Potentials of components have to complete each other and be enough flexibly engaged in order to tackle the current and future threats including RF's hybrid activities. Being a part of PAF, TDF have to ensure the security to the local citizens of Poland and provide the trustful image for building a right social perception of today's events.

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