

ARMED FORCES TRANSFORMATION TO COUNTERACT THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGES

Virgil RISTEA

Chief Deputy of the Air Force Staff, România

Abstract: *Increasing the violence resources of the nowadays security environment produces major alterations world-wide, in all domains of states activities. These aspects become more relevant as the present world power system, tending to unipolarism, is not a premiere. Through history, there have been noted many tendencies to organize the international system. The first of these was the Vienna Congress (1815), which recorded the defeat of the Napoleonic France hegemony, leading to the first multipolar organization of the European great powers structure at that time. The way those events influenced the military forces transformation may become relevant for the present international phenomena. The massive increasing of the violence resources of the present world, enlarged by the statal and non-statal actors possibility to possess these, means a strong enough challenge to provoke a states military capabilities transformation, in order to counteract these threats. In this context, the military transformation is not only the gradual reform or the new systems acquisition, but also the personnel outlook changing, as well as its resolution to adapt to the security environment requirements. In addition, the military transformation needs technological modernisation, doctrines reform, Armed Forces reorganisation, risks acceptance, redefining the way in which the combat force is generated and engaged.*

Keywords: *security environment, bipolarity, unipolarity, chaos axis, expeditionary forces, modularity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The third millennium world is full of contrasts, unpredictable, contradictory and in continuous changing. However, no later than 20 years ago, shortly before the end of ‘the 77-year war’, many considered that the globe was forever split between two military blocks led by two super-powers: The United States of America and The Soviet Union. After the bipolar contest and the Soviet Union sudden demise, in December 1991, world seems now to be much complex and, certainly, much confusing.

2. THE PRESENT SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Unfortunately, the current world-wide structure is far from „the eternal peace” [1] prefigured by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, nearly 200 years ago. In the

present world, there are no states with equal rights, but only failed states, evil/chaos axis or states placed at opposite developed poles. In the current international shape „the right of force” is stronger than „the force of law” and, moreover the fault lines have been reactivated, mostly those between West and East. Alliances are made and un-made, thus former enemies becoming today’s friends.

The natural arising questions are related to the following matters: is the actual world one of a „clashing civilisations” [2] on a huge „chess table” [3], or are we sitting „between war and peace” [4] and after the Cold War ending a „Cold Peace” [5] will follow? Besides, may we ask ourselves if the controversial hypothesis of „the end of history” [6] is still actual or will the world-wide nations be compelled to constantly fight for „hegemony or survival [7]? On the other hand, could we firmly sustain that the present globe leader - United States of America -

fighters „against the world” [8] or as it reaches its summit will it soon live its last days [9] Moreover, can the current world completely avoid „the chaos traps” [10] or do we already witness „the beginning of the end” [11]?

A complete answer for all these questions is not possible, at the present moment. Nevertheless, a number of projections and assessments related to the main features of the current security environment might be made.

Therefore, we may say that we witness the bipolarity demise and the beginning of a new stage, in which the unipolarity will express. In the same time, European Union is increasingly asserting at world-wide level and new power centres are appearing. On the other hand, a number of statal and non-statal actors shows their presence at international level, in the same time with new solutions and methods appearance for the international political, economical and security institutions and organisations development and work. Besides, of a paramount importance is the development of the collective security concept and the crises management trends on regional basis.

All these trends take place even though the struggle for resources and markets of all the relevant international actors is still in place.

3. MILITARY FORCES TRANSFORMATION

Military Forces transformation is imposed by the nowadays realities. Firstly, the 9/11 events were one of the most serious signals showing that the instability sources lay outside the affected states territories. In addition, the Afghanistan military operations have shown the modern, expeditionary forces superiority – light and technological highly-prepared - as well as those of the decision-making, command-control systems, leading to the re-evaluation of the military structures and operational concepts.

Another requirement of the Armed Forces transformation is posed by the new battlefield shape. The armed forces and budget downsizing, reorganizations, transformations, re-endowments, complete professionalisations, new risks, threats and vulnerabilities emergence, the stability and military operation

other than war generalisation may impose the shift of the military actions performing, the appearance of new technologies, (integrated, multinational) doctrines and the different training of the armed forces (becoming expeditionary forces), during peace time, crisis or conflict/war.

Under these circumstances, the combat disposals can no longer be rigid, linear or circular (anti-guerrilla), but asymmetric (non-linear). The linear, static combat (like that of the first and second world war) is considered obsolete and avoided. The modern battlefield is no longer uniform, linear, classic, having strips, dispositions, zones, depths, demarcation lines.

The recent conflicts and wars lessons learned have led to special studies issued by experts and comprised in Doctrines (Counterinsurgency Doctrine of U.S. General Petraeus), Regulations, Guides and Rules of Engagement. Military actions are performed in a fluid, multi-dimensional battlefield described by: asymmetric actions, mobility, decentralization, manoeuvrability, flexibility, large-scale usage of Land, Maritime, Air, Space, Intelligence, PSYOPS and Special Operations actions. All of the above are fulfilled at all three levels of the military art, continuously, with a high pace, in order to hit the enemy gravity centers and decisive points and to physically and psychically defeat him.

Moreover, equally important is the meaning of the 4th of April 2009, when NATO Heads of States and Government met at the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit, and expressed their view points related to the most relevant aspects of the military capabilities development, in accordance with the international environment progress. Among these there are matters concerning mission-capable helicopters, strategic lift and the Alliance Ground Surveillance system as well as the Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. Lately, this final domain tends to become one of the key-factors of the present and future military capabilities development.

The battlefield digitalization, modularity and combat simulation, intelligence and psychological warfare winning (as well as network warfare and effects-based operations)

are the main priorities of all major international actors. However, at that moment, these tools are available only for the world great powers and Alliances, with impacts on the combat features, mainly on the forces effective training in wartime and peace.

For this, the new force structure must be agile and expeditionary. This aim means that extensive airlift and maritime capabilities should be in place. As a plus, the materials and weapons systems must have the dimensions and outlines in order to allow air and maritime transportation.

Moreover, the expeditionary operations command, control and communications systems are needed in order to link, in proper time, the combat forces in different theaters of operations/deployment areas with the respective state/states as well as with the theater/deployment area joint force command-control structure.

Precision, speed, agility and ability of the forces rapid dispersion and concentration are the key features of the future expeditionary structures. The respective forces should be endowed with light equipments, high-precision weapons, increased fire power.

In the operational environment, forces must have a co-ordinated and low-profile logistic multinational infrastructure in order to protect the vital supplying routes.

Both the expeditionary forces support and the offensive as well as the defensive combat actions will be sustained by the air and maritime transport, reconnaissance, interdiction, intervention capabilities.

Besides, these forces must be modular organized, trained and endowed in order to be flexible enough to rapidly shift from high-intensity combat actions to humanitarian aids, low-profile actions, which are supposed to imply different actions conceptions and rules of engagement, different dimensions and composition of the military structures employed in operations.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In order to address the numerous threats and internal pressures posed against the military

organization, a new force structure must diminish as much as possible the difference between the willing to achieve the desired state and the possibility to fulfill this.

The military transformation is not only the gradual reform or the new weapon systems acquisition, but also the personnel mentality change, as well as its resolution to adapt to the security environment requirements.

In addition, the military transformation needs technological modernisation, doctrines reform, Armed Forces reorganisation, risks acceptance, redefining the way in which the combat force is generated and engaged.

REFERENCES

1. Kant, I., *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, Atherton, New York, 1970;
2. Huntington, S.P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Antet Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998;
3. Brzezinski, Z., *American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000;
4. Malița, M., *Between War and Peace*, Nemira Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998;
5. Bugajski, J., *Cold Peace: Russia's New Imperialism*, Casa Radio Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005;
6. Fukuyama, F., *The End of History and the Last Man*, Paideia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1994;
7. Chomsky, N., *Hegemony or Survival*, Corint Publishing House, Bucharest, 2001;
8. Kohut, A., Stokes, B., *America Against the World*, Ziua Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003;
9. Erdman, P., *America Last Days*, Corint Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002;
10. Raufer, X., *The 13 Traps of The World Chaos*, Meronia Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999;
11. Hage, J., *The End Has Began*, Nemira Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003.