

SWOT ANALYSIS OF “BALTICA 07” MISSION FROM CIVIL-MILITARY COOPERATION PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: *The Romanian Army has not always had concerns to train specialized forces in the field of CIMIC. The relations between Romanian militaries and civilians in the operational areas were based on the formers’ responsible commitment, as well as on the ability to inspire confidence, good will, respect, appreciation and consideration. With Romania joining NATO structures, the experience of the Alliance in the field of relations between soldiers and civilians made possible the embrace of the CIMIC concept and the establishment of the first specialized structures in this field. I do consider that the process is still in the beginnings. The perception by various categories of army forces of the role and importance of CIMIC in fulfilling their missions, especially in terms of their participation in missions outside the national territory, is not yet at the expected level within this research. The answers given by interviewees to the research questions were often conventional, with little depth of observation. Practically, all respondents agreed, at the maximum acceptance level, to my views, which was why a statistical processing of the answers was not necessary. However, I have used the observations of those who have been involved, with detailed responses with maximum receptivity. I do believe that this perception will improve, as challenges arise and awareness of the existence of specialists responding to these challenges. This research is intended to be a contribution to this awareness process.*

Keywords: *CIMIC, air policing mission, operations area*

1. INTRODUCTION

At the time of the “Baltica 07” mission was developing, the experience of Romania in the field was still limited. The Romanian legislation did not allow funding such activities, which, as one of the participants noted, was carried out “*often by collecting personal funds*”. Neither from symbolic value perspective, these actions did obviously and professionally involve the national symbols, values that are specific to Romanians. For such missions where the military conflict is absent and, therefore, the cultural component of the missions can be maximized, the detachment must be available from the stage of preparation of the promotional material mission specific to the Romanian culture and civilization, simple objects printed with national flags (flags, scarves, pens, toys, figurines, etc.), and for visits to schools and orphanages, or for protocols, packages of non-perishable goods, or symbolic gifts. Definitely, there should also be special financial resources available to the detachment for such activities, which can be managed by the public relations officer and the mission commander. Given that the frequency and importance of the Romanian Armed Forces missions outside the national territory are increasing year after year, and that the international military cooperation actions in NATO, or non-NATO exercises, applications and training are becoming more frequent, the Ministry of National Defense should prepare within specialized structures, through orders and acquisitions, or through their own forces, a wide range of promotional

materials, both for the promotion of Romania as a nation and for the promotion of various categories of army forces. At the same time, for the immediate preparation of specific missions, traditional materials should be made, as well as, in case of charitable actions, certain professional packages, inscribed with national symbols. Under any circumstance, when missions outside the national territory require *CIMIC*-type actions, the status of the Romanian military force must be that of national dignity, of confirmation of the Romanian Armed Forces as a distinct entity, solid values and principles undoubtedly anchored in the cultural and spiritual patrimony of the Romanian people. Under no circumstances should the Romanian Army and, in particular, the Romanian Air Force leave the impression of the Alliance’s “poor relative”. The indisputable professionalism of Romanian soldiers participating in missions outside the national territory must be favored with the dignity, honor and prestige of the country of which they are citizens.

2. IMPORTANT DATA ABOUT “BALTICA 07”

“Baltica 07” mission consisted in *“defending the integrity of the Baltic Sea Airspace in peacetime for 24 hours a day with aircraft capable of taking off and acting in the event of an aircraft being violated by mistake or intentionally, the flight regime in the airspace of the Baltic States”* [1]. The mission lasted for 3 months, between 31st of July – 31st of October, 2007. The mission was attended by 4 Mig-21 LanceR “C” aircraft and a detachment of 67 militaries from “General Emanoil Ionescu” Air Base 71 from Câmpia Turzii. The mission took place within NATO, *„under the command and tactical control of the Combined Air Operations Center– CAOC) from UEDEM, Germany”* and *„in collaboration with Lithuanian commanders Siauliai and Karmelava bases.”* [1]

One of the major concerns of the Baltic States, after independence, was the development of military forces to ensure its preservation and defense. Rapid joining NATO structures and massive participation in the Alliance's military activities is one of the core factors of this concern.

Of the three Baltic countries, only Latvia has a professional army. The Latvian defense concept is based on a Swedish-Finnish model, which involves the establishment of a Rapid Reaction Force and a mobilization center to build this force.

Lithuania abolished mandatory military service in 2008, but it reintroduced it in 2015, keeping under its arms a staff of 15,000 active soldiers.

Estonia has never proposed the abolition of compulsory military service, which has a variable duration of 8-11 months, depending on specialization, but it also prepares a Paramilitary National Guard (League of Defense).

Since joining NATO, the armies of the Baltic States participated and still participate with significant forces and means at international peace missions in theaters of operations in different parts of the world, having a great deal of experience in this field. They have an important contribution to the development and dissemination of experience in various fields, participating in the work of centers of excellence and even hosting some of them. It is of interest for the study the participation of Latvia at the NATO Center of Excellence in the field of civilian-military cooperation from the Low Lands.

3. SWOT ANALYSIS OF “BALTICA 07” MISSION

Therefore, the SWOT analysis of “Baltica 07” mission from *CIMIC* perspective, is as follows:

Crt.	Details	Content
1	Strong points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good military and specialized training of all military personnel participating in the mission. • The benefits of <i>CIMIC</i> training provided to the mission as a whole by NATO. • <i>CIMIC</i> experience shared by national detachments present during previous rotations. • The existence of communication, cooperation and logistics channels fully developed in previous rotation. • <i>CIMIC</i> training of the mission commander, of Public Relations Officer and of mission personnel. • The existence of a “Soldier’s Handbook”, for all military participants. • Knowledge, by all possible staff involved in <i>CIMIC</i>-related cooperation, of English, universal language of communication within NATO and, in particular, in the air force. • Exceptional availability of dialogue between the two cooperating parties, Romania and Lithuania.
2	Weak points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The complete novelty of the mission and the lack of experience in carrying out such missions. • Too general <i>CIMIC</i> training and poorly adapted to the mission and deployment area of the detachment. Absence of a <i>CIMIC</i> specialist in the mission. • The absence of a Russian-language translator, given that the Lithuanian population over 20 is 80% Russian-speaking. • The low availability of certain specific resources for social and cultural integration activities (financial resources, promotional materials, etc.). Lack of legal regulations in this area. • The still low level of implementation, in the Lithuanian Air Force, of the NATO air base equipping standards and assimilation of procedures. • The non-existent interest of the Romanian Consulate in Vilnius towards the mission of the Romanian detachment.
3	Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in the confidence of cooperation partners in their air defense potential, as MIG-21 LanceRs are at the resource limit, being the oldest aircraft among those present in the Air Police Mission in the Baltic States, and together with the MIG-29 aircraft of Poland, the only ones of Russian manufacture.
4	Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of an international system of training exercises and applications within NATO on <i>CIMIC</i> creates the circumstances for increasing the degree of interoperability of the air force in solving <i>CIMIC</i> issues in missions outside the national territory. • The participation of the Romanian Air Force in “Baltica 07” mission has created the premises for a better understanding of the specificity of such missions, with equal benefits of Romanian and Lithuanian troops, as well as mutual knowledge between the two armies and the cohesion increase within NATO.

4. CONCLUSIONS OF THE SWOT ANALYSIS

Until the start of “Baltica 07” mission, the Romanian Air Force did not have the opportunity to carry out missions outside the national territory since the Second World War.

Moreover, this mission was the most important of the Romanian Air Force within NATO. The choice of this mission for the present case study, to compete with the air traffic management mission at Kabul Airport in Afghanistan, was driven by more thorough research, as in the case of “Baltica 07”, combat aircraft actually took part, unlike the case of Kabul, where only specialists and security officers and aeronautical managers participated. Of course, in the case of Kabul, we were in a full conflict area with infinitely greater challenges in terms of mission security and difficulty, but “Baltica 07” allowed the test of the air force capability to carry out joint missions, using the whole complex airspace management required by the activities under the air policing concept. From civil-military cooperation perspective, the case of Kabul may have been more spectacular and more challenging, but in the case of “Baltica 07” these requests were easier to identify and more readily available.

The wins of this case study are obvious. They consist, firstly, in assessing the degree of involvement of *CIMIC* specialists in the preparation and deployment of a Romanian Air Force mission outside the national territory, as well as in evaluating the effectiveness of this involvement. The conclusions of the case study are, as follows:

- *CIMIC* specialists involved themselves in mission preparation, staff training, and provided a behavior guide, as the *CIMIC* manual calls the “Soldier’s Manual”.
- Participants opinion was that the training was general, less applied to the specifics of the mission, and the “manual” contained few particular aspects of the area.
- The *CIMIC* component of the Romanian Armed Forces did not consider it necessary to attach a *CIMIC* specialist to the mission, with possibly knowledge of Russian language or of the Northern culture and civilization.
- It is probably necessary for similar missions to make a much more *CIMIC* training, specific to the deployment area, and possibly to assign a *CIMIC* specialist, even a temporary employee.

A second conclusion is related to the legal framework for the execution of such missions. The Romanian state should be more interested in the presence of Romanian detachments in missions outside the national territory and to use these opportunities with more rigor and professionalism to promote the image of Romania. Legislation needs to be enacted, existing consular resources should be put in place and, in particular, material and financial resources must be provided for this purpose. It is unacceptable for a three-month presence of a Romanian detachment in a state with several million inhabitants not to be taken into account by the consular office attached to it.

A third conclusion is related to the lessons learned. A mission of such importance must be treated in all its complexity, without avoiding any of the aspects that can ensure success. Among these, civil-military cooperation is one that leaves deep traces in the consciousness of the population and of civil institutions in the host country. The military aspects are of utmost interest in national and regional security structures. For the common man, the cultural and socio-emotional impression left by foreign soldiers is the one that remains. According to this trace, a peoples, a nation, a country is characterized by.

CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, the participation of the Romanian Air Force in missions outside the national territory is not only a working hypothesis for applications and trainings. Local and regional instability in different parts of the globe, driven by ethnic, political or religious rivalries, by actions against human rights, by terrorist, separatist, dissolving states actions, has already led to the engagement of the international community through its representative bodies, but also through the North Atlantic Alliance under international

mandate to protect populations and legitimate authorities. The obligations arising for Romania as an active member of the international bodies to which it belongs, the Romanian Army's NATO membership, as well as the commitments assumed within this alliance, made it possible and necessary to participate, with significant effects, in numerous missions outside the national territory, Romania being considered a significant contributor to peace efforts in various conflict areas in the Balkans, Iraq or Afghanistan. To this, a significant number of international observers requested to Romania to supervise and validate peace efforts in various hot zones of the globe is added. It can be said that Romania is an actor involved in peace efforts, its pacifist vocation generating trust and hope worldwide. Given these conditions, the Romanians, whether civilian or military, have inspired feelings of safety, mutual acceptance, cooperation and open cooperation through their behavior in relation to civilian actors and the people in the areas of responsibility.

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