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Preparation of some designated subunits of the Hungarian Defence Forces for peacekeeping operations

An author's review of doctoral (PhD) treatise and his official critique

The outline of the scientific problem

International contracts guarantee Hungary's security. NATO, as the strongest military alliance, insures those capabilities through which current direct military attacks of any strength could be prevented.

Irrespectively of this, the events on 11 September 2001 shocked the world and pointed out that global terrorism - with its size and incalculable destructive impact - presents danger of a considerable size to the developed world. It has been proven that confronting it successfully exceeds the capabilities and competence of internal security forces.

The new tasks have new content and ways of implementation. The Hungarian Defence Forces have to provide capabilities for these new tasks and prepare their personnel inside its training system.

Preparation of the armed forces requires a high level of professional capabilities that is multi-faceted skills necessary for all, from soldiers, subunits, staffs, training officers equally. Through it each soldier, combat unit and staff can be capable of executing their tasks in both joint and multinational environment at the requested level.

At the same time - according to my judgement – a comprehensive and unified regulation of the Hungarian Defence Forces' subunits and units for participation in peace support operations and for the preparation to it has not taken place till now.

Recently an increasing number of Hungarian officers and non-commissioned officers have had an opportunity to participate in multinational peace support operations. Their experience comprises and will comprise an important part of military reforms and of Hungary's Euro-Atlantic integration. Nevertheless, in my opinion this area is not elaborated entirely.

It is necessary, to get the lessons learned to all of those who make use of them in the course of their work in an organized, structured way, broken down to individual levels. I served from summer 1999 nearly 10 months in Kosovo as the first Commander of the Guard and Security Battalion and in 2005 another 6 months in Iraq with the Iraqi Ground Forces Command HQ as the chief of a NATO training team.

At the beginning of the Kosovo mission in June 1999 during the preparation in Táborfalva there was no centralised training plan or a peace support handbook yet which could have been in used as a unified “Bible” for our preparation and during the execution of our tasks.

Arriving to Pristina we did not have a mobile fortification system which could have been installed within a few hours and could have provided efficient protection for the personnel. Because of this, in many cases from compulsion, we used the waste found in the camp's area to build watchtowers, firing positions, and checkpoints. Unfortunately, no considerable improvement could be ensured.

It was the reason that made me choose the theme of my research – training and preparation of Hungarian Defence Forces peacekeeping subunits designated for operations.

In my dissertation I laid out a comprehensive picture about the past of peacekeeping, its present and foreseeable future. I integrated peacekeeping training and preparing into a uniform system and also suggest that modern, mobile, technical defensive elements should be incorporated allowing to increase the safety of missions.

The treatise is underpinned by my nearly 30 years’ experience at various troop levels and lessons learned in missions, by my knowledge used in it and the summary of my research findings.

My research objective is to provide exploitable and utilizable knowledge - uniform recommendations - for those who are either interested in or affected by peace support operations including preparation for and conduct of peacekeeping operations ensured by the Hungarian Defence Forces.

I emphasize the analysis of mission experience within these recommendations and I propose their integration into the preparation and training system, and the establishment of a so-called “pool of lessons learned”.

I present, analyse and evaluate peace support operations in the examined period and their expected future. I examine the issues of reinterpretation of international missions, the changing of priorities.

I propose the expedient redeployment of participating forces in the operations, and certain additional tasks for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan.

I draw up a new, mission preconditioning system. I prepared a uniform training program, and I help the work of training officers with a recommendation of a handbook for the preparation to peacekeeping missions.

Lastly I present some mobile, light-structure engineer buildings for peacekeeping operations, which increase the safety of peace support personnel. I make a recommendation to commission them with the Hungarian Defence Forces.

I propose the application of light-structure engineer elements during the mission preparation and survey, in the processes of testing, and in support of tasks to be accomplished in the area of operations.

I analyse and evaluate the applicability of various elements of the construction system in the course of the training process and in different peacekeeping procedures.

Research methods:

- Analysis, systematisation of special literature (publications, regulations issued by the Ministry of Defence or the Hungarian Defence Forces) linked to the topic.
- The systematisation of the managerial experience attached to the topic, its evaluation, the examination of allied publications, his processing.
- The systematisation of my mission commanding experience, summary, processing, an outlining of the deduction of inferences and recommendations based on these.
- Workshop debates, initiation of interviews, producing a map of problem areas, an elaboration of solution proposals.
- Establishment of Multinational (Italian, Hungarian and Slovenian) Peacekeeping Corps (Multinational Land Forces - MLF) and the systematisation, processing, analysis, evaluation of the experience gained during cooperation.
- Tracing, compiling, analysis, assessment, deduction of main inferences of foreign sources, and adapting them into Hungarian mission preparation in order to renew and restructure our system.
- Personal participation in the preparation of troops for many multinational missions, the examination of training programs, and the deduction of inferences.
- Producing publications on lessons learned during the Kosovo peacekeeping mission, on the Iraqi training experience, and on the family support system.

A short description of the research work conducted, the inferences and conclusions that can be drawn from them

In the first chapter of the treatise I presented the place and role of peacekeeping in military operations other than war and summarised the principles of peace support operations.

I formulated the definition of peacekeeping; I presented its history, and the most typical UN peace support operations.

In the course of processing the chapter I deduced the following inferences:

Historical analyses proved in a suitable manner the continuously changing character of peacekeeping, which is expedient to increase in the current preparation as well.

A historical overview proved that there are fundamental peacekeeping procedures, for example the evacuation of population, patrolling, riot control, search, examination, investigation, set-up of checkpoints, which have not changed with as time passes.

In the second chapter I presented the present role of the Hungarian Defence Forces in the conduct of peace supporter operations.

I identified that the necessity of re-evaluation of mission role has arrived, priorities have changed, a shift of emphasis can be observed towards combat missions and enforcement-type missions.

I deduced the following inferences after processing the chapter:

With regard to the Balkans mission scheduled to be withdrawn from July 2008 it is expedient to plan the Guard and Security Battalion's subunits for another operation.

In the case of a planned extension of the Afghanistan mission it is expedient to complement the population support and assistance role of PRT duties.

It is expedient in the period of mission rotations to conduct a regular, organised compilation of the lessons learned, analyse and evaluate them, and to incorporate these inferences into the regulations, and also apply them both during the preparation and in the course of the execution.

In the third chapter I outlined a draft peacekeeping handbook and a training control plan.

I presented the training plan which is helpful for both the personnel and subunits designated for any peacekeeping task and for preparing cadets and I gave reasons for the necessity of this.

I elaborated the handbook helping with mission activities and I present a draft on this.

I deduced the following inferences after the processing of the chapter:

Unfortunately the philosophy of preparation has not changed; realistic exercises are disappearing; there is not healthy bravery and risk taking in planning; commanders do not have a free hand or sufficient means in the implementation.

in order to the renew the preparation of peacekeepers it is necessary to update or change the publication "Handbook on United Nations peace operations. " approved in 1994.

It is expedient to elaborate a peacekeeping training plan, measures in a uniform form with a content and system of requirements replacing different types and content of training plans published at different military leadership levels. This syllabus may serve both the general and special preparation of cadets and students at all institutes of military education and also the training of contract personnel for peacekeeping operations.

In the fourth chapter titled "Some mobile, light construction engineer elements in peacekeeping operations" I did the comparison of traditional technical facilities and modern mobile defensive systems, and analysed the opportunities of their reusability.

I exemplified the elements of the mobile, light construction engineer defensive system, its adaptability and defensive abilities impact assessments conducted under real-life circumstances.

I deduced the following inferences after the processing of the chapter:

According to my judgement, defensive systems currently used in different missions show low efficiency thus nearly endangering our operations. This fact has a significant impact on the safety and security of our military personnel.

It is expedient to acquaint the construction in increasingly wide professional circles, particularly in peacekeeping exercises. I consider it necessary to manufacture and procure one set of the known elements.

It is expedient to build checkpoint and the elements belonging to this set at least in two locations (education institution, troops level) and it is necessary to continue training with its use allowing gaining experience.

The chapters are followed by the conclusion, the summary of my research findings, the list of the results with a new scientific value, the figures and tables and the register of my publications, and the literature which was used.

I regard the following as the result of my research work with a new scientific value:

1. I proved that analysis, assessment, the deduction of the inferences of experience gained by participants in peacekeeping operations in a new organizational framework, then its integration into the preparation is an integrant part of peacekeeping training.
2. On the basis of my own experience and upon my research findings I elaborated a training plan for preparing the forces designated for peace-keeping operations, which ensures the

uniformed, theoretical and practical preparation at a the high-level for both cadets and for contract personnel.

3. I elaborated the draft of a peacekeeping handbook which already includes the tasks of the Hungarian Defence Forces stemming from their commitment, the new safety challenges and the newly appeared threats.
4. I proved that through putting the mobile, light construction peacekeeping engineer structures on service, a new set of means may increase the Hungarian Defence Forces' defensive engineer support ability, which considerably increases the safety and security of mission personnel and it gives an opportunity for preparing in that direction that allows the practice to be driven on the devices applied under real-life circumstances.

The practical usability of research findings

The results of the treatise – in my opinion- can be exploited in the following areas:

1. In the course of preparing Hungarian Defence Forces' personnel designated for a peacekeeping task, a uniform, hypotenuse training plan may get introduced which takes into consideration domestic practice, opportunities and requirements, but is also conform with NATO regulations.
2. The “Handbook for peacekeepers” helps better acquaint with the principles, manners and tasks of peacekeeping with all commanding and assigned personnel. Another result of the publication is that assembling practical directions gives techniques and intervening for trainees for peacekeeping missions and trainers to avoid the potential sources of danger residing in the mission helping with this.
3. The training plan and the handbook can also be used as a source of training material – the aforesaid preparing to be helped – for the completion of training regulations, aids, and educational supplements.
4. It is necessary to regularly, compile experience in an organised way, to analyse, assess, and then integrate the inferences into regulations. The adaptation of these during the preparation and the conduct of a mission would significantly increase and modernize the special preparation of the executive personnel.
5. With the systematizing, proposed by me engineer structures we will have a useful construction which can be used in peace support and humanitarian operations, in the fight against terrorism, easily can be transported onto any point of the world, quickly deployable. It is independent from all materials, being on the theatre of mission. It takes the solutions safer.

List of publications

1. The visit to an American armour battalion (a tactical exercise's analysis) Land Forces publication 1994. II évf. 2 sz.
2. Experiences of a battalion tactical exercise with live-fire manoeuvre, troubles and difficulties during preparation and execution Land Forces publication 1994. III évf.1 sz.
3. Fight executed in winter weather circumstances and preparing for an activity, which is connected to it. Memo
4. Interview with Lieutenant General Zoltan Szenes, PhD, Chief of Defence Staff about the Hungarian contribution to peace support operations, about the preparation for it and experiences. (New Army Review 2003/3.)
5. The experiences of the Kosovo mission with the commander's eye. (New Army Review 2003/4.)
6. The content of defensive grades against the international terrorism. Remarks (conference substance in English and in Hungarian languages). International Scientific Convention 2002. 11. 14. [www.zmne.hu/doktori iskolák/hadtudományi doktori iskola/](http://www.zmne.hu/doktori_iskolák/hadtudományi_doktori_iskola/)
7. The commander and the treatment of stress. New Army Review 2003/12.
8. Thoughts about the aim of a family support system and his practical application. New Army Review 2004/7
9. In the background of Iraqi Training Mission. ZMNE students' communications XI évf.
10. Contribution of the Hungarian Defence Forces to the maintenance of the international peace and safety. ZMNE students' communications XI évf. 2007/2
11. The experience of a Kosovo visit. (To be published in ZMNE students' communications XI évf. 2007/4 sz.)
12. Simulation systems in the service of the training. (To be published in ZMNE students' communications XI évf.) 2007/4 sz.
13. The fight against terrorism and the new international challenges affecting troops' training. Remarks. (Scientific Convention 2007/11)