

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What we really need is probably a special forces – not commandos, but rather people who are thinking through the kind of environment they are going to fight in and who have enough intelligence information to do the proper things. We have enormous problems knowing the areas in which we are going to fight.<sup>1</sup>

### Personal data:

Name (rank): Lieutenant Colonel Imre PORKOLAB  
Assignment: Commander, 34<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Battalion

### Education:

1990-1993 Kossuth Lajos Military Academy, Reconnaissance Department - Distinction  
1993-1994 Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst (UK) - Best Overseas Officer Cadet, Awarded with the Cane of Honour  
1996-1999 Budapest University of Economics, BIGIS – MA in International Relations  
2001-2003 Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Leader - Summa Cum Laude, distinction  
2005-2006 Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, SOLIC – Irregular Warfare, Summa Cum Laude  
2004-2007 PhD Studies at the Zrínyi Miklós NDU, Hungary

### Phd programme:

Faculty: Zrínyi Miklós National Defence University, Military Science Department  
PhD Studies: 2004-2007  
Subject: The role of Special Forces in the military aspects of asymmetric conflicts, with special emphasis on combating international terrorism.  
Advisor: Kőszegvári Tibor, PhD, Professor Emeritus, DSc, Zrínyi miklós NDU

Lieutenant Colonel Porkolab has started his PhD Program in 2004. The research and study regulations have been successfully fulfilled with a high standard and professionalism and has been given the absulotorium. His subject, „the role of The role of Special Forces in the military aspects of asymmetric conflicts, with special regard to international terrorism as a form of asymmetric warfare” is a unique and much sought after research area in the Hungarian Defence Forces, since the HDF is establishing the SOF capability and it has to be FOC by 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Rowan Scarborough, Pentagon Eyes Cuts, Washington Time, December 13, 1996, 1.

LTC Porkolab has also first hand experience in the subject as the Chief of the Special forces Department at the Joint Force Command, he has been published in the subject for more than 6 years and he is one of the best experienced expert to carry out such a research. He has also given numerous lectures on the subject both in Hungarian and in English and is participation in many NATO and EU Committees as the Hungarian military SOF representative. His operational experience with Special Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan also makes him an expert on this field of study

**Dissertation summary:**

This dissertation establishes an analytical framework for identifying and discussing strategic factors considered important when developing Hungarian Special Forces (HUNSF) as a new ‘niche’ capability of the Hungarian Defense Forces (HDF). Although the findings have a broad application, focus has been on the Hungarian Special Forces capability. Key question are: How will factors such as the strategic environment, changes in the nature of war and characteristics of our potential adversaries imposed by the information age, affect the development of a conceptual framework for a successful Hungarian Special Forces?

Central to the study are factors found in the strategic environment, such as Hungary’s affiliation with NATO and the EU. The dissertation concentrates on analyzing the nature of asymmetric conflicts with a special emphasis on guerrilla warfare and terrorism; defining the tasks for HUNSF and based on these tasks suggesting an organizational framework for the HUNSF capability. This framework includes main components like training or command and control. The constantly changing security environment will also call for adjustments to the concept of HUNSF in the future; therefore, a vision for the HUNSF is also incorporated into the dissertation and aims to provide flexibility and guidance for capability development in the future.

The changing features in the nature of conflict and in future potential opponents will also influence HUNSF mission challenges, opportunities and constraints. A particularly important mission challenge is the neglected military view of *low-intensity conflicts* as ‘worthy’ military missions. Therefore it is the my understanding that education on this field plays an important role in successfully understanding and fighting in future conflicts and with this dissertation they intend to fulfill educational requirements as well on this issue. A key finding of the dissertation is that Hungarian Special Forces (HUNSF), has the potential to contribute to the fight against many unique security challenges and tackle many of the military objectives currently ‘floating’ in existing military transformation strategies, with a

balanced approach (a healthy and tailored way of delivering a mixture of kinetic and non kinetic approaches).

## **Purpose and scope**

Hungary needs to develop a Special Forces capability. As a result of the Defense Review of the Hungarian Defense Forces (HDF), completed in 2003, the transformation of the Defense Forces has been implemented. One of the cornerstones of this transformation is the development of a Special Forces capability within the HDF with an establishment of a Special Forces unit by 2009.

Based upon the changed security environment and in order to become a credible ally in NATO it is essential for small members, like Hungary, to be able to make effective contributions towards the collective defense of the Alliance. For the relatively new and less resource-rich NATO members in Middle Europe, the goal is basically to develop a defense force that can fulfill fundamental national security needs and at the same time fit in with the Alliance's basic interoperability requirements.

Specialization is usually perceived the heart of the future Alliance missions: to share the risks and responsibility, and to share the tasks, in other words, – to specialize. In responding to future challenges NATO countries identified 'niche' capabilities<sup>2</sup>. The authors understand that the Hungarian Special Forces (HUNSF) capability<sup>3</sup> is a designated 'niche' capability in the Hungarian Defense Forces (HDF); therefore, the establishment of a HUNSF unit, which is capable to actively participate in meeting the future military challenges, is a priority task for the HDF.

*A dissertation question* pertinent to the above is therefore: How will factors such as the strategic environment, changes in the nature of war and characteristics of our potential adversaries imposed by the information age, affect the development of a conceptual framework for a successful Hungarian Special Forces capability?

Taking into consideration that by 2009 the entire SF unit and other elements belonging to Hungarian Special Forces capability are to be operationally ready, the authors' purpose

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<sup>2</sup> In NATO it is understood that not all nations can produce the full spectrum of capabilities: therefore member states have identified areas where countries already possess special expertise, in other words 'niche' capabilities.

<sup>3</sup> According to the authors, the Hungarian Special Forces capability involves the Hungarian Special Forces unit and additionally includes all organizations necessary for the successful establishment and the command and control of the unit.

with this dissertation is to suggest a conceptual framework for the successful development of the Hungarian Special Forces capability by adopting a problem-solution-concept method.

In general, Hungary's ultimate goal with developing a Special Forces Capability is to carry out successful Special Forces in order to protect Hungary's national interests. Due to their intrinsic nature, Special Forces can provide the National Command Authority with strategic utility in terms of economy of force, force multiplication effect and expansion of options. The author understands that the Hungarian Special Forces unit is going to be engaged in a variety of missions that the general-purpose forces are not capable of carrying out, and will need to develop unique, salient capabilities not found elsewhere within the HDF.

Because the HUNSF is a defense organization that was established in September 2005 and the Hungarian Special Forces concept and identity is still under development, determining appropriate tasks and structural arrangements constitute the steps required to pave the way toward future successes. Based upon the identified tasks, further characteristics of the HUNSF capability, like training and command and control requirements will also be analyzed. To ensure consistency throughout the development process, the author incorporates into this dissertation a vision for HUNSF as well.

### **Organization of the study**

This dissertation identifies and discusses several strategic factors considered important when implementing HUNSF as a new capability for the HDF in the information age. Although the findings have a broad application, the focus has been on Special Forces capability development in the Hungarian Defense Forces. The goal in this dissertation was to find answers related to the previously stated dissertation question: How will factors such as the strategic environment, changes in the nature of war and characteristics of our potential adversaries imposed by the information age, affect the development of a conceptual framework for a successful Hungarian Special Forces capability? Of particular interest are factors found in the strategic environment of Hungary, the tasks of the HUNSF unit, the command and control relationship of the HUNSF capability and the training requirements of the HUNSF unit .

The author organized this dissertation in a specific manner in order to support the development of a conceptual framework for a successful Hungarian Special Forces Capability Development Program. Success in Special Forces is relatively hard to define. Therefore the

intent is to analyze the factors that contribute to successful Special Forces operations. What are these factors? The Special Operations Reference Manual identifies three main factors that contribute to successful Special Operations:

1. Clear national and theater strategic objectives.
2. Effective command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I) support at the operational level.
3. A force trained, equipped, and organized to conduct Special Operations

Taking into consideration that by 2010 the entire SF unit and other elements belonging to Hungarian Special Forces capability are to be operationally ready, the purpose with this dissertation is to suggest a conceptual framework for a successful development of the Hungarian Special Forces capability by adopting a problem-solution-concept method.

In *chapter one* of the dissertation the author provides an overall assessment on Hungary's security environment by analyzing the country's national interests and taking into account the expected missions of the HDF. On the course of his analysis, he has examined the main features of the security environment of Hungary in terms of threats and subsequent requirements for the military and also collected the military tasks of the Hungarian Defense Forces in support of the policy goals of Hungary. By analyzing Hungary's security environment and the draft National Military Strategy, along with the recently completed Defense Review the author concluded that Hungary has reasonable need to develop a military capability to counter the new challenges (terrorism, regional instability, and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) of a modern era.

Recent historical examples have shown that warfare has shifted from an Industrial-Age focus on the enemy's armed forces to an Information-Age focus on changing the minds of the enemy's political decision makers. The new asymmetric threats (primarily terrorists, insurgents and rogue states) are concentrating on the fundamental precept that superior political will, when properly employed, can defeat a greater economic and military power and use unconventional methods to achieve their goals. The greatest threat, any democratic state have to face today is not only an aggression from another state, but also a networked international terrorist organization, supported by a rogue state and in possession of weapons of mass destruction.

The objectives of the future threat are different. Asymmetric enemies will not attempt to win by defeating the enemy's military forces. Instead, via the networks, they directly attack

the minds of enemy decision makers. Their ultimate objective is to destroy the enemy's political will, and the intermediate objectives are all milestones in shifting the opinion of the various target audiences.

Moreover, it is his argument that at present the HDF is not fully prepared to face all aspects of these new security challenges. Understanding the nature of modern warfare and the possible future threats, the author highlights the importance of the development of a military unit within the HDF that is capable of fighting in an asymmetric environment using both highly specialized conventional methods and Unconventional Warfare capability. He also points out that recognizing the need for this special military unit and realizing that neighboring countries have also developed similar capabilities, the Hungarian policy makers have decided to develop a Special Forces capability within the HDF. Moreover to this the author also analyses the main recent theories for Guerrilla Warfare and International terrorism. He provides a detailed description on the different forms of guerrilla warfare and spends a great deal of time by discussing terrorism as a form of warfare. This study would not be complete without introducing the comparison of the two as well.

Asymmetric attacks are coordinated across the spectrum of human activity: political, military, economic and social. The author understands that the military forces of developed democratic countries have no primary role in fighting the asymmetric threat; nevertheless, the military still plays an important part in the integrated effort in countering these challenges. In order to be capable of effectively fight the future challenges, the HDF have to develop new capabilities and equally importantly some parts of the HDF have to be able to think differently because the unconventional battlefield requires a different mindset from military leaders and soldiers. In Hungary part of the solution is to develop an Unconventional Warfighting capability, which means that soldiers at all command level have to be able to understand the rules of Unconventional Warfare.

*Chapter two* mainly concentrates on the military approaches towards insurgencies and guerrilla warfare as well as analysing the different military means to counter one of the greatest security challenge of our times, terrorism. The author provides different models which help in understanding and categorising these challenges. One of the models, the mystic diamond, deserves a special merit, as this is a unique, yet commonly used tool to understand military responses in a counter insurgency campaign.

Analyzing the current employment of the HDF and the future security challenges (focusing on guerrilla warfare and terrorism), the author believes that Hungary is likely to be

involved mainly in regional conflicts in the near future. It can be concluded that the Hungarian Defense Forces will most likely need to have an Unconventional Warfare capability supplementing the current Conventional capabilities in order to effectively fight asymmetric enemies in conflict zones and engage the opposing forces in Low Intensity Conflicts.

Analyzing the current trends and development of the Hungarian GPF it is obvious that in the near future conventional forces will better themselves and their TTPs in order to be able to react more effectively to the new challenges of the asymmetric environment. They will inevitably lean towards improving DA, SR and CT related capabilities if they want to succeed against the new threat. With massive firepower, light small unit tactics and precision guided weapons and improved intelligence skills they can achieve agility, speed and precision. The one thing they will not be able to master is Unconventional Warfare capability, because it requires different training and a completely different mindset from the soldiers as well.

It has to be understood though that for the most part a non-kinetic method is devoid of clear solutions and clear victories. Nor it is usually rapid. This means a willingness to accept lengthy commitments and incremental progress. It is also important to emphasize that UW (if correctly carried out by specially trained units) builds a unique intelligence capability and serves as a force multiplier in low intensity conflicts.

In *chapter three* of this dissertation, based upon the analysis of the previous chapters, the author proposes tasks for the Hungarian Special Forces. To achieve their goal, the author has developed a framework for analysis to identify the appropriate tasks for HUNSF. With the application of this method, the national security challenges and the HDF military tasks were identified, taking into account the relevant NATO and EU SF requirements as well. The proposed tasks are thoroughly analyzed as well. The first chapter lays down the foundation for an identification of the mission sets for HUNSF by analysing Hungary's current security environment, yet the cornerstone of the analysis is the development of the tasks for the Hungarian Special Forces unit. In order to identify the tasks the authors have adopted a method based on the suggestions of Christopher Lamb<sup>4</sup>. In his article Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions, Lamb specifies that, when tasking SF, one must take into consideration the nature of the security environment, the country's national security

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<sup>4</sup> Christopher Lamb, "Perspectives on Emerging SOF Roles and Missions", Special Warfare, (July 1995): 3.

documents, and the nature of the forces themselves. Proposing new tasks is an endeavor that should seriously consider some questions.

Moreover in this chapter the author analyzes the requirements of command and control in relation to the HUNSF capability and argue for the creation of the Special Forces Detachment (SFD) within the structure of the Defense Staff. His argument is supported by multiple levels (strategic, operational and tactical) of analysis. At the operational level Special Forces differ from the HDF GPF in many aspects; therefore, the development of the Hungarian Special Forces capability represents many unique challenges. These challenges can only be countered by specially trained personnel who understand the essence of Special Forces and have the attributes of a Special Forces soldier. It is not only the National Command Elements that are required to be looked upon, but it is also important to analyze the future place of HUNSF capability within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union as well, because the HUNSF will most probably going to be employed as part of a larger multinational force. In this part of the dissertation the authors will also analyze the doctrinal as well as the intelligence requirements of the HUNSF capability. Carrying out complex missions requires important organizational changes. The conclusions that come out of this dissertation indicate that HUNSF in the future should develop into a centralized and joint SF service, with a flat hierarchy and organic intelligence assets. By adopting this flexible organizational configuration and acquiring proficiency in the fields related to its missions, HUNSF will be able to conduct special operations, both independently representing the interests of Hungary and (during deployments) with Allied forces in combined scenarios as well.

The author also identifies the core purpose and the training requirements of HUNSF. The core purpose is to serve the Nation in peacetime, conflict and war by accomplishing missions assigned by the National Command Authorities and the regional commanders in chief, in enemy, denied or sensitive areas or in areas where the use of GPF is inappropriate using conventional and unconventional (working by with and through indigenous population) means in order to protect the population of Hungary and those of her Allies. Training requirements are based upon the identified mission the multinational characteristics of the force. Moreover, training specifics related to unconventional warfare (language skills, cultural awareness, interpersonal skills and knowledge of the operational area) are emphasized. Moreover, it is not enough to study the present selection and training, but future needs has to be taken into account as well. Therefore, conclusions have to be made and incorporated into



the training process of the HUNSF in order to be able to meet future needs. The training of Special Forces personnel takes a long time and by the time they are ready to be deployed, the operational environment can be different to when they started their training. Therefore special attributes have to be emphasized in order to ensure successful operations in the future. In order to ensure consistency for the HUNSF in the future, in the third part of the dissertation the authors will analyze the future needs, core purpose, the main characteristics and the correct use of the HUNSF capability and propose a vision for the HUNSF unit.

As a *conclusion*, it can be stated that the role of the Special Forces have increased dramatically in recent conflicts. Especially in Afghanistan and Iraq Special Forces are operating in large numbers on a daily basis; meanwhile they are being used worldwide on other fronts of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) as well, including many countries in Asia and Latin America. No other formations are permanently organized, equipped, and trained for foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, and other highly sensitive missions. In addition, SOF have call on unparalleled interagency and international expertise. Their skills offer unique, cost-effective, low-profile, and direct as well as indirect measures that enhance international stability...[In addition] familiarity with their areas of responsibility (AORs) and their ability to work closely with foreign military and other institutions give SOF an advantage over conventional forces in situations that demand cultural awareness.<sup>5</sup>

The author believes that the post Cold War environment provides requires the militaries of the developed countries to improve their non-kinetic military capability in order to be better prepared to counter today's unconventional threat. Based upon the findings of this dissertation, the author advocates, Special Forces' distinctive non-kinetic capabilities provide a viable military option for variety of operational tasks that are inappropriate or infeasible for conventional forces.

It is also concluded that international terrorist networks and rouge states will continue to be a considerable threat to the security interests of Hungary in the foreseeable future. Special Forces are uniquely qualified to deal with the asymmetric unconventional threat that these networks intend. Based on the recent Security Strategy of NATO and the EU, and considering future needs of the security environment, Hungary needs to develop special military capabilities in order to meet the future challenges. One of the most important of these capabilities is the Military Assistance (MA) capability. The author's belief, that MA will play

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<sup>5</sup> Collins, John M. "Special Operations Forces in Peacetime", JFQ, (Spring 1999).

an important role in countering the security challenges in the future and the General Purpose Forces of Hungary will not be able to acquire sufficient capability in this area; therefore, the authors highlight the incorporation of UW capability as a salient task of the Hungarian Special Forces unit.

The establishment of Special Forces within the HDF can serve multiple purposes. It can serve the country's national interests and, as a 'niche' capability, it can contribute to the collective defense tasks of NATO as well. The author's purpose is to suggest a conceptual framework for the Hungarian Special Forces by examining the existing capability gaps in the HDF and determining the tasks for the Special Forces unit. Moreover he provides other noteworthy organizational suggestions like the training requirements and command and control of the Special Forces in order to support the ongoing capability development and to give suggestions and planning guidelines to decision makers in the Hungarian Defense Forces.

It is understood that resources are really scarce and force reductions are present within the HDF and developing a new capability raises a lot of concern. It is also agreed that planners should extract maximum value of the money spent on new capabilities. HUNSF is a good investment for many reasons.

- Special Forces are a force multiplier. They are trained in a special way that facilitates the basic concept of the use of these forces: working by-with-through the local population. This operating method results in increased military effectiveness.
- Special Forces can be used on the conventional sense, but they are really effective on the unconventional battlefield (according to the hypodissertation of the authors HUNSF with a UW capability would be the only asset specifically tailored and designed to fight against asymmetric opponents).
- In peacetime the HDF can still gain a lot from the establishment of the HUNSF. HUNSF soldiers can provide special expert training packages (SERE, sniper training etc.) to other units of the HDF and if serving for officers in the HUNSF is on a 'tour' basis (i.e. they serve for a specified time and then return to their parent units) it will positively contribute to the overall professionalism of the HDF. HUNSF can serve educational purposes as well and help in develop an 'unconventional mindset' at all command levels within the HDF.

- The HUNSF unit will be an important contributor to intelligence in all operational scenarios. Based upon the tasks of the HUNSF unit, one can easily recognize that HUNSF has important strategic informational value. Another salient contribution of the HUNSF in the future warfare can be the cultural knowledge of the theatre and the HUMINT capability of the force.
- The HUNSF is specially designed to operate in a multinational environment. The HUNSF unit can be offered both for NATO and be deployed in support of military initiatives of the EU.
- HUNSF is a high readiness reaction force that can be deployed in a short notice within the described AORs. No special training is required before deployment for these soldiers; they are readily available for a variety of tasks.
- The variety of tasks HUNSF is able to perform is amazing. HDF military leaders have a high number of flexible options they can choose from. Some of these tasks are solely performed by the HUNSF unit (and these tasks are designed to cover previously identified capability gaps within the HDF). Other tasks contribute to the already existing capabilities of the HDF and are closely related to improving mission readiness of the overall force, to meet future security challenges and to defend the sovereignty of Hungary.

## **NEW SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS**

Based on the many analysis in this study the author has come up with 3 main findings regarding the development of special forces:

1. Systemic organisation of the asymmetric conflicts (with a special emphasis on guerrilla warfare and terrorism) and a comparison of these two forms. Suggestions were also made to better comprehend the military aspects of counter guerrilla operations using the mystic diamond model.
2. A proposed mission set for the HUNSF, including the main tasks (DA, SR and MA) as well as the other necessary mission requirements. A suggestion is also made describing the HUNSF role in asymmetric conflicts.
3. A proposed command and control system for the Hungarian SOF capability building and a training system complementing it.

## list of recent publications

TITLE	JOURNAL
<i>Intelligence abalysis in asymmetric warfare.</i>	Polaris, Autumn 2004, Volume 1, Issue 3, p.21.
<i>Lessons Learned from the security challenges in Iraq.</i>	AARMS, Volume 4, No.1, 2005 június, p.125.
<i>A Különleges Műveleti erők alkalmazása Irakban.</i>	Doktorandusz 2005/1, p. 44.
<i>A különleges műveleti erők alkalmazásának jelentősége.</i>	Kard és Toll, 2005/1, p.44.
<i>Information strategy of the Al Qaeda terror organisation.</i>	AARMS Vol no.5, 2006/1, p.125.
<i>Aszimmetrikus hadviselés: Ortodox és Gerilla hadikultúrák összecsapásai.</i>	Hadtudomány, 2005/4, p.188.
<i>Koan and the asymmetric warfare.</i>	AARMS 3/5/2006, p. 373.
<i>Katonai műveletek aszimmetrikus konfliktusokban.</i>	Kard és Toll, 2006/1, p.24.
<i>A terrorizmus, mint az aszimmetrikus hadviselés formája.</i>	Új Honvédségi Szemle, 2006/6, p. 73.
<i>A gerilla hadikultúra formái, fajtái és módjai.</i>	Nemzetvédelmi egyetemi közlemények, 2005. X évfolyam 3. szám, p. 65.
<i>Aszimmetrikus hadviselés.</i>	Nemzetvédelmi Egyetemi közlemények, 2006/3. p.65.

## LECTURES

PLACE	TITLE	TIME
Military aspects of the asymmetric war in Iraq, Zrínyi Miklós NDU	Asymmetry and the lessons learned in Iraq. (English)	2005
Security Policy Conference (MoD, Budapest)	The role of SOF int he HDF. (Hungarian)	2007
SOLIC – Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict Seminar (BTKK)	Similarities and differences of insurgency and terrorism. (English)	2007
SOF DAT – Special Operations Forces and Defence Against Terrorism Seminar (BTKK).	Terrorism as a form of asymmetric warfare. (English)	2007
SOF DAT – Special Operations Forces and Defence Against Terrorism Seminar (BTKK).	Defining terrorism. (English)	2007