

NATIONS AT WAR: WHY DO NATIONS PARTICIPATE IN WAR AND WHY NOT?

- a report on the participation of National Defence University representatives at the International Scientific Conference in Sofia, organised by the Euro-Atlantic Conflict Studies Working Group within the framework of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes

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On May 28-30, 2013, the representatives of the National Defence University (NDU) in Poland - Col. Assoc. Prof. Dariusz Kozerawski (the vice-rector for military and international cooperation) and Assoc. Prof. Janusz Zuziak, took part in the 13th Annual Conference of the Euro-Atlantic Conflict Studies Working Group on *Nations at War: Why Do Nations Participate in War and Why Not?*, organised by the G.S. Rakowski National Defence Academy and the French Defence History Office under the auspices of the PfP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes in Sofia, Bulgaria.

The main objectives of the conference were to exchange scientific views and experiences on, among other things, military history, the study of armed conflicts, and military thought on the conference subject in relation to the concept of the use of modern armed forces. On these grounds, the conference was addressed mainly to researchers dealing with the recent history of military and international security.

On May 28, 2013, after the official opening of the conference and welcoming of the participants, including the representatives of the organising countries (Bulgaria and France) – Theodore Tagarev (Minister of Bulgaria's National Defence), General Oliver Paulus (Director of the French Defence History Office MoD), Cmdr. Dimitr Angelov (the Commandant of G.S. Rakowski National Defence Academy in Sofia), the schedule of the conference was presented.

Due to the international nature of the conference and the language (English) in which the speeches were prepared, the discussions were held within consecutive plenary sessions. To reduce the costs, the organisers decided to resign from the use of simultaneous translators. The participants were accommodated in two hotels (the Crystal Palace and a military hotel: Shipka).

During the seven scientific sessions of the conference, 20 lectures, whose parts were enriched with multimedia presentations, were delivered. After each session led by a moderator, the authors of the speeches took part in discussions and answered numerous questions from the participants. It should be emphasised that dozens of scientists from 15 countries (Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Canada, Germany, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the USA, Sweden, Romania, and Hungary) took part in the conference, organised under the auspices of, and in cooperation with, the Euro-Atlantic Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes for Armed Conflicts Studies operating with NATO. In most cases, they represented historic military institutes, but also strategic research/studies institutes, which have significant scientific potential for research on the history of the armed forces of particular countries and their national security issues (it should be noted that in Poland there is no such institute in the structures of the Ministry of National Defence).

Poland was represented at the conference by the researchers of the National Defence University. The NDU representative - Col. Assoc. Prof. Dariusz Kozerawski, the vice-rector for military and international cooperation, gave a speech during the sixth panel on *Multinationality as a Strategic Challenge for Coalition Operations: a Case Study of Polish Military Contingent Experience from Iraq (2003-2008)*. The talk, enriched with a multimedia presentation, was based, among other things, on the results of field research conducted by the author in the Republic of Iraq in 2008. The speech given was of great interest to the participants, which was confirmed in a lively discussion with the NDU representative.

Moreover, during the above event, the participants were given a publication, which was the result of the work of the previous conference on *Past through Present: Thoughts on Military History at the Strategic, Operational and Tactical Levels of War* which took place in Vienna in 2012 and was organised by the Austrian Museum of Military History and the Hungarian Military History Institute. In this prestigious, collective scientific study the following articles were published in print:

- Col. Assoc. Prof. Dariusz Kozerański - *Theory Against Realism – the Use of the Soviet Strategy and the Antiterrorism Coalition Strategy in the Wars in Afghanistan (1979-2012)*
- Assoc. Prof Janusz Zuziak - *The Polish Military Effort during the Second World War.*

It is worth mentioning that the historical and scientific trip organised on the second day of the conference (May 29) was very interesting in the cognitive sense. The participants visited: the Thracian fortress in the town of Starosel (V-III century BC), the Archaeological Museum and the excavations of the ancient town of Hissar.

Another event of this kind will be organised next year by Slovakia in Bratislava and its co-organiser, as in previous cases, will be the Euro-Atlantic Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes for Armed Conflicts Studies operating with NATO. The suggested theme for the conference next year will cover the issue of the role of policy and diplomacy in wars and military conflicts.

It should be emphasised that the goal of the trip was fully achieved. The giving of a speech by a representative of NDU, in such a wide and influential, international, and scientific environment, made it possible to confirm the image of the university as one of the major centres conducting research in the field of military history and international security. What is more, the significant position of NDU in the Consortium mentioned above was confirmed with the invitation for the NDU representative by the representatives of Bulgaria and Greece to carry out a series of classes at universities and military schools in these countries.