

# **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**



# HUNGARIAN DEFENCE FORCES IN NATO MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONS (HIGHLIGHTING THE POLISH-HUNGARIAN COOPERATION)

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## **Abstract**

*Nowadays, the Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) have several multinational tasks all over the world. These are changing constantly due to the expansion of the different missions. In the beginning, HDF personnel were participating individually (officers, NCOs), and later by sub-level power in NATO and EU operations. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) mission in Afghanistan was the most successful operation of the HDF, which was terminated in March 2013. Hungarian soldiers gained considerable experience in Iraq too, where they served in a Transport Battalion under Polish command (Multinational Division). Based on these facts, this article presents some Hungarian aspects of multinational operations.*

**Keywords:** Hungarian Defence Forces, PRT, Transport Battalion, multinational operations, Strategic Airlift Capability

## Introduction

In this day and age and over the past decades, many countries have experienced a conflict or crisis which threatened not only the country's internal security but posed a threat to international peace. Although these conflicts are not international yet, they could affect regions or all continents. It has become a necessary task to examine these clashes.

NATO and the UN play an important role in dealing with these conflicts and helping with international aid, which helps conserve international peace. It is known that these conflicts and threats are varied but the intensity is different. Solving these problems also needs different resolutions. The best example is the recent Syrian uprising against the dictatorial power, when people went on to the streets to demand reforms. The conflict started to get serious when they tried to keep the rebels away with weapons, armoured vehicles, and tanks. This situation was later raised to international level and has developed into a conflict which has threatened other countries too. "Twenty-one months after the conflict in Syria began as a popular uprising, rebel forces are making gains, tactics are changing, and the threat of chemical warfare has made an appearance. Syrian rebels have reached a level of cooperation, forming a single entity -- the Syrian National Coalition. The alliance has received recognition from Arab states and support from NATO members in its goal of unseating Syria's President, Bashar al-Assad, and replacing his government"<sup>1</sup>.

North Korea provides another good example of the size and the methods of resolutions of conflicts which threaten international security. The threat towards North Korea increased after the testing of long range missiles abroad. "Despite sanctions from the United Nations, North Korea has warned they are preparing to launch more long range missiles and will test more nuclear explosives. North Korea's National Defense Commission threatened to wage, quote, „a full-fledged confrontation," against the U-S. On Tuesday, the U.N. condemned North Korea's launch of a long-range missile in December, and sanctioned them. The North

<sup>1</sup> A. Taylor, Syria's Long, Destructive Civil War, <http://www.theatlantic.com/focus/2012/12/syrias-long-destructive-civil-war/100426/> [available 11.04.2013.]

Korean government maintains the missile was peaceful, but the U.S. and other countries claim it was a test for nuclear missiles.”<sup>2</sup>

To settle these crisis zones is the main priority for maintaining international peace.

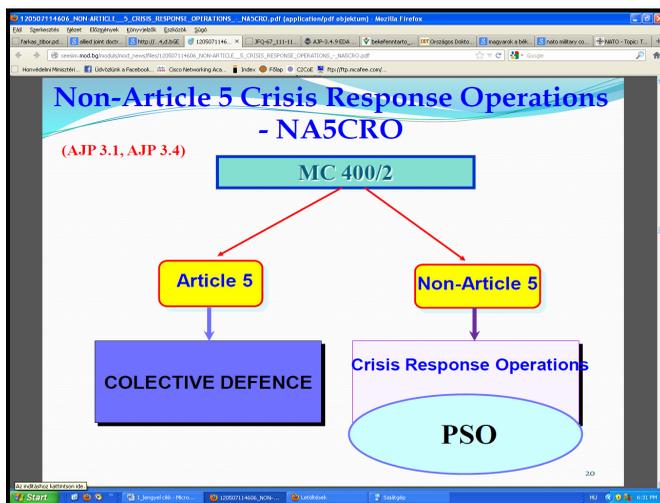
## **NATO peace operation**

It is clear that the first route for solving a conflict is diplomatic negotiations. If those negotiations are not successful, the intensity of the conflict increases, after which (para) military intervention might become necessary. Considering allied operations of previous years, we can recognise that there is a great need to promote the standardisation of crisis solving methods and actions.

Military operations other than war (MOOTW) is a new approach and the most suitable for solving crises - variety compound organisations are requested from the parties concerned. The crisis response operations (NA5CRO, Non-article 5 Crisis Response Operations) have different features from the „traditional military” operations. The „primary aim is the victory „, theory, the task and the representation of the environment is different from the traditional sense of war. The definition of NA5CRO, according to AJP-3.4, is as follows: ”NA5CRO include multifunctional operations, falling outside the scope of Article 5, which contribute to conflict prevention and resolution or serve humanitarian purposes, and crisis management in the pursuit of declared Alliance objectives.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> D. Milius: North Korea Warns Of Long-Range Missile Launch, <http://www.kionrightnow.com/story/20665150/north-korea-warns-of-long-range-missile-launch> [available 11.04.2013.]

<sup>3</sup> Allied Joint Doctrine for Non-article 5 Crisis response Operations AJP-3.4, p.19.



Source: I. Marinov: Non-article 5 Crisis response Operations, NA5CRO, slide 20. [http://seesim.mod.bg/moduls/mod\\_news/files/120507114606\\_NON-ARTICLE\\_5\\_CRISIS\\_RESPONSE\\_OPERATIONS\\_-\\_NA5CRO.pdf](http://seesim.mod.bg/moduls/mod_news/files/120507114606_NON-ARTICLE_5_CRISIS_RESPONSE_OPERATIONS_-_NA5CRO.pdf)

**Figure 1. Two types of operations**

Prior to operations, the aims have to be clarified, which according to NA5CRO can't be the destruction of the enemy but the protection of the civil population. The aim of the operation can also include the protection of the corps and the debilitation of political and military management. To implement these, it is vital to have well equipped and trained soldiers and organisations.

In the interest of international success it is important to monitor the challenges and requirements which specify the standards of international military developments, military training and preparations towards the successful participation in international tasks. The main legislation relating to this is the strategy concept act (Washington 23 April 1999), which states that NATO's main task is to terminate any international conflict and risks.

The NATO Military Committee conducts the MC's comprehensive strategical conceptions<sup>4</sup>. In the beginning, the base of the operations was the Combined

<sup>4</sup> „The Military Committee (MC) is the senior military authority in NATO and the oldest permanent body in NATO after the North Atlantic Council, both having been formed months after the Alliance came into being. It is the primary source of military advice to

Joint Task Forces (CJTF), which are flexible, mobile bonds for the sake of carrying out tasks. The following sum up NATO's most important foundation documents with regard to multicultural operations:

- Allied Joint Doctrine (AJP-01D),
- Allied Joint Doctrine for Non-article 5 Crisis Response Operations (AJP-3.4),
- MC327/2 NATO Military Policy for Crisis Response Operations.

## **Hungarian Defence Forces in Multinational Operations**

The participation of the HDF began with the peace support operations in 1897 when Hungarian troops accomplished service on Crete and, following that, between 1900-1914 in China. After the early era came the turn of individual missions between 1973 (Vietnam) and 1996 (IFOR<sup>5</sup>). The range of Balkans mission, and the Iraq and Afghan operations followed, which contained more forces and spread to longer distances<sup>6</sup>. Hungarian troops are participating in many countries these days and are successful in multicultural operations. Our soldiers have taken part with approx 1000 people in multinational operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo, Sinai, Cyprus, Georgia, Western Sahara, etc.

According to the act created in Washington, the future guidelines in the new strategy concepts are: mobility and installation, maintenance, the effective combat adaption, the ability to survive and effective communication. This alliance, according to the guidelines stated above, expanded the strategy concept, which was put in writing at the NATO summit organised later. At every meeting, the main issues considering the challenge, requirements, and the dangers at the given period of time were discussed, which reflected the Union's current concept. This is the base capability of NATO's and the participating countries' (including Hungary) developmental strategy, according to which we have continuously

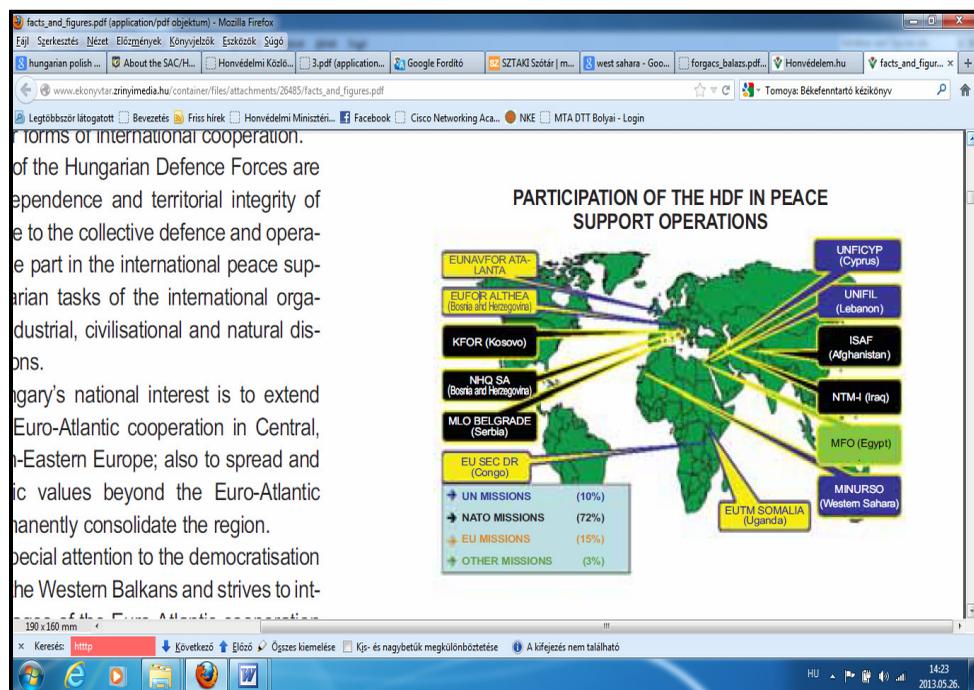
NATO's civilian decision-making bodies – the North Atlantic Council and the Nuclear Planning Group." The Military Committee; [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49633.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49633.htm) [available 11.05.2013].

<sup>5</sup> Implementation Forces: Multinational peace keeping force between 1995-1996 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NATO-led).

<sup>6</sup> Z. L. Kiss: Magyarok a békefenntartásban; Budapest 2011, p.8.

increased the capabilities of the army. The main territories of the developmental strategies are:

- Air defence radars (3D radars);
- Strategic Airlift Capability (C-17);
- Fighters (Gripen);
- Helicopters;
- Force protection equipments (bomb disposal robots, UAV,...)
- Modernisation of personal weapons and equipments;
- CNBC capabilities;
- ...



Source: Facts and Figures on the Hungarian Defence Forces 2011, Budapest 2011, p. 7.

**Figure 2. Participation of the HDF in peace support operations**

In my opinion, the main general skills of the participating countries in multinational operations must be:

- multifunction;
- develop;
- general use;

- modular;
- expeditionary.

The Hungarian National Defence shares this view too.

## **KFOR mission**

The experiences gathered during the missions and the implementation of NATO rules have been helping Hungarian troops in successful operations. The multinational operation called the Kosovo Force (KFOR) operating in the Balkans contains units and individually participating soldiers. Hungarian participation in Kosovo is permitted by the 1244 resolution of UN Security Council (UN SC)<sup>7</sup>.

The aim of the KFOR is to maintain the peace and make sure the treaty is kept. As a result of the unstable security situation, the presence of an international military force is crucial. Hungarian troops have been contributing to the success of the mission since the crisis began. Since the formation of the KFOR mission in 1999, Hungary has participated in the peacemaking operation with a battalion to maintain order in the region. The Guard and Security Battalion is based in Pristina. Its tasks are to guard the Film City, the Hungarian camp „Vrelo”, to escort VIP supplies, to maintain the Check Points and scouting. During this mission, the HDF have gained much experience which has been put to good use later. The KFOR mission transformed over the years, but it was and remains a successful operation.

<sup>7</sup> „Adopted by the Security Council at its 4011th meeting, on 10 June 1999. The Security Council, Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, [...] Reaffirming the call in previous resolutions for substantial autonomy and meaningful self-administration for Kosovo, Determining that the situation in the region continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security, Determined to ensure the safety and security of international personnel and the implementation by all concerned of their responsibilities under the present resolution, and acting for these purposes under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.” Resolution 1244 (1999): <http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/u990610a.htm> [available 11.05.2013].

## ISAF missions

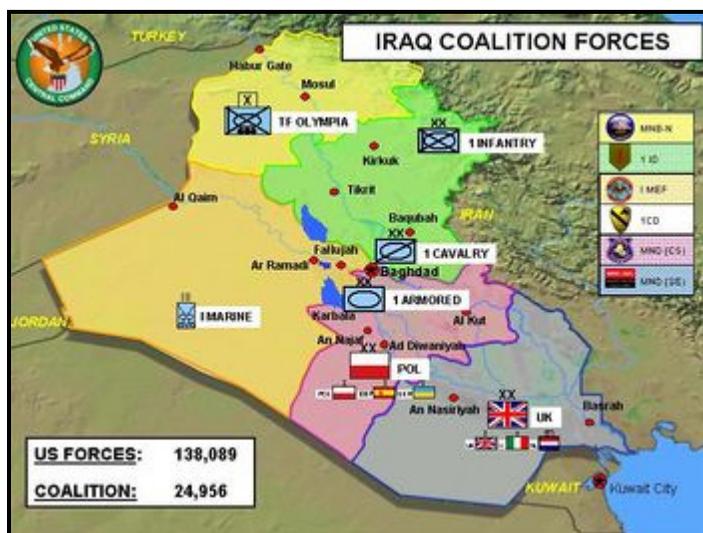
After the terrorist attacks on the USA, awareness of worldwide international terrorism became a main concern. As a result of the attacks, the USA suppressed the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in an operation known as Operation Enduring Freedom. The UN held a conference in Petersberg from 27 November 2001 to 5 Dec 2001 about the situation in Afghanistan and its political future. The attendees signed the „Bonn Agreement” which is the base of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The UN SC 1386/2001 decision established the ISAF forces headquarters, which authorises the necessary military intervention and helps the Afghan Government.

The first Hungarian participation started with a group of 50 sanitary workers, then a couple of soldiers in Kabul, Kunduz. In 2004, the Hungarian army undertook a more serious task when it started work in the HDF Light Infantry Company. Its tasks were patrolling, guarding and supporting. Following this, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) started their work in the Baghlan region in 2006. The Hungarian troops' main responsibilities lied in infrastructural developments, and the enforcement of local governments, helping reconstructional works, carrying out Hungarian national duties and programmes, keeping in contact with local authorities and leaders, with the locals and other international organisations. Along with maintaining security in the region, the PRT's other responsibilities are: improving education, infrastructure and health services, supporting local civilians, accepting the presence of international forces. Military tasks such as guarding, patrolling, following convoys-and VIPs was already military duty before the Afghan mission in the quotas.

The difference between the previous tasks is that the basic activity is to maintain the security of a whole territory which is managed by national and ISAF RC (N) command and working together with other PRT's local and international organisations. In March 2013, the HDF PRT ended, part of the forces were regrouped to the Kabul International Airport (KAIA) where the HDF Guard and Security Contigent started its duties up till this year. Nowadays, in the ISAF mission, different kinds of mentor teams are on duty like the Air Advisory Team (AAT); the Logistic Mentor Team (LMT) and the Military Advisory Team (MAT).

## Iraq mission under polish command

On 25 April 2003, a request was sent by the USA to the Hungarian Government to participate in resolving the crisis in Iraq. To accomplish this they required a maximum 300 soldiers with technical back-up and with arms, well mounted soldier troops whose aim was managing supply and shipping and humanitarian duties in Iraq. The Iraqi coalition forces worked in four operational zones. Two American divisions, a Polish lead multicultural one and an English lead multicultural division were set up and were responsible for stabilisation duties.



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coalition\\_forces\\_in\\_Iraq\\_%282004-04-30%29.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Coalition_forces_in_Iraq_%282004-04-30%29.jpg).

**Figure 3. Coalition zones in Iraq**

The the HDF Transport Battalion (HDF TB) of Hungarian troops was carrying out shipping duties in the South Central Zone (SCZ) under the Multinational Division Central -South Polish command. In 2003, Poland started preparations to set up the divisional commander in SCZ, then three months later they took control of the whole region from the USA.

The division's main tasks are the civil services, the stabilisation of the region, and to stop the evolution of armed fights and demonstrations - 9000 soldiers from 29 nations are involved in this action. In this non secure situation, the coalition

troops were under continuous attack, which made it even harder for them to carry out their job. The division managed the region independently, but between the managements the communication wasn't great and the unwillingness to work as a team made it even harder to accomplish the aims.

The first troops of 292 after training took part in shipping (food, cloths, humanitarian aid), logistics and sanitary tasks. Their base was in Al-Hillah with other nations's troops. When the jobs were allocated in the HDF TB, restrictions were put in place for the safety of the subunit, which were as follows: they could only do transporting, they couldn't split up, they couldn't come under other national command, convoy support was only permitted for convoys working under Hungarian management. Although these days Hungary is not participating with the units, it is important to mention the last transport unit, which left Iraq on 31. December 2004, which contributed greatly to the stabilisation of the country. Nowadays, Hungarian officers are in Iraq as part of the NATO Training Mission (NTM), but only individually.

## **Other Polish - Hungarian Cooperation**

As a result of the recent developments in world politics and of the global recession, the significance of regional cooperation seems to be regarded as an increasingly valuable asset. This notion inspired the decision of the Visegrád Group to create a common European Union battlegroup, thus transforming the preceding political cooperation of these countries into a genuine military cooperation. The defence ministers of the four countries – Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary – agreed to pursue this aim in 2011, which consequently led to the signing of a letter of intent to establish the V4 battlegroup on 6 March 2013 in Warsaw.

They agreed that the framework nation and commander of the common force will be Poland, that the V4 battlegroup financed from a shared budget must be ready for deployment by the first half of 2016 with a strength of 3,000, and also that it must be capable of independently conducting military operations under the aegis

of the European Union<sup>8</sup>. The basis of the efficient and smooth operation of the system is by all means an uninterrupted, long term, permanent and continuous cooperation. Some of the potential advantages of the creation and operation of the battlegroup may be that this cooperation will improve the interoperability of the armed forces of the participant states and, taking into account the fact that due to the recession defence budgets were decreased in all these countries, it might be an efficient way of utilising the resources available for defence and military purposes which could reduce the financial and administrative burdens.

The Polish and Hungarian armed forces also endeavour to cooperate closely outside the Visegrád initiative, as was demonstrated by the organisation of joint exercises – NATO Response Force (NRF) manoeuvre exercise “Steadfast Jazz 2013” and exercise “Lendülő Kard 2013” (Swinging Sword 2013), which included an air defence live firing element – as well as by the agreement signed by the defence ministers of the two countries which assures the two parties of experience sharing, joint training and the cooperation between their special operations forces. The most momentous of the aforementioned exercises was the military exercise “Steadfast Jazz 2013”, held in November 2013, which aimed at the improvement of the common defence of the allied countries. Thousands of soldiers from 14 NATO member states carried out land, maritime and air operations on the territories of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The objective and main goals of exercise SFJZ 13<sup>9</sup> for Hungary were to train the JFCBS<sup>10</sup> and the subordinated Component Commands to command and control in the planning and execution of a collective defence operation in the military, civil and asymmetric environment; to demonstrate and exercise the military capabilities of the NRF aimed at deterrence of aggression, the execution of rapid reaction operations, as well as the deployment of the NRF components in order to accomplish the objectives of NATO; to practice the planning, organisation and execution of logistic support for the deployed forces with the utilisation of the appropriate NATO, international and national resources; and to demonstrate the

<sup>8</sup> Aláírták a V4-es Harccsoport felállításáról szóló nyilatkozatot <http://www.kormany.hu/hu/honvedelmi-miniszterium/hirek/alairtak-a-v4-es-harccsoport-felallitasarol-szolo-nyilatkozatot> [available 05.05.2013].

<sup>9</sup> Steadfast Jazz 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Allied Joint Force Command-Brunssum.

initiative “Visible Assurance” approved at the Lisbon summit in 2010, as well as the cohesion and commitment of NATO<sup>11</sup>.

The role of Hungary and Poland in the multinational defence cooperation is also manifested in the joint participation of the Strategic Airlift Capability (SAC) programme. So far, 12 countries have joined the SAC programme – 10 NATO member states (the USA, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovenia) and two NATO Partnership for Peace participant states (Sweden and Finland).

The participating nations have agreed to establish a common wing consisting of Boeing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft to be jointly maintained and funded. The Heavy Airlift Wing (HAW) participating in the programme operating from the Pápa Air Base of the Hungarian Defence Forces commenced its operation on 27 July 2009 and achieved its full operational capability on 14 November 2012. The HAW – whose 135-strong military and civilian personnel are provided by the SAC nations – already operates three of the abovementioned long range transport aircraft<sup>12</sup>.

Strategic airlift is becoming increasingly important these days, since rapid reaction is essential in crisis situations. The aim of the SAC programme is to provide the participating nations with long-range military airlift safely and effectively including the appropriate personnel, infrastructure and logistic support. In accordance with the initial plans, the strategic airlift capability utilised in different domestic and international operations is to be maintained for at least 30 years. The member states attain such an airlift capability by the common acquisition, sharing and operation of the wing that most of them would not be able to gain otherwise. Since its establishment and activation, the C-17s of the HAW have carried out more than 600 missions and transported 29,000 metric tons of cargo and more than 38,000 passengers. The transport aircraft of the HAW participated in a wide range of operations in accordance with the requirements of the member states. Since 2009, most of the operations have been transport tasks to Afghanistan. The HAW started its latest operation in March this year, playing a role in the support

11 83/2013. (HK 3.) HVKF parancs, Honvédelmi Közlöny, Budapest 2013, p. 218.

12 <http://www.heavyairliftwing.org/faq/faq> [available: 15.05.2013].

of the Mali mission in agreement with the resolution of the UN Security Council. It is of paramount importance for Hungary that in this programme a permanent NATO presence/installation was established in the territory of the country.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that the tasks of the allied forces are becoming increasingly wide and complex. The constantly changing requirements can only be met if various types of national development endorse new capabilities. Hungary carries out all its national development with regard to these considerations and acquires the capabilities employed in allied operations through regular exercises. The Polish-Hungarian cooperation will presumably become stronger, which is a positive development for both these nations and the alliance.

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