

FROM SYSTEM TO MISSION

LTC Assoc.Prof. Mihai NEAG, PhD

Ileana Metea

„Nicolae Bălcescu“ Land Forces Academy

„The first task of our public life is to thrive towards the hope for values rather than towards the certainty of destruction and to do that we must start by preserving the chances for peace, refusing to help the forces of war, no matter the color they chose as disguise“
(Albert Camus)

Abstract

This paper aims to be a bridge between the idea developed by what is a system in forms and organization, with references to the military organization and what it means, exemplifying on one of the concrete applications represented by the missions executed within the military system. We will present the implications determined by the systemic organization on the military stability operations and the causal determinations among them. If the beginning is more theoretical and notional, the second is a log of some aspects of implementation of the management of the military structures at a tactical level, as they actually occur.

Introduction

The science of management is turning into one of the most important sciences, by providing rational methods and very safe ones of addressing issues.

Within a reality representation, the system as concept reveals mostly, the interaction, the correlation, the relations between elements of a whole, its

organization, and in some ways the notion of system is the opposite of chaos. The science of management sees nature as a hierarchy of systems that are inclusive and surpassing of themselves, that signify all the actions performed in order to achieve one goal. However, creating a system doesn't necessarily mean a clear-cut, overall disorder removal in the respective part of the environment, but a reduction of disorder on a smaller or larger scale. Mircea Malița, in one of his works pointed out that "systems can be controlled either directly by the human being or by means of the human being"¹. The intention of the general theory of systems is to reveal properties, principles and laws that apply to systems in general, independent from their variety or the nature of their components. The main consequence of theory is the introduction of a new scientific vision – the systemic one – due to the methodological virtues of the conceptual triad "system-structure-function", within the research of totalities (organized ensembles).

1. The System and the Dynamics of Its Organization

The system can be defined, at a general level, as an ensemble of elements that are connected in an organized manner and among which dynamic relations can be established. As far as the social field is concerned, the notion of system represents an allotment of functions and tasks, a specific type of organization, thus conceived for people to be able to make the best decisions for the achievement of their goals.

Generally speaking, a system is the ensemble of interconnected elements, that actively or potentially interact and that can be identified in any given field, be it physical, social or conceptual. A quick analysis of the aforementioned we can draw the conclusion that the system is an ensemble of interactive elements, that make an organized whole, with specific properties and functions, different from

¹ Mircea, Malița, *Aurul cenușiu*, București, Editura Dacia, 1971, p.102

those of the element in its composition, a distinct and relatively autonomous entity that can be found in any given field (physical, biological, social, etc.)²

The elements of the system are structural totalities, subsystems, where the laws of the whole are not identical to those of its components. The complement of the concept of system is that of environment, where elements from outside of the system are included and they influence or are influenced by it.

The organization and functioning of a system must ensure both the achievement of tasks under optimum circumstances and the compliance of people's requests that make these tasks complete; the system, as a whole, has the duty to replace old components, introduce and assimilate new ones, to ensure their optimum interweaving, thriving for constant improvement. The functioning of a system imposes a separation of what is objective and what it could conceive, elaborate and deliberate. The functional approach of any given system is the result of objective mechanisms, or of mechanisms that result from actions conceived in the economic, administrative, cultural field, a.s.o. the functioning of the system must take into consideration the behavior of the system in action, including the action within that system, the role of instrument, that is the system finality. An essential feature of any system is that it connects with all of its components. The way the system receives environmental influences, works with them and transfers them onto the same environment they came from makes the system find itself in action.³

3. Military Organization's Specifics

Military organizations have specificities that make them different from other social collectivities, and, according to the category of officers, differences

² Mircea, Stoica,(coord.), *Managementul organizațiilor militare*, Buletinul Învățământului Militar, anul III, nr. 3-4, București, 1996, p.56

³ Neculai, Bălan, Dumitru, Iacob, (coord.), *Teoria organizațiilor*, Buletinul Învățământului Militar, anul III, nr. 1-2, București, 1996, p.27

appear within them as well – soldiers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers or soldiers. Therefore, some aspects that define organizational culture, the climate and cohesion of military organizations must be underlined.

First of all, the values of the military are generally similar to those of the society as a whole, but according to the specific of the military organization they get nuances and interpretations, evaluations and effects. Relationships in the military are rigorously stated, oriented and controlled so that they fully comply with the objective demands of the military institution, considering the opportunity of actions in relation with the reality of the battle field, the convergence of efforts, unconditioned subordination, prompt execution of orders, and the cohesion of units all in compliance with the demands of military discipline.

There is a high degree of formality and standardization, the activity of components and their interaction being controlled by means of rules and procedures, by strong hierarchization. Communication and interaction are strictly established. Hierarchy is the main source of power with people being selected according to their fulfillment of tasks.

A series of values and attitudes are very important in the group's activity, such as: hierarchy, authority, discipline (obedience), loyalty for the commandant-in-chief, group interest, cooperation, competence, corps spirit a.s.o. rules have the role of conserving these values, therefore of imposing them to individuals. Practice has proved that performance in terms of instruction is obtained under specific circumstances of the organizational environment that favor human potential valorization and the competition between individuals, groups and collectives⁴.

As a consequence of the changes occurred in national and international contexts and the considerable diminish of conflict occurrence, specific to the

⁴ Gl. bg. Mihai, Chiriță, *Marile unități din forțele terestre în operațiile de stabilitate și sprijin, a IV-a Conferința doctrinară a forțelor terestre*, București, 2006, p.32

Cold War era, the type and content of missions have changed and the emphasis lies on rules of engagement, reorganization of structure, downsizing of troops and improvement of equipment. It is considered that the quantitative aspect of forces is less important and that modern weapons and equipment are needed, and training at professional level is perceived as paramount in importance.

The reform of the Romanian Army for the future of our security environment has provided the Romanian Army with the following objectives:

- Operationalization of the structures that are designed for collective defense within the Alliance at NATO standards and the improvement of the decision making process, according to signed agreements;
- Improvement of human resource management;
- Improvement of financial resources management;
- Fast initiation of process of modernization according to available financial resources, for the increase of NATO interoperability and for consolidation of Romania's position within the Alliance;
- Elimination of bureaucratic blockages;
- Improvement of social protection of personnel;
- Improvement of benefits, infrastructure and medical assistance.⁵

4. Systemic and Actional Characteristics of Tactical Microstructures in International Missions

Conflict amplitude has changed dramatically over the past few years by the very asymmetries of confrontations and by the use of specific technology in military issues. The challenges of the regional or international security environment have great effect on the character, nature and content of the Romanian Army's missions. Given these elements, forces capable of getting

⁵ S.M.G./P.F.-3.15, Manualul pregătirii și executării misiunilor militare în afara teritoriului statului român de către contingentele naționale, Buzău, 2005, pp.22-30.

organized and reorganized rapidly and efficiently in view of various mission, that can be dispersed and spread, are needed. Therefore, the military have to be extremely flexible and able to perform different types of operations, specific to stability, support and conflict operations.

From the very beginning of Romanian participation in this type of missions, the units sent have constantly improved their operation procedures, nowadays the professionalism of our units being unanimously acknowledged, but most of all their ability to adapt to the social environment specific to the various types of populations to be found in theatres of operations. Stability and support operations occur usually on a multinational background, this is why it is highly necessary to have all doctrines and basis concepts concerning these operations synchronized, coming up with a common language, developing common work procedures for the success of these missions.

Romania's military strategy underlines that "participating in multinational peace-support operations stands for one of the strategic missions of the military for the state of peace". A series of principles lie at the basis of stability and support operations: basic, operational and the ones that condition cooperation relationships. Therefore, the basis principles are; legitimacy, active and continuous support provided by the Security Council, full engagement of the countries participating with troops, establishment of a clear and tangible mandate, the force impartiality and objectivity, as well as neutrality⁶.

Given the fact that usually stability and support operations are conducted together with international organizations, non-governmental organizations and private-volunteer organizations, the command relations will have some peculiarities, the structure of command having to ensure integration as efficiently as possible of all military components possibilities. The command of operations can be defined as the military process used by the commandant to impose his will and intent, assisted in doing so by his staff that organizes,

⁶ S.M.G./L-2, *Doctrina întrunită pentru mișcare și transport*, București, 2006, p.16.

conducts and coordinates all the assigned tasks. These two components, command and control, put together, form the C2 concept, necessary for the planning, coordination and conduct of operations.⁷

The infantry platoon/company performs stability and support operations based on operation plans drafted by superiors and on their mandate, within the infantry national battalion, most of the times, or part of force task-forces with an international component. Generally speaking, the actions part of stability and support operations are conducted in a difficult, ever-changing environment, governed by rules different from classic conventional military actions. Commandants and subunits must adapt easily to the frequent change of situations and to be able to handle the new challenges that may occur during these types of operations.

The forces nominated to take part in missions abroad have to fulfill the next stages: force generation, mission accomplishment, and recovery. The mission accomplishment phase includes: dislocation, engagement and redeployed.

○ *Generating force* (training before departure) deals with the next aspects: personnel selection, training and logistics support. All the activities have to be well synchronized so that the unit could have the requested operational capability in an established amount of time.

Unit's tasks are various with the following main objectives:

- Operational planning;
- Force defense system;
- Mission special training;
- Equipment functioning;
- Supplies packaging;
- Technique embarkation;

⁷ L-14/1, Instrucțiuni privind operațiunile de mișcare și transport ale unităților și marilor unități, București, 2005, p.20.

- National territory transportation (according to a detailed plan drafted in advance);

Ground transportation on national territory or in theatres of operation is performed with own capabilities as well as with military and civilian support means. The railway will be used for long distances and for huge amounts of equipment and materials.⁸ Naval transportation it is the main means for resources and personnel to be dislocated. Air transportation ensures all personnel movement and partly the resources' as well.

The next steps after unit arrival are reception, staging, onward movement and integration - RSO&I of the battalion in the theater of operations. In this stage, the collective cooperation between NSE and HNS is essential. *Reception* is the process of arrival, unload, sort and local transportation of personnel, equipment and resources arrived in POD. This action will be performed in the Marshalling Area. In the same location food supplies, medical assistance and accommodation are to be ensured. *Staging* consists of assembling and organizing personnel, supply, equipment and materials arrived in the Marshalling Area for the purpose of movement. In this same area food supplies, medical assistance and accommodation are to be ensured. *Onward moving* means to reposition the unit in a location from which it can fulfill its tasks. These actions imply movement from reception and staging areas to tactical assembly area.⁹ *Integration* is the process that ensures the battalion's structure as it was planned for the mission in order to be engaged as a unique structure in tactical assembly area. This means that the unit is operationally ready and the transfer of authority has been performed. The Task Force Command Headquarters exerts operational control and delivers all mission orders. Depending on the existing situation the operationally-ready and the

⁸ L-14/1, Instrucțiuni privind operațiunile de mișcare și transport ale unităților și marilor unități, București, 2005, p.21

⁹ FM 100-17-3, Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration, 1999, p.14

transfer of authority can be performed in one of the aforementioned areas.

Engaging means that the unit will take an active part in the operation, with all its capabilities, according to Romania's memorandum and under Task Force Command Headquarters' control. Should the mission be accomplished earlier than the initial estimated time, right after decisive operations, the unit will redeployed after force withdrawal and transition.

Redeployment essentially means almost the same thing as deployment that is moving logistics and troops from one area to another, after fulfillment of the mission. Redeployment has to four stages: pre redeployment actions in POEs, strategically movement into PODs, movement to unit peace time location.

Once the mission is accomplished the unit will proceed to the established assembly areas or straight to redeployment assembly areas. This is the place where the TOA takes place. The activities performed in these areas prepare the unit for movement¹⁰. Displacement within a theatre of operations can be performed directly from the Redeployment Assembly Area (RAA) towards Marshalling Areas correspondent to Points of Exit (POEs) or by passing Staging Areas, depending on the distance that has to be covered, the level of force retracing or the conditions provided by the theatre of operations. In embarking points Host Nation Support elements, movement coordination structures and cooperation with HNS elements stand in the foreground. Activities in embarking points mostly deal with: container embarkment, customs inspection, personnel embarkment, passenger and goods lists check-up.

Strategic displacement can be performed by air or sea and it lasts from the first departure (take off) until last transport of the unit reaches ground. When PODs are reached, the units start the reception process, followed by the peace-

¹⁰ FM 3-93, The Army in Theater Operations, 2005, p.5.

settlement of the unit, depending on the arrival of transportation and the means that the unit has available. The reception is the process of strategic materials and personnel incoming, local transportation, supply personnel with food, medical care, accommodation, a.s.o.

The regeneration of the forces phase has to do with granting a period of recovery, the normal program of instruction or military education is in store, stocks are filled in, and equipment is technically reviewed.

In conflicts, foes study one another's action doctrine, searching for ways to counteract all advantage the adversary might have and trying to make the best of its own advantages, in order to place the other party at critical points. Military strategies used in recent conflicts prove the wish to keep under control the negative effects of constraints exerted by the reduction of the battlefield on the armed forces' command and control capabilities. The purpose of force constriction is to create critical moments that would determine the foe to give up military action. Besides directed physical actions other actions are performed in order to mislead the opponent and to affect its will and motivation. Once these critical moments are created they are directed towards the foe's command and control system, until its power to resist be assimilated, or until the losses force it to stop all military actions.

Stability and support operations are, usually, nonlinear and isolated and are deployed according to principles specific to armed fighting, depending on the situation created. Commandants adjust the operational framework, the operational art and factors to the situation in hand. They decide upon decisive operations, the battle field modeling operations, or the ones that are necessary for the success of the mission. When commanders visualize such an operation, they keep in mind the fact that foes have to be defined differently (for instance the foe may comprise illegal groups, famine, disease, disasters), and will come up with the role that civilians have in constituting the centre of gravity.

From the principle of stating objectives comes the necessity to establish the success factors specific to every mission, the optimum ways to get to the foe's center of gravity, depending on the limitations and constraints imposed by the political or by the military to all military actions, as well as to identify the causes that could affect the centers of gravity, be it of the own force or of that of the opponent's. It is possible, for instance, that during a peace-support operation, the parties involved in the conflict attack the military in the forces that try to intervene, to come between, changing their operational centers of gravity into force groups whose actions are meant to change the mission.

The UN humanitarian mission in Somalia – UNOSOM I reached a dead end in November of 1992, because of the impossibility of Somalia's opposing tribes to reach an agreement concerning UN and NGO humanitarian assistance. Consequently, in December, 4th 1992, The UN Security Council authorized the use of any means for the international force protection, as it initiated a peace-enforcement operation "Operation Restore Hope", deployed between December 1992 and May 1993, under US guidance.

This is a typical mandate exchange during a mission, as a result of the change in the opponent's attitude and centre of gravity, at operational level.

Operation safety is performed based on the right to self-defense against hostile actions. The task-force commandant must not allow any sort of threat against his troops. The uncertain nature of some circumstances and conditions in stability and support operations, together with any military action's potential to generate fast changes make it mandatory for security to be of utmost importance for the protection of the forces.

In stability and support operations the sources that may influence the perceptions and decisions of the commandant include: the media, information sources, public opinion's reactions. The impeccable planning and deploying of psychological operations and an efficient information management, all

contribute to the legitimacy of effort made by a coalition in an area of operations as well as to the maintaining at low levels the emerging possible threats.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bălan, Neculai, Iacob, Dumitru (coord.) – *Teoria organizațiilor*, Buletinul Învățământului Militar, anul III, nr. 1-2, București, 1996.
2. Stoica, Mircea (coord.) – *Managementul organizațiilor militare*, Buletinul Învățământului Militar, anul III, nr. 3-4, București, 1996.
3. Vlăsceanu, Mihaela – *Psihosociologia organizațiilor și conducerii*, Editura Paideia, București, 1993.
4. Zamfir, Cătălin – *Dezvoltarea umană a întreprinderii*, Editura Academiei, București, 1980.
5. Zlate, Mielu – *Psihologia muncii*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1981.
6. Zorlențan, Tiberiu, Burduș, Eugen, Căprărescu, Gheorghiiță – *Managementul organizației*, Editura Economică, București, 1998.
7. Revista forțelor terestre nr. 1/2007
8. Gl. bg. Mihai Chiriță, Marile unități din forțele terestre în operațiile de stabilitate și sprijin, a IV-a Conferința doctrinară a forțelor terestre, București, 2006.
9. F.T./I-3 Manualul pentru luptă al companiei de infanterie, Făgăraș, 2006, art. 800.
10. S.M.G./P.F.-3.15, Manualul pregătirii și executării misiunilor militare în afara teritoriului statului român de către contingentele naționale, Buzău, 2005.
11. S.M.G./L-2, Doctrina întrunită pentru mișcare și transport, București, 2006.
12. L-14/1, Instrucțiuni privind operațiunile de mișcare și transport ale unităților și marilor unități, București, 2005.
13. FM 3-93, The Army in Theater Operations, 2005.
14. FM 100-17-3, Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration, 1999.