

## CHALLENGES AND THREATS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AS THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S HYBRID WAR

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**Abstract:** The current situation in Ukraine confirms that the European thesis on solving conflicts with peace categories and through the road of diplomacy does not work in a perfect way. The evaluation of the Russian Federation's activity (RF) after occupying the Crimea shows that strategic objectives of Moscow spread farther. In the strategic dimension the hybrid war led by Moscow is measured up against the entire NATO as perceived being the main threat. Past experiences in Ukraine and the theory assessment show that the new generation war run by the RF embraces multi-storey efforts directed at the state's function destabilizing, changing the internal order or/and leading to the state's bankruptcy not even necessarily seizing its territory. The complex nature of the hybrid threats requires undertaking integrated actions by the international community. It seems it will be possible to reach it while having the common NATO and EU doctrine on the hybrid threats counteraction. States, particularly those endangered, should draw up and implement their own accustomed strategy of the national security that will let opposing both classical and hybrid threats, with as well as without the NATO aid.

**Keywords:** hybrid war, threats, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, NATO, the European Union.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Russian aggression in Ukraine in 2014 and the illegal annexation of Crimea has been the first case of forceful movement of the borderlines and incorporation of another state into the territory of aggressor since the end of the Second World War. The event changed the perception of threats to the world, especially to Europe and direct neighbors of the Russian Federation (RF). Infringement of the international rules on the peace and international security took place in defiance of the decisions of the United Nations Charter of the USA even though Russia is a permanent member of the UN. In spite of the fact that Russia signed the Final Act of the Security Conference and Cooperation in Helsinki [9] in 1975, The Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in 1994 is a member of the NATO-Russia Council and European Council; it does not comply with the member decisions, documents and settlements. Unprecedented infringement by Moscow the international law, restoration of the power of Russia, conduction of the expansion policy and intimidation of the West took place after all in the circumstance of quiet acceptance of the NATO and EU what can an expression of the lack of strategy of response. Restlessness of the state of former Russian republics very dependent on Russia in terms of economy and energy [28] cause W. Putin to say that the armed force of the RF can be used for protection of the Russian-speaking people that stay outside the Russian state [24]. These countries are afraid that Ukraine scenario of destabilization of the institution of state, chaos and unrighteousness can be repeated.

The situation in Ukraine confirms that the thesis of the European reasoning in the categories of peace and conflict-solving through diplomacy did not testify, as well as the frequently used throughout the last decades by the USA the strategy of *hard power*, namely the use of regular armed force. Engagement into the Russian Federation on Ukraine after the exit

from the country by W. Janukowicz opens a new epoch of the Russian strategy in reaching its political objectives, and on the other hand, changes the paradigm of employing the regular force in modern wars referred to as hybrid, non-linear or new generation wars. It turned out that the second decade of twenty first century is the decade of restricted use of the armed force which is proved by the strategy and practice of the USA, China and concealment of the use of the force by the RF in Abkhazia, the South Ossetia or Transnistria [18]. Russia in pursuit of expansion and restoration of its great power combines many so far well know methods of the use of force with new abilities gathered mainly thanks to new technologies as well as the instruments of non-military influence with modern concept of holistic and multi-dimensional influence on the weaker elements of defensive force of a hostile state. Centered structure of command and process of leadership allows leading long-standing, coordinated operations in diplomatic, informational, economic, military and cybernetic dimension. This way, Moscow reaches its strategic objectives without an official warfare. Other methods may embrace the threat of the use of nuclear weapon [10], mass use of regular armed force and pressuring through creating frozen conflicts.

The RF operation on Ukraine strengthens the conviction that European-Atlantic security becomes less and less stable and the security environment undergoes rapid transformations. Nowadays, the largest threats are posed by the Russian strategic objectives, Military Doctrine and ability possession [21].

The aim of the article is to define challenges and threats for security resulting from the concept of hybrid warfare led by the RF as well as identification of counteractive methods. Results of researches are presented by solving the problems as follow:

1. What the essence of warfare is expressed by?
2. What challenges and threats for safety do result from the concept of hybrid warfare?
3. How should the hybrid threats be counteracted?

## 2 DEFINITION OF THE HYBRID WARFARE

The theory of threats and hybrid warfare occurs when the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah closes in 2006 and basically refers to the conditionings of events of the last decade. Definitions formulated [16] do not correspond fully with what we observe in Ukraine. F. Hoffman emphasizes that the characteristic of hybrid warfare is commonness of the acts of terrorism and variety of crime forms [15]. He defined hybrid threats as an opponent who simultaneously and adaptably uses integrated combination of conventional weapon and irregular tactics, terrorism and criminal elements on the battlefield in order to reach political goals [16]. The definition above does not work in the confrontation with non-kinetic threats that take place commonly in Ukrainian conflict. Nevertheless, it indicates that as a result of hybrid warfare the political goals are reached which means that operationalization of the concept serves for realization of the strategy. Ukrainian experience proves it. Thus, the concept of hybrid warfare as distinct from those of last decades should be considered in strategical categories. Therefore, the thesis should be posed that it inscribes well in Clausewitz's paradigm of warfare conduction which says that war is only a continuation of policy by other means [11]. A. Jacobs and G. Lascoasnjaras (2015) propose a very general but also universal definition of hybrid warfare which would seem to be conceivable if it was not limited to operations with the use of violence. In their meaning, the concept of *hybrid warfare means a form of conflict with the application of violence which state and non-state actors are involved in using conventional and unconventional means of influence not limited to the battlefield or a specific unconventional of influence, not limited to the battlefield or a specific, physical territory* [17]. In the hybrid warfare, the space of influence as distinct from a traditional warfare does not limit to physical dimension and is present in other dimensions in which regular armed forces did not influence so far. Its essence is to cause planned and coveted effects which are synchronized. A. Deep states that the effects are received thanks to the employment of asymmetric technics and tactics are synchronized on multi-dimensional battlefield [13]. Multi-dimensional character of fight and the significance of synergy of the effects can be seen also by F. Hoffman [15]. His descriptive approach to the threats and hybrid warfare seems to be correct one. It is believed that hybrid warfare combines a variety of fight models and involves classical military abilities, irregular tactics applied by

irregular formations, terroristic acts, common violence and intimidation as well as criminal chaos. To follow the course, he believes that the hybrid warfare can be conducted both by state and non-state actors. He thinks that multimodal activities can be implemented by separated subjects (or even one subject), but generally they are operationally and tactically directed in the main battlefield aimed at reaching the effect of synergy in physical and psychological dimension of conflict [15]. J. Messner perceived the significance of psychological dimension. He said that informational and psychological impacts were the factors that determine the victory or failure in fight. He posed the thesis that in hybrid warfare psychology was its fourth dimension [25]. Then, as opposed to the classical war the aim of hybrid warfare is not an occupation of the territory of a hostile state but an occupation of the awareness of its society.

## 3 CHALLENGES AND THREATS OF THE HYBRID WARFARE

The assessment of Russian activities in order to conquer Crimea and involve in the war in Donbas points out that the strategic objectives of Moscow do not limit to destabilization of the situation on Ukraine, pressuring the authorities in Kijow and realization of the plan of making New Russia, but they do not go further. Restoration of the great power status of Russia and developing the spheres of influence endanger the states of the East of Europe. Hybrid warfare led by Moscow in strategical dimension is measured up against the entire NATO which is perceived as the main threat. Putin will try to humiliate NATO and undermine its reliability of alliance [28]. Russian new approach to war waging without its official declaration combines many recognizable elements with modern concept of influence of the so-called hard and soft one, with an emphasis of the other [19]. The Russian strategy does not limit to irregular armed force as it is defined by Hoffman, but predicts the use of hybrid instrument being in disposal of the entire state. Contemporary wars do not limit to the use of regular armed force. Thanks to centralized structure of command and the process of decision, Russia can lead long-lasting, coordinated operations in the diplomatic, informational, economic, military and cybernetic dimension. This way, Moscow reaches its strategic objectives without an official warfare. It turned out that non-military instruments fail to provide immediate verdicts; nonetheless, they are more effective than the armed force. The armed force as the Russian Military Doctrine indicates will be always employed in modern conflicts, but only when the influence of non-military instruments will appear to be ineffective and only in the times deciding about the final results of a conflict [10]. The phenomenon of hybrid warfare consists in

reaching strategic objectives without the need to wage a military struggle in traditional sense. It testifies the thesis posed by J. Messner who stated that the end of the twenty century put an end to the epoch of warfare according to Clausewitz's opinion as a clash of two opposing armies [25].

Russia permanently introduces the state of threat for all member states of NATO which is proved by making demonstrative flights but of armed fighter-bombers and strategic bombers. Russia provokes and tests the NATO defense system through playing with submarines in the Baltic Sea [30]. Russia runs also aggressive exercise based on the scenario of aggressive operations with the use of nuclear weapon throughout its own territory and arctic area. Defense budget raises constantly and pursue gathering new capabilities by programmes of the development of armed force planned for the period from 2010 to 2020 [31]. The background for the reforms of Russian armed force will be the concept of network centrality and non-linearity [23]. J. Bērziņš points out that in the transformation of Russian armed force the following priorities will apply [5]:

1. Departing from direct destruction in favour of direct influence;
2. Departing from direct elimination of an adversary in favour of drawing it closer and convincing him to join the attacking side;
3. Departing from armoured warfare in favour of culture warfare;
4. Departing from the use of regular general military subdivisions in favour of the compact, networked subdivisions of variety of specialisations, integrated in the informational space and private military companies;
5. Departing from traditional, tridimensional fight in favour of the informational/psychological fight and perception fight;
6. Departing from direct clashes of armies in favour of non-contact fight.

As a result of the realization of the armed force development programmes the Russian Federation intend to possess new capabilities of psychological operations, strategical misconception and strategical communication. The aim of the Russian reforms is taking strategical initiative which is the condition of victory.

Kremlin effectively applies *maskirovka* (masking) which is a part of Russian doctrine of 1930 on the strategical, operational and tactical level. However, what used to be technics of battlefield nowadays has become a strategical state tool and overshadows the entire Europe [19]. It is supported by informational fight which intends to mislead in differentiating between what is true and false, between the reality and fantasy. In the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation of 2014 there were found records on asymmetric methods of operation that let eliminating the advantage of an

enemy, participating in the conflicts of irregular subdivisions of the armed force and private military companies. An important emphasis was put on the use of political powers and social movements directed and funded from outside [8].

Changes in the views of Russian strategists on war conduction one can see in the articles and public speeches made by the Chief of the Russian Federation General Staff [4]. Gerasimov general presented twentieth century war model called new generation war in which special emphasis is put on the measures of non-military impact used for political and strategical objectives achievement. Gerasimov can see the significance of modern technologies. Therefore, he maintains that precise strikes from a distance on selected objects of states critical infrastructure and selected military objects will be new non-contact form of future fight [4]. For the asymmetry and destabilization of hostile state throughout its territory and in all dimensions of its function he refers also the future wars as non-linear ones [14]. Foregoing experiences in Ukraine and the assessment of theories indicates that new generation warfare includes multi-storey efforts oriented towards destabilization of state function and transformation in its internal order. As opposed to the conventional warfare a centre of gravity of new generation war will be centered in the society [3]. Russian perception of modern war is based on the idea of playing war in people's minds which was pointed out by Messner. In consequence it leads to large-scale informational impact in order to gain the upper hand in their psyche, leads to frustration and moral decay of both the armoured subdivisions and civil people. In a new generation war the pursuit of deployment of combat subdivisions of the armed force only in the last resort. On the other hand, an adversary will be impelled to engage its whole potential. It will to influence the government and the entire state destructively which as a result is to lead to its failure [3]. Russian operations in Ukraine unambiguously indicate that security environment in Europe becomes unpredictable. The aim of Russian hybrid impact is pressuring and destabilization of neighbouring states without the need to seize the territory. Combination and synchronization of camouflaged non-military operations cause the effect of surprise and handicap the adequate reaction especially of international organizations functioning on the base of consensus. Hybrid warfare is dangerous, because it is easy, cheap for external aggressor yet costly and negative in its consequences for the defending one [26]. Blackmail about the use by RF nuclear weapon and large-scale use of militaries and conventional weapon as well as creating frozen conflicts is a large threat for the security of Euro-Atlantic area. In order not to prevent a large-scale crisis situation the protective operations are deliberately taken up.

#### 4 STANDING UP TO HYBRID THREATS

Coordinated and asymmetric operations by RF with employment of many instruments create a strategic ambiguity. Through complex and multidimensional influence Russia intentionally sends wrong signals, which masks its real intentions, confounds adversaries, impedes decisive process and make a response ineffective. Putin in his pursuit of division of West and influencing the weakest elements by means of hybrid strategy with the use of conventional and unconventional tactics paradoxically led to approach of NATO and the European Union (EU). Awareness of seriousness of the situation made NATO collective defense to be its highest priority and EU wants to contribute to the security as much as possible in both political and military field.

In order to ensure preparedness of the Alliance to respond to new challenges in the security area, in Newport Summit the "Readiness Action Plan" (RAP) was approved. The plan aims to enforce a collective defense of the Alliance as well as enhance the capability of crisis management. The plan elements involve measures referring to both constant need of ensuring Allies' security and strategic adaptation of forces and military measures of the Alliance to new challenges in security area [1].

In the framework of the continuation of the foregoing security measures of allied militaries applied in 2014 the Alliance decided to maintain continuous and rotational presence of Allied armies on the ground, at sea and in the air of the Eastern flank territory as well as the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Sea. The alliance will continue to perform intensified exercises, especially in the Eastern flank territory. Scenarios of those exercises will be tailored to present challenges, particularly the threats coming from the East. Situational awareness will be enhanced by flights of AWACS aircrafts on the Eastern flank, namely, in Poland and Romania as well as by increasing the exchange of reconnaissance and intelligence information between allies and NATO's Command Structure [34]. Strengthened Baltic Air Policing will be maintained consisting of 16 aircrafts based on Siauliai airport in Lithuania, Amari in Estonia and Malbork. It is planned to enhance the cooperation between NATO's Command Structure and national commands, and up-dating of defensive plans and potential one for the countries of the Eastern flank [1].

The second part of the „Readiness Action Plan” involves adaptation measures essential to ensure a full ability of the Alliance to live up to new challenges in the security area. As part of the resources the Alliance will make reforms of NATO Response Force (NRF). It is planned to increase its number from 13 thousand to 25 thousand of soldiers. Nowadays, the NRF functioning collection will be

enforced by hard and antiaircraft units prepared to rapid deployment in the region threatened. Within the framework of NRF Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) the so-called "Spearhead Force" will be organized. It will be a unit in size of the brigade of ground troops consisted of approximately 5 thousand supported by elements of the rest military force (maritime, air and special ones). VJTF should be capable of deployment in region threatened within 2 to 5 days since decision is made. Readiness of the elements of VJTF will be examined as part of exercises announced shortly before. Achieving complete operational readiness of VJTF is anticipated for 2016 [1]. Until then, the part of temporary VJTF will play the elements of NATO Response Force Collection of 2015 consisted of German, Dutch and Norway subdivisions [20].

Justification of decision-making process is planned in the scope of VJTF force activation. Nowadays, in order to use NATO Response Force the consent of North-Atlantic Council is required which delay the process of their activation. According to the preliminary assumptions, VJTF unit will be subordinated to NATO Command Structure on a rotational basis to one of NATO High Readiness corpses [1]. In the case of its use in NATO Eastern flank, the command of the unit would be taken up by Multinational Corps Northeast from Szczecin [6].

Parallel to the implementation of „Readiness Action Plan” the Alliance will work on strengthening capabilities in the area of response to the hybrid warfare which includes a wide spectrum of overt and covert as well as military, paramilitary and civil operations closely coordinated. The Alliance should possess the tools and procedures necessary for effective deterrence and reaction to the threats. For this reason strategic communication will be improved, new sceneries of exercises considering hybrid threats will be drawn up and coordination of NATO operations with partner states and organizations will be strengthened [1]. Critics claim that NATO prepares classical response against unconventional operations of RF. Undoubtedly, the unconventional abilities will be also needed to counteract the hybrid warfare including disinformation counteraction, subversive operations, or cyberattacks. Although decisions made by Wales determine some directions of counteracting hybrid threats, but it seems that they are the consequence of traditional thinking. It is simply impossible to face the new idea by old methods. One may ask a question here: will VJTF be able to stand up against non-state actors applying unconventional methods of fight, procedures and technics or agents running subversive activity, spreading chaos, terror and intimidation? Is not it necessary in the first place to draw up a complex untraditional strategy enabling both collective and single state being the target of hybrid attack to response [29]? Consequences of new strategy introduction need to find its reflection

in the doctrine of armed force use, programmes and trainings. However, the most important are the changes in mentality of leaders and soldiers that enable to fight in new quality conditionings. In the aspect of the operation conducted in Crimea which was not an armed attack but operationalized new form of warfare, one can ask a question: are possible legal footings of NATO and the response instruments available adequate to contemporary wars requirements called by Gerasimov *new generation wars* [4]. The momentum and scale of military operations by RF are deliberately restricted and maintained by aggressor at the level below possibly unambiguously identifiable the threshold of regular open war [2]. NATO will find it much difficult to response as the level of aggression maintain below the criteria adopted for classical threats will not allow applying collective defense instruments as it was stipulated in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty on the armed assault to one or more side of Alliance (Artykuł .., 1949). Readiness Action Plan signed in Newport should be the foundation stone of deeper changes of records in Article 5 and drawing up a new NATO strategy concept which will explicitly indicate not only how to stand up against complex hybrid threats [19].

European Union claims that hybrid threats will evaluate along with the development of new technologies. It is assessed that activities should be taken up for security of sensitive elements of state security system. The core of defense philosophy against hybrid threats consists in complex recognition of the effects possible to withstand threats. It seems to be a correct assumption that hybrid strike is designed and oriented towards the most vulnerable elements of state function [4]. In the case of Ukraine the critical ones include:

- 1) Weak government, state institution and corruption;
- 2) Weakness of security structures and state defense;
- 3) Marginalization of Russian-speaking population;
- 4) Much dependence on Russian supply of oil and gas [12].

Ukrainian defense system likewise of other states traditionally was prepared to defend against regular state armed force. It turned out that it did not live up to the requirements being the consequence of non-state actors' appearance leading the so-called *proxy war*. The thesis was proved that the sensitive areas and crucial ones for state function in the same time are: economy, energetic sector and fuel system, critical infrastructure, financial system, communication system and transport [4]. In this aspect, especially important for EU will be provision of energetic security through a supply of energy from outside and diversification of its sources. Well-recognized its own weaknesses are the basis for preparing effective security and defense system against hybrid threats [12].

The strategy of counteracting hybrid threats must consider conviction of a possible aggressor on the consequences of an operation and the price he would need to pay. Deterrence can be realized in two stages. Firstly, the consequence of sanction can be expressed by punitive operations which lead as a result to severe damages on the attacking side and may turn out to be inviable. Secondly, it can significantly raise the level of critical infrastructure and prepare the society to unpredictable consequences and negative events [4]. There is a great room for development in searching the ways of cooperation between EU and NATO in preparing a complex collection of tools for counteracting hybrid threats. Integrated operation of those organizations based on a common doctrine can be the future fundamental pillar of deterrence [12].

In conclusion it should be said that complexity of hybrid threats requires a strategy based on which the politics and guidelines for taking up coherent EU operations need to be shaped. The conclusions of debate on hybrid threats must find its reflection in new strategy of EU security. If common with NATO strategy of counteracting hybrid threats are not drawn up the EU strategy will need to be complementary with NATO strategy. Drawing up a common strategy of counteracting hybrid threats is a good chance for improvement of the relationship between EU and NATO. It should be the ground of mutual support [4]. Common EU security and defense policies in the aspect of counteracting hybrid threats is a good base for exchange of the intelligence information, building new capabilities, including situational awareness and training and exercises conduction. The priority for EU is establishment of a cell integrating information on hybrid threats. It will have a crucial meaning for warning on threats and preparing adequate response. Communication strategy will considerably improve the message directed to the Russian Federation as well as preparing of the response to any expressions of disinformation [4].

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Taking into account a lack of firm reaction of the West, decreasing the capabilities of Ukrainian Armed Force and constantly enforced presence of Russian armies on the territory of Ukraine spreading of territorial conflict cannot be excluded as well as the intention of taking territorial control over as far as Nadniestrz and in the same time cutting off Ukraine from the Black Sea. Transfer of the methods applied by Russians in hybrid war on the other regions including Baltic States cannot be excluded as well. Majority of experts' stance is that lack of prevention of the aggressive operation by Russians on Ukraine at its present stage will result increasing threat to destabilization of the entire region of the

Middle and East of Europe. No decision of president Obama and the presidents of East of Europe States in the case of providing to Ukraine with military support is wider and wider as well as more sharply criticized also by some representatives of American administration and supreme military leaders.

Results of the researches prove that the operations of RF undertaken in Ukraine are not an improvisation but reflect an ordered employment of the all spectrum of the tool available to the opposite side. In the aspect of the all sequence of events one can pose a thesis that they inscribe well in the paradigm of Clausewitz on war conduction which says that war is only a continuation of policy by other means. I claim that hybrid operations refer to exactly those means but the rules of war conduction, its character and objectives remain all the same [3].

It seems that it is not very likely that Russia crossed the borderline of the territory of NATO, nevertheless it should be expected that through non-military operations will try to destabilize coherence of both NATO and EU. Effective response to hybrid operations will require coordinated operations of both organizations. In order to ensure it possession of a common doctrine of counteracting hybrid threats is essential. NATO should play a leading part in such areas like preparing military response, intelligence and deterrence and when necessary, intervention. It seems that in the time of peace the best element of deterrence is constant presence of NATO armies on the territory of the most threatened states. EU should be responsible for counteracting in cyberspace, energetic and migration policy and counteracting propaganda. It is intended to pursue synergy in an integrated employment of all instruments being at disposal of both organizations [4].

Extremely challenging for both organizations and member states, particularly those threatened, will be reduction of any susceptibilities and vulnerabilities to the hybrid threats. Either NATO or EU will not ensure absolute security of member states in the face of hybrid threats but will certainly help in building their resilience to them. Particular states should elaborate and implement their own non-standard strategy of national security which will allow standing up to classical and hybrid threat with and without the aid of NATO. For the realization of the strategy there need to be assigned resources that would ensure gathering the capabilities required. Undoubtedly, Eastern European countries have to modify the fundamentals of their defense structure to be able to take up future challenges [4].

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