

THE CONCEPT OF TOTAL DEFENSE IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

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Abstract: *At all levels of social development, there are trends of change and adaptation to the dynamic security environment. Defense systems based on solid foundations of national and collective security, along with monitoring the scientific and technological achievements of the modern age, see an equal need for revitalization as well as modernization of their potential. Traditional concepts of the defense system confirm their inviolability in the face of long-term crises even in the third decade of the 21st century. However, the success of the sustainability and reorganization of the defense system depends on the implementation of the results of the work of scientific and professional circles. The concept of total defense shown in the case study of the Republic of Serbia will describe the elements of the defense system common to all national states, but also the specifics of a comprehensive approach to the concept of total defense at the national level.*

Key words: *national security, defense, comprehensive approach to the concept of defense, military defense, civil defence*

1. INTRODUCTION

Seemingly overcome by the fear of a global conflict similar to the Second World War, and then by the bloc tensions characteristic of the Cold War period, they deny asymmetric threats such as terrorism, and in the second decade of the 20th century, the pandemic caused by the spread of the viral infection Covid-19 associated with the realignment of the main actors in multipolar world order.

Theoretical and practical viewpoints regarding security and defense have always been and remain current among scientific and expert circles, the academic public, and above all among political decision-makers. Although primacy is given to military defense in relation to other aspects of ensuring the survival of the population in a certain territory, any point of view about the self-sufficiency of military defense is doomed to failure at the start.

Since the 6th century, official attention has been paid to the unarmed aspect of defense, defense by non-military means or civil defense in international law, strategic determinations of national states, as well as doctrines of military-political alliances. Strategic and indoctrinated

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documents, and then international and national regulations conditioned the obligation, primarily, of state actors to plan, build, and even to arrange and adjust existing capacities and infrastructure in order to support the concept of civil defense. The attempt to systematize knowledge from political, economic, sociological, and above all security and military sciences, in order to build a stable and functional civil defense system, is given priority ad hoc. More dominant and frequent were the determinations of the national states to partially observe the concept of civil defense or bring it together with military defense within the concept of total defense.

2. REVITALIZATION OF THE CONCEPT OF TOTAL DEFENSE

The revitalization of the concept of total defense is significantly influenced by predictions of security risks and threats. Taking into account the past experiences in the implementation of a comprehensive approach to defense, and above all the experiences of countries that based the realization of national defense on collective defense, one constant can be observed in the indisputable confirmation of the importance of the concept of total defense.

When considering the state strategic commitments, it should always be borne in mind that their strategic documents in the field of security and defence are most often changed with the change of the strategic (security) environment, primarily in the case of states that are within certain collective security systems (e.g. NATO members), which generally does not apply to militarily neutral and other politically and economically independent states (Golubovic & Sakovic, 2023).

The readiness to defend the country and the support of the citizens in defense efforts are key factors in building a credible defense. Citizens and decision makers must be aware of what crisis and war conditions require of them.

Modern concepts of comprehensive national defense are based on two basic principles - resistance and resilience. Resistance refers to the will and readiness to defend the country in case of military threats. Resilience refers to the willingness of civilians to maintain the functioning of society in the event of a crisis, including a military attack (Berzina, 2020).

As some authors point out, in their security and defense policy documents, many states and international organizations (EU, NATO, etc.) have defined a comprehensive approach to the defense of national interests and adapted their doctrinal frameworks accordingly. Total defense is the combined efforts of the military services, relevant civilian agencies, and various societal actors, including businesses, in the face of an armed aggression from abroad (Bengt & Jan, 2023).

Depending on the way components (entities) are organized and available resources are managed, theoretically and practically different defense models can be distinguished. Some authors mention two models:

- territorial model based on the territorial-administrative organization of the state i
- a functional model that starts with functional organization in relation to the important dimensions of a society (Berisa, 2017).

One cornerstone of the old total defense concept was the will to defend, which included popular support for preparedness for crises and war (Bengt & Jan, 2023).

Total defense is planned, organized and implemented in peace, state of emergency and war, by engaging part or the entire defense system in the protection and realization of the defense interests of the Republic of Serbia. Some of the basic assumed success of total defense can be considered: timely and comprehensive preparations of all subjects of the defense system;

planned, organized and timely mobilization; favorable strategic and operational development; organized territory; unified, coordinated and determined action of all defense forces; motivation for defense and resistance and others. The basis for the preparation and implementation of total defense is reliance on one's own potential, which does not exclude cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

3. CIVIL DEFENSE

Aimed at protecting the state as a reference object, security "providers" are faced with the challenge of constant adaptation to the security environment. Civil defense is one of such "providers" of security, whose bearers, in the Republic of Serbia, are all relevant segments of society, which are defined in the broadest sense as state bodies, bodies of autonomous provinces, bodies of local self-government units, companies, other legal entities and entrepreneurs, and even citizens in an organized and regulated sense with precisely defined rights and obligations. In a narrower sense, we can look at "providers" of security embodied in the form of civil defense according to their territorial coverage; levels of jurisdiction; the degree of exposure to security challenges, risks and threats from which they should protect the population in a certain territory and others. Regardless of how you define civil defense, in a narrower or broader sense, the tasks and activities of civil defense, as well as the bearers of their implementation, are integrated by the Ministry of Defense. This coordinating role of the Ministry of Defense in the field of civil defense is reflected in peacetime conditions through the preparation of the subjects of the defense system for action in conditions of emergency and war, while in the case of declaration of a state of emergency and war, the competence of the Ministry of Defense is to direct the subjects to act according to the documents for the implementation of the Plan defense of the Republic of Serbia. The purpose of civil defense is to protect the state and the population from dangers that come as a result of armed conflicts, but also in major emergency situations of a natural and man-made nature (Valjerjevic & Mladenovic, 2018). In accordance with strategic objectives, effective civil defense contributes to the protection of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia. Normative-legal regulation of civil defense, in accordance with the concept of total defense, will specify competences, increase responsibility and improve the competence of subjects of the defense system in the field of civil defense. The Republic of Serbia will advance preparations for civil defense. Special attention will be paid to building organizational capacities for unified management of civil defense, and organizational and personnel capacities for training all subjects of the defense system. Normative and legal regulations related to civil defense will also be updated, as part of the defense of the Republic of Serbia. Special attention will be devoted to the training of the population for defense, and the development of coordination mechanisms of the subjects of the defense system (Strategija odbrane RS, 2019).

Civil defense should fulfill tasks in accordance with the code of international humanitarian law, especially those related to: prevention and opposition to all forms of threats to people, material goods and the environment; organization and functioning of state authorities; organization and functioning of the economy; organization and functioning of public services of special importance; protection and rescue of the population and material goods (Komazec et al., 2016).

4. SYNERGY OF VITAL COMPONENTS OF TOTAL DEFENSE

The application of total defense enables the defense system to be engaged in a comprehensive and unique way, which implies the integral engagement of all subjects of the defense system and the defense potential of a state. Given the specifics of the entities and defense forces, total defense includes military and civilian defense. Military defense is focused on preparation for

defense and defense of the use of the army and other armed forces of defense. Civil defense, as a part of defense, is limited to preparations for defense and defense by non-military means. Between military and civil defense, it is easy to learn and inevitably implies a causal connection.

The development of military defense is coordinated with the development of the defense system of the Republic of Serbia. Military defense preparations are carried out continuously, comprehensively and planned, in order to maintain a high degree of combat readiness. Qualitative and quantitative features of military defense certainly constitute the military power of the state. Military defense is focused on preparations for defense and defense using the army and other armed forces of defense. The security logic that dominates official discourses emphasizes total defense against military and nuclear attacks; or focusing on crisis preparedness practices when the military threat is no longer imminent; or an attempt to combine both approaches when a military threat is again possible (Wrangle, 2022).

In former "total" wars, the military imperative permeated all areas of social action. Developed capabilities for countering military threats will also enable participation in countering or removing the consequences of non-military threats while providing support to civil authorities. Taking into account the uncertainty and changed physiognomy of future multidimensional security challenges, risks and threats, the defense system needs to develop a wide range of capabilities that enable responses of both a military and non-military nature. The whole society must be resistant to the danger of the 21st century, and the activities must function even when the society faces difficult challenges and crises. People must have access to the most basic - food, water, electricity, transportation, education and upbringing of children and other things, and it is precisely the basic task of the civil defense system to enable the functioning of all the mentioned activities.

Ensuring the implementation of military defense and civil defense in conditions of emergency and war is the function of protecting national values and interests with unarmed means of defense.

5. CONCLUSION

At the global level, military confrontations are certainly the primary source of instability, while each subsequent year of human development implies the modernization of military equipment and weapons with the application of modern models of warfare. Therefore, it is expected that future classifications of security challenges, risks and threats will be subject to revision, primarily in terms of supplementing newly discovered or modified threats. The pandemic caused by the viral infection Kovid-19 reminded the entire humanity of the need to revive the non-military aspects of defense. The war in Ukraine, but also other smoldering hotspots, primarily on the European, Asian and African continents, along with the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, would represent an alarming threat to the survival of the entire planet. In addition, the exhaustion of renewable and non-renewable resources, combined with natural disasters, the causes of which are mainly climate change, reminds us that something urgent must be done.

Whether humanity will be able to predict the future and what will be the ability to adapt to the upcoming changes, certainly remains an open question for both current and younger generations. The pursuit of the sustainability of the concept of total defense is both a new and an old "philosophy" on which nation-states rest. The challenge for political actors, as well as the entire social sector, is the ability to create human resources who clearly know and act in accordance with their knowledge and skills in the context of the total defense of national interests.

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