THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TERRORISM IN ROMANIA'S VISION AND ITS STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Colonel Cosmin PÎSLARU, PhD student[*]

Abstract: *Effective counter-terrorism is not a new security responsibility for Romanian security forces. Terrorism was a threat to Romania's national security before 1989 and was for years under the communist regime, but anti-terror elite forces avoided its attacks. However, the Cold War terrorism is different from 21st century terrorism.*

Keywords: *terrorism, strategy, social manifestation, combating terrorism*

Introduction

After the fall of communism and after the terrorist attacks in the United States, since September 11, 2001, the lethality and virulence of the terrorists' intentions and their goals have changed. Attacks in the US, Spain, the UK and others have urged Romania to transform its global security system to be able to combat terrorism and terrorist networks, as well as other asymmetric security threats and challenges, in an effective and collaborative manner, in order to effectively avoid, counteract and combat terrorism[1].

Like many other countries in the world, Romania has become aware of the importance of national institutions with a role in preventing and countering terrorism. This fact actually supports Romania's security objectives and starts international cooperation. Romania, in its "National

---

[*] Col. Cosmin PÎSLARU is an officer in the Ministry of National Defense and a PhD student at the National Defense University "Carol I"

[1] Matei, Florina Cristina, Romania's Anti-Terrorism Capabilities: Transformation, Cooperation, Effectiveness, in https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/37818/04_-matei_2012-04.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

Security Strategy"[2], an essential document, also states that one of the main lines of action is to strengthen the institutional system to ensure national security in order to be effectively accountable to a wide range of risks and threats, including terrorism. In order to accomplish the fundamental interests of Romania, an integrated approach is needed so as to achieve a superior organizational stage: designing a mechanism among institutions to prevent and counteract terrorism, which could respond to the specific challenges of the current security context, national procedures and international cooperation. This integrated approach covers the interests and needs for Romania's internal security by strengthening the self-protection mechanisms against cross-border threats, including terrorism and the adoption of the principle of solidarity and the involvement of Romania in a policy that takes a stand on international terrorism through concrete measures intended to ensure the country's contribution to the fight against international terrorism in the context of multilateral cooperation.

National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism

Immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the President of Romania at that time convened the Supreme Council for Country's Defense (CSAT) in an emergency session and adopted the Resolution on Romania's participation alongside NATO member states to fight international terrorism.[3]

The impact of these attacks attracted the world's attention on a serious threat - sometimes minimized or ignored - that has bad global effects, directly affecting vast regions. At the same time, terrorism represents a general denial of the rules, principles and values that characterize the human relationship in a civilized world, a serious threat to national security of states, as well as a major challenge to international stability, with a negative impact on the whole global system.

---

[2] Strategia Națională de Securitate, in http://old.presidency.ro/static/ordine/CSAT/-SSNR.pdf.
[3] Claudiu Degeratu, Romania's Participation in the Fight Against International Terrorism: Implications for Civil-Military Relations and the Security Sector Reform, in https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F3-7908-1656-6_13.

From this perspective, states that are the main guarantors of fundamental human rights, are forced to identify and use more effective methods and techniques of regulation and to make efforts to prevent and combat terrorism. It is necessary for the states to put aside all political differences that impede the international consensus in the theoretical and practical treatment of the terrorist phenomenon.

This new approach has been explicitly assumed by the entire international community in the context of consensual developments. It is imperative to strengthen international cooperation to counter terrorism on the basis of a deeper view, in accordance with active approaches in countering explicit forms of terrorism that must be accompanied by activities designed to prevent the emergence and development of such phenomena.

The above developments are illustrated by mutations in the structure of national security policies and mechanisms in almost all states, as well as in the strategic priorities and orientations of certain bodies our country is a member of.

Romania as a whole and each of its institutions / structures with attributions included in the general approach to preventing and combating terrorism has achieved important results and has accumulated valuable experience.

Romania's fundamental interests now require integration to achieve a superior organizational step: designing a mechanism between institutions in order to prevent and disrupt terrorism, which should respond to the specific challenges of the security context through national approaches and international co-operation.

This approach takes into account the interests and needs for the internal security of the Romanian society, which calls for the strengthening of this mechanism of self-protection against cross-border threats, including terrorism, but also the adoption of the principle of solidarity and the involvement of Romania in a political attitude against international terrorism (also included in the Euro-Atlantic accession documents).

Based on Romania's fundamental interests and objectives, the Supreme Council for Country's Defense supports the creation of a national system for preventing and disrupting terrorism. Thus, in April 2002, the Supreme Council for Country's Defense approves the National Strategy for

Preventing and Combating Terrorism, a fundamental doctrinal document which strengthens its mechanisms of self-protection against the terrorist phenomenon and exploits the interests and the security needs of the Romanian society.[4]

The national strategy for preventing and combating terrorism is based on:

1. The current legal framework: the Romanian Constitution; internal rules and regulations to be applied in the event of terrorism or terrorism issues; general and specific provisions on the organization and functioning of the main institutions within the national system for preventing and combating terrorism.

2. Relevant international documents and regulations in the field of terrorism and related cross-border threats: UN documents; conventions and other documents concerning terrorism and other related activities agreed upon within the EU and the Euro-Atlantic organizations in which Romania is a Member State; the bilateral and multilateral agreements on terrorism signed by Romania.

3. National Security Strategy of Romania.

4. Specific and global assessment of developments relevant to national and international security, taking into account the current threats and terrorist activities;

5. Analyses of the international, legal and functional doctrine on the terrorist prevention and countering, developed by the Romanian, European and American partners;

6. Internal and external scientific studies on terrorism.

At the same time, the National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Terrorism is the main document that establishes the conceptual basis and specifies: the definition of the terrorist phenomenon, in a unitary perspective, appropriate to the integrated operational approaches; the main aspects that can properly support and lead the activities of preventing and combating terrorism: (evaluations on creation, support, encouragement and actions; categories of entities involved, associated, favorable or potentially resorting to terrorist activities, the specific objectives and approaches; the threats and aggressions at the national and international level; the current

---

[4] Antiterorism&Contraterorism, in https://policesay.wordpress.com/2011/03/04/16/.

and predicted vulnerabilities of the national system, the mechanisms for protection against terrorism).

At the same time, the main objectives of Romania regarding the prevention and counteraction of terrorism are specified here; the integrated and unified vision of the measures to be taken in the coming years.

The National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating Terrorism is expressed in the following instruments: General Protocol on the Establishment and Functioning of the National System for Preventing and Combating Terrorism; special interdisciplinary programs setting out the organization and rules of cooperation and objectives within the functional mechanisms in which two or more institutions / bodies develop certain counter-terrorist measures.

The implementation of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating Terrorism, and subsequent operational measures do not have a fixed deadline. The above-mentioned documents will be analyzed and reviewed by the representatives of the institutions / bodies within the system annually or whenever necessary.

Derogations from the National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating Terrorism, as well as subsequent proposals, will be subject to the approval of the Supreme Council for Country's Defense.[5]

According to the Strategy, terrorism refers to the credible activities and threats of illegal actions having the following main characteristics: they are deliberately launched by individuals or other type / social structure motivated by completely hostile attitudes and concepts towards other entities by perceiving that the relations with the latter have arisen in intolerable conflicts and in the desire to act aggressively; the use of violent and / or destructive means and methods that are directed against individuals and / or material factors that are important to social life; they deliberately resort to the widespread propagation of anxiety, insecurity, fear and panic (terrorist activities are conducted in such a way as to ensure a tremendous psychological impact, to make the public aware of their goals); have explicit or implicit political objectives in order to influence a particular entity; they

---

[5] National Strategy for the Prevention and Countering of Terrorism, in http://www.sri.ro/-upload/combatingterrorism.pdf.

are carried out independently of a state of war or, in the event of war, armed conflicts are not subject to war conventions.

The above-mentioned definition refers to terrorism as a kind of social manifestation, making a distinction between it and other acts of violence. Illegal acts through which terrorism is expressed, sustained or favored, control methods and legal sanctions against specified, defined authors, are explained both in the domestic legal framework and in the international regulatory instruments agreed by Romania.

Many entities can be found in relation to generating, favoring or performing terrorist acts: authentic terrorist entities, made up of individuals or social structures whose characteristics and actions are the subject of actions described as terrorism; entities of a political, economic or cultural nature that are controlled by terrorist entities and which apparently operate under the laws of their native or current territories. Thus, the donor entities do not directly coordinate terrorist actions but provide terrorist organizations with human, financial, logistical or financial resources, political support, or any other kind of support; conditional entities that support the terrorist organization for several reasons, but only on condition that they perform certain actions for their benefit; infiltrated entities which, by specific means and methods, develop within the terrorist entity as controllable and reliable, and are used by terrorist entities in order to control certain elements through which they can make their activity known; ideologically compatible entities are generally circles, groups or organizations that, without expressing themselves as sponsoring entities with specific interests in supporting terrorism and without coordinating such activities, provide terrorist organizations with resources and assistance. The associated / favorable entities are, in general, factors, structures, groups and organizations that, through their actions, support the terrorist organization solely on the basis of material interests (such as corrupt officials in state or financial institutions); the target entities are the objectives of the terrorist entities (states, organizations and international bodies); operational objectives are individuals or material factors directly affected by terrorist actions.

The Strategy highlights the general objectives in preventing and combating terrorism. Thus, the analysis of terrorist activities, set up in a systemic approach, leads to the following major objectives of the national

fight against terrorism: to identify, monitor and permanently assess the risks and threats and the vulnerabilities of the national security system.

Actions, intentions, general context and endogenous / exogenous phenomena can ascertain all these threats against national security. These elements may appear inside our country or abroad, generating specific actions or supporting such terrorist activities.

Another important objective is to protect the national territory (citizens, national targets, residents and foreign targets within the country) against terrorist activities. This involves all the necessary categories of institutional action, such as: preventing the outbreak of internal terrorism; eliminating the risks that the terrorist cells represent to the international sector.

By acting independently or in cooperation with other foreign / local cells, these organizations could enter Romania and attack targets within our country's borders.

At the same time, important objectives of the Strategy are: protecting citizens and national objectives abroad against terrorist-related actions, whatever their nature or outcome; preventing the involvement of Romanian citizens and foreigners residing in Romania in activities related to international terrorism, regardless of their field of operation or their objectives; to participate in international efforts to prevent and counter terrorism in different geographical areas.

The Strategy underlines the importance of: active contributions to bilateral and multilateral initiatives for the identification and performance of the most effective diplomatic acts, regulations and other legal provisions, as well as an international mechanism of cooperation between institutions aimed at preventing terrorism and countering further terrorist activities; the implementation within the national legal framework and within the current internal and external state activities of the obligations assumed by Romania internally or deriving from the international agreements to which Romania is a party; information sharing and law enforcement cooperation on potential or actual terrorist activities and actions or actions that encourage terrorism; engaging with armed forces specialized in joint military operations in accordance with UN resolutions to ensure international security and stability objectives in preventing and combating terrorism.

Conclusions

In our opinion, the decreasing of terrorist threats is a common international problem. Society becomes vulnerable, criminals abusing of the highest democratic values: the reduction of personal freedom and public control mechanisms.

Under conditions of freedom and tolerance, radicals who do not recognize the values of democracy face resistance in their activities. Islamists are convinced of the effectiveness of violent methods when they see the lack of trust in the West. However, Islamophobia will become inevitable if Muslim leaders do not implement supervision of the fanatics, and Western leaders will not cease to justify principles such as freedom of speech. This also applies to terrorists motivated by other ideologies.

We can conclude that, in general, the conditions for fighting terrorism in Europe today are the following: we fight against terrorism, jihadism and radical Islam, but we do not fight religion (Islam and Muslims); we defend the values of democracy and the values of secularity of states; counter-terrorism measures must be implemented in such a way as to prevent divisions into society from the point of view of ethnicity or confessional affiliation.

The common European growth, the unity of the Member States and the effective cooperation of the EU institutions will largely determine the scenarios of economic development at EU level. It is necessary to take account of these common challenges of the EU's foreign policy, such as immigration, Middle East conflicts and terrorist threats. The foreign policy agenda can also be significantly influenced by international events such as international price fluctuations, the Palestinian independence issue and the results of negotiations with Iran or North Korea.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*** *Strategic Concept for the Defense and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, November 2010*
MUREŞAN M., VĂDUVA G., *Războiul viitorului, viitorul războiului*, Editura UNAp, Bucureşti, 2004;

TITEL I., *Riscuri asimetrice la adresa securităţii naţionale şi regionale,* Teză de doctorat, UNAp „Carol I", 2014;

VASILE B. și colab, *Sistem de răspuns la terorism*, Editura Militară, București, 2014.