

TACTICAL DETERMINANTS OF A2/AD OPERATIONS

Assoc. Prof. Col. Leszek ELAK, PhD
War Studies University

Abstract

The paper presents a concise and thorough insight into the problem of overcoming potential Russian anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) operations, which may pose a major threat to Poland's security. The geopolitical situation in the region is seriously determined by the Kremlin's Foreign policy, which is aimed at restoring Russian dominance over its neighbouring countries and disrupting political and military cohesion of NATO. Against this background it seems essential for Poland to develop its modern Armed Forces, which being based on the Land Forces and the Territorial Defence Forces, could be effectively employed against potential military threats.

Key words: A2/AD operations, combat readiness, defence belt/area, Land Forces, military capability, tactical group/unit, Territorial Defence Forces

On the basis of an in-depth analysis of the contemporary environment of international security, it should be observed that the Russian Federation is implementing a strategy of using military means related to A2/AD operations¹. This conception is based on the assumption of preventing a real adversary from entering the theatre of operations (*i.e.* Anti-Access) by means of long-range munitions, and denying it freedom of action within the theatre of operations (*i.e.* Area Denial) by means of shorter-range munitions. In order to carry out A2/AD tasks, Russia plans to use surface-to-air missiles², anti-ship ballistic missiles³, anti-ship cruise missiles⁴, as well as mines and drones. These means are asymmetric in nature, and they are often deployed by potentially weaker countries making use of their superiority, which stems from the fact that they carry out operations in the vicinity of their own territories⁵. Undoubtedly, this conception is justified. It allows Russia to freely enact its foreign policy and look after its national interest with reference to threats presented in

¹ A2AD – Anti Access, Area-Denial.

² SAM – Surface to Air Missile.

³ ASBM – Anti Ship Ballistic Missile.

⁴ ASCM - Anti Ship Cruise Missile.

⁵ See: <https://pulaski.pl/rosyjskie-zdolnosci-w-zakresie-srodkow-izolowania-pola-walki-a2ad-wnioski-dla-nato/> (access: 29 Nov 2018).

its new “Military Doctrine”⁶ (it includes several repetitions taken from the 2010 doctrine, but it also defines the contemporary reality; at the same time, it introduces new concepts related to security, specifies new internal and external threats, as well as raises matters connected with allies).

As it is widely acknowledged, Russia aspires to become a world power. Among its national interests of key importance there is the global area, which can be characterised by contacts with countries which, although geographically distant, constitute Russia’s area of interest. This is to strengthen Russia’s position related to resolving problems of global dimensions. The key national interest in this respect concerns the active construction of an approach to international relations ensuring that the Russian Federation holds the most significant position, which corresponds to its political ambitions, reinforced by its military capability⁷.

Because of the Russian conception of A2/AD operations outlined above, Poland and NATO have begun increasing their military capability that is able to counter the Russian A2/AD capability. Therefore, it is possible to observe that NATO is making its presence known near the eastern flank⁸, especially due to the fact that Russia is evidently increasing its capability to block a potential arrival of NATO forces in Poland or the Baltic states to help these countries in case of hostilities. Owing to the American initiative to reinforce the region, the number of soldiers stationed on the eastern flank has significantly increased. Furthermore, the build-up of our A2/AD capability by the border should be focused on increasing the number of coastal naval missile units, developing the capability of unmanned reconnaissance and strike platforms, bolstering anti-aircraft and anti-missile defence, expanding the radio-electronic warfare capability, intensifying work on modern mine warfare, as well as purchasing new submarines that will contribute to making the construction of A2/AD land and maritime borders more realistic.

Poland together with other NATO countries need to develop a concurrent strategy and invest in munitions and weapon systems that can overcome the A2/AD systems of the Russian Federation. They are called stand-off weapons⁹. What is more, a viable solution is to equip NATO air force with small and relatively cheap unmanned vehicles which can imitate MALD¹⁰ flight vehicles, thereby confusing and neutralising enemy air-defence missile systems. It is also necessary to take account of the necessity to develop an operational capability related to countering A2/AD means in defence planning, *i.e.* in NATO NDPP¹¹. From the perspective of NATO countries, reconnaissance and intelligence (ISR) are also of high priority.

6 Signed by President Vladimir Putin on 26 Dec 2014.

7 M. Żyła, *Obwód Kaliningradzki w polityce bezpieczeństwa Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Wydawnictwo DRUK, Warszawa, ASzWoj, 2018, p. 6.

8 eFP - NATO’s enhanced Forward Presence.

9 Stand-off weapons are mainly cruise missiles on air and naval platforms, supported by an effective real-time target tracking system.

10 MALD - Miniature Air Launched Decoy.

11 NDPP – NATO Defence Planning Process.

This is so because a proper reconnaissance and intelligence capability will make it possible to identify enemy combat assets¹².

The conception of A2/AD operations presented above as well as Russia's vital strategic interests, and the manner in which they are defined, pose a real threat to the Baltic states and Poland. Moscow is ready to make use of all forms of hybrid warfare¹³, propaganda and political pressure in order to interfere in the internal affairs of these countries. We may expect that the main foundation of Russia's policy towards the Baltic states is to disrupt political and military cohesion of NATO and the EU. The Russian Federation attempts to restore its dominance over its neighbours, in both political and economic aspects, which is true especially of the countries that used to be members of the communist bloc during the times of the Cold War. It is worth adding that in the area of the Baltic Sea, Russia is taking steps to maintain military superiority and preclude both Finland and Sweden from joining NATO. One crucial argument that can be used by Moscow while furthering its national interests is the defence of the rights of Russian-speaking populations¹⁴. A good case in point can be Russia's activity in the Crimea and eastern Ukraine as well as the fact that Russians constitute approximately 25% of the Estonian and Latvian population.

We may assume that the location of NATO forces on the Eastern flank is an effective deterrent against Russia, and it makes Russian provocations in this region complicated. However, in order to ensure effective resilience against Russian threats, it is necessary to conduct continuous analyses of the state of security, ongoing monitoring, apply early warning system as well as reinforce and train the civil service in the Baltic states, as it is these countries that will be the first to respond to hybrid actions before any NATO intervention takes place. It is also crucial to tighten cyberspace security, protect critical infrastructure, counter disinformation and ensure cooperation of civilian and military forces¹⁵.

Considering the scenario of NATO operations outlined above, we should not forget that Russia is also the successor to the Soviet empire, which consisted of the centre and periphery having different degrees of autonomy. According to Vladimir

12 Based on: <https://pulaski.pl/rosyjskie-zdolnosci-w-zakresie-srodkow-izolowania-pola-walki-a2ad-wnioski-dla-nato/> (access 01 Dec 2018).

13 Russia can apply hybrid warfare methods to the Baltic states. Hybrid warfare can be defined as a combination of diverse military and non-military means. The Russian Federation often uses the instrument of media disinformation, which is mainly done in social media. A good illustration can be the false news informing that a rape was allegedly committed by NATO soldiers on an Estonian woman or that weapons of mass destruction "have gone missing" over Latvia.

14 The imperial policy of the Russian Federation in the post-Soviet area aims to ensure security and self-defence for its citizens. Ensuring the survival of the state and its status of a world power constitutes the foundations for the revival of the Russian empire. "Nowadays, Russia desires what has always been wanted by world powers: to maintain its dominant position in the regions that are strategically important and to dispose of the influence other world powers exert on such regions." - based on: R. Kagan, *Powrót historii i koniec marzeń*, Poznań 2009, p. 25.

15 See: M.A. Piotrowski, K. Raś, *Wzrost zagrożenia rosyjskiego w raportach bałtyckich służb specjalnych*, „Biuletyn PISM”, no. 44 (1394), 2016.

Putin, the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical disaster of the 20th century. This statement shows the public mood in Russia, with Russians still longing for greatness and dominance in the world as well as for the times in which they were profoundly respected as a nation. The breakup of the Soviet Union has resulted, to a certain extent, in an identity crisis and a loss of the sense of world power and imperial position¹⁶. Therefore, we may expect that currently Moscow's ambition is to build a country that is economically and militarily strong, to assert dominance in the world, and to pursue its national interests at all costs. Putin's term of office is the time during which the Russian empire is being restored, which is achieved by centralizing power, as well as increasing stability and cohesion of the Russian Federation. Moscow's state policy is based on verticalization of power, a crackdown on a substantial number of oligarchs and pacification of independence movements (Chechnya). A crucial factor is a huge demand for fossil fuels, generating increased state budget income, which translates into an increase in military expenditure and possibility of reforming the Armed Forces.

According to *Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (*White Book on National Security of the Republic of Poland*), "[...] the geopolitical location of Poland between the West and East has been the most significant strategic factor [...] determining the essence and character of national interests and strategic goals regarding security."¹⁷ Poland's geographical location in Europe is not easy, as the country is situated within the area containing various geographical, civilizational and political divisions. Over the centuries, Poland has been part of different European regions. An analysis of the historical changes indicates that Poland belongs to a group of countries whose geopolitical location is not stable. Professor Jerzy Bański¹⁸ seems correct when he states that "the history of Central and Eastern Europe can be characterised by constant annexations, occupations, and fighting. Therefore, it is difficult to expect that in this atmosphere there could be room for the development of cooperation and a sense of community of interests"¹⁹.

The political and military literature shows that Poland is regarded as belonging to the region of Central and Eastern Europe²⁰, which experts on geopolitics treat as

¹⁶ S. Bieleń, *Tożsamość międzynarodowa Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 91-92.

¹⁷ *Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, BBN, Warszawa 2013, p. 9.

¹⁸ Prof. Jerzy Bański, PhD (Polish Academy of Sciences) - born in 1960 in Wolbrom, a geographer, President of Polish Geographical Society.

¹⁹ J. Bański, *Polska i Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia w koncepcjach podziału Europy*, IGiPZ PAN, online version: http://www.igipz.pan.pl/en/zpz/banski/PDF/29_Polska_w_Europie.pdf (access: Dec 2014).

²⁰ The concept of Central and Eastern Europe was formulated in the interwar period and resulted from the work done by Polish historians, who developed a conception which postulated the existence of a region, also referred to as *Intermarium* (Polish: *Międzymorze*), embracing the countries which adopted Christianity from their Western neighbours in its Latin version together with the West European model of culture. The region consisted of Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia, the

a political, cultural and historical division rather than a strictly geographical one. The modern concept of Central and Eastern Europe mainly refers to the countries that emerged from the breakup of the former communist bloc. The majority of available sources indicate that in addition to Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, it comprises the Baltic states (*i.e.* Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), the former Yugoslav countries (*i.e.* Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, the Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina), as well as Romania, Bulgaria and Albania. Recently, Kosovo²¹ has also been included. Altogether, there are 16 (17) countries in this region. According to Jerzy Bański, in terms of the economy, Central and Eastern Europe is a transitional form between the affluent West and the poor East, whereas considering its political characteristics, it can be located on the scale between stable democracies on the one hand and unstable political systems of superficial democracy on the other. He also emphasises the significance of historical determinants, which have created among the nations of the region an ethos of resistance and fight against invaders as well as a sense of temporariness and uncertainty about the future²².

The difficult geopolitical location of Poland in Europe discussed above, which has been confirmed by historical events many times, does not create stable conditions for development and security of Poland. It does not only concern military security, as, at present, this type of security is not the principal goal of Poland's security policy. It is neighbourly partnership that is a vital issue from the perspective of potential or real threats which can result in the destruction of the country's public sphere, disintegration of society life, or destabilization of the economy²³.

Therefore, from the perspective of Poland's security, it is essential to develop modern Armed Forces which should have an operational capability to independently conduct a national operation within the territory of the country. Their military

Czech Republic and the three Baltic states, *i.e.* Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. What is more, old Ruthenian lands that had been connected with Poland for a few centuries, were also regarded as part of this region, despite their links with East European culture, *i.e.* Ukraine and Belarus. It was only in the 1980s that the name *Central and Eastern Europe* started to be used universally, which was thanks to the work and activity of Milan Kundera (Czech), Czesław Miłosz (Polish) and István Bibó (Hungarian), who used it as a counterweight to the name East Europe, popular during the Cold War. Based on: A. Podraza, *Europa Środkowa jako region historyczny*, online version: <http://jazon.hist.uj.edu.pl/zjazd/materialy/podraza.pdf> - access: Dec 2014, p. 11.

21 The unilateral declaration of independence of the Republic of Kosovo is recognized by 106 out of 193 UN member states, 23 out of 28 EU member states, and 24 out of 28 NATO member states. However, it is a state that is not recognized formally. It has not been recognized by Serbia, Romania, Slovakia, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Belarus, and Russia. Since the end of the civil war, it has been a protectorate administered by the UN with the help of NATO forces (KFOR) - the author's note.

22 J. Bański, *Polska i Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia...* op. cit., online version: http://www.igipz.pan.pl/en/zpz/banski/PDF/29_Polska_w_Europie.pdf - access: Dec 2014.

23 M. Karpiuk, "Bezpieczeństwo narodowe, a międzynarodowe" (in:) *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w świetle prawa wewnętrznego i międzynarodowego*, AON, Warszawa 2011, p. 281.

capability should deter any potential enemy, making them reflect on whether it is worth provoking a military conflict with Poland. Poland's guarantor of security is also the partnership with NATO. However, on the basis of political and military analyses, there appear more and more theses indicating the possibility of a swift application of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which translates into new thinking and conceptions regarding security. Experts on security frequently voice the opinion that the strength of every country in the political arena is determined by how strong its Armed Forces are, which, considering the topic discussed in this paper, is absolutely adequate.

The intention to develop A2/AD capability of the Armed Forces on the tactical level should be based on prognostic military and non-military threats, which the army have the responsibility to neutralise. Being a member of NATO, Poland's priority connected with security and defence capability is to direct the development of A2/AD capability in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the Concept for Defence of the Republic of Poland, and the NATO Strategic Concept. However, despite the guarantee of security from Poland's allies, we should not forget that it is necessary to build our own deterring and A2/AD capability, since Poland, being a cross-border country between NATO and the EU on the one hand and Russia on the other, is the first to be exposed to hybrid operations conducted by a potential adversary. Considering the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, this seems really likely. This is why the Armed Forces should have a capability to conduct a defensive operation in order to counter this type of threats. This capability involves, first of all, reconnaissance, intelligence, missile defence, anti-aircraft defence, survival skills, camouflage skills and the ability to conduct deep operations.

On the tactical level, the Armed Forces that are to be effectively used on land in A2/AD operations consist of two pillars. First of all, there are the traditional Land Forces; secondly, the Territorial Defence Forces (TDF). When the latter branch of the Polish Armed Forces was being established, there were many doubts surrounding the question of whether the TDF should be an independent military branch or a component of the Land Forces. Such considerations were justified, as taking into account the area of operations, it is the same for both branches referred to above. However, due to the fact that the TDF are to support non-military entities in both peacetime and crisis, and since in wartime they can be used to perform tasks in areas occupied by enemy forces, the above division into two independent branches was eventually accepted. As a result, there might arise a number of questions concerning, for example, (1) the cooperation of both branches of the Armed Forces in wartime, (2) their command and control relationships in the defence belt (area) of the Land Forces which happens to coincide geographically with the permanent area of responsibility (PAOR) of a territorial defence brigade, (3) fire and air support of territorial defence units, or (4) taking over the responsibility from the Border Guard (BG) for state border protection (border protection reinforcement). Despite the issues mentioned above, it should be emphasised that from the perspective of Poland's security and defence capability, the establishment of the new branch of the Armed

Forces was justified. This is so because of training personnel reserves, increasing the capability of the Polish Armed Forces, developing the arms industry, and what is important, educating citizens about security as well as instilling the spirit of patriotism. However, opponents of the TDF express the opinion that instead of developing the TDF, a much more reasonable approach would have been to expand the structure of the Operational Forces by increasing the number of light and armoured brigades. It should be observed, however, that despite the three-year period of developing of the TDF's capability, the establishment of the fourth division in the Land Forces (18th Mechanized Division) has been initiated. Its main task will be to defend Poland's south-east border.

It is worth describing both branches of the Polish Armed Forces, by presenting their structure and the main tasks, as well as highlighting mutual relationships while performing tactical and operational tasks. Currently, the Land Forces are subordinate to the General Commander of the Armed Forces through the Inspector for Land Forces. According to news spread in the media, it is known that there will soon be a change in the command and control system of the Polish Armed Forces. There will be established commands of branches of the Armed Forces directly subordinate to the Chief of General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces²⁴.

The Land Forces are responsible for defence against an attack on land and in the air within the whole area of the country, in every operational direction and in the face of any form of military threat. Their structure is based on tactical groups (divisions), units (brigades, regiments), and sub-units (battalions, squadrons, companies). They are prepared to perform tactical and operational tasks regardless of weather and battle conditions. Their most important characteristic is considerable firepower, manoeuvrability and resistance to enemy attacks, extensive use of modern military tactics as well as multidimensional cooperation with the other branches of the Armed Forces. In addition, they fulfil their obligation related to securing NATO crisis response operations as well as UN and EU peacekeeping and humanitarian missions. Another task they have is to cooperate with non-military entities in peacetime and crisis on mitigating the consequences of natural disasters.

Currently, the Land Forces constitute approximately half of the entire capability of Poland's Armed Forces. They consist of mechanised, motorised, armoured, airmobile, missile, artillery, reconnaissance, electronic warfare, anti-aircraft defence, engineering, signal, IT, as well as radiological, chemical and biological defence troops. The fundamental military capability is based on 4 divisions: light - 12th Mechanized Division, 16th Pomeranian Mechanized Division, newly-established 18th Mechanised Division, and a heavy division, *i.e.* 11th Armoured Cavalry Division. Each division consists of three brigades and other support and logistics

²⁴ As it is expected, there will be a return to the former, hierarchical manner of command and control of the Armed Forces. At the moment, there are three equivalent commanders, who are subordinate to the Minister of National Defence, *i.e.* Chief of General Staff, General Commander of Branches of the Armed Forces, and Operational Commander of Branches of the Armed Forces.

elements. The 12th Division has two mechanized brigades²⁵ and one motorised brigade, whereas 16th Division has one armoured brigade, one mechanized brigade, and one motorised brigade. As for the 11th Division, it consists of two armoured brigades and one motorised brigade. Finally, the 18th Division²⁶ has an armoured brigade and a mountain infantry brigade²⁷.

It is worth observing that on the tactical level, divisions can conduct operations independently, as they contain organic artillery, anti-aircraft defence, and engineering regiments, as well as logistics battalions. One drawback is the fact that they lack organic reconnaissance elements and the Army Aviation aircraft (at least a squadron of assault and transport helicopters). In addition to the main part of the Land Forces outlined above, there is also an airmobile unit - the 25th Air Cavalry Brigade, and the 6th Airborne Brigade.

The second pillar of A2/AD operations is the Territorial Defence Forces (TDF)²⁸. They operate within the military subsystem as support forces and are capable of performing both non-military and military tasks. They are organized and employed for defence on a local and regional level. The TDF consist of units and sub-units formed mainly on the basis of local resources and allocated material resources of the Polish Armed Forces. They maintain readiness to perform tasks within the territory of Poland on all levels of state defence readiness. They are an effective instrument of the state's security policy regarding the prevention or elimination of causes and consequences of internal or external threats to the state security. Moreover, they are a general formation whose aim is to conduct both military and non-military operations, actively using local civil resources. Being one of the elements that can be employed to deter a potential enemy, they can effectively neutralise potential military threats to state security and build up local and spatial state defence readiness across Poland's whole territory. The essence of employing a TDF unit/sub-unit lies in using it in its permanent area of responsibility (PAOR), which is always the same in peacetime, crisis or in wartime. Depending on the level of defence readiness in which the TDF are operating, the only element that changes is the character of operations that are conducted and the priority of tasks performed within the framework of these operations. Also, when employing only part of their force, TDF units/sub-units will be able to perform tasks as part of response to emerging threats in regions neighbouring their home areas of responsibility. However, these will only be temporary actions, whose purpose will be to support the operations conducted by the forces that have already been deployed there.

25 Including the 7th Coastal Defence Brigade.

26 As a result of the establishment of the new division, the 1st Armoured Battalion of 16th Mechanized Division and the 21st Independent Highland Brigade became subordinated to it.

27 There is also an initiative to establish a new brigade of 18th Mechanised Division.

28 Based on: *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej w operacji*, DD-3.40, MON, Warszawa 2018 (the doctrine was drawn up by the author of the chapter).

In the next few years in Poland there are to be 17 brigades of the Territorial Defence Forces, consisting of approximately 50,000 soldiers. The process was divided into 4 stages. The first one, which is completed, involved the formation of TDF brigades by the eastern border of the country (Podkarpackie, Lubelskie and Podlaskie Provinces). In the second stage of the TDF formation, there were created two brigades in the Mazovian Province and one in the Warmian-Masurian Province. The brigades in the Pomeranian, Kuyavian-Pomeranian, Łódź, Świętokrzyskie, Lesser Poland, Silesian and Greater Poland Provinces will be created in the third stage. Stage four will commence in 2019 with the formation of sub-units in the west of Poland - in Opole, Lower Silesian, Lubuskie and West Pomeranian Provinces.

The TDF consist of the Command of the Territorial Defence Forces²⁹, territorial defence units (17 brigades) comprising 3-5 battalions of light infantry, depending on operational needs in a given province. Furthermore, the brigades comprise command, logistics, engineer, and support companies.

The main tasks of the TDF are to:³⁰

- ensure general security and defence of the PAOR, including state property, public utility facilities and cultural assets against looting and destruction;
- support combat engagement of the Allied (Coalition) Reinforcement Forces;
- support the reconstruction and functioning of government and self-government administration as well as ensure security and public order in liberated territories;
- reinforce the defence capability at the eastern border;
- be able to respond to new security challenges *i.e.* repel hostile activities during ‘hybrid war’;
- protect the population;
- deter a potential aggressor (in case of an armed attack, direct the population to shelters or covers, distribute water and food, provide medical support);
- support the mobilization deployment of all the Armed Forces, organize mobilization points, cover or block the gaps in the Operational Forces formation;
- repel the enemy attacks, organize ambush, abatis and other operations to delay the movement of the enemy;
- be a guide for the Operational Forces in a rough terrain;
- protect critical infrastructure, and also public utility facilities, bus and train stations, ports, airports, electric power plants, food industry establishments, radio and television stations;
- conduct irregular activity, destroy enemy critical infrastructure, restrict the manoeuvres of the enemy forces;

²⁹ The TDF Command is directly subordinated to the Minister of National Defence. Ultimately it is to be subordinated to the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces.

³⁰ J. Małycha, *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej Zadania i Wyzwania*, ObronaNarodowa.pl, ISSN 2299-131X.

- set up explosives in the terrain;
- conduct resistance movement, and also guerrilla warfare in occupied areas;
- support the Special Operations Forces;
- isolate enemy Subversion and Reconnaissance Groups, provide assistance to fight them, reconnoitre the enemy, restrict the enemy manoeuvre, eliminate the enemy, eliminate the effects of the enemy attack, *etc.*

Among the numerous non-military tasks, the most important ones are to³¹:

- create a safe operational environment in the PAOR;
- maintain combat readiness to defend the territory of Poland;
- support local communities and the non-military entities in the performance of crisis management tasks and maintenance of internal security;
- conduct organizational and planning activities, mobilization activities, and training events;
- conduct strategic communication activities in order to instil patriotic and civic attitudes and values;
- support local communities and the non-military entities in the performance of crisis management tasks and maintenance of internal security;
- attain readiness and participate in the immediate and general response to a situation or non-military crisis in order to prevent or counter it, minimize and eliminate its effects, and also restore the state existing before the crisis.

The Territorial Defence Forces are a military form of preparation and employment of all the means appropriate for defence of Poland in the general defence. They ensure successful combat, including deterrence against enemy aggression and a new battlefield created as a response to the revolution of contemporary threats and also challenges in the military area, which the future will bring.

The author believes that nowadays it will be difficult for the Land Forces, which are directly exposed to enemy operations, to independently fulfil all the defence tasks in the entire territory of Poland. Therefore, in his opinion, the decision on forming the TDF is right. Here it is worth considering the following dilemma, which refer to the use of the capability and capacity of the new formation. They concern mainly the fact that future wars will be embedded in a hybrid environment, therefore the employment of military tools will not be entirely effective. The cooperation with the Territorial Defence Forces should involve reconnaissance of the directions of potential enemy threat, protection of the state borders by the Operational Forces and the TDF, allocation of appropriate capacity to fight in the protection area, participation in delaying operations, cooperation during non-linear (discontinuous) operations, joint covering of the gaps between the division defence belts/brigade defence areas, and covering of the flanks of the operational formation. The Territorial Defence Army should be a tool of deep operations to cooperate with the Airmobile and Airborne Operations Forces. In the rear area they should protect and support the

31 *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej w operacji...*, op. cit. , p.13.

mobilization and movement of forces and also fight with landing troops and armed underground groups. Another important aspect of cooperation is that they support the preparation and performance of the offensive manoeuvre of the Operational Forces, relief in place of the forces, protection of ports, industrial regions, defence of cities, protection of civilian population and evacuation thereof from the combat zone. We should also point to the significant role the Territorial Defence Forces play in the fight with subversion and reconnaissance groups as well as amphibious and airborne assaults.

Taking into account the capacity of the Land Forces and the Territorial Defence Forces, we should now consider combat organization in a defence operation. The formation of the fourth division has increased the number of the variants in which the Land Forces may be engaged. They will be arranged in one or two echelons with a reserve (the previous structure restricted the capacity to one echelon and one reserve only). The area of responsibility of the land component should be divided into an area of direct operations (area of the covering forces, main defence area) and the rear area. The area of the covering forces is a place in the structure of the land component defence, bounded to the north by the handover line of the component - HL XXX (sea and land border) and to the south by the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA)³², where the main task of the allocated units will be to reconnoitre the main directions of enemy attacks, decrease enemy capacity, channel enemy movements, deceive in terms of the forward edge of the battle area, carry out distortion and demonstration activities, gain time, force the enemy to conduct premature deployment, and be directed at the main defence effort.

The main area of the land component defence is the area bounded to the front by the forward edge of the battle area, and on the three other sides by boundaries. It is designated for conducting manoeuvre defence or a decisive battle, depending on the assumed defence objective. It is also where the enemy attack is to be broken up and counterattack launched. Defence is conducted in the defence belts and areas. The rear area of the land component (corps) is bounded to the front by the division defence belt boundary, and on the three other sides by corps boundaries. From a defence operation standpoint, this region is mainly used as a mounting and concentration area of the mechanized and armoured reserves and armed of service, area for regeneration and attaining combat readiness of the forces, and for positioning command posts. Taking into account the above-mentioned division of the defence area of responsibility of the future operations and the enhanced capacity of the Land Forces, it may be thought that in cooperation with the Territorial Defence Forces, the organization will have fewer gaps and undefended areas. In such a context, the tasks for the land component should concern active operations in the covering area. Their delaying operations need to be concentrated along the north-eastern border up to the forward edge of the battle area - planned and developed based on the line of strategic rivers

32 FEBA – Forward Edge of the Battle Area.

and the tactical features of the terrain. The width of the covering area encompasses the northern border, *i.e.* approximately 650 km, the eastern border of approximately 400 km. Its depth is approximately 250 km. Taking into account the prescribed rules of tactical operations and the current capability of the Land Forces, we may conclude that probably one division and two or three independent regimental tactical groupings will be selected for this operational space. The elements of the formation in the covering area should be supported by air cavalry squadrons, artillery regiment, elements of air defence, combat engineer battalions, the aviation of the Land Forces, and they should be provided with adequate logistics. The Territorial Defence brigades will play a considerable role in the formation of the division in combat in the area of the covering forces. This is because the scale of operations in the area of the covering forces determines the need to plan and organize the defence of ports and naval bases, LNG terminals and other critical infrastructure installations, and also to eliminate approaching amphibious attacks. It is for such tasks, among others, that the Territorial Defence Forces are preferred and the facility protection and security battalions mobilized in the wartime. The creation of the Territorial Defence Forces and the fact that they have taken over some of the protection and security tasks have contributed to the enhanced capability of the Land Forces in respect of covering operations - *e.g.* delaying operations.

An important issue in the covering forces area in the aspect of A2/AD operations is strengthening the state border and taking over the responsibility for the border from the Border Guard. Pursuant to normative documents, when a war breaks out the MoD assumes responsibility for the protection of the border. The capabilities of the Land Forces are limited, and positioning at least one mechanized or motorized platoon in all of the BG units in the operational area of the Naval BG Division, Warmian-Masurian BG Division, and Podlaskie BG Division will lead to the involvement of a significant part of the Land Forces' capability, which equals to excluding from combat an equivalent of two brigades. Thus, the author believes that to some extent such a task should be taken over by the light infantry companies of the Territorial Defence Forces located in the border area.

While analysing the main defence area, we should assume that in the first echelon there will be formed three divisions, and in the reserve in the rear area there will be positioned one reserve division, which has left the covering forces area after the combat and moved to the rear area to restore the ability to fight and conduct future operations. They will form the mechanical or armoured, amphibious and anti-landing, anti-tank and anti-subversion reserves. While analysing the area of direct operations, we may expect the divisions to arrange their troops to fight in one echelon with a reserve. A consequence of such organization will be the fact that a division will defend a 250 - 300 km wide and 250 km-400 km deep belt. It is also necessary to organize defence of strategically important urbanized areas, railway junctions, road junctions, bridges and other critical infrastructure installations. Planning the division defence in a belt having such parameters causes that 4-5 battalions will conduct defence in the FEBA in the first echelon, and the commander of the division will have a brigade in the reserve. Taking into account the capability of the potential

enemy, new character of conducting future wars and the threats from a few operational directions, the land component should assume the non-linear combat formation.

We should not forget the classical arrangement of tactical groups - linear and non-linear ones, since we are not able to defend ourselves along the whole line of defence. However, the non-linear defence arrangement requires that the commander support the divisions in combat by organizing a few mobile mechanized, armoured, anti-tank, anti-amphibious and anti-landing reserves to block the intruding enemy, conduct counterattack, break up approaching reserves, and be capable of conducting deep operations with the deployment of missile forces, artillery, assault helicopters, assault aviation, combat drones.

Here it is worth mentioning that the main defence area will include vast urbanized areas together with the capital of the country, and other agglomerations of strategic importance to Poland, the capture of which will allow the enemy to reach our Centre of Gravity. On the one hand the newly created 6th Mazovian Territorial Defence Brigade has in real terms enhanced our forces responsible for defending Warsaw, on the other hand the Land Forces will have to strengthen the defence of the city with their weapons. According to theoretical analyses, the defence of Warsaw would require allocation of an equivalent of at least two motorized brigades and a few independent infantry battalions, which, after all, would not be sufficient taking into account the size of the city and the tasks its defenders need to confront³³. The main defence area mentioned above will also contain other critical infrastructure installations which will need to be protected and defended by armed military formations. It is worth pointing out that the main defence area will take approximately 1/3 of the present territory of our country, which should be controlled and defended by the main defence forces.

Making generalizations of the above-analysed problems, we may conclude that the main forces designated to defend the main defence area will comprise twelve battalions in the first echelon and six battalions in the reserve. Moreover, in the reserve there will be two brigades (airmobile and airborne) and a division in combat in the covering area (regaining combat readiness). It is an optimistic estimation, since the situation in the battlefield may make it necessary to allocate from the brigades some elements to conduct other operations in the course of defence (*e.g.* secure railway junctions, bridges, organize the forward position and reinforced regions, secure important installations, create raid units and detachments, fight enemy landing troops and assault groups, isolate national minorities, fight special as well as and subversion and reconnaissance groups, protect and evacuate civilian population, escort prisoners-of-war and other operations). A realistic analysis indicates that in the first echelon the defence will be carried out by up to 12 mechanized and armoured battalions. Therefore, we should assume that from ten to twelve thousand soldiers, excluding the TDF soldiers, will be in combat along the approximately 800 km wide forward edge of the battle area. Transferring these calculations onto fighting equipment along

³³ At present at the operational level it is not beneficial to capture urbanized areas.

this width, the Land forces will have at their disposal approximately seven hundred combat vehicles and tanks. In such a situation, a battalion is likely to be given an area of responsibility which is 35 km or more in width, and a brigade - 80 - 100 km or more. Obviously, it is only a mathematical operational and tactical calculation because a contemporary war will be totally different in nature. Nevertheless, we should not forget the classical conflict (for example Ukraine) and how important it is to build strong mobile and independent units which can oppose three times superior attacking enemy groups.

Having analysed the defence operations in the main area of the land component and having in mind the excessively vast battalion and brigade defence areas, we should realize that such organization, in order to be capable of conducting defence, requires the superior to support the operations. This is to fill the gaps in the organization, break up approaching reserves, neutralize enemy artillery, destroy command posts and perform offensive manoeuvres. Such operations along the whole width of the area require having strong armoured reserves, a few artillery brigades, missile regiments having a range of at least 100 km, airmobile reserves, a few squadrons of modern assault and transport helicopters and a possibility to lay scatterable mines at a great depth. It is also necessary to have an effective anti-aircraft and missile defence of the forces in combat on the front line and to employ a broad spectrum of unmanned aerial vehicles for reconnaissance and indication of targets. Considering the vast distances between the elements of the combat groups, we should build our defence capability to logistically support the forces in combat, mainly by provision of ammunition, petroleum and oils, ensuring communication with the superior at the lowest levels and conducting an effective electronic warfare.

In the area of direct operations, the Territorial Defence Forces will need to have a capability to conduct combat operations, organize and conduct warfare, including covering gaps and flanks of land component units and sub-units, build engineering barriers, damage, protect and defend the infrastructure and installations (regions) of key importance, coordinate and synchronize reconnaissance (guarding, patrolling). They will also perform tasks as part of joint fire support, command organization and logistic support as well as support for the land component units and sub-units related to ensuring freedom of action (manoeuvre) and mobility in the regions of operational deployment (identification and designation of routes, selecting guides, identification and designation of fording, identification and securing of diversion routes). Moreover, they are to support the non-military entities in the performance of the tasks to the benefit of local communities. The tasks are related to mitigating the effects of enemy attack in the areas where mass destruction or damage have occurred or weapons of mass destruction have been used³⁴.

Joint operation of the Land Forces and the Territorial Defence Forces in the rear area of operations will be characterized by conducting combat operations, ensuring

³⁴ See *Działania Wojsk Obrony...*, op. cit., p. 33.

freedom of manoeuvre and support for Operational Forces and Allied (Coalition) Reinforcement Forces, also by organizing and conducting fight, including countering landing troops, and conducting anti-subversion operations. What is more, in this area, the TDF should seek to ensure general security and public order, command organization and logistic support, support of the non-military entities in evacuation of the civilian population and resources, cultural assets and elements of economic capacity which are of significant importance to Poland's defence from the regions threatened by warfare operations³⁵.

Another aspect of the operations of the Territorial Defence Forces will be to fight in the areas temporarily held by the enemy. In this area the primary tasks are to continue combat operations, exchange information with the Operational Forces regarding the combat environment (terrain, weather, local population, enemy), coordinate and synchronize reconnaissance operations, carry out irregular and unconventional operations, including organization of fire ambushes, assaults and direct actions against detachments, elements and devices which support enemy forces in combat. Moreover, they will perform tasks as part of joint fire support (including assessment of the effects of the attacks), organization of command and logistic support, support of the Operational Forces and the forces performing the tasks in the PAOR, and also support the non-military entities related to restoring administration after the conflict³⁶.

In conclusion, we should highlight the fact that the attained state of combat readiness and security system financing are the significant indicators of A2/AD operational capability. It all depends on the systemic solutions related to mobilization and operational deployment of the Armed Forces, organizational condition of the Armed Forces, the quality and quantity of personnel reserves and the possibility to use materials and technical equipment, flexible reactions to interference in the process of attaining states of higher readiness, and the amount of financial assets allocated for defence. Being capable of continuous operation allows the Armed Forces to create conditions for achieving the objectives of the operation. This capability requires that the armament and equipment be in working order, supplies, combat assets and matériel be timely replenished in and outside the territory of Poland; losses be replaced, and personnel be rotated. Being able to take effective action facilitates effective use of capability and the assets of appropriate range and accuracy. It can be attained with the use of new command systems, effective reconnaissance and intelligence, availability of the required forces, planning and commanding procedures, optimal use of combat assets, maintaining supplies and combat assets, training forces.

It is impossible to attain readiness for A2/AD operations without having capability to command, inflict damage, be mobile, operate continuously, survive, *etc.* Therefore, we may put forward a thesis that the capabilities of each component are interdependent in the operations. They constitute a system of capabilities which

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

support one another. They are also a determinant of future operations. Resignation from one of them may disturb the proper functioning and conducting of A2/AD operations. Thus, specific operational capabilities are a determinant of the combat capabilities which are being developed for individual components in operations. This is how A2/AD operational capability is developed.

Reference list

- Bański J., *Polska i Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia w koncepcjach podziału Europy*, IGiPZ PAN, online version: http://www.igipz.pan.pl/en/zpz/banski/PDF/29_Polska_w_Europie.pdf (access: Dec 2014).
- Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, BBN, Warszawa 2013.
- Bieleń S., *Tożsamość międzynarodowa Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Warszawa 2006, pp. 91-92.
- Elak L., *Ochrona granicy państwowej. Wybrane aspekty*, ASzWoj, Warszawa 2017.
- Elak L., *Bezpieczeństwo wschodniej granicy*, ASzWoj, Warszawa 2018 – monograph in press.
- Karpiuk M., “Bezpieczeństwo narodowe, a międzynarodowe” (in:) *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w świetle prawa wewnętrznego i międzynarodowego*, AON, Warszawa 2011.
- Małycha J., *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej Zadania i Wyzwania*, ObronaNarodowa.pl, ISSN 2299-131X.
- Podraza A., *Europa Środkowa jako region historyczny*, online version: <http://jazon.hist.uj.edu.pl/zjazd/materialy/podraza.pdf> (access Dec 2014).
- Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 6 October 2015 on the deployment of Border Guard and units and sub-units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland in the event of a threat to public safety or disturbance of public order in the vicinity of border crossing and in the border area - Dz.U. [*Journal of Laws*] 2015, item 1575.
- Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej w operacji DD-3.40*, MON, Warszawa 2018.
- <https://pulaski.pl/rosyjskie-zdolnosci-w-zakresie-srodkow-izolowania-pola-walki-a2ad-wnioski-dla-nato/> (access: 29 Nov 2018)
- Żyła M., *Obwód Kaliningradzki w polityce bezpieczeństwa Federacji Rosyjskiej*, Wydawnictwo DRUK, Warszawa, ASzWoj, 2018, 2018.
- Piotrowski M.A., Raś K., *Wzrost zagrożenia rosyjskiego w raportach bałtyckich służb specjalnych*, „Biuletyn PISM”, no. 44 (1394), 2016.