

THE SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN CRISIS

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Abstract

The crisis in Ukraine in early 2014 marked a turning point in the history of international relations. A number of specialists in the field of political science have sought to explain the reasons for the occurrence of such events in the 21st century and what implications they may have for the global security system, especially in the regional one. This article analyzes the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on the security of the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: National security; repercussions; Russian-Ukrainian crisis; Republic of Moldova; Russian Federation; Ukraine.

Lately, the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, which started in 2014 and has lasted for more than five years, as concerns of international politics and diplomacy, became an important subject of discussion. The interest of the researchers and decision-makers in the field of international politics, was directed to the relations between the two states - the Russian Federation and Ukraine. This is due to the fact that both the Russian Federation and Ukraine have been for the past years objects of a particular interest, caused by events such as: the actions of the Russian Federation in Eastern Ukraine, the Russian occupation of the Crimean peninsula. The analysis of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis impact on regional security, as well as on the security of the Republic of Moldova particularly - a genuine topic in the speeches of politicians and scientific researchers. For a better understanding of this phenomenon, it is necessary to highlight some aspects that the impact of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis could have on the security of the Republic of Moldova.

Another premise behind the Russian-Ukrainian crisis is Ukraine's support for the Saakashvili regime in Georgia, along with it he has sought to form the CIS "Democratic Choice Community" - or a pro-Western cordon around the Russian Federation. Also, the proximity of Ukraine to NATO, the support of the location of the anti-missile shield in Eastern Europe conditioned the negative reaction from the Russian Federation. While analyzing the events in Ukraine in the light of the geostrategic interests of the Russian Federation and the West World, we understand that Ukraine has become the scene of disputes and confrontations among the geopolitical actors. The EU looks forward to include Ukraine within its sphere of influence. Thus, for Europe, Ukraine is not only a vast territory with a population of 46 million inhabitants, but can serve as a shield in ensuring the security of the neighboring states at its border. The states that will form the sanitary cordon, according to the interests of the EU, must become supporters of the democratic values and become marketplaces for the European goods, respectively. Although the liberalization of Ukrainian markets is in favor of EU trade policy, it can serve as a weapon for the internal market as well.

Although the Association Agreement with the EU is initialled, its implementation is lengthy. The annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation served as a strategic result, which fortifies the

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Russian power in the religious, cultural and historical space and also contributing to the strengthening of Russia's position in the Black Sea area. Likewise, the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to Russia represents the picture of the contemporary victory, achieved after 1945, as well as the demonstration that Russian territories can be returned peacefully, within the national consciousness while the confrontation between West and East continues. The territorial annexation of Crimea also represents several negative aspects, which have changed the architecture of the Eastern European space. The rupture of the commercial-economic relations with the West, the destruction of the monetary system, the destabilization of the financial situations of the citizens, caused the transition to the new standards.

Thus, for a better understanding of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis repercussions on the security of the Republic of Moldova, occurs the need to identify the factors that could condition threats and risks for the country's security.

A brand new political impetus "Novorossia" claimed by Russian President V. Putin, who at the press conference on April 17, 2014 stated that Harikov, Donetsk, Lugansk, Kherson, Nikolaev and Odessa are areas that constitute "Novorossia" and historically these areas did not belong to Ukraine. According to President Putin, "Novorossia" was included in the composition of Ukraine by the Bolsheviks as a result of the 1917 revolution. In the summer of 2014, the concept of the "Novorossia" confederation was formulated and was to include the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine: Odessa, Kherson, Nikolaev, Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporozhye, Harikov, Donetsk and Lugansk (see Annex 1). As a result of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, actually only the popular republics of Lugansk and Donetsk were created.

Currently, according to some specialists opinions, the "Novorossia" project can be considered outdated. The failure of this project is due to countermeasures taken by the West in response to the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine² (*Рада и «закон Савченко»: отмена ошибки?*). Thus, in the opinion of M. Emerson, a British political scientist, specialist in post-Soviet space issues, the countermeasures taken by the West against the Russian Federation were an important step in changing Russia's strategic intentions in the relations with Ukraine³ (*Численность и состав населения Одесской области по итогам Всеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины*). Although it is considered failed, it is not excluded that this project will be reactivated by the Russian Federation in the meantime. Thus, in order to determine the impact of a possible reactivation of the "Novorossia" project on the security of the Republic of Moldova, there is a need to examine the conditions and factors that could contribute to a possible extension. For a better understanding of the situation created in the region, it is mandatory to examine the factors that would destabilize the situation and pose threats to regional security.

A first factor that could lead to the reactivation of the "Novorossia" project is the presence of Russian military forces and weapons within the Donbas area. In the Donbas conflict, most of the forces of the Military Tactical Group were formed as a result of merging between the military forces of the brigades positioned in the southern region: 136, 18, 17, 8, 19, 205, 33, 34th motorized brigade, 291st artillery brigade including military base 7. (*Численность и состав населения Одесской области*, p. 68).

Also, in the Donbas area there are located 12 military units, used in order to react operatively in critical situations and in case of threat of strategic objects such as: Ilovaisk, Debalițevo, Donetsk airport. The special units of the General Research Command are present in the Donbas area. 7 subdivisions of the General Research Command of the Russian Federation were detected, which are active for diversionist and research purposes. These forces occupy the administrative buildings, attacking the Ukrainian forces, being integrated under the cover of false documents, they hold high positions of responsibility - from deputy commander to lower commanders and specialists, serving

² *Рада и «закон Савченко»: отмена ошибки?* <https://ru.krymr.com/a/28499518.html>

³ *Численность и состав населения Одесской области по итогам Всеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины.* <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/rus/results/general/nationality/odessa/>

contemporary technique and armament⁴ (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, p.68).

Representatives of 4 units of the naval forces are also identified in the area. The soldiers of the 61st Marine Brigade and the representatives of the 200th Special Purpose Brigade of the Northern Maritime Fleet who, during 2014-2015, were activated in Lugansk. Since 2015, the tactical group 99 of the northern fleet has been present in the Donetsk area. The soldiers of the 810th Marine Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet deployed in the Crimea were observed in 2016 in the direction of Mariupol.

The Rosgvardia National Army was also noticed, thus, 5 subunits were identified - with contracted military personnel with military experience in the North Caucasus. In Donbas are still present the special purpose operational brigades number 46 and 451, the special purpose detachment 15 called "Veatici" (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, p.69)

In addition to this military potential, military forces of missile defense and radio equipment were also discovered in the Donbas area, which are part of the structure of the military-cosmic forces belonging to the Russian Federation. In the spring of 2015, were identified units of the 338th subdivision of the 4th Regiment of the army, in whose competence was located the airspace control ("Kast" and "Nebo" type radar stations). Also were spotted ZRPK "Pañiri", ZRK "Buk" involved in the downing of "Boeing MH17". Several soldiers from units stationed in the Middle East, in the Arctic, Tajikistan, were also pointed. In the military operations in Donbas are attracted the soldiers present in the units deployed in the territories occupied by the Russian Federation - Abkhazia, Crimea, and even the Transnistrian area of the Republic of Moldova (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, pp. 69-70).

A component of the aggression of the Russian Federation in Donbas is the arming of the military with weapons and special equipment. Thus, based on the observations made by the Research Agency Inform Napalm, in the conflict zone of Ukraine were identified over 40 types of military equipment belonging to the Russian Federation. A large part of the latest technique equipment was deployed during 2004-2015 years. Also, in order to handle the specific technique, special training of personnel was mandatory (this proves that Russian military personnel is active in the Donbas area).

Russian military equipment located in the eastern part of Ukraine includes: armored cars GAZ-233014, "Tiger", GAZ-39371, "Vodnik", KamAZ -43269, "Vistrel", TAB 82 A, tanks T- 72 (model 1989), T-72BA (model 1999), T-72B3 (model 2011), T-90A (model 2006), T-72 C1, trucks model KamAZ-5350 "mustang", "Ural 632301", "Ural-43206", RSZO 2B26, 9K58 "Smerci", CHAP1 RL232-2M, ZRK9K330 "Tor", 9K331 "Tor M-1" and 9K332 "Tor M-2", ZRPK 96K6 "Pañiri-C1". There are radio stations R-166-0.5, R-441-OB "Liveni", KŞM R-149BMR "Kuşetka-B", REB RB-341B "Leer-3", REB R- 378b "Borisoglebsk-2", REB R-934UM, REB R-330 J "Jiteli", REB "Torn", REB "Rtuti BM", RB-636AM2, "Svet-KU", BLLA "Granat-1", "Granat-2", "Forpost", "Orlan-10", "Eleron-3SB", "Zastava" [17, pp.68-80]. In the Donbas area, Soviet model equipment was used in military operations such as: T-64 tanks, T-72B, 2C1 "Gvozdika" artillery installations, "Strela-10" anti-aircraft complex, fighting machines. of infantry "BMP-1", "BMP-2", multifunctional armored tractors "MT-LB", howitzers caliber 122 mm "D-30" and caliber 152 mm "Msta-B", anti-tank guns MT-12 "Rapira" (Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта 2017, pp. 80-81).

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has accused Moscow of increasing the presence of troops in the area under cover of military exercises on the border with the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. Thus, according to UN data, the conflict in Donbas has resulted in about 14,000 deaths since its outbreak in 2014.

Ukraine's Military Intelligence Service warned that Russia has begun preparations to force the Ukrainian army to respond to the "hostile actions" on the demarcation line in Donbas. This would serve as an excuse for Russia to increase its military presence in the separatist territories of eastern Ukraine by introducing "regular units" with the alleged aim of "protecting Russian citizens", given that tens of thousands of Ukrainians in Donbas have already received Russian passports.

⁴ Донбас в огне. Путеводитель по зоне конфликта. Львов: Прометей. 2017, с. 29-30

This scenario has already happened in 2008 in South Ossetia, when Georgian troops entered the territory of the separatist after facing several challenges, falling into Moscow's trap, according to Russian independent experts, which triggered Russia's military intervention, under the pretext of "imposing peace", which led to the recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and the other Georgian separatist region of Abkhazia by the Russian Federation⁵ (SUA și NATO, în alertă, după escaladarea tensiunilor între Rusia și Ucraina în Donbas).

In the context of the events in the eastern part of Ukraine, it is worth paying attention to the social factor, which determines the vectors and interests of the foreign policy of a state, in this case Ukraine. The Ukrainian population, especially in the south-eastern parts of the country, remains skeptical about Ukraine's integration into the EU. Thus, according to the survey conducted by the group "Reiting", the population of the cities Dnieper (49%), Zaporozhye (35%), Harikov (32%), Mariupoli (24%), Severodonetsk (23%) voted for Ukraine's accession to the EU. Supporters of Ukraine's EU integration are in Lvov (86%), Ivano-Frankovsk (85%) and Uzhgorod (82%). For the integration into the Eurasian space, the Ukrainian population voted also in Mariupol (37%), Odessa (29%), Harikov (27%). The lowest percentage (2%) regarding Ukraine's accession to the Eurasian project was obtained in the western part of the country (Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины). Unlike the situation in the south-eastern areas of Ukraine in 2016, currently, the vast majority of the population is in favor of Ukraine's integration into the EU.

Another factor that could have an impact on the regional security, including the security of the Republic of Moldova, can be considered the stability / instability of the Odessa region. In the last years 2016-2017 Odessa has become a city where the increase in crime and the number of extremist organizations came out of the control of Kiev⁶ («Правый сектор» и криминал делят Одессу на сферы влияния).

During Tsarist Russia, Odessa ranked 5th in the empire in terms of crime, mostly such as theft. Odessa is currently out of the control of the law enforcement agencies of Ukraine. Thus, according to statistics, in 2015, crime in the Odessa region increased by 21%, compared to 2014, and in 2016 - by 45%. Particularly serious crimes increased from 355 to 717 annually, and serious crimes - from 4397 to 6295. Also, during that period, there is an increase of 76.0% in murder cases, as well as doubling of rape cases. According to V. Serdiuk, head of the National Police Department, the situation in Odessa in recent years has become critical. The causes of the increase in crime in Odessa are - economic stagnation, declining income, loss of jobs, political and social instability, illegal distribution of weapons in the eastern part of Ukraine.

The return of the combatants to their motherland, which in the absence of a service, were involved in criminal activities. Another factor that contributed to the increase of crime in Odessa was the adoption and approval by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on November 26, 2015 (entered into force on December 24, 2015) of Law No. 838-VIII on the introduction of amendments in the Criminal Code of Ukraine with reference to the order and term of detention of detainees. This law was called Savchenko's law, according to which one day of detention was equivalent to 2 working days, which led to shortening the detention period in prisons of detainees. Although Savchenko's so-called law was repealed on June 21, 2017⁷ (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001) (Верховная рада Украины отменила «закон Савченко», сокращавший сроки уголовникам 2017), many detainees have already been released, and they are now continuing their illegal activities. The reform of the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine has no less impact on the situation in Odessa, which has led to the replacement of professional staff with unskilled / non-professional staff. Another aspect that diminishes the security of Odessa is the fight of interests between the politicians Poroshenko, Kolomoiskii, Tymoshenko for the influence in the area, especially

⁵ SUA și NATO, în alertă, după escaladarea tensiunilor între Rusia și Ucraina în Donbas. https://deschide.md/ro/stiri/externe/82945/SUA-%C5%9Fi-NATO-%C3%AEn-alert%C4%83-dup%C4%83-escaladarea-tensiunilor-%C3%AEntre-Rusia-%C5%9Fi-Ucraina-%C3%AEn-Donbas.htm?fbclid=IwAR2608RmIFe5NM8WmUHvZKOrCREJAlia4_DrHRZ_vgSjZvJRKUcdf1QUE4k

⁶ «Правый сектор» и криминал делят Одессу на сферы влияния. <https://vz.ru/world/2015/3/5/732919.html>

⁷ Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova. Institutul de Politici Publice. Chișinău 2001.

⁸ Верховная рада Украины отменила «закон Савченко», сокращавший сроки уголовникам. <http://www.mk.ru/social/2017/05/18/verkhovnaya-rada-ukrainy-otmenila-zakon-savchenko-sokrashhavshiy-sroki-ugolovnikam.html>

the fight to have a monopoly over the four ports, the customs, the market "sedimoi kilometer", points which bring income and through which the greatest crimes are committed.

Another aspect of Odessa security, including regional security, is the polarization of the city. The presence of the "right-wing sector" and pro-Russian forces lead to a destabilization of the situation, to an increase in crime⁹ (Оганджанов И. Беспредел у моря: как Одесса превратилась в криминальную столицу Украины).

The multiethnic aspect of the Odessa population could also destabilize the situation dramatically. Thus, according to the general census of the population, conducted in 2001, in the Odessa area live over 133 ethnic groups: Ukrainians -1542.3 thousand (62.8%); Russians -508 thousand (20, 7%); Bulgarians - 150.7 thousand (6.1%); Moldovans -123, 8 thousand (5%); Gagauzia - 27, 6 thousand (1.1%); Jews-13.4 thousand (0.6%); Belarusians-12.8 thousand (0.5%); Armenians-7.4 thousand (0.3%); romi-4.0 thousand (0.2%); Polish-3.2 thousand (0.1%); Germans - 2.9 thousand (0.1%); Georgians - 2.8 thousand (0.1%); azeri-2.7 thousand (0.1%); Tatars - 2.6 thousand (0.1%); Greeks 2.1 thousand (0.1%); Albanians-1.9 thousand (0.1); arabi-1.3 thousand (0.1%); other ethnic groups-45, 6 thousand (1.9%) (Численность и состав населения ОдесскоВсеукраинской переписи населения 2001 года. Государственный комитет статистики Украины 2001).

A direct threat to the security of the Republic of Moldova is the Region that claims to be a sovereign and independent state is the territory of the Republic of Moldova on the left bank of the Dniester River, which occupies an area of 3.7 thousand km², which represents 11% of the territory Republic, with a population of 730 thousand out of the 4380 thousand inhabitants of the country, i.e., 16.7% of the total population. We will mention from the very beginning that there are no preconditions for the political self-determination of this territory. First of all, in this region as shown by the statistical data live: the native population, the Moldovans, which constitute 38.5%, 29.5% - Ukrainians, 25.3% - Russians, 1.6% - Bulgarians, 4, 6% - other nationalities¹⁰ (Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины). Moldova has become a real hotbed of conflict.

Since 1995, Russia, in order to maintain its military presence in Moldova, has taken the path of transforming the small contingent of Russian troops in Transnistria into peacekeeping forces. The intention of the Russian Federation to turn the former 14th Army into a peacekeeping force is not new. Russia made proposals to Moldova in this regard during the armed conflict in the summer of 1992. On November 22, 1995, the issue of transforming the small contingent of Russian troops from Transnistria into peacekeeping forces was discussed in the Joint Control Commission (JCC). The military formations of the Russian Federation, deployed in the eastern districts of the Republic of Moldova, include the units and subunits of the former 14th Army, which in 1997 were called the Russian Troops Task Force (GOTR). This transformation is explained by the Russian Federation by the considerable decrease of the military presence in the region and by the new peacekeeping missions carried out by its troops. However, the closest explanation to the truth of these metamorphoses would be the following:

1. The continued use of the collocation "The 14th Army" had become too inconvenient for Moscow on the grounds that it was associated with Russia's direct involvement in the military conflict on the part of the separatists.

2. The change of name provided an opportunity to divert attention from Russia's unwillingness to continue to comply with the provisions of the 1992 Agreement. On the principles of conflict settlement in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova according to which military units in the region could not be used in the operation peacekeeping.

3. In 1997 the three-year period for the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of the Republic of Moldova by the famous Agreement signed in 1994 expired and the Russian Federation was forced to create the impression that even if the entry into force of the agreement in question had been blocked by the Russian Duma, however, Russia shall act to the best of its ability in accordance with the spirit of this Agreement. In reality, no new missions for the Russian troops have

⁹ Оганджанов И. Беспредел у моря: как Одесса превратилась в криминальную столицу Украины. <https://russian.rt.com/article/311089-bespredel-u-morya-kak-odessa-prevratilas-v>.

¹⁰ Феномен Новороссии по-прежнему присутствует в политическом поле Украины. <http://rebels-herald.ru/fenomen-novorossii-po-prezhnemu-prisutstvuet-v-politicheskom-pole-ukrainy/>

occurred and no considerable diminution of the military presence took place. By the end of 1997, only 377 wagons of military equipment had been withdrawn from the Russian Federation, out of the 10,000 or so determined before the 1994 agreement was signed. Radio electronics and logistical equipment, but no tank, armored fighting machine, artillery, anti-tank or anti-aircraft system, no ammunition wagon, etc. had been withdrawn. This trend has not changed further. In 1998 no wagons with GOTR military equipment were withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in 1999, 122 wagons with automobiles, engineering equipment and repair equipment were withdrawn, in 2000 again only 40 wagons with automobiles and logistics equipment. (Thus, until now, military equipment was withdrawn from the territory of the Republic of Moldova in a volume not exceeding 5 percent of the volume declared for evacuation in 1994).

From a military point of view, the abrogation of the name "14th Army" seemed to be logical given that several units that were part of this structure until 1992 were on the territory of Ukraine, two military units (from Parcani and Dubasari) passed under the jurisdiction of Tiraspol, and the units in Tiraspol were essentially an infantry division with several reinforcement units. Currently, the structure of the Task Force has remained practically similar to that of the 59th Motorized Infantry Division and includes an infantry brigade (formed on the basis of the 3 infantry regiments of the 59th Division), a tank regiment, artillery, an anti-aircraft missile regiment, an anti-tank artillery division, a reconnaissance battalion, a transmission battalion, insurance subunits, depots, etc. The endowment of Russian troops over 6 years also remained unchanged: 117 T64 tanks in 2000 compared to 120 in 1994, 130 armored fighting vehicles compared to 160 in 1994, 128 pieces of artillery compared to 128 in 1994 and 180 in 1992. The most astonishing conclusion, reached by the military analysts following the timely assessment of the Russian military presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, is that the total potential of the military forces on the left bank of the Dniester remained virtually the same as in 1992. Those of the reserve in the 14th Army were transformed into semi-deployed military units. Armed forces of the MRI, the decrease of the Russian forces was accompanied by the increase of the military force of the MRI in the same proportion, the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Russian troops pass with the military service in the Transnistrian military units. This way, on the left bank of the Dniester, a military potential much higher than the one existing on the right bank was preserved. The comparison of the potential of two military forces is not based exclusively on the number of categories of weapons and military equipment but, first of all, on their combat potential. Thus, the number of weapons systems, such as artillery, may be comparable, but if some of these systems do not have ammunition or are in a technical condition that no longer allows their use, when evaluating to the real military potential this category can be completely omitted. Also it is worth mentioning that the warehouses in Colbasna are practically divided into two and a part belongs to Tiraspol. At the same time until 1992 on the right bank there were no significant stocks of ammunition and the conditions of financing and activity of the National Army of the Republic of Moldova since its creation and until, it is estimated that ammunition reserves didn't happen. The fact that the army is trying to sell some categories of weapons and equipment is a tangential testimony that these categories do not have a decisive influence on the military potential. Thus, the organizational changes of 1997, making some changes in the structure of Russian military units, did not diminish the Russian military potential in the region, perfectly following the logic of the Strategic Course of the Russian Federation with CIS member states, approved by B.Eltin on 14 September 1995, which declared the Commonwealth of Independent States as an area of vital interest to the Russian Federation and formalized the implementation of the mechanism for maintaining the Russian military presence in the CIS states on principles and forms of military bases. The agreement on the principles of political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, signed in July 1992, determined that the military units of the 14th Army could not be used to carry out peacekeeping missions, given its active involvement in the military conflict, such as and by the fact that about 50% of the officers and about 80% of the non-commissioned officers of these units are semi-locals and, de facto, citizens of the MRI. Thus, Moscow imposed the application of the principle of neutrality and impartiality of the peacekeeping troops in its own elaboration. In the new formula, after the reorganization of the 14th army into GOTR, the fulfillment of peacekeeping missions is no longer attributed to military units brought to the region from

the depths of Russia, but to local troops. In reality, the very acceptance by the Republic of Moldova of Russian military forces as peacekeeping forces was the biggest political mistake that conditioned the blocking of the entire conflict resolution process and is it is a desecration of the very principles of such a process. In fact, the entire peacekeeping operation is, in reality, an operation to preserve the conflict and protect the separatist regime and its consolidation process (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Russia has sought to justify its proposal to provide peacekeeping functions to troops in the 14th Army through the financial difficulties it faces in securing peacekeeping troops. In reality, the Russian proposal was further evidence that Moscow had no intention of complying with the Agreement on the Withdrawal of Russian Troops, an agreement signed with Moldova in October 1994, and "the transfer of the 14th Army's peacekeeping function." will perpetuate its presence in Moldova".

However, the Russian proposal pursued another objective. According to the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Weapons in Europe, the Russian Federation undertakes to destroy or withdraw from the territory of the Republic of Moldova 5 types of conventional weapons (tanks, armored vehicles, artillery pieces, combat helicopters and attack aircraft). If the Republic of Moldova were to accept the Russian proposal, all or part of its weapons would go to the endowment of the peacekeeping forces", which would mean removing it from the FACE Treaty and therefore Russia, in this case cannot be charged with non-compliance with that Treaty. Russia, as the successor to the Soviet Union, has not reconciled and is not reconciling with diminishing its role in the former USSR. The main interest was to stop the centrifugal tendencies and diminish its influence in this territory.

In the composition of the Armed Forces of a.z. MRI are: units and subunits of infantry, artillery, tanks, air defense, transmissions, aviation, special, insurance and others within the Ministry of Defense; internal troops within the Ministry of Internal Affairs; border guards within the Ministry of State Security; Cossack troops; staffs and popular militia formations; staffs and civil defense formations. At the end of 2000, the number of military formations made up of the Ministry of Defense, the interior troops and the border guards reached 7,200, of which about 3,000 are deployed in the security zone. The Cossack troops (about 3000 pers) and the popular militia (about 3000 pers) are considered active reserve units. In case of military danger, it is expected to increase the staff to about 25,000 people.

Currently the military formations of a.z. MRIs are structured in accordance with their own military doctrine which provides for the maintenance of units with small numbers, but able to triple their numbers in case of need. Thus, each infantry brigade includes command, guard and insurance subunits deployed (which ensure the daily activity of the unit), as well as a battalion deployed by infantry (which ensures the training of recruits and the permanent formation of the military reserve). In case of military danger, it is planned to deploy units to the states of war.

The material basis of military formations a.z. MRI is the combat technique, weapons, equipment, ammunition and other material sources transmitted from the military units of the 14th Army both during the armed conflict in 1992 and in the following period. At the endowment of the military formations of the Ministry of Defense are:

T-64 tanks - 18 units; armored fighting machines 84 units; BTR-60 - 24 p .; BTR-70 - 26 units; BTR-80 - 11 units; BTR-D – 12 units; BRDM - 7 units; BMP - 3 units; MTLB. 1 units. Artillery pieces about 10 units: self-propelled howitzers 122-mm type "Gvozdica" - 18 units; anti-tank cannons 100-mm MT12 - 16 units; 85-mm cannons - 12 units; mine throwers M120 - 45 units; 82-mm mine throwers - 40 a units; BM-21 reactive projectile launch systems. Grade 20 units. Anti-aircraft guns - 49: 100-mm caliber type AZP-100 - 10 units, 57-mm caliber type C-60 - 12 units; of caliber 23mm type ZU 23-2 - 24 units; "Alazani" - 3 units; Anti-aircraft missile systems Complex medium-range anti-aircraft defense complexes (1-18 km) type Osa-2;

Igla type small-range anti-aircraft defense complexes (0.3-5km), about 40 complex units of ПТЯР "FAGOT" type anti-tank missiles, about 30 units; bullet armament about 20,000 a. The aviation subunits are equipped with: 6 helicopters - MI-8T; 2 helicopters - MI-2; 1 aircraft - AH-26; 4 aircraft -

AH-2 (2 for preservation); 2 aircraft - ЯК-18 (50), 10 aircraft ЯК-52. МИ-8Т helicopters are equipped with "HYPC" rocket launchers.

Under the management of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are: the internal troops are intended for the guarding of state objects and the performance of various service and combat tasks. In the composition of the internal troops are: Special Destination Battalion «Dnestr» - t. Tiraspol, 2 patrol detachments Prevomaisk and Parcani, 7 patrol militia sections, the Dniester Battalion is directly subordinated to the Minister of Internal Affairs of the a.z. NMR. The staff has about 400 people. In the eastern part of the Republic of Moldova there are weapons: 82mm caliber mine launchers, anti-tank grenade launchers, machine guns, submachine guns, sniper rifles, etc. The total number of subunits of the internal troops is subordinated to about 700 people.

Another institution that has military forces is the Ministry of State Security of the so-called "Transnistrian Moldovan Republic". The composition of this institution includes the following forces that are part of the Armed Forces of the "NMR": the special purpose battalion "Delta" (deployed in the city of Tiraspol). Its strength is 150 soldiers. Also in the management of the Ministry are weapons: armored vehicles, grenade launchers, small arms, special means. The Cossack Regiment of independent border guards (deployed in the city of Tiraspol) with a force of 300 soldiers is also a component of the Ministry's forces. Also, the Regiment is equipped with infantry armament and about 20 armored personnel carriers' type BTR-60, BTR-70.

Other military forces present in the Transnistrian area are the border guard troops consisting of a Training Detachment (deployed in the city of Tiraspol), 7 commanders (Camenca, Ribnita, Dubasari, Grigoriopol, Bender, Tiraspol, Slobozia), 29 border guards and 30 of border control posts. Weapons are present in the Transnistrian area: armored fighting machines, mine throwers, grenade launchers, small arms and a military force of about 1500 people¹¹ (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Cossack troops (Черноморское Казачье Войско) are also present in the Transnistrian area. The Cossack troops are the main reserve of the FA of the a.z.RMN. The organization "Черноморское казачье войско" includes 7 districts of Cossacks, established according to the territorial principle and which bring together Cossacks from nearby localities (ponds). Their composition is as follows: Cossack District 1 (Camenca town); district 2 of the Cossacks (Rîbnița town); district 3 of the Cossacks (Dubasari town); district 4 of the Cossacks (Grigoriopol town (Grigoriopol, Crasnaia Gorca, Bîcioc estates); district 5 of the Cossacks (Bender town); Slobozia - the ponds: Sucleia, Slobozia, Glinoe, Dnestrovsc).

The Cossacks satisfy the military service in: 1) the Cossack regiment of border guards from the Ministry of State Security and 2) the motorized infantry battalion of the 1st motorcycle infantry brigade of the Ministry of Defense.

The number of Cossacks that can be mobilized reaches 3,000 (the total number of Cossacks and family members is about 10,000 people). The military command of the Cossack troops in number of 30 people performs permanent military service. Also, the Cossack troops are part of the Russian Union of the Cossack Soviet, in whose works the Cossack ataman in the region participates permanently.

The Territorial Defense Corps (People's Militia and Civil Defense) (народное ополчение) (formed on the basis of I. Izmirnov's decree of March 17, 1992) and the Civil Defense (formed in 1992) is the reserve of the Armed Forces of a.z. MRI and is structured in territorial battalions. In peacetime, the people's militia and civil defense have permanent staffs stationed in the district centers. The deployment of battalions is carried out in case of military danger or for concentrations and training applications. The staff of the battalion is completed with permanent staff from the battalion commander to the company commander. The staff is about 20 people and has a weapon of about 150 submachine guns. Also, the staff permanently carries out combat training exercises with the battalion commanders, company. The People's Militia and the Civil Defense have its own structure: the General Staff of the People's Militia Corps (Tiraspol) and 5 General Staffs of the Territorial Battalions (Ribnita, Dubasari, Grigoriopol, Bender, Parcani), the Permanent Staff of the

¹¹ Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova, Institutul de Politici Publice, Chișinău, 2001.

Territorial Defense Corps (People's Militia) and civil defense) up to 300 people, most of whom are reserve officers. After completing the battalions with troops in case of military danger, the Territorial Defense Corps can reach the number of 2000 people. The GOTR Independent Tank Battalion includes 80 tanks. This is the amount that corresponds to a regiment according to both Russian and European standards. At the same time, the Independent Tank Battalion of the NMR includes 18 tanks corresponding to the structure of two companies (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001, pp.28-31).

In 1991, the volume of real stocks in the Transnistrian area was 2500 wagons (45951 tons). Already in 1994, during the negotiations on the military patrimony on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, the warehouse command presented another information, which determines a volume twice smaller than the one presented in 1991: reactive projectiles 4 027 t. 212 wagons; bombs 82-mm, 120-mm 5 057 t 364 wagons; ammunition for anti-aircraft artillery 2,819 t. 151 wagons; ammunition for grenade launchers 2 649t. 233 wagons; anti-tank and anti-personnel grenades 643t. 40 wagons; 574t anti-tank missiles. 58 wagons; 3 845t cartridges. 184 wagons; mines and pyrotechnic means 3 397t. 20 wagons; instruction ammunition 1 255t. 100 wagons. In total, in 1994 there were 24,266 tons (1362 wagons) in the Transnistrian area compared to 1991 when there were 45,951 tons (2,500 wagons). The difference between the data presented in 1994 and those presented in 1991 is the direct result of the transmission of ammunition to the military formations of a.z.RMN during the military conflict and after its cessation.

Since 1994 the territory of the depots has been divided in two and on one part of the territory it has been offered to Tiraspol for the organization of the ammunition depot of the military formations of the a.z.RMN. To guard and ensure the activity of the warehouse, Tiraspol deployed a battalion from the 3rd motorcycle infantry brigade from Râbnița. Consisting of about 300 soldiers equipped with TB (БТР-70), mine throwing battery, anti-tank cannon battery (6 MT12 cal.100mm cannons), anti-aircraft battery (6 ZU23-2 coupled cannons) and infantry armament this battalion provides both security and control over deposits. At the same time, a border guard post is set up at the exit of the warehouse. Thus, the removal of weapons and ammunition is controlled by the security organs, and the reciprocal transmission inside the warehouses is carried out without any obstacle.

In addition to the transmission of ammunition and weapons inside the depots, in the years 1992-1999 were repeatedly found cases of transporting from these depots to the military units of azRMN 122 mm shells for howitzers, 100 mm for anti-tank guns, bombs 120 mm for grenade launchers, ammunition for RPG7 and RPG9 grenade launchers, RPG18 / 26 disposable grenade launchers, hand grenades, 9mm, 5.45mm and 7.62mm cartridges, et.

Since 1994, the Russian Party has repeatedly mentioned the existence of two categories of ammunition that prevented a rhythmic and rapid withdrawal of deposits from Colbasna: third-class or non-transportable ammunition and ammunition brought to the ready-to-use or coupled state. Which, for various reasons, cannot be transported in such a condition. Also in these documents was the third category, called ammunition that could not be used by the 14th Army formations due to the lack of appropriate weapons systems. Category 3 ammunition (non-transportable) was present - 435 tons in 1994 (0 tons in 2000).

During the Moldovan-Russian negotiations on April 27, 1994, the existence of 435 tons of non-transportable ammunition due to the expiration of the maximum storage terms (produced in the 30s and 40s) and violation of maintenance rules. According to the specialists' calculations, a period of 7 months was required for the liquidation of these ammunitions. The liquidation of these ammunition by detonation began in the spring of 1995. At the end of 1995 the Russian Party declared the destruction of 600 tons of ammunition, and on 18.11.1996 General V. Evnevici declared that the Russian Party destroyed 12237 units (204 tons) of ammunition as follows: shells 152mm- 254 units; projectiles 100mm-12 units; projectiles 125mm-1061 units; projectiles 85m- 51 units; projectiles 122 mm-452 units and projectiles 76 mm-136 units. Also, in the Transnistrian area, 122mm reactive projectiles were detected, 5 units, projectiles 30 mm 272 units, bombs 120 mm 9940 units, projectiles 23 mm 60 units.

The destruction of ammunition by detonation was continued in the following years. In total, according to many of Moscow's contradictory statements in the period 1995-1999 were destroyed by detonation not the 435 tons declared in 1994 but about 1000 tons of ammunition, or such a category of ammunition should no longer exist. At the same time, taking into account the fact that, despite the bilateral agreements, no foreign observer or expert was admitted to the destruction operations, as well as the division of the deposits into two parts in 1994 (one part being offered. FA RMN.), it can be stated with certainty that these actions were an integral part of the process of arming and equipping the military formations of azRMN and, on the other hand, they served as cover for various ammunition trading businesses (Aspectul militar în soluționarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001).

Since 1995, armaments have been produced in companies in the Transnistrian area. Thus, the mechanical plant in Bender produced in series: launch systems for reactive projectiles BM-21, Град with 20 pipes (mounted on the bodies of cars Зил-131); anti-tank grenade launchers ППГ-9 (since 1995); mine throwers (82-mm, 120-mm caliber) (since 1996); portable anti-tank grenade launchers ППГ-7 (since 1996); ПСМ pistols of caliber 5.45 mm. (only in the period 1995-99 about 2000 units were produced). Thus, by the end of 1999, 47 "Grade" type projectile launcher installations had been produced. Of these, 20 units were sent to the artillery regiment of the Armed Forces of the a.z. NMR. The others are exported. Thus, 7 BM-21 "Grade" reactive systems were delivered to Abkhazia through Bulgaria, under the cover of a Russian company.

Taking into account the location of the plant (right bank of the Dniester, inside the security zone, the special regime of the city of Bender) the leaders of Tiraspol, together with the Russian side, insistently promoted and managed to obtain the necessary conditions for the production and transportation of weapons. Thus, the condition was imposed that the checkpoint and crossing of the Peacekeeping Troops on the Bender Bridge be completed only by Russian and Transnistrian soldiers (in 1992 by the decision of the Unified Control Commission on all bridges on the Dniester were installed tripartite checkpoints, which included representatives of the peacekeeping forces of the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and the TMR).

All subsequent attempts by Chisinau's representatives in the Unified Control Commission to restore the status of this post as a tripartite and to carry out an inspection visit to the plant in accordance with the provisions of the 1992 Agreement and the CUC status were a response.

Since the spring of 1997, at the metallurgical plant in Râbnîța, the production of 82-mm caliber mine throwers was launched. The minesweeper production equipment was purchased in 1995 from the Russian Federation and also allows the production of 120-mm caliber minesweepers. The testing of the first throwers and the control shootings were carried out on May 17, 1997 in the presence of the representatives of Russia. Production capacity - 5-6 units per week. Most of the launchers are delivered to the military formations of a.z.RMN. Also in the spring of 1997, the first experimental batch (100) of antipersonnel mines in a wooden case (of the ПМД type) was produced at the factory. Subsequently, the production of anti-tank mines was found. GP-25 40-mm anti-personnel grenade launchers (with pipe mounting) are produced at the pump plant. Some of the subassemblies for these throwers are produced at the "Selihoztehnica" plant in Camenca.

From the spring of 1996, the plant began to systematically receive wagons and trucks with bombs and projectiles from the warehouse in Colbasna. These deliveries were covered by the process of destroying non-transportable ammunition from the warehouse in question. The immediate vicinity of the warehouse and plant (approx. 10 km), as well as the permanent blocking of access to the area by representatives of Chisinau or international organizations make it quite difficult to estimate the volume of deliveries for both weapons and ammunition production and trade. (Only 4 wagons delivered to the plant in the spring of 1997 contained about 200 tons of bombs and projectiles). Various sources confirm that, with the help of specialists from the Russian Federation, the technological process for the extraction of explosive material and the production of ammunition was launched, and the sale of different types of weapons, both from the GOTR arsenal and of own production is carried out under cover of export with metal.

Thus, at the "Electromaş" plant in Tiraspol, the following products were generated in series: 9-mm machine guns; Macarov pistols 9 mm mm; 5.45-mm PSM pistols; hunting weapons and special combat weapons manufactured from them. Subassemblies (including silencers - приборы для бесшумной стрельбы) are received from the Russian Federation. At the same time, the "Electromachine" plant and the "Electroaparat" plant (Tiraspol city) produce subassemblies and equipment blocks for various weapons systems, the assembly of which is carried out in the Russian Federation. In the most frequent cases, Tiraspol concludes the arms export contracts with the help of Russia and, in particular, of the concern "РОСВООУЖЕНИЕ" whose representatives are in the region on a permanent basis (Aspectul militar în soluţionarea conflictului din zona de est a Republicii Moldova 2001, pp.33-34). Based on the fact that the situation in Ukraine is complex, in turn the implications of the crisis in Ukraine on the security system of the Republic of Moldova are complex (Albu N. 2015 p.30)¹².

The manifestation of "anti-Chisinau" attitudes in various districts of the Republic of Moldova - Gagauzia, Balti, Taraclia also poses threats to state security. The holding of the two referendums in the Gagauz Autonomous Region on February 2, 2014 was an opportunity for Moldovan society to have heated debates on how the Center communicates with the regions. During a discussion at the Russian Institute for Strategic Research, experts from this well-known institution confirmed the possibility of Moscow resorting to military or force majeure scenarios. The main argument was that, after what happened in Ukraine, the previously existing rules of the game have disappeared, which opens the "window of opportunity" for a multitude of scenarios.

According to security experts, there are a number of confidential analyzes that confirm Moldova's poor ability to cope with direct military aggression. There is a similar problem in Bălţi. In the summer of 2012, the councilors from Bălţi decided that they will organize a referendum for the extension of the municipality's autonomy. The plebiscite was to take place on September 9, 2012, but was not organized because the government had reached an agreement with local authorities. Balti Municipality was to receive the status of level II administrative-territorial unit, just like Chisinau. The agreement, however, was not respected. In June 2014, councilors in Balti again called for a law to be adopted to give Bălţi a special status, otherwise they threatened to hold a referendum to create autonomy. Two elements explain the public's attention to this subject. The first case concerns the fact that, although the court declared them illegal, the political elite in Comrat insisted on organizing plebiscites, which was a political insult to the central authorities. The second issue is related to the blow of the image applied to the course of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova, the development and the results of the referendums showing that there are solid opponents of the idea of European integration of the country (Ciurea Criza din Ucraina)¹³.

Finally, the last argument is related to the statements of the Russian Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, who stated that the Russian Federation will pay special attention to the Taraclia district, populated by ethnic Bulgarians, and to the Gagauz autonomy. The actions of Yakubov, born in Ceadir-Lunga and Hudiakov, born in Tiraspol, considered older friends with Gagauz leaders, give the impression that they did not represent Russia's official position. Likewise, Ambassador Muhammad's statement that he will pay more attention to Russian speakers in Taraclia or ATU Gagauz-Yeri could be treated as a platform for cultural support of Russian speakers in the mentioned localities. Therefore, the instability created in the southern regions of Moldova was exacerbated by events in Ukraine and Russia's political involvement, but also by domestic causes. A new touchstone for stability in the area will be the discussion of the Package of Laws on the Special Statute of Gagauzia Autonomy, which was not approved by Parliament (Ciurea Criza din Ucraina).

Thus, assessing the situation in Ukraine, we could highlight the following repercussions of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis on the security of the Republic of Moldova:

- Although the "Novorossia" project can be considered an exhausted subject due to countermeasures taken by the West in reaction to the actions of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, it

¹² N. Albu, „Influenţa crizei din Ucraina asupra securităţii Republicii Moldova”, *Revista Militară nr. 2(14)*, 2015, p. 30.

¹³ C.Ciurea, *Criza din Ucraina și impactul ei asupra sistemului de securitate al Republicii Moldova*, Asociația pentru Politică Externă.

is possible that this project will be reactivated by Russia and Russian military formations deployed in the districts of the Republic of Moldova could support its development.

- The presence of armaments in the eastern part of Ukraine conditions the creation of criminal networks, including on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, involved in the illegal arms trade.
- The embargo imposed on the Republic of Moldova in September 2013 for the export of wines is of a political nature, to discourage European integration, it affects the economic security of the Republic of Moldova.

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