

## **PARTICULARITIES OF THE OPERATIONAL PLANNING OF ACTIONS INSIDE THE INLAND-MARITIME AREA OF ROMANIA**

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*Operational planning of the specific actions within the inland – maritime area for the management of major crisis situations is developed in accordance with NATO crisis management procedures.*

*Rigorous planning of crisis response actions is based on establishing the decisive conditions which ensure an optimum objectives/missions distribution report.*

*The decisive conditions are fulfilled by achieving the support effects, these being sequences of a strategic or operative objective.*

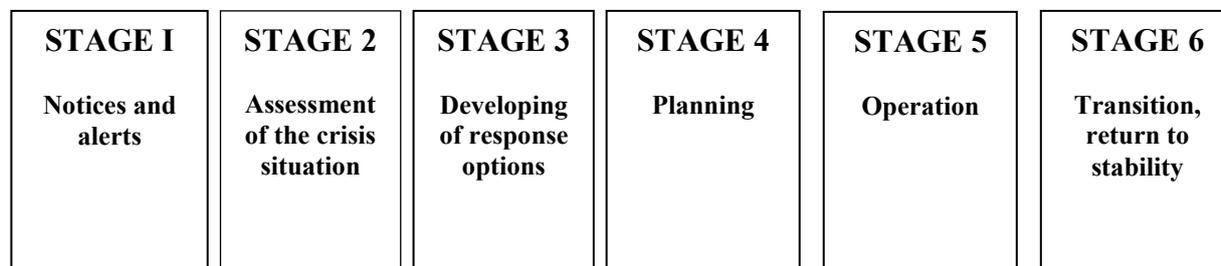
**Keywords:** operational planning; crisis management; operations plan; decisive conditions; support effects.

Military actions deployed within the inland-maritime area of Romania imply in particular the response of the inter-institutional structures forming the integrated system for national interests' promotion and defence upon a crisis situation or the participation of the multinational congregated forces to an armed conflict.

The operational planning process as a response to a crisis situation is generally similar with the one for current operations, hence, the specific character of these operations puts a mark in this field.

One of the specific issues is the inter-operability of the participating forces. In our opinion planning is the most important and sensitive stage of the entire process of approving, organizing and deploy of an operation. In the same time, we think that the planning actions related to the intervention to a major crisis situation on national territory or of a regional or local armed conflict must be in accordance with the NATO concept regarding crisis management, in view of enhancing the inter-operability and the efficiency of the intervention.

Analysing the stages of the crisis management process<sup>1</sup> presented in Figure 1, we intend to develop an algorithm of the planning process, specific for the actions undertaken within the inland – maritime area of Romania



**Fig. 1** Stages of the NATO crisis management process

1. Within the first stage – *Notices and alerts* – the lower command and control system and the inter-institutional information structures of the integrated system for national interests’ promotion and defence monitor a potential crisis area, and the political-military structure must be informed whenever there is a new alert assessment or whenever there are alterations of this alert. Once informed, the political-military structure has three options to follow: take no measure; require further information or accept and retain the alerts as being severe and indicate the related strategic, operative and tactic structures to analyse the situation.

2. *Assessment of the crisis situation* – the political- military component directs the responsible structures to analyse and asses the military, social, political and economic situation of the crisis evolution, in view of a possible inter – institutionalised response. After the assessment is presented the political – military level may follow two options: take no measure or order the crisis management inter-institutional structures to develop potential response options.

3. *Developing the recommended response options* has the goal to orientate the decision within the political – military situation analysing process, including the military strategic analyse. In this respect the response options aim the interfusion of activities developed by the political – military component together with the National Military Command Centre.

4. – 5. Political – military level’s *Decisions planning and execution* – inter-institutional structures response strategy, the final desired stage and the missions covered by the initiation directive will be transposed into an operations plan. After approval, this operations plan will be executed, implemented and monitored by the system’s components through its responsible structures.

6. *De-escalation and return to stability*<sup>2</sup> - this stage of shutting off the crisis and return to stability is reachable when the objective and the final state were achieved.

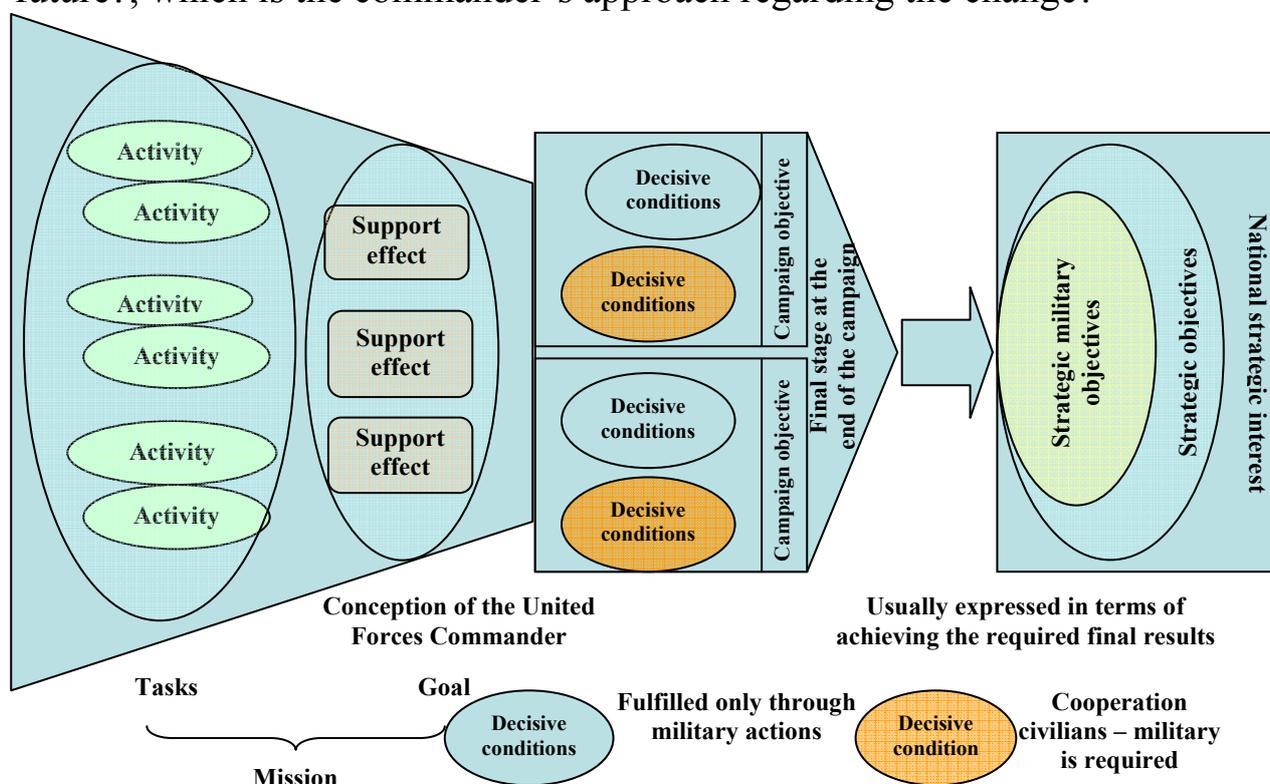
<sup>1</sup> *AJP 3 B*, 2010 Cap. 4, p. 65.

The planning process we propose is an inter-institutional integrated type and has to be considered in the context of a training unified system. In this respect the command components of all participating forces must use the processes of this system for developing training programs, for planning, executing and assessing the training based on the essential tasks in order to accomplish the mission.

As it is very easy to notice, the unified character of the military actions is displayed at all military art levels. What we wish to underline is the fact that the planning process is dynamic and always directed by the commander. Even if the general staff is assisting the commander of the united forces, finally the ultimate planning result (OPLAN) belongs to the commander and he is the one directing its elaboration process.

The essence of this relationship is based on acknowledging that planning is a mental activity, supported, but not led, by some processes. For that matter, each operation has an unique context, a combination of military and non-military actions all following the same purpose: transposing the strategic intentions into tactical actions.

Planning as a response to a major crisis situation is addressing, in general, the following three questions: which are the characteristics of the current situation?; how should the most favourable situation look in the future?; which is the commander's approach regarding the change?



**Fig. 2** The relation operational planning and strategic planning

<sup>2</sup> NATO working group on „crisis management” – 2008, section 2, *Ending of crisis and closing the conflict.*

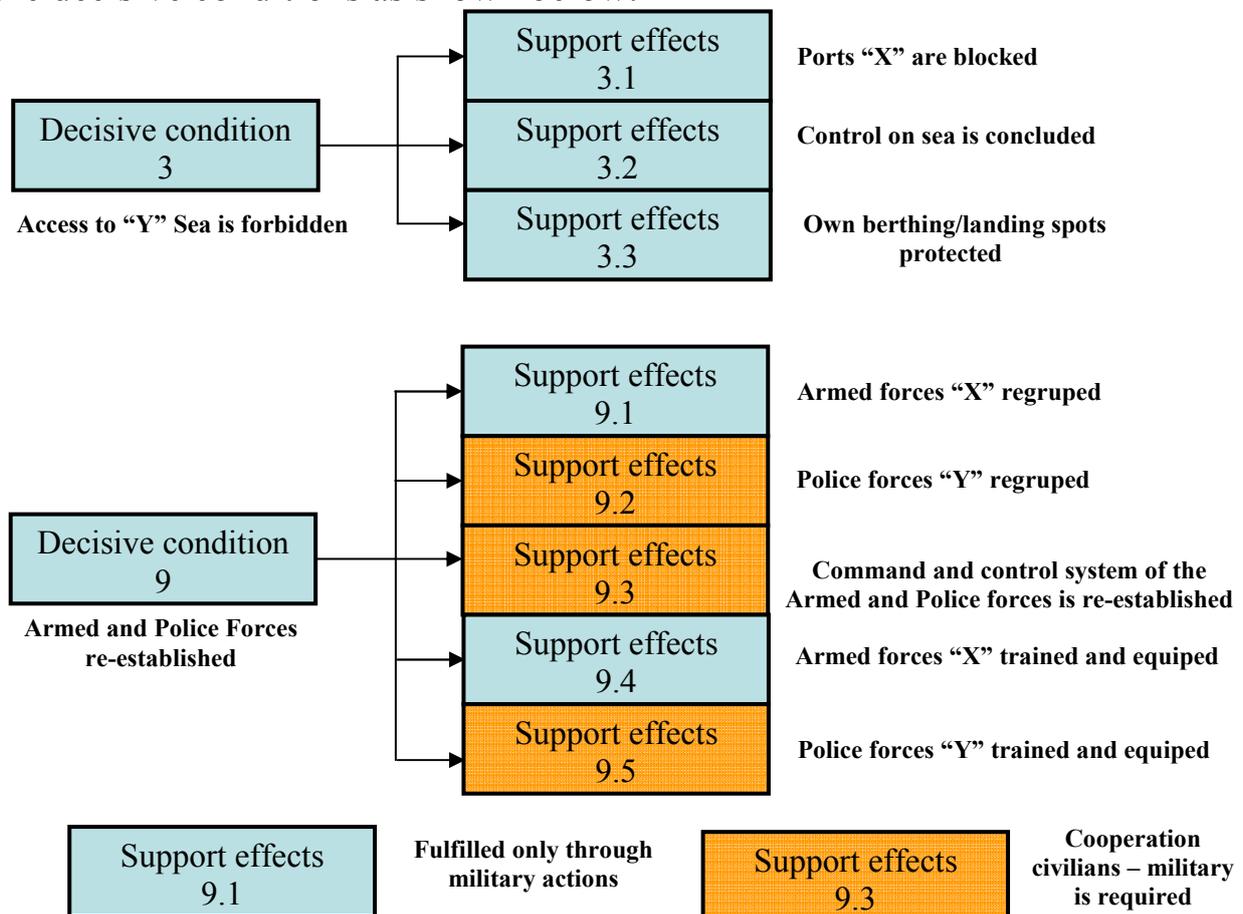
As mentioned before, in essence, a *decisive condition* represents a combination of specific circumstances considered necessary for fulfilling the objectives of an efficient intervention. These should reflect the relation between the decisive individual conditions and the relations within each condition, between the barycentre and the action's objectives.

The decisive conditions are:

- prior conditions for fulfilling the objectives and implicit for reaching the final required stage;
- expressed by using verbs at participle in view of channelling the attention towards the results and not on the activities.

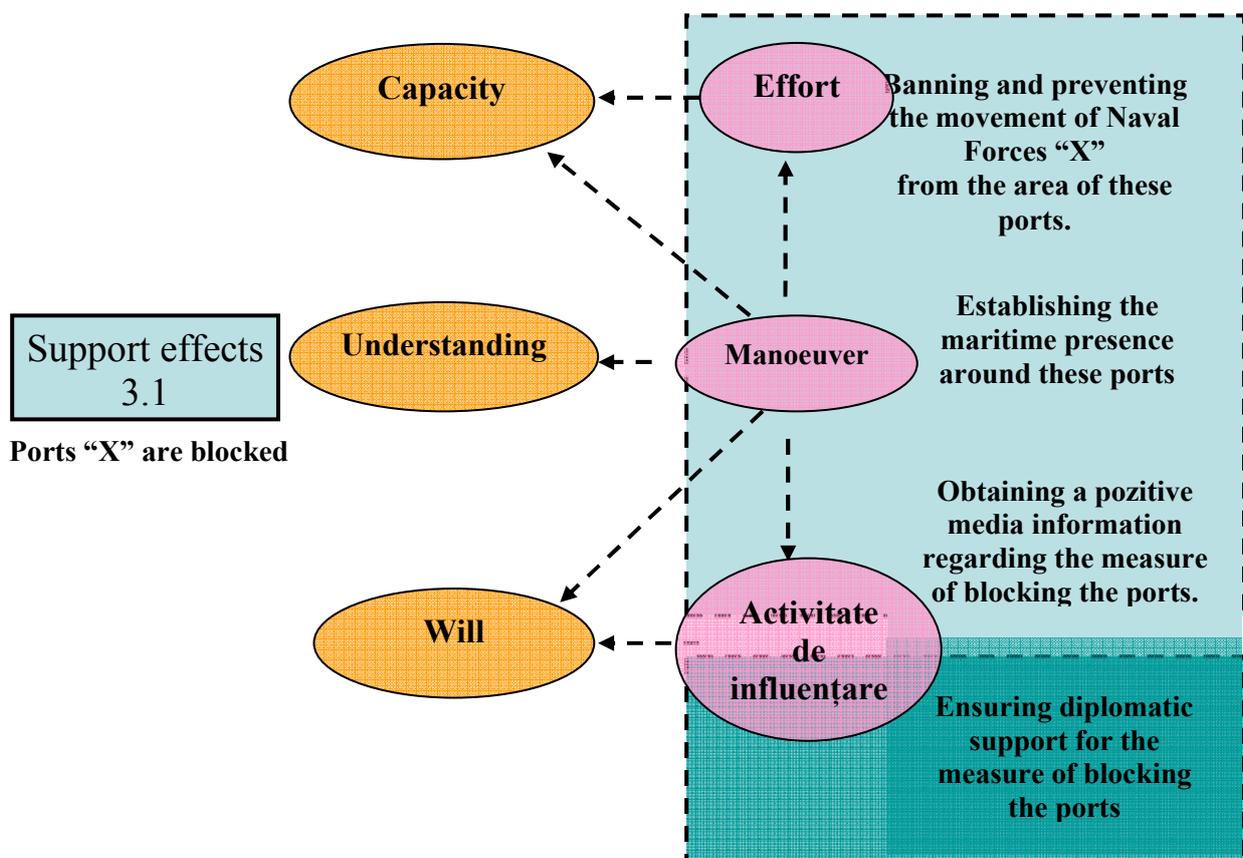
For example, the inter-institutional crisis response structure may identify a domestic real military or unmilitary capacity as a decisive condition concurring to reaching an objective for solving the situation created.

The decisive conditions are derived from the descending analyse of the objectives of an intervention. They are fulfilled by accomplishing the required support effects for each of them. In this way, the activities must be conducted in such a way that these effects to be reached. One must keep in mind that not always we receive the desired support effects, that is why we must be prepared also for the unwanted effects. The support effects always result from the decisive conditions as shown below:



The principle of Mission command – through which the commanders renders their lancers the freedom of action necessary for taking the right decisions in unexpected situations in OPLAN/OPORD, for taking the opportune steps or for counteracting the opponent's actions, admits that, rarely the events are developed in accordance with the initial plan and while the military actions are lead to fulfilling some specific effects, intuition and operational art remains primordial.

Integrated type actions (reunited) ensure the general frame for strengthening the response effect, directing the activities and the manoeuvre for reaching the support effects.



Developing a full process of unified planning implies getting through several steps and sequences within these, the inputs for each sequence being the former obtained results.

Planning of actions inside the inland-maritime are of Romania in the circumstances of a major crisis is based on the previously presented process stages. From this approach we must retain the following specific elements:

- response actions are based the preliminary order created by the political – military structure;
- the plan of operations comprises the standard paragraphs for the issues related to crisis management;

- the missions of the intervention structures have an inter-institutionalized, integrated, unified, and in some situations also multinational character;
- the rigorous planning of the crisis response actions is based on establishing the decisive conditions ensuring an optimum division between objectives and mission;
- the decisive conditions are fulfilled by getting the support effects, these being sequences of an operative or strategic objective.

As a conclusion, we trust that the operational planning of actions inside the inland-maritime area of Romania has to comply with NATO procedures for crisis management and the participating response structures have to ensure the fulfilment of the decisive conditions by getting the support effects.

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