

Jakub Adamkiewicz

Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna
im. Jarosława Dąbrowskiego

Patrycja Bryczek-Wróbel

Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna
im. Jarosława Dąbrowskiego

Marzena Walkowiak

Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna
im. Jarosława Dąbrowskiego



The Challenges for Polish Territorial Defence in the Face of Hybrid Threats from the Russian Federation

Introduction

In the light of neo-imperialist ambitions of Russia to recover its influence in the area dominated by the former Soviet Union, the security environment of Poland and of other countries in the region has become unstable, which requires taking strong remedial actions. The current threats are of a hybrid nature. An increasing number of these threats emerges outside the traditional scope of military activities, and a country may lose its sovereignty and territorial integrity also as a result of non-military or paramilitary operations. This is proven by the military conflict in Eastern Ukraine, which was presented on part of Russia as an internal dispute between separatist regions and the Ukrainian government. However, in fact it is a form of hybrid aggression conducted by Russia, which supported the separatists from the Donetsk and Lugansk regions both by providing equipment and technologies, and by human forces. Ukrainian media and government have frequently informed about the so-called “green men”, i.e., unidentified soldiers of Russian troops who crossed the Russian border to fight on the side of the separatists. At the same time, this was accompanied, both officially, and unofficially, by informational, financial, and political support provided by Russia for the rebellious part of the Ukrainian population who supported Russia. The unconventional formula of the military operations conducted in the territory of Ukraine required defining a new category of conflict, which was named the hybrid war. Ultimately, this war transformed into a classical military

conflict between two countries. The actions of the Russian Federation in the territory of Ukraine pointed to the need to build strong territorial defence forces that would be able both to counteract hybrid activities and to move to active resistance in the event of open conflict, including irregular operations, such as guerilla warfare, in the occupied territory.

Research methodology

The main research problem is the question: *What are the challenges for Polish Territorial Defence Forces that result from the neo-imperialist policy of the Russian Federation that takes hybrid actions against the countries of the former Eastern Block?* The research was conducted as part of the project *Functioning of Territorial Defence Forces in the institutional and social aspects*. The analysed material was obtained from five interviews with high-rank officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland and ten interviews with security experts employed at self-government authorities in three voivodeships. The research was conducted by experienced professional interviewers and scientists from the Military University of Technology. In total, nearly 14 hours of recordings and over three hundred pages of transcriptions were analysed. This article also uses information obtained from representatives of the armed forces that describes various aspects of the functioning of the Territorial Defence Force. The authors of this study received a large amount of information about the conflict between Russia and Ukraine from Mr Dariusz Materniak, who has a PhD degree in security sciences and at the same time works as a journalist and observer of the conflict. The reports of the Geopolitical Intelligence Services were a valuable supplement to the current knowledge about the war between Russia and Ukraine. The whole research process focused on verifying the adopted hypothesis, which was as follows: *The territorial defence forces of countries that are facing the threat of hybrid operations on part of the Russian Federation, including the Polish Territorial Defence Forces, should not only be excellently prepared to perform unconventional actions in their areas of responsibility, but also identify with the problems of the local community, which may be supported by the institutional and functional integration of the military structures with local government and self-government administration*. The empirical research was supported by desk research, in particular specialist and academic publications on the organisation of territorial defence in Poland. The scope of the analysed data included the aims and objectives of the formation of the new type of troops, the methodology of training and preparation of the soldiers of these forces, as well as theoretical aspects of territorial defence. In this respect, the authors referred to the publications of Ryszard Jakubczak, who is considered to be one of the most important territorial defence researchers in Poland. In

particular, the authors referenced his monographs: *Współczesne Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej (Contemporary Territorial Defence Forces) (2014)* and *Współczesna obrona narodowa (Contemporary National Security) (2020)*. The authors also used the knowledge obtained from Professor and General Tadeusz Szczurek, who is an expert in the scientific recognition of unconventional forms of combat and the scientific editor of the monograph *Asymetryczne zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa narodowego XXI wieku (Asymmetric Threats to the National Security in the 21st Century) (2014)*.

Hybrid operations of the Russian federation against Ukraine

The leading example of hybrid war has become the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula which had belonged to Ukraine by the Russian Federation in February 2014. The direct impulse that led to the intensification of the Russian operations in the Crimea was the loss of power by the president of Ukraine who supported Russia, Viktor Yanukovich⁴⁰⁴. The response of Russia to these events, and, at the same time, the first stage of the conflict with Ukraine, were the actions taken in the territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. In the initial stage of the operation, these actions consisted in introducing own military units without signs that would define their national affiliation, and which were officially presented as alleged representatives of “local self-defence”. In the information circulation, they were identified as the “green men”. The operations of these troops consisted mainly in taking over control of the most important infrastructure objects and authorities, and in blocking the soldiers of Ukrainian troops in their bases. At the same time, the Russian Federation concentrated its forces along the Ukrainian border⁴⁰⁵.

At that stage, no combat between the units of the Ukrainian armed forces and Russian troops took place. According to some experts, the lack of armed response on the part of Ukraine resulted from the need to secure the border between Russia and Ukraine by transferring the units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces that were mostly permanently stationed in the western and central part of the country to the east. This manoeuvre allowed to build troop groupings along the prognosed routes of potential Russian attack (i.e., in the vicinity of Kiev and Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Donbas, as well as Kherson and Odessa). As a result, the potential open Russian intervention in eastern Ukraine became less likely, due to the potential high costs (both military

⁴⁰⁴ H. Kuromiya, *The War in the Donbas in Historical Perspective*, “Soviet and Post Soviet Review” 2019, vol. 46/3, pp. 245-62.

⁴⁰⁵ T. Ambrosio, *The Rhetoric of Irredentism: The Russian Federation's Perception Management Campaign and the Annexation of Crimea*, “Small Wars and Insurgencies” 2016, vol. 27/ 3, pp. 467-90.

losses and political and economic risks, in particular in the international aspects) for the Russian part⁴⁰⁶.

However, withdrawing from open invasion on the territory of Ukraine did not mean that the Russian Federation completely gave up its attempts to subordinate the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine to its rule. This became clear in mid-April 2014, after the towns locating in the Donetsk Oblast: Sloviansk and Kramatorsk were seized by armed groups that were composed both of representatives of local circles of Russian supporters and mercenaries and agents of Russian special services. A large part of them penetrated Ukraine between March and April, being officially identified as tourists, economic migrants, or travellers⁴⁰⁷. Their actions resulted in seizing the premises of authorities, Police and Ukrainian Security Service stations, and other strategic objects in the Donetsk and Lugansk Oblasts and with time, after occupying larger territories, the proclamation of establishing the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic⁴⁰⁸. The seriousness of this threat is confirmed by the words of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Philip M. Breedlove, who said that "it's of utmost importance that NATO be ready for so-called 'little green men.' Armed military personnel without sovereign insignia, who create unrest, occupy government buildings, incite local populations (...). Once the green men are there, a revolution happens quickly". He added that, "What we see in Russia now in this hybrid approach to war, is the use of all the tools that they have to reach into a nation and cause instability"⁴⁰⁹.

Another, parallel element of Russian involvement in the conflict were weapon supplies for the groups of so-called separatists. Initially these were small supplies, comprising mainly light small arms, anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, over time - as the capacity to transport armaments increased after the militants captured several border crossings - also including armoured personnel carriers, tanks and artillery, including rockets, as well as mobile anti-aircraft kits. A result of the last action was the shooting down of the Boeing 777 airplane of the

⁴⁰⁶ D. Materniak, *Plan Putina załamał się po Krymie: wyszło nie tak jak chciała Rosja*, „Defence24.pl” http://www.defence24.pl/wywiad_plan-putina-zalamal-sie-po-krymie-wyszlo-nie-tak-jak-chciala-rosja/, (access of: January 15 2016).

⁴⁰⁷ M. Galeotti, *Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New Is Russia's 'New Way of War'?*, "Small Wars and Insurgencie" 2016, vol. 27/ 2, pp. 282-301.

⁴⁰⁸ E. Giuliano, *Who Supported Separatism in Donbas? Ethnicity and Popular Opinion at the Start of the Ukraine Crisis*, "Post-Soviet Affairs" 2018, vol. 34/ 2-3, pp. 158-78.

⁴⁰⁹ J.R. Haines, *How, 'Why, and When Russia Will Deploy Little Green Men – and Why the US Cannot'*, Foreign Policy Research Institute, <http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/03/how-why-and-when-russia-will-deploy-little-green-men-and-why-the-us-cannot/>, (access of: January 14 2021).

Malaysian Airlines (most likely by mistake), with 298 passengers and crew members on board, of whom no one survived⁴¹⁰.

Although the Russian part was not officially involved in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, shelling of units of the Ukrainian Armed Forces taking part in operations against members of illegal armed groups - mainly using large-calibre barrel artillery and rockets - was regularly conducted from its territory as early as the summer of 2014. Also, some aircraft of the Ukrainian Air Force were shot down by air-to-air missiles that were fired by Russian combat aircraft in the airspace of the Russian Federation. In August 2014, regular units of the Russian Army entered the territory of Ukraine, allegedly by mistake, as a result of navigation errors during the manoeuvres. With time, the participation of Russian soldiers in combat has become a standard: at the turn of January and February 2015, during the fights in the town of Debaltsevo, their number reached, according to various sources, from 10 to 15 thousand soldiers, mainly those who dealt with logistics, operating radar stations, communications systems, artillery and armoured vehicles, and in form of the presence of soldiers of Russian special units, who were mainly performing reconnaissance and diversion operations⁴¹¹.

Until the military aggression of the military forces of the Russian Federation in Ukraine on the 24th of February 2022, the nature of the conflict in eastern Ukraine was definitely hybrid.

This is a form of conflict that involves a dynamic combination of conventional military forces and irregulars, terrorists and criminals, or all of them at once, aimed at achieving a common political purpose in order to achieve the set benefits or goals⁴¹²

Moreover, it does not exclude combining various types of adversary actions, not only military ones (i.e., the use or threat to use the armed forces) but also actions in other areas (diplomatic, economic, informational, etc.). In order to exert pressure on the enemy and to achieve the intended goals⁴¹³. According to Yevhen Magda, the Ukrainian political scientist, hybrid war is an attempt of one country to impose its will on another, in the spheres of politics, economy, information policy, and in other areas, which is realised without proclaiming the state of war and in compliance with the standards of international law. Hybrid war does not require

⁴¹⁰ S. Kuipers, E. Verolme, E. Muller, *Lessons from the Mh17 Transboundary Disaster Investigation*, "Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management" 2020, vol. 28/2, pp. 131-40.

⁴¹¹ Ł. Nadolski, *Kampania zimowa w 2015 roku na Ukrainie*, Bydgoszcz 2017.

⁴¹² J. R. Davis, *Continued evolution of hybrid threats*, "Three Swords Magazine" 2015, vol. 28, p. 20.

⁴¹³ T. Szczurek, *Asymetryczne zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa narodowego w XXI wieku*, Warsaw 2014, p. 13.

the occupation of the enemy's territory, as it strives to destroy the power structures from within and to break the will to resist in the society. In his opinion, the factors that contributed to Ukraine being involved in this kind of conflict were the large territory that is difficult to control, the corruptibility of the political and business groups (including central administration), no membership in military alliances and the multinational and multiethnic nature of the state. Hybrid war is a complex of actions that are conducted simultaneously in the military, diplomatic, economic, and informational spheres. The military factor does not necessarily have to be dominant, as, for example, the informational or intelligence and diversion factors may be not less important⁴¹⁴.

The crisis in Ukraine demonstrated that an important element in the spectrum of security threats (both to public security and to the security of state on the strategic scale) are crises and conflicts below the threshold of war (one of the forms of such conflict may be hybrid war). These are situations when the attacked state is unable to determine with all certainty whether it has become a target of external aggression that would justify launching the international mechanisms of allied support. The key elements in the neutralisation of such threats are not only the armed forces (which are in principle designated to respond to external aggression, which, as it has been mentioned, may be difficult to diagnose), but first of all, the territorial defence forces. In this case, they should support internal security organs, whose task is to handle the negative phenomena that occur internally, regardless of whether the source of these phenomena are internal threats or whether they are caused by external intervention that is conducted with the use of means that hinder or even completely prevent the identification of the entity that is responsible for the emerging threat. A potential enemy in such conflict may be not only members of armed groups, terrorists or criminals, but also hostile groups of civilians, who are usually unarmed and act with use of so-called "passive resistance" methods⁴¹⁵. They may be capable of affecting the capacity of state authorities and of the competent services who are responsible for restoring security and public order to function properly (such situations, with the participation of groups of civilian population, frequently occurred in the initial phase of the conflict in Donbas)⁴¹⁶. In such event, well trained Territorial Defence Forces that originate from the local population and at the same time identify with the state and represent national interest

⁴¹⁴ J. Magda, *Wojna hybrydowa – przeżyć i zwyciężyć*, Charków 2015, pp. 27-29.

⁴¹⁵ D. J. Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, New York 2010, p. 200.

⁴¹⁶ M. Iwanik, A. Alijew, *Ukrainie potrzebna jest strategia wobec Krymu*, „Portal Polsko-Ukraiński polukr.net” <http://www.polukr.net/blog/2015/04/alim-alijew-ukrainie-potrzebna-jest-strateg-wobec-krymu/>, (access of: February 15 2021).

may counter the new type of threats, while at the same time being an important pillar of national security. Another argument that supports the formation of territorial defence forces is their ability to conduct irregular operations in the areas occupied by the enemy. We are currently dealing with such potential situation in the territory of Ukraine. Such possibility was mentioned, among others, in the Geopolitical Intelligence Services report: stating that “The importance of unconventional conflicts continues to be underestimated by the Russian military leadership, which has learned little from the operations in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Syria. Those experiences were not adequately institutionalized through a doctrine capable of addressing the tactical differences between a conventional and irregular war, or handling conventional and unconventional war simultaneously, as will almost certainly be the case. It is therefore extremely plausible that, should the conflict become irregular, the insufficiently prepared Russian contingent will face a crushing defeat”⁴¹⁷.

The seven-year (2014-2021) hybrid conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which had all the characteristic properties of war, demonstrates clearly, that the strategic aim of the Russian Federation was not the annexation of the Crimea. Rather than physically taking over the territory of Donbas or other eastern borderlands of Ukraine, the Russian Federation strives to permanently destabilise the region. In this way, Moscow intends, first of all, to prevent Ukraine from getting closer to the European Union, although this had already become real after signing and ratifying the Association Agreement, even if it is assumed that the country might become a Member State in a very long-term perspective (even after 15 or 20 years, or even later). Paradoxically, the Russian aggression accelerated the decision of the European Commission to grant Ukraine the status of a candidate to the European Union, though it is only the beginning of a long road to full membership.

In the political sphere, the uncontrolled military and political conflict on the eastern border, which threatens to escalate, puts a big question mark over the possibility of Ukraine's integration into both the European Union and NATO. In the economic sphere, the state of permanent conflict and the prospects of full-scale Russian aggression forces, among others, increased expenditures on armament. This additionally damages the poor economic condition of Ukraine, leading to public discontent and evoking the desires for political and social stabilisation, which used to be identified with the protectorate of the former Soviet Union. Apart

⁴¹⁷ F. Saini Fasanotti, *Will Ukraine shift to an irregular war?* Geopolitical Intelligence Services AG 2022, <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/?p=34792> Report published: May 19, 2022.

from problems in the social sphere, one should also add humanitarian problems in the war zone, the growing number of casualties among soldiers and civilians, the unclear scope of responsibility for civilian victims and the whole informational sphere of the conflict in the media. According to the previously cited political scientist, Yevhen Magda, the aim of Russia is to fully subordinate Ukraine, but without conquering it formally, while maintaining the appearances of formal independence⁴¹⁸. What is important, the Russian Federation may achieve these goals with relatively little effort and resources, which also applies to constant denial of any links to the armed groups that operate in Donbas. The resulting situation will be in many aspects very similar to that of Georgia, where the separatists' republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia have also been functioning since the early 1990s. They also play the role of a destabilising factor and are a potential hot spot for conflict with Russia, which could be noticed very clearly in 2008. This situation was perfectly summarised by Polish journalist and analyst Witold Jurasz, who pointed to the threats that are related to the current conflict in Donbas: "It does not matter that [Russia] does not gain mass support, and those who fight in Donbas are mercenaries and local bandits. The goal has been achieved. Ukraine has become an area of combat, people are dying, and the West has received a clear and legible signal: The price for Kiev's European ambitions is war"⁴¹⁹. Such situation is a very desirable development for Moscow, and its existence may be considered to be a strategic defeat of the European Union, not only due to geopolitical reasons, but also, or even mainly due to the fact that Russia was actually allowed to participate in deciding about the expansion of the territory of the Union.

The crisis in Ukraine demonstrated how fragile the international security guarantees are, if the country does not have sufficient own means to respond to the aggression. It is worth reminding that the Russian Federation was one of the four states that signed the Budapest memorandum on Security Guarantees for Ukraine in 1994⁴²⁰. The lack of adequate national capacity to defend the country led to the loss of control of Ukraine over its territory. At the same time, the imperialist ambitions of Russia, which manifest in the attempts to recreate the zones of influence that were lost after the fall of the Soviet Union, were demonstrated⁴²¹. In

⁴¹⁸J. Magda, *Wojna hybrydowa...*, op. cit., p. 13.

⁴¹⁹ W. Jurasz, *Rosja nie oszalała*, "Forbes.pl", <http://www.forbes.pl/witold-jurasz-lepiej-juz-bylo,artykuly,181169,1,1.html>, (access of: January 16 2021)

⁴²⁰ *Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurances*, Published December 5, 1994 (ang.). The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), 1994-12-05. (access of: March 25 2021).

⁴²¹ V. N. Konyshov, R. V. Parfenov, *Hybrid Wars - between Myth and Reality*, "Mirovaya Ekonomika I Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya" 2019, vol. 63/12, pp. 56-66.

the opinion of many experts, Ukraine is not the last victim of hybrid war. The potential list of further targets includes central and Eastern European and Caucasian states. The main factor that supports the realisation of the scenarios is first of all the presence of large groups of the Russian minority. As a result, the most endangered are those states and regions, where the first “green men” can easily hide among local groups that speak Russian and have a pro-Russian attitude⁴²², as well as circles that are vulnerable to the actions of political forces and organisations as well as media that support Russia. What is important, the activities that are part of hybrid war do not have to engage most of the potential of the aggressor state but they may still effectively influence the political and economic situation of the victim state, also in the international aspect (as may clearly be seen in Ukraine) by creating further “frozen” conflicts⁴²³, similar to that in Donbas⁴²⁴. Moreover, for at least several years, Russia has been conducting active policy to counteract so-called “coloured revolutions”⁴²⁵ (which, outside Ukraine, also took place in Georgia and Kirgizstan). The main aim of this policy is to maintain its influence in former Soviet Union states or, at least, to prevent them from getting closer to the West⁴²⁶. At the same time, it should be emphasised that one of these countries is Poland, who has had experience in resisting to Russian occupation dating back to the 18th century⁴²⁷.

Challenges for the Territorial Defence Forces of the Republic of Poland

The countries of the Central and Eastern Europe region that used to be under the domination of the Soviet Union are currently in very similar situation. The imperialist attempts of the Russian Federation to restore its former zone of influence may evoke fears and should motivate the countries of the region to strengthen their defensive capacity. One of the directions of such actions may be building strong territorial defence forces.

The Territorial Defence Force was established in a way in response to the hybrid conflict in Ukraine, supported by the fear of potential threats coming from Russia. This is proven by the

⁴²² J. R. Haines, *How, Why, and When Russia...*, op. cit..

⁴²³ J. Dziuba, *Gra mniejszości rosyjską*, „Portal Spraw Zagranicznych”, <http://www.psz.pl/117-polityka/joanna-dziuba-gra-mniejszoscia-rosyjska>, (access of: March 11 2021).

⁴²⁴ В. Кравченко, *Микола Замкула, Гібридна війна: як передбачити Росію?*, „Portal Polsko-Ukraiński polukr.net”, <http://www.polukr.net/uk/blog/2016/02/hibrydnavijna/>, (access of: January 30 2021).

⁴²⁵ A. Eberhardt, *Rewolucja, której nie było. Bilans pięciolecia „pomarańczowej” Ukrainy*, „Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich”, <http://archive.is/va3r#selection-479.1-479.71>, (access of: March 11.2021).

⁴²⁶ В. Гусаров, *Россия усиленно осваивает тайные военные операции гибридного характера. Аналитика группы «ИС»*, „sprotyv.info”, <http://sprotyv.info/ru/news/kiiev/rossiya-usilenno-osvaivaet-taynye-voennye-operacii-gibridnogo-haraktera-analitika-gruppy>, (access of: March 20 2021).

⁴²⁷ R. Jakubczak, *Współczesna obrona narodowa*, Warsaw 2020, pp. 37-42.

timeline of events related to the creation of these forces. The concept of establishing a certain type of troops arose in 2015, i.e., one year after the annexation of the Crimea. Then, in 2016, the idea to create territorial defence forces along with the legislation establishing the new formation emerged. The first unit was formed in the beginning of 2017. During that period, the idea of Territorial Defence Forces was improved based on the conclusions drawn from the observed conflict in eastern Ukraine.

The key was the constatation that a state may effectively seize the territory of another country without introducing operational forces to the area. Destabilisation activities, such as disinformation and propaganda that may wake dormant ethnic conflicts and worldview disputes, are sufficient. Such atypical form of attack requires developing unconventional ways of defence. The Territorial Defence Forces are one of the concepts of responding to potential aggression of this kind in Poland. It seems to be justified by arguments. First of all, the TDF units are composed of soldiers who are emotionally tied to the territory that they defend, i.e., residents of the area. This builds a strong motivation to fight for their families and homes, which are threatened in the face of hostile intervention. Being driven by emotions may, in this situation, strengthen the morale of whose soldiers. In the past, such motivation brought victories in many a battle that was apparently impossible to be won. Moreover, the local roots of these soldiers give them a better knowledge of the area where operational activities are conducted. Hence, properly trained soldiers are able to use the advantages of the battlefield and find hideouts that will allow them to conduct an effective guerilla war. Apart from that, as alert observers of the life of the local community, they may notice any potential diversion activities, such as destabilisation, incitement, or disinformation attempts, and respond to them appropriately. Thus, soldiers of Territorial Defence Forces become an element of the intelligence system, which gives the services that are responsible for the internal defence of the state to respond quickly to any attempts to disintegrate it.

The hybrid operations of the Russian Federation towards Ukraine revealed several main tasks that should be performed by territorial defence forces. These include, among others: Monitoring threats and responding immediately to the emergence of foreign entities, in particular if they conduct an activity with the aim to weaken the bonds between the local community and the state, and, as the activities of the enemy intensify, defending the territory and local population in a decisive manner, using the social support for these activities. If the territory is seized by the enemy, the Territorial Defence Forces should conduct irregular operations, with the aim to successively destroy the live force and combat assets of the enemy

and to disorganise its activities and prevent it from conducting an organised occupation of the territory. If the hybrid conflict develops into an open armed conflict, the task of the territorial defence force should be to create the appropriate conditions for the introduction of operational troops and to closely cooperate with the units that conduct regular military operations. On the other hand, if national or allied support is received, the forces should ensure the proper conditions for taking over control of the given territory and to reconstruct the critical infrastructure of the state⁴²⁸, including central and local government administration.

Conclusion

The success of the hybrid operations conducted by the Russian federation and the defeat of the Ukrainian forces in the eastern part of their country resulted from the poor preparation of the Ukrainian forces and the fact that the defence system was not adapted to the new formula of hybrid conflict. One of the main sources of the defeat was the participation of the local community on the side of Russia. At the same time, the most effective element of Ukrainian response were the units of volunteers who originated from pro-defensive (but nationalist) groups. One may be tempted to state that the hybrid conflict takes place in the fields of “will power” and loyalty to one of the fighting parties. The combat is based rather on the morale of the participants than on the technical resources. This is, in a way, a return to the origins of the art of war, when the victory in the battlefield often depended precisely on the motivation of soldiers.

The concept of the Territorial Defence Forces in Poland was developed after the Ukrainian crisis and the annexation of the Crimea by the Russian Federation. These events had a major influence on the assumptions and objectives adopted for creating a new type of troops, as it was assumed that the most effective element of resistance against a similar type of attack will be to use soldiers who are assigned to fight in the area where they live and where their homes are situated. This was a reference to the idea of guerilla combat at the times of World War II, when units composed of volunteers were able to resist the occupant’s forces for years, using their excellent knowledge of the area and outstanding will to fight. Initially, this assumption caused quite a stir and evoked some doubts (not to mention controversy) among the experts in the fields of security and defence. However, with time, it slowly turned out that the

⁴²⁸ M. Walkowiak, T. Szczurek, *Critical infrastructure in view of the challenges to national security*, Warsaw 2021, pp. 52-54.

new type of forces may to a certain extent foster building defence against asymmetric forms of military aggression. Although, fortunately, these assumptions have not been tested in practice, there are some theoretical grounds to believe that the Territorial Defence Forces will fulfil at least part of their mission. The correctness of the adopted assumptions was doubtlessly confirmed by the conclusions from the course of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which point to the real possibility of the conflict transforming into a guerilla war.

As a result, it seems that Territorial Defence Forces may indeed be a response to the threat of hybrid conflict. In the face of the presence of this kind of forces, the enemy will find it difficult to use the erosion of the local population's sense of identification with the state and to strengthen the separatist movements. Moreover, although the military competences of Territorial Defence Forces will not allow them to oppose the regular armed forces of the enemy in open combat, they may significantly hinder conducting the attack in the territory of the Republic of Poland. Forst of all however, territorial defence uses the human capital of the civil society, where citizens engage in matters of security not because of material reasons, but as a result of their bonds with the country and their homeland. Territorial Defence Forces strengthen the defensive potential of Poland, although the scope of this support is slightly different than it was assumed at the initial stage of preparing those armed forces.

Streszczenie:

Działania hybrydowe Federacji Rosyjskiej wobec Ukrainy, które rozpoczęły się aneksją Krymu w 2014 roku, miały zasadniczy wpływ na zmianę postrzegania bezpieczeństwa w innych państwach Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, w tym w Polsce. W poszukiwaniu możliwości przeciwdziałania tego typu zagrożeniom, podjęto decyzję o utworzeniu nowego rodzaju wojsk – Obrony Terytorialnej w Siłach Zbrojnych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. W świetle późniejszych wydarzeń, tj. otwartej agresji zbrojnej Federacji Rosyjskiej na Ukrainę oraz prób wywołania kryzysu migracyjnego na granicy białorusko-polskiej, decyzja ta wydaje się jak najbardziej uzasadniona. Niemniej warto poddać naukowej refleksji rolę i miejsce formacji obrony terytorialnej wobec wyzwań, jakie pojawiły się w nowej sytuacji geopolitycznej w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem wielkomocarstwowej polityki Federacji Rosyjskiej wobec państw tego regionu.

Słowa kluczowe:

Bezpieczeństwo, działania hybrydowe, obrona terytorialna, Federacja Rosyjska, Półwysep Krymski.

Keywords:

Security, hybrid operations, territorial defence, Russian Federation, the Crimean Peninsula

Bibliografia:

1. Ambrosio T., *The Rhetoric of Irredentism: The Russian Federation's Perception Management Campaign and the Annexation of Crimea*, "Small Wars and Insurgencies" 2016, vol. 27/ 3.
2. *Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurances*, Published December 5, 1994 (ang.). The Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), 1994-12-05. (access of: March 25 2021).
3. Davis J. R., *Continued evolution of hybrid threats*, "Theree Swords Magazine" 2015, vol. 28.
4. Dziuba J., *Gra mniejszością rosyjską*, „Portal Spraw Zagranicznych”, <http://www.psz.pl/117-polityka/joanna-dziuba-gra-mniejszoscia-rosyjska>, (access of: March 11 2021).
5. Eberhardt A., *Rewolucja, której nie było. Bilans pięciolecia „pomarańczowej” Ukrainy*, „Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich”, <http://archive.is/va3r#selection-479.1-479.71>, (access of: March 11.2021).
6. Galeotti M., *Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New Is Russia's 'New Way of War'?*, "Small Wars and Insurgencie" 2016, vol. 27/ 2.
7. Giuliano E., *Who Supported Separatism in Donbas? Ethnicity and Popular Opinion at the Start of the Ukraine Crisis*, "Post-Soviet Affairs" 2018, vol. 34/ 2-3.
8. Haines J.R., *How, 'Why, and When Russia Will Deploy Little Green Men – and Why the US Cannot'*, Foreign Policy Research Institute, <http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/03/how-why-and-when-russia-will-deploy-little-green-men-and-why-the-us-cannot/>, (access of: January 14 2021).
9. Iwanik M., Alijew A., *Ukrainie potrzebna jest strategia wobec Krymu*, „Portal Polsko-Ukraiński polukr.net” <http://www.polukr.net/blog/2015/04/alim-alijew-ukrainie-potrzebna-jest-strateg-wobec-krymu/>, (access of: February 15. 2021)
10. Jakubczak R., *Współczesna obrona narodowa*, Warsaw 2020.
11. Jurasz W., *Rosja nie oszalała*, "Forbes.pl", <http://www.forbes.pl/witold-jurasz-lepiej-juz-bylo,artykuly,181169,1,1.html>, (access of: January 16 2021)
12. Kilcullen D. J., *Counterinsurgency*, New York 2010.
13. Konyshv V. N., Parfenov R. V., *Hybrid Wars - between Myth and Reality*, "Mirovaya Ekonomika I Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya" 2019, vol. 63/12.
14. Kuipers S., Verolme E., Muller E., *Lessons from the Mh17 Transboundary Disaster Investigation*, "Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management" 2020, vol. 28/2.
15. Kuromiya H., *The War in the Donbas in Historical Perspective*, "Soviet and Post Soviet Review" 2019, vol. 46/3.
16. Magda J., *Wojna hybrydowa – przeżyć i zwyciężyć*, Charków 2015.
17. Materniak D., *Plan Putina załamał się po Krymie: wyszło nie tak jak chciała Rosja*, „Defence24.pl” http://www.defence24.pl/wywiad_plan-putina-zalamal-sie-po-krymie-wyszlo-nie-tak-jak-chciala-rosja/, (access of: January 15 2016).

18. Nadolski Ł., *Kampania zimowa w 2015 roku na Ukrainie*, Bydgoszcz 2017.
19. Saini Fasanotti F., *Will Ukraine shift to an irregular war?* Geopolitical Intelligence Services AG 2022, <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/?p=34792> Report published: May 19, 2022
20. Szczurek T., *Asymetryczne zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa narodowego w XXI wieku*, Warsaw 2014.
21. Walkowiak M., Szczurek T., *Critical infrastructure in view of the challenges to national security*, Warsaw 2021.
22. Гусаров В., *Россия усиленно осваивает тайные военные операции гибридного характера. Аналитика группы «ИС»*, „sprotyv.info”, <http://sprotyv.info/ru/news/kyiv/rossiya-usilenno-osvaivaet-taynye-voennye-operacii-gibridnogo-haraktera-analitika-gruppy>, (access of: March 20 2021).
23. Кравченко В., *Микола Замкула, Гібридна війна: як передбачити Росію?*, „Portal Polsko-Ukraiński polukr.net”, <http://www.polukr.net/uk/blog/2016/02/hibrydnawijna/>, (access of: January 30 2021).