MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEFENCE POLICY SECTOR
Strategic Planning Department

STRATEGIC DEFENCE REVIEW OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

– SUMMARY –

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Editorial Board
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For the editor
Director
Asst. Prof. Dr. *Miljan Milkić*, coloner

Head of the Section for Publishing
– Editorial Office "Vojna knjiga"
Goran Janjić, BSc

Editor
Aleksandra Kapor

Translator
Defence Policy Sector

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

The Strategic Defence Review of the Republic of Serbia, hereinafter referred to as the "Strategic Defence Review", is a defence planning document which provides overview of the current defence capabilities, achieved level of defence system development, required capabilities, strategic orientation and priorities of the defence system development, as well as other issues relevant for functioning and development of the defence system.

The Strategic Defence Review represents a long-term planning document of the defence system development based on the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and the Defence Strategy of the Republic of Serbia. The key starting points in its development were military neutrality as a defence interest of the Republic of Serbia and total defence, as a strategic concept of defence of the Republic of Serbia.

The defence system development is directed towards building and enhancing defence capabilities, as a precondition for preservation of peace, security and development of the Republic of Serbia. Apart from relying on its own strengths and potentials, the defence system development involves defence cooperation with partner and friendly countries on equal terms, building confidence and understanding among actors whose activities may influence the security and progress of the Republic of Serbia.

The long-term development planning process involves all elements of the defence system and their capabilities. The Strategic Defence Review has been developed through interdepartmental work of the public administration bodies.

The Summary of the Strategic Defence Review was produced in order to familiarise the public with the key outcomes of the process of defence system development planning. It includes the analysis of strategic environment, state of defence system, defence system capabilities, as well as strategic orientations and priorities of the defence system development by 2035.



1.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The strategic environment of the Republic of Serbia is determined by activities of numerous actors, which in different ways have a cumulative and hybrid influence on the defence system and its development. The main characteristics of the strategic environment factors are unpredictability, dynamism and asymmetry.

The processes in the strategic environment which influence the defence system functioning and development have been primarily analysed in domains of political, economic, ecological, energy, social, technological, information and security factors. The effects of the strategic environment factors bring about challenges and threats to the security of the Republic of Serbia.[1]

Political factor. Orientation of the Republic of Serbia to maintain peace and develop friendly and partner relationships with actors in international relations as well as its foreign policy orientation is favourable for development of the defence system. The participation of the Serbian Armed Forces and other defence forces in multinational operations under the auspices of the United Nations, European Union and independent international organisation "Multinational Forces and Observers" in line with decisions of the National Assembly, will continue to have a positive impact on the overall defence system capabilities and enhance international reputation of the Republic of Serbia.

The security of the Republic of Serbia, as a military neutral state, will largely depend on mutual relations among the most influential states

[1] *Challenges* to security are potential dangers that can jeopardize the national and defence interests of the Republic of Serbia under certain circumstances. Threats to *security* are the existing dangers that directly jeopardize the national and defence interests of the Republic of Serbia.

in the world and the way they pursue their foreign policy priorities and interests, primarily in the region of South East Europe. In the context of defence, cooperation with the European Union and NATO is significant for the Republic of Serbia, taking into account that these are the international organisations having the greatest impact in the region. Unilaterally proclaimed independence of the territory that administratively covers the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija will remain the greatest challenge for stabilisation of the situation in the Republic of Serbia and the Western Balkans.

Economic factor. By 2035, the South East Europe will retain the status of the European economic periphery, which will dominantly rely upon the economic cooperation with the European Union. Direct foreign investments, strengthening national economy and competitiveness in the market will ensure the economic growth, which will have positive effect on macro-economic indicators of the Republic of Serbia. The stable economic situation will enable an increase in the resilience of national economy to global economic disturbances, as well as sustainability and stability of the defence system development funding.

Environmental factor. The increasing lack and limited availability of natural resources, as well as climate changes and degradation of natural environment will increase chances for the outbreak of conflicts caused by competition to provide energy sources, natural resources, drinking water and food. The Republic of Serbia is exposed to risk of floods, droughts, fire, earthquakes and technical-technological accidents which imposes the necessity of building new capabilities and adapting the existing ones, including development of armament and equipment adapted to changed operational conditions. In addition, the engagement of defence forces in increasing number of civil protection tasks, i.e. assistance to civil authorities in prevention and recovery of negative effects of natural disasters or during the technical-technological accidents require adapting the use of defence forces, conduct of specific training and procurement of specific equipment for the protection of personnel and materiel.

Energy factor. In circumstances of increased demand for energy, triggered by economic development and due to limited availability and non-renewability of certain natural resources, the competition

for the access to sources and flows, primarily of oil and gas, will potentially result in crises that may escalate into armed conflicts. It is estimated that by 2035 the risk of attack on the infrastructure for the production and transportation of energy sources will also increase dramatically, which may entail employing military capacities for their protection. Some states endeavour to overcome the lack or unavailability of energy sources, by building nuclear power plants which will create the necessity to enhance security of those plants and storage of radioactive waste. By 2035, the South Eastern Europe states will still depend on the import of energy sources and their territories will remain significant corridors for gas transport to the Central and Southern Europe. The Republic of Serbia could face considerable energy challenges, which could be timely mitigated or eliminated through diversification of sources and lines of energy supply, building additional storage capacities, using renewable energy resources, and by improving efficiency including facilities of significance for defence.

Social factor. Certain demographic trends such as depopulation and aging of the population, more intensive migration of the population from the rural to the urban environments, increase in disproportion of settlement, especially in economically underdeveloped areas, emigration of qualified and educated personnel, mostly young people, can influence the quantity and quality of defence forces manning. In social domain, predominantly important will be improvement of health care capacities, better access to education and quality of education, employment, rural development, agricultural production and water supply supported by the appropriate traffic infrastructure, strengthening the self-sustainability of local self-governance, enhancing resilience of society and defence system actors, and training of entire population for the defence purposes.

Technological factor. Important scientific progress and technological development will occur primarily in the most developed countries meaning that not all states will equally benefit from that developmental process. Important defence innovations are expected in the sphere of information systems and communications, robotics, biotechnology, nanotechnology and technology of materials. Concurrently, there is greater need to raise the level of accountability of all subjects in terms of the use of scientific achievements, particularly in the

domain of comprehensive protection of innovative technological assets and processes against misuse. The innovative technologies will influence the character and course of future armed conflicts in the form of "depersonalisation" of armed conflict participants through the use of precise weapons remotely piloted aircraft, chemical and biological weapons, including the increased use of artificial intelligence. Depending on the achieved progress in scientific technological sphere, one could expect a positive impact of this factor on the security of the Republic of Serbia, in particular through faster technological development, encouraging innovation and expanding research and development capacities, joint projects with other states and strengthening of national defence industry.

Information factor. The development of information technologies has enabled faster exchange and processing of a large number of data and information, but at the same time, increased their exposure and consequently the vulnerability to risks primarily in the form of cyber espionage, attacks to critical infrastructure, unauthorised data base breaches, as well as spreading misinformation and disinformation and other illegal activities in the cyber space. Conflicts in cyber space open completely new dimension compared to the conventional understanding of security threats. It is estimated that future threats in the form of cyber-attacks against the security of citizens, states and organisations will be more pronounced in the Republic of Serbia as well. Hence, the qualified personnel and availability of high-technology equipment in the defence forces is an important segment for the prevention and timely countering activities in cyber domain, especially offensive information activities that could jeopardize security of the Republic of Serbia. Simultaneously, due to accelerated technological development, information technology equipment is getting outdated more quickly leading to increased need for permanent and greater replenishment, continuous personnel training for the use of new equipment and assets, which entails greater investments.

Security factor. By 2035, in the struggle to restructure international relations, great powers will primarily rely upon "hard power". Therefore, they will strengthen their own capabilities as well as capabilities of allies. The threat of the outbreak of a direct war between great powers cannot be excluded. In parallel with building

the capacity to fight a conventional armed conflict, a tendency that will dominate the increase in military power will be the development of capacities to confront asymmetric threats, as well as development of capability to support civilian structures in case of non-military threats. The South East Europe region will remain the area of interest for the European Union, especially in the domain of the European integration, which will remain under considerable influence of the United States policy. The state in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, will be a long-term source of instability.

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The assessment of the strategic environment included identification of potential *challenges and threats to security,* probability of their manifestation and consequences they may produce to security of the Republic of Serbia and its citizens.

The continuation of Euro-integrative processes and improvement of cooperation among the Republic of Serbia and the most influential world and regional states, particularly in the field of security and defence, contribute to reducing the possibility of *armed aggression* against the Republic of Serbia, regardless of complex political-security situation at global and regional level. Probability of an armed aggression against the Republic of Serbia is assessed as the minor one, but cannot be entirely excluded.

Key threat to security of the Republic of Serbia *is secession tendencies evident on the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija and activities of the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Pristina* which jeopardize national and defence interests of the Republic of Serbia.

Terrorist attacks cannot be excluded due to organizational and logistic relations of extreme Islamic fundamentalists and spillover of security threats from other states. The Republic of Serbia can be the target of terrorist activities directly and by using its territory for transit, preparation and conduct of terrorist attacks in other countries.

In addition, it is estimated that the security of the Republic of Serbia can be jeopardized *by mass illegal migration, unfavourable demographic trends, epidemics and pandemics of infectious diseases, natural disasters, as well as other forms of security threats.*



2.

STATE OF THE DEFENCE SYSTEM

Analysis of the state of the defence system included an assessment of internal factors and identification of key problems that influence the functioning of the defence system. Internal factors were considered through definition of the forces and shortcomings in the domain of normative framework, strategy, doctrine, organization, human resources, training, education, armament and equipment, infrastructure and morale.

Normative and legal framework in the field of defence enables performance of activities and tasks of the defence system actors in accordance with defined obligations and responsibilities. However, the adopted Total Defence Concept requires fine tuning of normative and legal documents, in order to create conditions for its implementation.

Strategic framework in the field of security and defence has a positive effect on performance of activities and execution of tasks within the purview of defence planning actors. Due to ever faster changes in the strategic environment and their possible influence on the security of the Republic of Serbia, new strategies and concepts are to be developed.

Doctrinal framework contributes to the execution of missions and tasks of the Serbian Armed Forces. However, the equipping of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Serbia with modern armament and military equipment and changes in the physiognomy of armed conflicts, demand upgrading of the defence doctrinal documents.

Defence system organisation ensures execution of tasks significant for the defence while changes in the Serbian Armed Forces organisation and mobilisation system enable the improvement of operational

capabilities creating conditions for introducing into operational use the newly acquired armament and military equipment, as well as manning. Systematization of jobs in the defence system will improve their capabilities for defence planning.

The most significant strength of the defence system is competent and motivated personnel, whose specific knowledge and skills are developed throughout the decades, including the participation in in-country activities and activities abroad, by using national and foreign experiences. Various models of manning applied in the defence forces are favourable for capability to execute assorted jobs in the defence system, i.e. missions and tasks of the Serbian Armed Forces. On the other hand, under certain circumstances, lack of personnel may have negative effect to overall manning, as well as the age structure of a part of the professional personnel which can produce additional workload for the existing personnel reducing the quality of their performance.

The level of competence of the active personnel of the Serbian Armed Forces is at high level, which has favourable effect on missions and tasks execution. However, due to suspension of the compulsory military service, continuity in training of the citizens for defence requirements was lost. In that regard, the current training models need to be improved in order to obtain required level of preparedness and ensure execution of tasks in the field of military and civil defence.

The system of military education provides education and professional development of all categories of personnel for the needs of defence. There is a developed cooperation between scientific and educational institutions which jointly implement projects significant for defence. Through investing in teaching and scientific cadre, institutional exchange of knowledge and skills with educational institutions in the country and abroad including enhancement of educational process, the positive influence of education on capabilities of the defence system will be additionally advanced.

Equipping defence forces with armament and equipment positive influences the execution of activities and tasks within the purview and responsibility of the defence system. In the past few years, favourable influence on equipping and overall development of defence system was made by successful implementation of national

armament and equipment development projects as well as building our own capacities for development and production, and mastering new technological solutions in accordance with the global trends of armament production. Financial framework for the defence budget allocation of minimum 2% GDP was reached in 2020, whereas the defence budget in terms of structure and distribution of expenses is significantly investment-oriented. Such a model of financing created preconditions for the renewal of armament and equipment, accelerated implementation of initiated equipping projects, as well as initiation of the new ones. The key progress was made in the field of equipping and modernization of complex combat systems.

In the previous period, significant efforts were made on building infrastructure to house the newly procured materiel, construction of facilities for the newly established units, investment maintenance of the existing facilities and development of technical documentation. In circumstances of stable funding of defence needs and in line with the adopted Total Defence Concept, further improvement of infrastructure and preparation of the territory for defence has been planned.

Morale of the active personnel of the Serbian Armed Forces for the defence of the country is at high level. It's strengthening, among other things, influenced by the measures for the improvement of the living standard of the Serbian Armed Forces members. The high level of morale of the active personnel of the Serbian Armed Forces positively influenced the execution of tasks within the framework of all three missions of the Serbian Armed Forces, which has contributed to a high level of confidence of the citizens in the Serbian Armed Forces and the international reputation of the Serbian Armed Forces as a reliable and professional partner in preserving and promotion of security and peace in the world.

Solving problems which affected the defence system represents continuous task of the defence system actors.


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3.

THE DEFENCE SYSTEM CAPABILITIES

Changes of the factors of the strategic environment including the changes of challenges and threats to the security of the Republic of Serbia, require perpetual harmonization and improvement of capabilities and capacities of the defence system for an effective and efficient conduct of activities, missions and tasks and protection of the defence interests of the Republic of Serbia. The Strategic Defence Review determines 250 capabilities of the defence system and describes the difference among the existing and required defence system capabilities, in the domain of the military and civil defence. The aforementioned capabilities were grouped by levels (strategic, operational and tactical), and defence forces (for military and civil defence separately). The state of capabilities was analysed through the elements of capabilities such as: command, timely availability of the forces, deployment and mobility in the zone of operation, use of information space, effective and efficient utilization of forces, resilience and protection of forces and their sustainability.

Taking into consideration the specificities of the defence system, division of capabilities into military and civil defence capabilities is functional and it was made for better planning, monitoring and conducting its development in the long run.

Military defence is a part of the defence of the Republic of Serbia which includes a set of measures and activities directed to preparations for defence and the defence of the Republic of Serbia by engaging the Serbian Armed Forces and other armed defence forces. Military defence is based on the capabilities of the Serbian Armed Forces and other defence armed forces to deter and confront armed threat to security. The Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces are

in charge of the development of military defence capabilities while the Ministry of Interior develops a part of the capabilities as well.

In the period up to 2035, The Ministry of Defence will undertake measures to create conditions for the implementation of Total Defence Concept, primarily through joint management of defence activities and defence system functioning.

In the period up to 2035, the Serbian Armed Forces and other armed defence forces will focus on the improvement of the capabilities for preventive and active engagement against the sources of security threats to the Republic of Serbia and for timely and determined response to security threats in accordance with the principles of the International Law which regulate the use of force. The Serbian Armed Forces and the other armed defence forces will develop capabilities for military defence and will focus on defence from external armed threats, relying upon the resources of the Republic of Serbia and using the own and foreign lessons learnt. Development of capabilities of the Serbian Armed Forces will provide an efficient deterrence of armed aggression and prevent strategic surprise.

The Land Forces will remain the largest part of the Serbian Armed Forces and the leading force of the Republic of Serbia defence. Land Forces will develop the capabilities for preparation and conduct of operations on land and inland waterways, in addition to participation in multinational operations and support to civil authorities in confronting security threats. Permanent modernization and development will be of a crucial significance for the achievement of maximum efficiency and capability of the Land Forces to respond to various challenges and threats to security in the contemporary strategic and operational environment.

The Air Forces and Air Defence will develop capabilities to deter aggression, control and protect the sovereignty of the air space and to provide support to Land Forces in defence of the Republic of Serbia. Relying on the state-of-the-art technology, including multi-purpose aircraft, advanced radars, air defence systems, electronic warfare systems and unmanned air defence systems will become a distinctive trait of the Air Forces and Air Defence.

Civil defence is a part of defence of the Republic of Serbia, which encompasses a set of measures and activities directed towards preparations for defence and defence of the Republic of Serbia by

the non-military means. Developing the capabilities of civil defence will improve the ability to provide successful functioning of state authorities, autonomous provinces` authorities and local self-government units, companies and the other legal entities. This will enhance the living and working conditions of the citizens, meeting the requirements of defence forces, planning and implementation of plans for the training of citizens for county's defence, coordination of protection and rescue activities, fulfilling military, labour and material obligations, mobilization and conduct of non-military fight and resistance. The bodies responsible for the development of defence system capabilities in the domain of civil defence are the competent state authorities, autonomous provinces` authorities and local self-government units, which perform defence affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and other defence system actors which carry out preparations for defence.

In the domain of civil protection, there are stipulated and described differences between the required and the existing capabilities of the defence system in the fields of social activities important for defence, focused on timely identification and response to challenges and threats to security, significant for defence of the Republic of Serbia. The focus is also placed on the improvement of the protection of population, creation of citizens' security, health, social, economic and the other living and work conditions, providing products and services required for the execution of defence missions and assignments in the state of emergency and war, including the training of population for defence.

In keeping with the aforementioned, by 2035, legislative and executive authorities will, within their stipulated competences, improve their capabilities for the defence system management. Moreover, they will provide required conditions for the functioning and execution of the tasks of the defence system in peace, state of emergency and war.



4.

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND PRIORITIES OF THE DEFENCE SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

The defence system development will be implemented through a set of harmonized activities based on strategic orientation and priorities, in order to establish a qualitatively new state. It is directed towards the creation of conditions for the protection and achievement of defence interests of the Republic of Serbia, as well as building capabilities and capacities to confront the challenges and threats to security of the Republic of Serbia.

Changes within the defence system will be carried out in accordance with the orientation expressed in the planning documents, adapting to the changes in strategic environment and available resources. Strategic orientation confirms that the system defence development will be carried out in accordance with the Total Defence Concept, policy of military neutrality and financial resources of the country for the purpose of creating conditions for integral engagement of defence system actors and defence potential of the Republic of Serbia. In addition, the orientation is that the defence system should rely on its own forces, potentials and defensive capacities, including the capacities of partner and friendly countries, primarily in the segment of equipping by complex combat systems.

Determined priorities ensure the development of the defence system under the conditions of limited resources and possible changes of development conditions.

Priorities of defence system development in the field of military defence are focused on the enhancement of the command and management of defence forces, human resources management, forces protection, manoeuvre and transport of the forces, as well

as establishing an efficient air defence system, action by remotely operated assets and actions against remotely operated assets, high-precision and fast long-range engagement at, fire support and capacity building for cyber and electronic warfare.



In the field of civil defence, the priorities of system defence development are focused on the strengthening of civil protection, development of transportation infrastructure, improvement of capacities and technological level of industrial production. In addition, defence system development is focused on the strengthening of the capacities of local self-government for the strengthening of health care system, diversification of sources and lines of energy supplies etc.

Priorities of defence system development in the fields that combine military and civil defence are focused on the enhancement of mobilisation system and building capacities for the education and training of defence system actors and defence forces for the requirements of defence, capacity building and development, storage of the material reserves, including the development of society and defence forces resilience.

CONCLUSION

Strategic Defence Review Summary has been developed to familiarise the public with the key outcomes of the process of defence system development planning, simultaneously taking into consideration confidential data protection.

The Strategic Defence Review was developed in such a way to encompass the defence system of the Republic of Serbia and its capabilities, not only the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces, as it was the case previously. In that process, a special attention was paid to the scope of defence, which, because of its importance for the Republic of Serbia, permeates and transcends individual competences, both of the Ministry of Defence and other ministries and special organizations of the Republic of Serbia.

The intention is to send a clear and unambiguous message, primarily to the citizens of the Republic of Serbia that the activities of the Ministry of Defence are transparent, competent and accountable. In addition, the Ministry of Defence identifies the contemporary threats and challenges to security of the Republic of Serbia, and together with other defence system actors, it develops required defence capabilities in an active and planned manner, in order to protect national and defence interests of the country.

The positions defined by the Strategic Defence Review represent the foundation for the establishment of a qualitatively new condition in regard to the current situation of the defence system, primarily by building defence system capabilities, consistent to the requirements and capacities of the Republic of Serbia.

The Strategic Defence Review as the first among planning documents for defence system development provides a basis for a continuous

process of development planning and the development of the Long-Term Defence System Development Plan of the Republic of Serbia determining the long-term development goals and priorities, the future capabilities, content, development dynamics and defence system financing.

The further implementation and elaboration of positions and orientation from the Strategic Defence Review create conditions for a stable functioning and defence system development in the period to come.