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CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES IN RESOLVING THE CONFLICT OF 2001 IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

МЕРКИТЕ ЗА ГРАДЕЊЕ НА ДОВЕРБА ВО РАЗРЕШУВАЊЕ НА КОНФЛИКТОТ ВО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА ОД 2001 ГОДИНА

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ABSTRACT

Our research will be specifically focused on conflicts, with a particular accent on the confidence-building measures (trust-building measures) in the process of conflict resolution, as an essential element of any sustainable conflict settlement process. This research will explore the content of the plans on the resolution of the conflict of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia, in light of the latest theoretical information on insurgency and counter insurgency as determined by the Strategy on Counter insurgency of the United States and NATO's Strategy on Counter Insurgency. In that context we will present the Plan on confidence-building measures in resolving the Conflict of 2001 in Republic of Macedonia.

Keywords: Conflict, conflict resolution, confidence-building measures, counter rebellion.

INTRODUCTION

Conflict resolution has been an important part of human life since ancient times, when humans grouped together to form communities to live in cooperation with each other.

Great philosophers of the classical age such as Plato, Aristotle and Cicero; or Machiavelli of the age of Renaissance; or philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment such as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant; thinkers such as Averroes, Maimonides and Al-Farabi of the Arab world and Asian philosophers like Kautilya, Confucius and Sun Tzu have given great treatises to the world on the genesis and causes of conflict and their resolution. Philosophers from Socrates to John Rawls dealt with the question of equal treatment of citizens and how equality and freedom could address conflict.

Conflict resolution has taken centre stage, perhaps since World War II, in an era when new nations have begun to deal with establishing national identities and operating

within them, in the context of the potential conflicts that are inherent to such situations where smaller nations are carved out of larger entities, as well as nations attempting to emerge from the traumas – economic, social, cultural and emotional, of colonial domination and exploitation.

Our research will be specifically focused on conflicts, with a particular accent on the confidence-building measures in conflict resolution. This research will explore the content of the plans on the resolution of the conflict of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia, in light of the latest theoretical information on insurgency and counter insurgency as determined by the Strategy on Counter insurgency of the United States and NATO's Strategy on Counter Insurgency. In that context we will present the Plan on confidence-building measures in resolving the Conflict of 2001 in Republic of Macedonia.

DEFINING CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES

Confidence-building measures have the objective to prevent, manage and resolve crises that are likely to escalate into violent conflicts between states or between states and non-state actors. To be effective, they require transparent and verifiable actions by the immediate conflict parties in order to establish more predictable, mutually assuring patterns of behavior. Confidence-building measures can thus be unilateral, bilateral or multilateral depending on the nature of the conflict. They are often facilitated and supported by third parties, including regional and international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Confidence-building measures can be military, diplomatic, political, or cultural in their nature and they can be applied equally in conflicts between, across, and within states.

Understanding the utility of confidence-building measures requires considering that their purpose changes over time in a conflict cycle. In the short term, they aim to arrest an escalating crisis before the outbreak of major violence or to stabilize an immediate post-ceasefire situation. In the medium term, confidence-building measures are meant to increase contact and trust between conflict parties and socialize them into a new approach to addressing their dispute. In the long term, they can play a crucial role in paving the way to, and sustaining, a meaningful conflict settlement.

To conclude, confidence-building is an essential element of any sustainable conflict settlement process. It often requires a leap of faith to take the first step and equally to reciprocate. International, third-party efforts can facilitate and support confidence-building measures, but they do require skilled, determined, and visionary leadership on the part of

the immediate conflict parties: skills to know and understand the domestic and international constraints under which an opposing leader is operating, determination to persevere through the inevitable setbacks, and vision to inspire political support at home and abroad for a sustainable settlement.

ANALYSIS OF THE PLAN ON CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES IN RESOLVING THE CRISIS

In order to successfully resolving crisis of this type, it is inevitable to gain the approval of the population in those environments where the discontent and conflict are mostly manifested. One of the key formulations in the "Plan and program on resolving the crisis in the Republic of Macedonia" (the Plan of President Trajkovski") with a view to successfully overcome the crisis, is to implement the trust-building measures. The trust-building measures, i.e. their re-establishment, were the key to eliminate all misunderstandings until that time and to pave the way to the future. These essential measures have to be locally perceptible and familiar to the population – the target group in the surrounding earthquake prone area. Furthermore, by accepting the trust-building measures, the country proves that it is determined and ready to resolve the ongoing crisis peacefully and by means of political and diplomatic assets, to isolate, disarm and passivize the terrorists and certain armed extremist groups.

In order to fully and successfully achieve this goal, the country will also have to secure the help by the International Community, which have already been done in our case. Together with the implementation of these activities, it is necessary to resume and continue with the dialogue through the institutions of the system and to continue integrating the "non-integrated" Albanian minority back in the society. This step (which was imposed by the international factor as a sort of "scheme" for successfully handling the rebellion, as describes in all textbooks on counter rebellion), was supposed to create a new climate and new image for the Republic of Macedonia. In that way, it was envisaged for our country to be reaffirmed as a country which is fully determined and dedicated to comply with the international standards on human rights and ruling of the law under the watchful eye of the international community.

With a view to fully and successfully implement all these activities linked to resolving the crisis, the active support of the EU, NATO and OSCE was provided, wherein each of these organizations had a clearly defined role.

The Plan on trust-building measures in resolving the crisis, as stipulated with the Joint doctrine of the NATO member-countries to implement the measures for counter-rebellion (including terrorism), is founded on three basic premises – security, politics and economy.

This Plan stipulated the ceasefire announcement, which would officially be announced by the country's president. This activity (the first step in the sphere of security measures) implied the precise establishment of the date (and time) of ceasefire, as well as of the conditions and guarantees that this ceasefire would not be abused in order to gain military advantage. To illustrate, the terrorists violated the agreement this very day (the first day) in order to gain "military advantage" and to temporarily increase "the extremists occupied" by 100 percent (by double) as defined in the document.

It was the obligation of OSCE and the EUMM (the European Union Monitoring Mission) to implement the monitoring during ceasefire. NATO and the EU were responsible to provide guarantees from the terrorists and the armed extremist groups that they would comply with the ceasefire plan (which, in the period to follow, would be violated more than 50 times a day – there are specific data confirming these statistics in the special database of the Centre for Crisis Management dating from that period).

The political measures stipulated with the Plan determined the basic variable – "to use interethnic dialogue with the purpose of reaching acceptable solutions based on the established international standards"[1]

NATO and EU are required to make efforts in order to influence the terrorists and certain armed extremist groups to give up their terrorist and armed activities, i.e. to give up their intentions to pursue political goals by use of weapon. The next goal, which is to be achieved in parallel with this goal, is to create the favourable political climate and the necessary pre-conditions for their further integration in the Macedonian society.

Among the security measures, the following activities were of specific importance:
- Official ceasefire;
- Specific weapons withdrawal;
- Local division;
- Freedom of movement;
- Mixed (multiethnic) police and
- Mechanisms for handling complaints.

The specific weapons withdrawal was organized with the purpose of minimizing the possibility for escalation of armed activities and increasing the safety of the citizens, cer-

tain buildings, institutions and locations. This measure involved withdrawal of the terrorist's weapons in certain territories, as well as withdrawal of the weapons of the Macedonian security forces, by providing strong guarantees from the NATO forces and the representatives of the European Union.

"The withdrawal of the RM security forces will be accomplished in a way that will not threaten security and will not put the implementation of the Plan in question." [1]

The next step was aiming at locally dividing the terrorist and extremist groups on the one side, and the security forces of the Republic of Macedonia, on the other side. For that purpose, it was stipulated to precisely locate the territories where the withdrawal of the terrorist groups and the security forces will be performed. The exact locations would have been delivered to NATO and EU in due time.

In order to implement the personnel mission on monitoring the condition (OSCE and EUMM), it was stipulated that they are given freedom of movement in the conflict-stricken areas. In addition, this Plan specified other details of organizational and technical nature, in particular those related to issuing permits, approving the frequency range of their radio and communication media, as well as providing information on all areas under control of the security forces where unexploded ordinance and mines exist.

It was also stipulated that the civil population will be granted freedom of movement (the areas of free movement will be determined).

There were special documents to define the status of EUMM, OSCE, of the additional personnel from the local population, as well as the profile of their working clothes, permits etc.

One of the measures aiming at gaining the complete trust of the population (a short-term measure which is to be transformed into a long-term measure in the post-conflict period) consisted of increasing the number of ethnic Albanians in the police units that operated in the crisis-stricken areas.

„The representation of the members of the ethnic minorities in the Republic of Macedonia within MoI personnel will be increased as a long-term measure, while having in mind larger representation of women"[2]

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1   Kotovchevski, M. (2010). Conflicts, terrorism and penetration of wahabism into the Balkans, Collection of Works – International science conference "The Balkans – A challenge to the safety of Europe and the international community".

2   Ibid.

This measure initiated the process of forming mixed (multiethnic) structure of the police units and the process for equal representation of ethnic groups in the police forces. The last measure within this set of security measures was the measure for establishing the appropriate mechanisms for handling complaints.

In this aspect, besides strengthening the role of the Ombudsman in handling the complaints, it was also stipulated that the local authorities "are given directions to establish additional task forces which will enable the mayors, local police commanders and local army commanders to handle the complaints more efficiently, especially those related to the local security issues".[3] The Plan stipulates additional directions for all subjects (especially the Ministry of Interior Affairs) as to the cooperation with the local authorities.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL MEASURES

According to the doctrines of the United States and NATO, the third basic pillar for handling the rebellion (i.e. to implement counter rebellion measures) is the economy. Particular accent in this Plan on the economy was put on the implementation of separate economic, social and infrastructure measures.

The category of economic measures for the achievement of set goals was primarily focused upon:

- The restoration and renewal of assets that provide living conditions;
- Opening jobs or other opportunities of earning incomes;
- Reconstruction;
- Return to their homes and reintegration into society of individuals who will voluntarily give up their arms;
- Restoration and renewal of assets that provide living conditions.

This measure involved renewal of the living conditions of the population in the crisis-stricken regions as sooner as possible. This measure, which was of vital importance for "getting life back to normal" in the crisis-stricken regions involved reconstruction of damaged buildings, restoration of livestock funds and other assets that provide normal living conditions (shops, livestock, assets for products transport, power grid, etc.). The period to follow will reveal all the weaknesses and selectivity in the implementation of this measure whose implementation was stipulated to return all displaced individuals in their homes and enable them to start a "new life." The agony of displaced Macedonians has continued even to this day, although the plans have guaranteed to equally implement these measures for all ag-

grieved citizens on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

Opening jobs or other opportunities of earning incomes

We may define the basic premise of this measure as creating conditions "for the development and implementation of programs to reduce unemployment, taking into account the ratio of proportional ethnic representation."[3]

It is interesting to highlight some of the commitment in this plan to create new job opportunities and loan opportunities in other parts of the country dominated by ethic Macedonian population. Although the unemployment rate is even higher in the passive regions of the Republic of Macedonia inhabited predominantly by ethic Macedonian population, as compared to the crisis regions, this kind of crisis did not occur in these areas, i.e. these bitter issues were not resolved by force. The period that has passed from the conflict until today will judge the accuracy of these statements.

Reconstruction

The process of reconstruction of infrastructural buildings of vital importance was the focus of interest of the third economic measure. In order to provide "normal" living conditions for the population in crisis-stricken regions, the unselective restoration of infrastructural buildings was stipulated.

The selectivity of the international community was once again put forward in this stage of the process of trust-building measures. The demolished infrastructural buildings in the villages inhabited by predominantly Macedonian population have not yet been reconstructed, thus summing up the process of "quiet and peaceful ethnic cleansing".[4]

Return to their homes and reintegration into society of individuals who will voluntarily give up their arms

This Plan guarantees the possibility for terrorists and extremists who will voluntarily give up their arms to be reintegrated into the society. These measures have the purpose (in their final stage) to continue the process of implementing the trust-building measures.

The final part of this Plan was reserved to fully bring out and promote long-term measures – the price that the Republic of Macedonia had to pay after this imposed and staged conflict for its termination and the "active" involvement of the International Community in its resolution.

The long-term measures, apart from the amendment of the Constitution, comprised

3   Plan on Confidence Building Measures in Resolving The Crisis from 08/02/2013 (Final Draft), Republic Of Macedonia, Coordinative Body of the Government, Releasable to Nato & International Organizations.

4   Ibid.

eight other segments of "intervention" in a variety of vital social spheres in order to eliminate "the roots of the conflict" and to terminate it in its initial stage. The long-term measures, as stipulated with the Plan for Trust-Building Measures, were the following:

Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. This point is subject of dialogue between the President of the country and the leaders of the political parties.

Education

Resolving the problem with the higher education of the Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia;

Continuation of the activities and projects, in particular those supported by OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, with a special focus on continuing and enhancing the support for SEE University;

Increase efforts to improve the conditions of education, here including an effort to increase the number of female students, especially in the rural areas;

Efforts to improve the quality of minority language education in the primary and secondary schools.

Increasing the percentage of representation of ethnic Albanians in the public administration, while having in mind their level of education, expertise and competency;

Decentralisation – expanding the authorizations of local authorities by adopting and implementing a new Law on Local Self-government;

Media

Establishment of a single television and radio channel for the minorities within the public broadcasting system;

Establishment of a respectable public broadcasting system, taking into consideration the needs of adequate programming in minority languages.

Providing assistance in media law development.

Professional training for journalists/editors and spokespersons of public institutions.

Conduct elections: ensuring fair and democratic elections – the citizens should understand the voting procedures, no group voting should occur and violence will be prevented;

More campaigns for clarifying the rights and responsibilities of citizens –individuals in a democratic society;

Create conditions for learning the minority languages in the regular educational system (primary and secondary schools) and/or through language courses or other forms of training which require providing additional funds from the International Community;

Conduct a Census, in line with the international standards.

In order to conclude, the content analysis of the Plan on confidence-building measures for managing the conflict of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia will help draw up a scientific report and verify all strategic determinations and contemporary scientific achievements connected with the resolution of this type of conflicts in the latest history. Furthermore, this analysis will provide guidelines leading to improved conflict resolution strategies in the future.

CONCLUSION

From a scientific point of view, it is essential to emphasize that the scientific explanation for this study will confirm, re-define and enrich the scientific knowledge in the field of conflict management of this type in a contemporary international community. In addition, this will reaffirm the strategic determinations elaborated in the contemporary scientific and specialist work and studies on counter- insurgency in order to verify their scientific validity and establish their possible weak points, with the single purpose of managing future conflicts of this kind in an even more efficient manner. Regarding the historical importance of this study, one should bring attention to the fact that for the first time in our latest history, certain documents that were of crucial importance to the conflict management, such is the Plana for Media Campaign has been be promoted and analyzed. This document will further enrich our historical science, as well as the science of defence and protection, the political science and all other scientific disciplines related to conflicts and conflict resolution on national and international level.

The analysis of experience and facts related to the conflict in the Republic of Macedonia will largely contribute to the enrichment of the theory on conflict resolution, the theory on rioting and especially counter rioting and will further enrich the strategic determinations of the United States and NATO in this important sphere, considering the fact that the conflict resolution in Macedonia was evaluated as a role model in the history of conflict resolution and their resolution at international level.

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