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14. ABSTRACT
In 2014, Russia's New Generation Warfare and the ISIS terrorist threat have brought European countries' attention back to homeland defense. Preparing for these new challenges are especially difficult for small countries with limited financial, law enforcement, and military capabilities. One of the most important military tools in these fight is Special Operations Forces. Because of the importance of the Special Operations Forces in the modern conflict environment, it is crucial to further develop their capabilities and better integrate them into national defense plans and strategy. One way to do it is to develop and utilize Special Operations Forces reserves as a national irregular force.

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

IRREGULAR WARFARE IN HOMELAND DEFENSE -
DO THE SMALL STATES NEED SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES RESERVE?

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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Executive Summary

Title: Irregular Warfare in Homeland Defense: Do the Small States Need Special Operations Forces Reserve?

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Thesis: Because of the importance of Special Operations Forces in the modern conflict environment, it is crucial to further develop their capabilities and better integrate them into national defense plans. One way to do so is to develop and utilize reserve Special Operations Forces as a national irregular force to fight against the hybrid threat, a larger occupying power, and potentially terrorism.

Discussion: There are two major recent security challenges that Europe and West are currently facing. Russia's New Generation Warfare and the ISIS terrorist threat have brought European countries' attention back to homeland defense. In 2014, Russia used hybrid warfare tactics in eastern Ukraine, causing confusion and conflict; meanwhile she was able to annex Crimea in a short period of time without fighting a war. In the same year, ISIS's success in Iraq and Syria triggered major migration flows to Europe. To keep the West fearful, ISIS has been using information operations continuously, and to demonstrate its strength it executed coordinated terrorist attacks on European soil in 2015. The possibility of fighting against Russia's hybrid warfare and terrorist groups in their homeland also creates new challenges for the European countries' defense systems. These challenges are especially difficult for small countries with limited financial, law enforcement, and military capabilities. They have to find a way to prepare and fight against both the hybrid warfare and the terrorist attacks on their own. Facing these new threats require more than just weapons and forces. It requires a whole-of-government approach however military capabilities will remain crucial parts of the small nations' response. One of the most important military tools is Special Operations Forces. These specialized units are highly trained both in irregular warfare, one of the most important elements of the Russian Hybrid Warfare strategy, and in counter terrorism operations. Special Operations Forces understand how to conduct irregular warfare, which is most important in fighting against irregular forces in the early phase or against large occupying forces in the latter phase of a hybrid conflict. Because of the importance of these forces in the modern conflict environment, it is crucial to further develop their capabilities and better integrate them into national defense plans and strategy. One way to do it is to develop and utilize Special Operations Forces reserves as a national irregular force.

Conclusion: The proposed Special Operations Forces reserve system is only a tool in the whole-of-government approach's toolbox. The Special Operations Forces reserve will not win the war by themselves either against the hybrid warfare, occupying force or against the terrorism, but as a national irregular force it will be an effective tool in the small countries' national defense strategy for fighting against the hybrid threat, a larger occupying power, and terrorism.

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Preface

This research was inspired by the current threats to Europe and to West. In the past thirteen years almost every NATO and European countries' military were busy conducting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; meanwhile they lost focus on their homeland defense strategy. My main goal with this paper is to show that developing a Special Operations Forces reserve capabilities would be a useful tool in the homeland defense strategy and in the fight against the recent threats. I also hope this paper will make the small countries' operational and strategic level decision makers and planners think about the importance and advantages of using the SOF and the proposed SOF reserve in the homeland defense strategy.

I owe many thanks two of my Hungarian colleagues, Lieutenant Colonel Norbert Tajti and Lieutenant Colonel Sandor Fabian who supported and encouraged my research. I wish to thank the Marine Corps University's faculty, especially Dr. Lynn M. Tesser and Lieutenant Colonel Kevin D. Glathar, who led me through this great journey of the professional military education. I am especially grateful to Dr. Francis H. Marlo, whose guidance and comments helped developing and finishing this paper. I also would like to acknowledge the support and sacrifice of my family. My wife Erika, my children Szabolcs and Zsombor gave up precious family time to let me complete this paper and the school.

Introduction

“Competent Special Operation Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur.”¹

In the recent years, the world has witnessed the reemergence of an aggressive Russia, one that never really accepted that she lost her influence on the former Soviet Union’s territory and satellite states when the Soviet Union collapsed. The Soviet Union’s most important defense strategy was to keep the West far from her border, which failed in 2004 when the Baltic States became NATO members and brought the Alliance to Russia’s doorsteps. Russia started to worry that more former Soviet Union countries would choose closer ties to the West and NATO instead of staying under the influence of Russia. This fear seemed to materialize when Ukraine started the process of joining the EU and NATO. In the long run, it led to Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2014. Long before the Ukrainian conflict, however, Russia had already started its campaign against the pro-Western former Soviet states. These countries, like Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, have been feeling continuous pressure, especially from Russia’s aggressive information operations campaigns, economic pressure, and cyberattacks. The critical role of these elements is best described in the 2010 Russian military doctrine, which emphasizes the importance of the information operations prior to any military actions “in order to achieve political objectives without the utilization of military force.”² Russia used this method against Ukraine as well. In 2014, Russia used hybrid warfare tactics in eastern Ukraine causing confusion and conflict; meanwhile, she was able to annex Crimea in a short period of time without fighting a war.³ This method that Russia employed in Ukraine was not new for her, as it is deeply rooted in old Soviet doctrine. According to James Q. Roberts, “The original Soviet Red Army doctrine was intended for employment on conventional battlefields. The purpose of Maskirovka 2.0 is a bit different in that it is being used to achieve peacetime illegal political and

geographic gains while staying below the threshold that would trigger any direct military response from the West.”⁴ Russia used Maskirovka 2.0 effectively against Ukraine in 2014 and brought the rest of the world’s attention to the new threat of Russia’s hybrid warfare. In addition, another security concern has arisen recently: ISIS. The terrorist group’s rapid expansion and success in the Middle East has re-energized the European countries’ thinking about their territorial security and homeland defense as well.

In the same year as the Ukrainian conflict, ISIS’s success in Iraq and Syria triggered major migration flows to Europe. Hundreds of thousands of refugees arrived to the Eastern European countries seeking asylum in the richer Western European countries. These countries were not prepared to control so large a number of refugees on the borders, and, as a result, the entry of refugees to the West was uncontrolled for a while. ISIS used and is still using the refugee flow to infiltrate more terrorists into Europe.⁵ It has already conducted and will plan and carry out terrorist attacks later on in Europe using the infiltrated terrorists.⁶ Europe also fears that the westerners fighting alongside ISIS in the Middle East who are now arriving back to their home countries will plan and conduct terrorist attacks. To keep the West fearful, ISIS has been using information operations continuously, and to demonstrate its strength it executed coordinated terrorist attacks on European soil in 2015.

It has become obvious that the European countries have to worry about both Russia’s New Generation Warfare - hybrid warfare - and the ISIS terrorist threat. The NATO and EU, as the most important international organizations with many European members, are working on concepts and plans to counter the hybrid threats, and are eager to find the solution against the ISIS advance and its terrorist attacks. Since 2003, the NATO and European Union member states have mainly focused on Afghanistan and Iraq; however, the current threats show that it is

time now to switch their attention back to their homeland defense. Although Russia's hybrid warfare against Ukraine lacked a defined armed attack, Russia was and will be prepared for a full-scale military occupation, if necessary. The possibility of fighting against terrorist groups in their homeland also creates new challenges for the European countries' defense systems. These challenges are especially difficult for small countries with limited financial, law enforcement, and military capabilities. They have to find a way to prepare and fight against both hybrid warfare and terrorist attacks on their own. Facing these new threats requires more than just weapons and forces, but military capabilities will remain crucial parts of the small nations' response. One of the most important military tools is Special Operations Forces. These specialized units are highly trained both in irregular warfare, one of the most important elements of the Russian Hybrid Warfare strategy, and in counter terrorism operations. Special Operations Forces understand how to conduct irregular warfare, which is most important in fighting against irregular forces in the early phase or against large occupying forces in the latter phase of a hybrid conflict. Since most of the small Eastern European countries started building their Special Operations Forces capability only 10-15 years ago, the size of the available professional forces is very small, in most cases approximately a battalion size element. Because of the importance of these forces in the modern conflict environment, it is crucial to further develop their capabilities and better integrate them into national defense plans. One way to do it is to develop and utilize Special Operations Forces reserves as a national irregular force to fight against the hybrid threat, a larger occupying power, and potentially terrorism.

Definitions

To establish a framework, it is necessary to understand the basic definitions which will be used through this paper. It is necessary to discuss the Special Operations Forces' tasks and the definition of irregular warfare. There are multiple diverse definitions for the same terms in different US services' and NATO's doctrines. There are some terms which are not defined in NATO doctrine and there are several differences between US and NATO doctrines. For example, the principal tasks of the Special Operations Forces are different for NATO and for the US. According to the NATO Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations (AJP-3.5), military assistance, direct action, and special reconnaissance are the principal tasks for the special operations forces. The US Joint Publication for *Special Operations JP 3-05* states the "direct action, special reconnaissance, countering weapons of mass destruction, counterterrorism, unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense, security force assistance, hostage rescue and recovery, counterinsurgency, foreign humanitarian assistance, military information support operations, and civil affairs operations as the core tasks for the Special Operations Forces."⁷ The US Joint Publication-1, the *Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, states that irregular warfare is a "violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). The strategic point of IW is to gain or maintain control or influence over, and the support of, a relevant population."⁸ NATO doctrine does not define unconventional warfare, and the term "irregular activity"⁹ is used only in reference to the adversary's activity. Although NATO countries ratify NATO doctrine, they still have the freedom to have their own doctrine and own way to employ their forces. Since most of the European countries' Special Operations Forces were trained by the US Special Operations Forces, they understand and use the US terms, definitions and core tasks in their doctrines. For

example, one of the principal tasks of the Hungarian and the Estonian Special Operations Forces is to conduct unconventional warfare beside the NATO SOF principal tasks.

Through this paper, the US Joint Publications' terms, definitions, and special operations core tasks will be used with two exceptions: the definition of hybrid warfare and counter-unconventional warfare. Neither hybrid warfare nor counter-unconventional warfare are defined in the US Joint Publications or in NATO doctrine. Hybrid and counter-unconventional warfare are relatively new terms. The United States Army Special Operations Command's *Counter-Unconventional Warfare White Paper* states that "the counter-unconventional warfare is a strategy encompassing a whole-of-government approach to synchronize the pillars of irregular warfare to integrate joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational partner efforts against adversary unconventional warfare activities."¹⁰ For hybrid warfare, *The Military Balance 2015*'s definition will be used, which describes the hybrid warfare as "sophisticated campaigns that combine low-level conventional and special operations; offensive cyber and space actions; and psychological operations that use social and traditional media to influence popular perception and international opinion."¹¹

Case Studies

In order to examine the utility of the development and employment of Special Operations Forces reserves as a national irregular force in small nations, this paper will present two case studies. The first case study will demonstrate how the irregular warfare methods played an important role in defending Yugoslavia and how a relatively small irregular force could exhaust the will of a more powerful occupying force. The second case study will describe the characteristics of Russia's New Generation Warfare – hybrid warfare – and how Russia used irregular warfare methods to reach her goal.

Tito's partisan operations in Yugoslavia

Throughout its history, the Balkans were occupied for centuries by its neighbor countries and other empires, such as the Romans and the Turks. Since the occupying powers always left troops to control the population, the Balkan people's only chance to resist against the occupying forces was to use irregular warfare methods. The mountainous terrain gave an advantage to conduct guerrilla operations and also made difficult the counter operations for the regular forces.

Yugoslavia was established right after World War I from the states of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. It was a relatively young nation full of ethnic and national differences when the Axis powers occupied it on April 6, 1941. Yugoslavia was strategically important for Germany because it provided raw materials for the German war machine and, most importantly, it was the major lines of communications between Germany, the Middle East and North Africa. After the Axis power defeated the Yugoslavian Army, resistance movements started to organize. One of the resistance movements was a communist partisan group led by Josip Broz, also known as Tito. At the beginning of the war, Tito's fighters' operations were limited, mostly due to the lack of the weapons and equipment. They conducted small-scale sabotage operations against the occupation forces and against the native security forces, mostly to harass the troops. At the end of 1941, Tito had about fifteen thousand fighters, mostly still without weapons. Most of the partisans' weapons and ammunition were obtained from attacks on Serbian police posts and German convoys. Tito's forces obtained food from local supporters and from attacks on local villages friendly to the occupation forces. Unfortunately, the partisans not only fought against the occupiers, but also against other resistance movements, mostly because of the different ethnicity and political goals. The main opposition was between Tito's partisans and Mihailovics-led Chetniks. In the early phase of the war, the Chetniks benefitted from British support, meanwhile Tito's forces had to face the lack of any the external support. Mihailovics belief in "live and let

live”¹² later led the Chetniks to provide information to the Germans about the partisan forces and the shift of the British external support to Tito’s partisans. The reason behind his belief and actions was that Mihailovics realized the fight against the Axis power caused more suffering for the Serb population, meanwhile the anti-Axis operations did not bring the desired effect. Mihailovics was also afraid that after the war the communist partisans would take over Yugoslavia, leaving the Serbs in minority. To weaken Tito’s strength, Mihailovics provided information to the Nazis about Tito’s forces.

The continuous harassment and the success of the partisan operations made the Germans take the threat seriously and launched counter operations against Tito’s partisan forces. The initial small-scale operation against the partisans was ineffective. The burning of the homes of the suspected supporters and the execution of the partisan hostages led the local population to provide more recruits and support to the partisan. The demolition of bridges, railroads and roads, the cutting of telegraph and phone wires, and the continuous attack on German convoys in 1941 started seriously affecting the German’s raw material supply and supply routes. The annihilation of mining areas around Bor caused the loss of almost a month’s supply of copper for the German war machine.¹³ Since keeping the resupply routes open and raw materials flown was critical for the German war industry, the Axis power had to pull out forces from other fronts and deploy them to Yugoslavia to protect the important lines of communications and the industrial facilities. Responding to the partisan threat, Germany sent more than a hundred thousand troops to hunt down the partisans in 1942, whose number doubled in 1943. Germany tried different methods to defeat the partisans besides the conventional encirclement operations. In 1943, Germans set up a network of strongpoints and employed units to sweep the area around the strongpoint. These units also served as a quick reaction force for the strongpoints. These small, heavily-armed forts

were placed at important railroad and road junctions, tunnels, bridges and also at industrial installations which were potential partisan targets.¹⁴ Since the strongpoint system did not bring the desired result, the Germans also deployed the *Jagdkommando* (ranger detachment)¹⁵ which was designed to search for and destroy the partisan forces. When the operation required, the *Jagdkommando* dressed in civilian clothes and used local collaborators who could speak the native language to help masking their identity. Although the relatively small *Jagdkommando* was successful in small-scale operations, it did not have a major impact on Tito's operations, whose force's strength was more 150,000 fighters. The last German operation against Tito was launched in May 1944. In "Operation *Roesselsprung*,"¹⁶ Germany dropped battalion-sized elite units on Tito's headquarters at Dvar. Although about six thousand partisans were killed and Tito's headquarters was captured in this operation, Allied air support to the partisans forced the Germans to withdraw. By late 1944, Tito reorganized his forces from the downfall and started receiving British support. Tito's partisans, with the British support, started to push the Germans to the north and on 30 October 1945, with the assistance of the Soviet Red Army, the partisans liberated Belgrade.

Although the Axis powers quickly defeated the Yugoslav Army in 1941 and had all the advantages of the numerical, technical and air superiority, they were not able to find an effective solution to defeating Tito's irregular partisan forces. The partisans' chance to win against a large occupying force were very little, but they succeeded. The key aspect of the success were the preexisting organizational framework, disposition of the partisan force, popular support, and the effectively-used irregular tactics.¹⁷

What facilitated the quick buildup of the network and the start of the effective operation of Tito's irregular resistance movement was the preexisting organizational framework.¹⁸ Tito in

1937 became the leader of the illegal Communist Party of Yugoslavia. He continued building the party's secret cells until the Germans occupied Yugoslavia. By that time, the Communist Party had widespread membership all over the country. As Arquilla stated, the party's network was "highly useful during the years of resistance to the Nazis."¹⁹

One of the most important key aspects of Tito's success was, as Laqueur described, that "Tito had realized that the strength of the partisan movement lay in its dispersal."²⁰ The partisans' dispersal was one of the main reasons that the German operation did not have much effect on Tito's forces. Although there were multiple attempts to encircle and hunt down the partisans, the Nazis were not able to cause vast effect because they could only defeat a small part of the partisan forces. The dispersal also provided the possibility for the cross-country recruitment, as well as wide-ranging knowledge and situational awareness about the enemy and environment.

In addition to the elements described above, popular support was vital as well. The food and supplies that the population provided were key for the partisans, especially at the beginning of the war, when Tito's forces did not have British support. The population provided not only the basic needs for the partisans, but also the most important asset for the irregular operations: intelligence. As Alexander Ratcliffe described, "the backbone of all partisan activities was the intelligence services."²¹ The reliable real-time information was the key for planning and executing the irregular operations.

The main purpose of Tito's irregular tactics, like sabotages, raids, and ambushes, was to paralyze the Axis power's operations by disrupting its supply, harassing its troops and causing as much harm to them as possible. Tito mostly employed his units in small formations, no larger than company- or battalion-sized, to remain flexible and less detectable. The basic partisan rule

was to attack at night or in the last hour of daylight so in case of any mission failure they could escape.²² The carefully-selected targets were observed and reported by the local populace, mitigating the risk of detection.

Using irregular warfare tactics, Tito's partisan forces were able to effectively resist and later push out of the country the much larger number of Nazi troops. Although most of the time irregular forces are not able to defeat a larger conventional enemy on their own, they are capable of causing serious damage, imposing their will, and influencing enemy operations. Tito's success was one of the historical examples where the irregular forces defeated a much larger enemy without major external support.

Russia's New Generation Warfare - Hybrid Warfare

The origin of Russia's New Generation Warfare dates back to the 1920s, when the Soviet military developed "maskirovka" (masked warfare). Maskirovka's main purpose was to prevent the enemy from discovering Soviet's intentions by misleading him about the goal, purpose and timing of an operation. The Soviet Union used maskirovka many times during the Cold War. As James H. Hansen described "the Soviets practiced extensive maskirovka during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 and also before their move into Czechoslovakia in 1968."²³ The new maskirovka, as Roberts G. James defined "maskirovka 2.0" is designed to permit Russia to reestablish (by force when necessary) its sphere of influence in the near abroad."²⁴ Russian military thinkers refer to hybrid warfare as the New Generation Warfare.²⁵

In 2013, General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation described the changes in the character of armed conflicts. According to Gerasimov, the New Generation War uses advanced technologies and employs multiple actors with a combination of conventional and unconventional methods. New Generation Warfare, instead of concentrating on

an open-armed conflict, will use the political, diplomatic, and economic means, combined with other methods of warfare such as cyber, information and psychological. Gerasimov also emphasized the significance of the clandestine employment of the paramilitary, insurgent and Special Operations Forces in the New Generation Warfare.

In the same year, two Russian military scholars, Sergei Chekinov and Sergei Bogdanov, explained Gerasimov’s proposal in a more detailed study. Janis Berzins outlined Chekinov’ and Bogdanov’ New Generation War into eight phases:

No Open Armed Conflict	Open Armed Conflict
<p>First Phase: non-military asymmetric warfare (encompassing information, moral, psychological, ideological, diplomatic, and economic measures as part of a plan to establish a favorable political, economic, and military setup).</p> <p>Second Phase: special operations to mislead political and military leaders by coordinated measures carried out by diplomatic channels, media, and top government and military agencies by leaking false data, orders, directives, and instructions.</p> <p>Third Phase: intimidation, deceiving, and bribing government and military officers, with the objective of making them abandon their service duties.</p> <p>Fourth Phase: destabilizing propaganda to increase discontent among the population, boosted by the arrival of Russian bands of militants, escalating subversion.</p> <p>Fifth Phase: establishment of no-fly zones over the country to be attacked, imposition of blockades, and extensive use of private military companies in close cooperation with armed opposition units.</p>	<p>Sixth Phase: commencement of military action, immediately preceded by large-scale reconnaissance and subversive missions. All types, forms, methods, and forces, including special operations forces, space, radio, radio engineering, electronic, diplomatic, and secret service intelligence, and industrial espionage.</p> <p>Seventh Phase: combination of targeted information operation, electronic warfare operation, aerospace operation, continuous air force harassment, combined with the use of high precision weapons launched from various platforms (long-range artillery, and weapons based on new physical principles, including microwaves, radiation, non-lethal biological weapons).</p> <p>Eighth Phase: roll over the remaining points of resistance and destroy surviving enemy units by special operations conducted by reconnaissance units to spot which enemy units have survived and transmit their coordinates to the attacker's missile and artillery units; fire barrages to annihilate the defender's resisting army units by effective advanced weapons; airdrop operations to surround points of resistance; and territory mopping-up operations by ground troops.</p>

Table 1. Phases of Russia’s New Generation War²⁶

The new warfare's main battlefields are the minds. Its main objective is to cause fear and confusion in the enemy's military and civil population through the basic layout of the warfare (economic pressure, political instability) and by reinforcing it with an effective psychological and information campaign. In every situation, the operation's objectives and end state are different. Russia reached her political objective in Ukraine without launching an open offensive attack and employing higher phases of New Generation War. The phases are not carved in stone, and the composition of the phases or their sequence could change. Some of them could go simultaneously, but in any case Russia will attempt not to employ phase six or above in order to stay below the threshold that would trigger any direct military response from the West.

Some methods that Russia used against Ukraine had been already used against other countries in the 1990s, such as Moldova in 1989-1992, Georgia in 1989-1993, and Lithuania in 1990-1991. Russia learned a lot from these previous operations and, as Victor Morris stated, "Russia is further developing its nonlinear war practices by pursuing a Master's Degree in Ukraine."²⁷ Russia in each case employed economic pressure and sanctions, political destabilization, information warfare, and cyber-attacks. A Stratfor analysis described that the pattern used against these countries "broadly consist[ed] of three categories: the organization of ethnic Russian or pro-Russia social and political groups and movements; the deployment or support of informal or unofficial security forces in key areas; and finally the launching of formal military operations."²⁸

At the beginning of the operation, Russia's shaping actions concentrated on exploiting her economical influence; using information and cyber warfare; strengthening and supporting separatist, anti-government movements and government officials; fueling religious and ethnic tension among the population; and establishing contacts with and mobilizing organized crime

groups, in order to put pressure on the targeted country. Russia also issued passport to ethnic Russians to be able to claim later on that she was intervening in the defense of her citizens.

When the shaping occurred and Russia repositioned her forces under the cover of a military exercise, unmarked Special Forces units appeared in the country. In 1991 in Lithuania, Russia used Special Forces soldiers dressed in civilian clothes during a demonstration against the government to generate the occupation of the parliament. In 2014 in Crimea, Russia employed unmarked Special Forces, also called “little green men”²⁹ or “polite people.”³⁰ The unmarked soldiers were equipped with Russian-type weapons. They blocked the military and police barracks, and occupied key government building in order to prevent any Ukrainian counteractions. At the same time, organized demonstration arose all over the country. Some of the protesters were armed and showed signs of high military skills. Later, the protesters started taking over public administration and media buildings which were key for taking the federal government. The protesters and “polite people” also claimed during the whole operation that they were locals who were not satisfied with the central government of Kiev. Russia officially denied that Russian troops took part in the events.

During the operation, the non-military means and the Special Forces’ unconventional activities dominated, but the conventional military also had key role. The earlier repositioned conventional forces on the borders were posing the threat of a massive conventional attack. As this paper already stated, Russia’s goal was to reach her end state without using open armed conflict, but was prepared and willing to use if necessary. The concentrated and continuous information campaign was key to reinforce the fear and confusion and to lower the morale and will of the security forces and the civilian population to resist.

The Russian Special Forces' unconventional mission in Crimea was complex. First, they sealed off police and military bases, and cut the lines of communication. Their strict rules of engagement and their skill in handling the population were critical to avoiding the escalation of resistance and armed conflict with Ukrainian security forces. Second, they instigated, took part in, and controlled the demonstrators to occupy key governmental, administrative and media buildings that were key to taking control of the local government.

Without a doubt, the deployment of the Russian Special Forces was as important in the operation as was the employment of the "soft power" or the conventional forces. The lessons learned, beside the TTPs, are that Russia transformed her "door-kicking" Special Forces to thinking, highly disciplined unconventional warfare-capable forces.³¹ As retired Russian Army General Makhmut Gareev noted, "the lessons learned highlights the use of smaller elite rapid reaction forces as part of a wider campaign to achieve strategic objectives."³²

In 2014, Russia's successful annexation of Crimea and the operation in Eastern Ukraine demonstrated that a country could reach its ultimate goal without launching an open, armed attack. Most of NATO's Eastern European members' national defense strategy relies on the belief that the NATO will defend them and guarantee their sovereignty in case of an armed attack. However, because NATO's Article 5 states that the collective defense will only occur when one or more of the NATO members are under armed attack, the characteristics of Russia's New Generation Warfare, as described above, may prevent any intervention from the Alliance. These small countries must prepare to develop capabilities, countermeasures and a more self-sufficient national defense strategy to defend themselves without NATO's help. As a NATO Defense College Report also states, the "first response to hybrid warfare must come from the nation threatened."³³

Irregular Warfare in Homeland Defense

In order to determine what the small states in Europe need to focus on while developing their future national defense strategy, two questions need to be answered. The first is what kind of war will these states be fighting in the future? This question is hard to answer. But taking a look back to the past might provide some starting points. Sebastian Gorka stated “80 percent of all war since Napoleon has been irregular or unconventional.”³⁴ The characteristics of the twenty first century conflict suggest that the trend will continue in the near future and conflicts will be dominated by irregular warfare.³⁵ Russia’s hybrid warfare, China’s unrestricted warfare and Iran’s Qods Forces are all employing irregular warfare to reach their goal, as are terrorist groups.

The second question is what capabilities and organizations are needed to counter these threats? The Iraq and Afghanistan examples show that although the Coalition Forces employed a large number of conventional forces on the ground, they were unable to successfully counter the threats presented by irregular forces. Today’s trend towards using irregular warfare does not mean the end of conventional forces or warfare. Rather, the conventional and irregular warfare coexist.³⁶ For instance, the Russian conventional forces’ presence on the Ukrainian border was as important to Russian success in 2014 as was the deployment of the Russian Special Forces. As the two case studies show, the employment of an irregular force against a relatively larger force could have a major effect on the opposing forces and their operations.

Special Operations Forces Reserve in Homeland Defense

Will the Special Operations Forces win the war against the irregular threat and terrorism? The answer is likely to be no. As this paper already stated, an effective fight against hybrid threat and terrorist organizations requires more than just weapons and forces. It requires a whole-of-

government approach using diplomatic, informational, military, and economic means. But the most important military tools are Special Operations Forces. The Special Operations Forces' core tasks by doctrine³⁷ contain four out of five principal irregular warfare operations: unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency, and counterterrorism. Special Operations Forces are designed, trained, and equipped to operate and fight against an irregular threat. For instance, after the Russian annexation of Crimea, Ukraine used the regular army instead of Special Forces against the masked soldiers, which was Kiev's main mistake. As Heidi Reisinger and Alexander Golts stated in their study, "The task would have required Special Forces prepared for combat in urban areas, not regular forces, who would not be able to make effective use of armored vehicles, artillery or air strikes."³⁸

Most of the Eastern European countries' Special Operations Forces capability is young, and the size of the available professional forces is very small. In most cases, it is only a battalion. Since the Special Operations Forces are crucial assets in the modern conflict environment, even the NATO and European Union (EU) require more Special Operations Forces units for their missions from the contribution nations. The Eastern European countries, to fulfill their NATO and EU commitments, usually deploy their Special Operations Forces units in NATO's missions (Iraq, Afghanistan) and contribute their forces to NRF and other EU mission (EU Battle Group). When the countries take seriously their commitment to fulfill their NATO and EU commitments, it means that there will be always ODAs³⁹ or ODBs⁴⁰ which are in deployment, and some will always be preparing for either deployment or NATO, EU or national exercises. This burden is a heavy one for the small countries and also a difficult planning consideration. How can they rapidly mobilize and redeploy their Special Operations Forces in a case of any conflict like the

annexation of Crimea, which lasted only a few days, especially given the fact that the early use of Special Operations Forces would have been critical to prevent the annexation?

The proposed Special Operations Forces reserve forces would be an active reserve force whose main mission is to provide a capable force against a country's external and internal threats by conducting unconventional warfare, counter-unconventional warfare and counterterrorism operations as a part of the country's national defense strategy. The Special Operations Forces reserve units would rarely deploy outside the country, and therefore would always be available for their primary mission of homeland defense. The Special Operations Forces reservists would need to be well-trained, experienced individuals who speak foreign languages and who are adaptive, capable of critical thinking, and have served as active duty Special Operations Forces. The ODA's "area of operations" would be designated by the country's threat assessment, for instance around critical infrastructures, borders, capital, large cities, and territories where the targeted minorities' live. In short, these forces would operate in areas considered most likely to face either terrorist activity or the hybrid warfare's unconventional forces. The ODA member's housing will be in the ODA's designated area of operations (AO), in relatively close vicinity to each other, but dispersed enough to provide the ODA broad regional familiarity. Since operators would live with the population and be part of the community, they would develop serious regional familiarity and situational awareness in their AO. The ODA members would keep their mission essential weapons and equipment at home, ensuring quick reaction and free access to the equipment in case of the blockade of military and police bases, as occurred in Crimea. Since these units would already be in the area, they would be the first responders to the threat, the first intelligence source in the early phase of the conflict and the organizers and initiators of the population's resistance.

Building a Special Operations Forces reserve capability is a long process. The countries need to establish a system to leverage the Special Operations Forces reserve in their human resource management strategy. It will be especially difficult for those countries that do not have an early military retirement program. These countries must develop a system to build up this capability. The countries that have early retirement programs could employ retired SOF soldiers in their SOF reserve units, thus making the standup of such a force quicker. The SOF reserve, to be an effective tool in the war against the irregular threats, must have a standing Special Operations Command (SOCOM) that also has the understanding of irregular warfare and is prepared and trained for this task.

Since the war against the irregular threats and terrorism requires a whole-of-government approach, the countries' SOCOM has a critical role to provide the link between the reserve units and other government agencies; to collect and disseminate information; and to command, control, synchronize, and deconflict the special operations with the conventional and law enforcement headquarters (HQ) and units. In case of emergency, the SOCOM commander must have the authority to activate the SOF reserve units and also to command and control the special operations in and outside the country. The SOCOM must have the capability and authority to send liaisons to the law enforcement and military intelligence HQ's to collect and disseminate timely intelligence. The other critical capability of the SOCOM is to reach or have military and civilian databases of reservists, former or retired military-aged persons, and interpreters.

Counter Unconventional and Hybrid Warfare

As a result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2014, the importance of developing a strategic concept and capabilities for counter hybrid warfare will increase in the future.

Alongside with the development of the whole-of-government approach, it is necessary to utilize the countries' Special Operations Forces capability as part of a holistic approach. Since Russia is using unconventional forces and tactics in the hybrid warfare early phases, one of the best weapons against them is an unconventional force organized, trained, and equipped to defeat them. Having a Special Operations Forces reserve will provide more benefit to this fight, including the following:

- A highly trained, always available force;
- a local, undercover presence which could provide timely information and organize resistance; and
- quick reaction time, and regional knowledge, situational and cultural awareness.

Domestic Counter Terrorism Operations

The recent ISIS successful terrorist attacks in Europe, the fact that more terrorists have infiltrated into Europe with the refugees, and the return of the foreign fighters to their home countries shows that terrorist attacks are imminent threats to the European countries. Counter terrorism is also an area where SOF reserve units could bring capabilities to this fight. The Special Operations Forces reserve can provide defense support of civil authorities, including support to prepare for, prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist attacks.⁴¹

Special Operations Forces reserve forces are able to provide counter terrorism-specific training for law enforcement units and offer advice and assessments about the vulnerabilities of the existing physical security system at critical infrastructures and key governmental buildings.

In case of high threat against critical infrastructures (nuclear reactor, or other key facilities), a Special Operations Forces reserve could provide assistance to the law enforcement units in the protection of key facilities. Although in most of Eastern European countries during peacetime the above-mentioned tasks are still the law enforcement's tasks, some changes in the countries' legislation would allow the deployment of Special Operations Forces reserve as a support of the law enforcement units' counter terrorism operations. Another possible employment of Special Operations Forces reserve is to provide response units to terrorist attacks. For instance, an SOF reserve unit or units assigned to the capital AO would be able to react quickly in a case of terrorist attacks and help the police in either preventing terrorist attacks, capturing terrorist or protecting high-value targets.

Unconventional Warfare Against an Occupying Force

Although an open, armed offensive operation is the most unlikely scenario, it is still a threat. If Russia is not able to reach her goal with other means, she is prepared to launch a full-scale armed attack against the target country. Since the small Eastern European countries have only limited military capabilities compared to Russia, they will not be able to stop the Russian troops at the border. The SOF reserve troops would be an excellent force to start building up guerilla forces and conducting unconventional warfare against the occupying country. As Tito's partisan operations show, an unconventional warfare against an occupation power could be effective. As Henry Kissinger stated, the odds between the guerilla and conventional force in *The Vietnam Negotiations*. "The guerrilla wins if he does not lose. The conventional army loses if it does not win."⁴² After World War II, the US Army Special Forces' initial focus also was in Europe to raise partisan forces in case of a war with the Soviet Union.⁴³ The Special Operations Forces reserve, in case of open armed conflict, could start building up the guerilla forces and

conducting unconventional warfare against the occupying power while the active SOF units could operate in the enemy's rear. In addition, using the proposed Special Operations Forces reserve for this mission will provide the following advantages:

- A well-trained, always available force;
- a local, undercover presence which could provide timely information, organize and train a guerilla force, and conduct operation against the enemy;
- regional knowledge, situational and cultural awareness;
- foreign- and English-speaking soldiers would make the linkup and cooperation with the Allied forces easy; and
- the ability to conduct peacetime training of conventional military reservists for guerilla warfare.

Recommendations

Although this paper does not define future size of the countries' Special Operations Forces reserve capabilities, the size should be based on the available active Special Operations Forces size and the countries' threat analysis and should taking into the consideration that "competent Special Operation Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur."⁴⁴

Those countries who have legislation restricting the use of military force during peacetime should take into consideration the benefits of deploying military forces, especially Special Operations Forces, in a case of terrorist attack or against irregular forces in hybrid warfare. After Paris's terrorist attacks in 2015, France deployed military forces to reinforce law enforcement. In 2015, Hungary changed the law to be able to deploy military forces to reinforce law enforcement units in dealing with the refugee flow.

The initiation of changes and update in NATO doctrine is necessary. NATO doctrine lacks the terms of unconventional and irregular warfare. NATO besides to determine these terms should assign the unconventional warfare and counter terrorism as principal tasks for NATO Special Operations Forces. In the recent security environment, unconventional warfare and counter terrorism became important for all NATO members. A model to follow for NATO such as the Hungarian and Estonian Special Operations Forces (who are using) and Norwegian Special Operations Forces⁴⁵ (who are planning to use) unconventional warfare as a principal task of their Special Operations Forces.

Some countries already have Special Operations Commands. To really benefit from the SOF reserve system, it is necessary to the countries who will use this system to have or establish a Special Operations Command.

Conclusion

There are two major recent security challenges which the West is facing right now. Russia's New Generation Warfare and the ISIS terrorist threat have brought back the Western countries' attention to homeland defense. NATO and the EU both took steps to deter and react to these threats collectively, but because Russia's hybrid warfare design may prevent any alliances' intervention, NATO members should take steps to develop capabilities and plans to be able to defend themselves. As a NATO Defense College study suggests, it is the member states' responsibility to first respond to these threats.⁴⁶

The Special Operations Forces reserve system is an essential element of the whole-of-government approach, which is why it is necessary to start building the system today, in order to be effective in the near future. The Special Operations Forces reserve system will not work without either the active Special Operations Forces or a standing Special Operations Command.

The SOCOM is the key strategic organization which will plan, install, and implement the small countries' Special Operations Forces' capabilities into the countries' national defense strategy and plan. The SOCOM also will provide the command and control element, and the link with other national and international inter-agencies, intelligence services and headquarters (HQs). The SOF reserve system complements the countries' Special Operations Forces capabilities, which are relatively small especially in the Eastern European countries. This system will give more flexibility and options to deploy the active units. While the reserve elements would focus on the homeland defense the active Special Operations Forces could focus on the enemy rear.

The proposed Special Operations Forces reserve system is only a tool in the whole-of-government approach's toolbox. The Special Operations Forces reserve will not win the war by themselves either against the hybrid warfare, occupying force or against the terrorism, but as a national irregular force it will be an effective tool in the countries' national defense strategy for fighting against the hybrid threat, a larger occupying power, and terrorism.

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