Restructuring and Modernization of the Romanian Armed Forces for Euro-Atlantic Integration

Capt. assist. Aurelian RAȚIU

Contemporary society gives us the image of fluid systems, surprisingly changing sometimes, which restructures, in order to survive, redefine their own interests, and reconsider their laws/relationships and principles.

The end of the Cold War provided to the Euro-Atlantic area and its close proximity the possibility of new geo-political and geostrategic configurations and of building a more ample and stable security architecture. For more than a decade Romania has been conceiving and building her future on a single option – vital for its security – the European and Euro-Atlantic Integration.

As for our country, the firm policy to joint NATO, supported by more than 80% of our population was assumed and accomplished consistently by the Romanian Armed Forces. The context and the world evolution have determined to endorse measures of restructuring and modernizing Romanian Armed Forces. Recently, profound transformations occurred in our military structures, accelerating our move towards the full NATO membership.

The armed forces restructuring is a need and we do not motivate it with the NATO accession. The main objective of restructuring and modernization process is to build a small size flexible, mobile, professional army, well-modern equipped, able to fulfill its goals: warrant “of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and constitutional democracy” [1] and act toward strengthening and maintaining security and peace in Euro-Atlantic area and worldwide.

Factors of restructuring and modernization of Romanian Armed Forces was: Romania’s national interest; security environment; request of the military modernization in accordance with world tendencies; physiognomy, typology and tendencies of military conflicts; adjusting battlefield to the future: modular structure, sizing and implementing new forces, according to new spectrum of armament; (formations and units have become “supple, easy to maneuver and command, capable of joint operations ...” [2]); requirement of interoperability, compatibility and standardization of our own military structures ones.
Accomplishing military interoperability with NATO has represented a challenge for Romania’s Armed Forces, a main objective for Romania’s NATO integration efforts, since 1994, when the Partnership for Peace Framework Document was signed.

In order to achieve the desired interoperability and compatibility the PfP Program represented a unique opportunity to mostly value the resources for the cooperation among NATO members and partner states, to get our armed force closer to the Alliance’s armed forces.

The restructuring and modernization process of the Romanian Armed Forces has been ongoing since 1990, through more stages.

Between 1990 and 2002 practically there were adopted the main laws and norms which ensure the optimum functioning of our armed force under the new conditions of the rule of law, market economy and military reform. They guarantee the security of our state and the accomplishment of the armed forces’ missions. They enable the implementation of the new organizational structure, the integrated planning, requisitions, the siege and emergency status and external missions funding.

The first stage: (1990-1995). Its main objective was to downsize Armed Forces’ structures quickly and to eliminate political element. In order to do that, the following steps have been taken:

• eliminating political structures and security controlling;
• creating a new legal environment for the Armed Forces, on a democratic, rule of law bases;
• eliminating the structures involved in the activities of the national economy;
• structuring the Romanian Armed Forces and standardizing the civilian democratic controlling [3];
• applying measures for diminishing armament and conventional forces, according to Paris Treaty stipulations [4];
• creating the legal environment and the force structure for PSO and humanitarian missions under UN aegis, reorganizing Army Corps and Brigade Force structure by giving-up division and regiment structure;
• start programs for equipment modernization;
• reorganizing the force structure by giving up the echelons of the division and regiment type, in favour of body of troops and brigade structures.

Second stage (1995-1997) aimed at:

• operating the first stage created structures;
• bringing the structural reorganization of the army to an end, on the echelons: battalion, brigade, and body of troops;
• starting the NATO membership forces interoperability process,
according with MAP cycle settling. First PARP cycle by (1995-1997), Romanian Armed Forces assumed a number of 18 IOs of 19 suggested by the Alliance;

• reorganizing Military Education System;
• bringing SO earmarked structures reorganizing to an end.

The third stage (1997-2000) focused on the following activities:

• second PARP cycle (1997-1999, extended in 2000) – the main concern was to accomplish 44 assumed IOs, while assuring interoperability for nominated units from Romanian Readiness Force, in order to participate in NATO-led PSOs.

In 1999, on NATO recommendation, Romanian Armed Forces, decided to assume, 10 extra IPGs to be accomplished during next PARP cycle and 84 PGs (10 IPGs included) of 88 in all, in February 2000.

• the Council of Defence promotes the suggestions on restructuring the great units, units and formations of the army’s peace structures;
• reorganizing MOD and General Staff; (The new structure outlook is to assure interoperability with the similar Euro-Atlantic structures. Mainly, the measures aimed at a module system with directorates J1-J8, sections, offices, and independent compartments.);
• land, Air and Naval Forces HQ have been reorganized on modules, in order to accomplish the interoperability of the General Staff with the similar NATO;
• training and improving centers have been reorganized into Application Schools; as a result, two of the existing education institutions have been eliminated.

On 18.06.1999, Supreme Defense Council decided the end-strength is 112,000 military and 28,000 civilians.

Timeframe (2000-2007) there are two stages which are in conformity with the concept concerning restructuring and modernization of Romanian Armed.

First stage (2000-2003) aims at restructuring and operationalizing force structure at minimum requested level, in order to assume a credible defensive capability and the interoperability planned level, as assumed by Romania in PARP program.

By achieving the objectives of the 3rd PARP cycle, MOD has elaborated the “Implementation Plan for Partnership Goals 2001 – 2007”, witch aims at establishing the necessary legal frame to coordinate the efforts of all structures involved in implementing of 84 assumed PGs, in order to meet the requirements for NATO application.

Even if the number of PGs is very large, this option leads to increasing rhythm of achieving interoperability as well as to avoiding
“interoperability islands”.

The PGs’ main goal is to enhance interoperability of earmarked units and facilities for NATO – led PfP operations, military co-operation with EU, collective defense and to develop capabilities for future NATO membership.

Romania has assumed 84 partnership goals (PGs): 26 general PGs; 21 Land Forces PGs; 15 Naval Forces PGs; and 22 Air Forces PGs.

In conformity with Romania’s fundamental option of integration into the Euro-Atlantic security structures, the Department of Defense will firmly continue the process of reform and modernization of the Romanian Army by making sure that both the actions and the measures established in the frame-plans, drawn up and endorsed by the Supreme Defense Council will be carried on.

The Armed forces restructuring process and NATO endorsement are complementary. The authorized Romanian Armed Forces strength is 112,000 military and 28,000 civilians. In the last years, the Armed Forces have been downsized to 90,000 military.

Programme Force 2003 has different readiness levels: Active Forces – the readiness Forces – FRF, capable to fulfill, if needed, a large spectrum of tasks; Territorial Forces – the Forces at Low Readiness – FLR is designed to enforce the first level and to ensure rotation and replacement in CRO up to 90-360 days after combat capability is suspended; and Extra Forces

Considering that the restructuring process is planned to end by 2003, the force structure has to respond to the following requests: intelligent, skillful, determined and highly engaged force; assure a minimum security requirement; accomplishing interoperability and partnership goals; increased capability for PSOs designated forces; accomplish the level of readiness according to NATO requests.

In the second stage (2004-2007), will be enhanced on the continuity of achievement of operational capabilities of the structure realized at the planned level; also the ending of some major acquisition programs and starting new programs, in order to modernize the endowment with combat technique and support equipment and protection of action means, specific to the XXI-st century battlefield.

The new force structure, the Objective Force 2007 will ensure the national defense of our country and will properly contribute to the collective defense, crises-response operations, and to the regional and Euro-Atlantic security.

Romanian Armed Forces shall create a supple, flexible and modular force, more compact and able of credible sustainability in the theatre of
operations.

The authorizations of this force will be of 75,000 military and 15,000 civilians.

Also, a new conceptual and doctrinaire system was created, referring to the organization, development, training and use of armed forces to protect our national interests. An increased crisis management capability was developed, together with the ability to prevent and deter the threats against Romania’s security. The peace-to-war transit system was improved and the military cooperation relations with NATO members and partners were amplified.

Endowment modernization is a fundamental component of the modernization armed forces process and in this stage, besides the restructuration and operationalisation of forces structure, will go on the developing of some of the acquisition programs, according to the analyzed image, made during the working meeting by the Defense Planning Council Board and approved in the General Developing Time Table of Acquisition Programs and Military Techniques Modern in the period 2001-2010.

The directions to action are: realize of an efficient management system; increasing the research, surveillance and warning capacity of the troops; increasing of fire power, mobility and accuracy through weapons modernization and realize performant ammunition in Land Forces, increasing of fire power and the possibilities of using combat facilities of airplane; improving combat ships navigation, communication and fire control systems, as well as their sea autonomy including sea refuel possibilities; acquisition of small quantities of individual and collective personnel protection; performing logistic system for all echelons.

In order to accomplish interoperability with NATO membership armies, next period, we need to focus on:

• thoroughgoing study of doctrines concerning the structure and the competence of the General Staffs, and Alliance operation conducting, as well;
• applying NATO standards and procedures in order to use a common operational language, which assure participation in training, exercises, operations within multi-national forces;
• improving troops training according to the requests of modern warfare and Euro-Atlantic standards;
• improving management system and optimizing informational and decisional activities;
• training in order to use sole NATO symbol system and standard maps;
• reviewing and adapting military directions and regulations for
operation procedures, according NATO standards;

- pertinent information should be given on the measures and actions initiated by other applicant countries and bi-lateral (multilateral) military co-operation relationships with NATO membership countries should be developed;
- initiate a program of exchanging information and co-operation for allocated forces.

References

[1] Constitution of Romania, art. 118, alin. 1
[3] Civil democratic control of the military can be defined as all the prerogatives the Constitution and the Law confer to the authorities of the political society – democratically elected or legally established – necessary to set the legal frame for the organization, functioning and responsibilities of the military body. They are also necessary in order to establish the limit of action and to check the extent to which the activity of the military body observes the legal provisions and the decisions of the competent authorities.
[4] In conformity with the provisions of the CFE Treaty and the convention on maximum levels of the quantities of conventional armaments and technique (Budapest, 3 November 1990), Romania has the right to possess the following: tanks – not more than 1,375; combat armored vehicles – not more than 2,100, artillery equipment - not more than 1,475; combat aircraft – not more than 430; attack helicopters – not more than 120.

Bibliography

1. Filder, J., NATO History, European Institute, 2005