

HISTORY AND MEMORY IN INTELLIGENCE

HISTORICAL PRECEDENT OF COOPERATION IN MATTERS OF INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract:

In the contemporary security environment, characterized by the continuous dynamics of interdependence between the elements of national security systems, as well as the international ones – with similar institutions of other countries, the importance of integrated cooperation becomes increasingly influential, both in internal decision-making and in training the content of international relations. Of particular importance for the geographical structure (in a geopolitical, geo-economic and geostrategic aspect), is the level of economic and technological development of the states participating in this cooperation network, taking into account the advancing share of cyber, terrorist, extremist, criminal, etc. risks in contrast to the degree of development. Based on this consideration, the differences in the colours of political regimes will traditionally be of secondary importance to the pragmatic needs of the situation. Respectively, the cooperation criteria, in the perspective of its structure, remain unchanged, yielding only to the emergence of new content priorities. Developing from the specifics of the international security environment at all levels – regional, continental and global, taking into account the uninterrupted development of the transnational aspect of contemporary threats, the diversification of hostile forces and means of exerting influence in subversive forms – the changes become clearer. In order to prevent and counteract them, it is necessary to emphasize fundamental knowledge – a condition in which national and community intelligence authorities, at the institutional level of the European Union, strengthen their priority function of anticipating ensuring security through offensive actions, whose qualitative content will depend on the availability of excellently trained, motivated and remunerated human resources.

Keywords: *authorities, cooperation, coordination, institutional, intelligence, security.*

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Introduction

In spite of many obstacles, the common and permanent goal of special services cooperation, at the national or at the international level, has always been to identify, prevent and counteract dangers to interests of national security. This integrated formulation aims at establishing strategies and continuous transformations of contemporary security authorities, so as to avoid duplication, overlap or unfair competition at the institutional level, inevitably followed by unjustified resource costs. This article aims to emphasize cooperation efforts and the importance of outcome for security and intelligence authorities in the context of a constantly changing environment in terms of risks and threats. To this end, the specific regulatory framework for cooperation between special services has been examined, as well as the actions taken to develop this cooperation at the national and international level.

With the adoption in 1998 of the Concept of National Security of the Republic of Moldova, the objectives of ensuring national security were clearly mentioned, both on the territory of the country and abroad. The intelligence activity, as an element of ensuring the national security of the Republic of Moldova, is placed on the list of other institutional activities – political, economic, diplomatic, etc. International cooperation, as a tool to ensure and strengthen national security, is represented by a separate chapter. (*Concepția securității naționale a Republicii Moldova*, 2008)

European standards and practices are stipulated, the document being limited to this universal participation in international efforts aimed at managing contemporary threats and challenges, such as “Fighting terrorism”. Tangentially, the respective issue can be observed in the other compartments, not included in the aforementioned list, but their importance is secondary in the context of cooperation on this specific field, depending on the commitments assumed. (*Strategia securității naționale a Republicii Moldova*, 2011)

International cooperation, at the bilateral or multilateral level, in the field of intelligence and counter-intelligence, is possible only if it is based on the unity of purpose, objectives and strategy, on the basis of information provided by the participating intelligence authorities. Their activity in such a format is determined by the particularities and

customs of the participating countries, by the way common interests are understood and formulated, by the differences in the levels of security culture in the countries they represent, by their ability to perceive the importance of special services. The need for the cooperation of intelligence authorities is determined by the following conditions:

- 1) The emergence of sources of international insecurity with historical, territorial, ethnic, religious, political, or ideological origins;
- 2) Risks and threats to the interests or national security of a state;
- 3) Dynamics of the level of danger of risk factors from an external opponent;
- 4) Radicalization of international terrorism;
- 5) Intensification of the information-media war, characterized as an uninterrupted process.

As an institutional phenomenon, cooperation between security agencies is aimed at coordinating, in an integrated manner, the activities carried out by the intelligence authorities of different countries and evaluating, in an integrated way, the information obtained concerning national security.

With a developed legal framework for inter-institutional cooperation in the field of intelligence, its establishment and consolidation has been a successful process for several reasons, taking into account that all intelligence authorities, without exception, are bureaucratic institutions with specific internal regulations, which always delay processes. Likewise, the existence of several services with overlapping responsibilities and roles affects efficiency and cooperation and leads to unfair competition or professional rivalry, able to reduce to zero the very meaning of inter-institutional cooperation, approved at the highest level of states. In order to develop and strengthen such cooperation at the international level, bilateral or multilateral cooperation protocols are established, which allow for the creation of various functional mechanisms, including for the operational exchange of the intelligence of common interest. The main communication tool in the cooperation process is the exchange of information, including through the creation of integrated communication networks.

This research defines the concept of security through cooperation. Cooperation in the intelligence area exceeds the classification according to the structural-quantitative criterion according to the levels of cooperation at bilateral and multilateral level, giving way to other approaches. Thus, such a format as the “Bern Club”, which has been active since 1971 at the initiative of the USA, France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain and Switzerland, respectively, was created for the technical coordination of counter-terrorism cooperation (Troncotă and Blidaru, 2010). This structure currently brings together the heads of security services of the EU member states, providing the framework for informal thematic meetings on current issues that may threaten the common interests of the participating countries.

The next example, the Kilowatt Group, which has been active since 1977, brings together representatives of intelligence and security services from 15 EU countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland, Israel, Norway and the United States also on the subject of international terrorism. In the same context, the other thematic cooperation structures are highlighted, such as the Pompidou Group, the STAR Working Group (Ständige Arbeitsgruppe Rauschgift), the Vienna Club, the Mediterranean Club, the Safari Club or the NATO Special Committee (Troncotă and Blidaru, 2010, p. 3).

Taking into account the fact that in the list of member states of the respective structures there are, in most cases, with rare exceptions, the same states with founding status, it is important to highlight the existence of an informal network of operative exchanges of information, with a priority on related issues – asymmetric risks, such as international terrorism, organized crime, illegal migration. Obviously, this cooperation is rather a kind of strategic truce, conditioned by the existence of long-term risks with the impossibility of solving them based on their own resources.

The practice of informal cooperation, usually based on bilateral bases, is more frequent. Often, such cooperation takes place between Border States who shares a series of common interests. Contrary to these forms of cooperation, the policy of the participating states in this

field is carried out taking into account the priority of their own national interests to the detriment of the interests of the partners. There are several arguments that justify such approaches.

The protection of information sources is a principle strictly respected by all intelligence services without exception, as the most sensitive, important and vulnerable segment of intelligence activity in general. Moreover, as a rule, the exchange of evaluations and analyses has priority in relation to primary information, obtained directly from the first source, which again can put it at risk of uncontrolled development. At the same time, for example, the Romanian legislation does not exclude that, in well determined and substantiated situations, at the proposal of the director of the Romanian Foreign Intelligence Service (SIE), approved by the Supreme Council of National Defence (CSAT), intelligence human sources may be engaged in operations on cooperation actions with allied intelligence agencies (*Law no. 1/1998*).

The admission of this stipulation is based on secular experience in this professional field, references to which can be found, for example, in Chapter 12 of the Treaty on the Art of War, by describing, in particular, such a category of intelligence agent as an irreversible agent – person attracted in an intelligence, counter intelligence or disinformation operation, as a result of which it loses its quality of agent, by virtue of such conditions as the development of its real identity in the face of the enemy or the loss of life. (Sun Tzu, 2000, p. 110) The efficiency of cooperation demonstrates a pragmatic character, according to the reciprocity principle, according to which, the exchange of operative information is realized on the basis of a similar offer – immediate or perspective. For this reason, institutional cooperation between the special services of different countries with the attraction of human sources of information can be extremely costly, with the risk of reducing the importance and usefulness of the cooperation in question. This will condition the intensification of cooperation in the field of shared use of technical sources of information, convincingly argued for budgetary reasons, created on the basis of the costs of sophisticated technologies.

For instance, the Helios 1 program is an eloquent example of effective cooperation in this field. This program, which involves France

(78.9%), Italy (14.1%) and Spain (7%), is aimed at producing two military optical satellites – Helios 1A and 1B, launched into orbit on July 7, 1995, and respectively December 3, 1999 (Troncotă and Blidaru, 2010, p. 7). More than 30 French, Spanish and Italian companies have contributed to the realization of the Helios 1 program. In the summer of 2005, the governments of Belgium and Austria offered the establishment of an EU intelligence service, following the CIA model, with responsibilities in the field of preventing and combating terrorism. However, the proposal was rejected, as it was obvious that the main European powers were not willing to exchange information with all 25 EU member countries. The main opponents of setting up a European intelligence organization are the “Big Five” – the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy and Spain, which have strong intelligence services as well as the Netherlands and Sweden which cooperate within SITCEN, not being interested in revolutionizing the current EU intelligence cooperation system (Troncotă and Blidaru, 2010).

Moreover, due to the conservative nature of intelligence agencies and the bureaucracy specific of this type of organizations, the intelligence services generally consider that the only intelligence and analysis on which they can rely 100% is that of their own; to this national pride is added. In addition, the national intelligence communities of the EU member states are organized differently, in many cases a service in one state having no equivalent in another. To be successful, any cooperation should be based on mutual trust; in the field of intelligence, this concept has a relative value, the establishment of relationships based on trust requires a long time. The process of setting up a European intelligence agency would take place in several stages.

The financing of the services, the results of the operations and their content refer to the category of classified information, thus, there is a need to connect the legislation of the states participating in this cooperation in the field of intelligence. Therefore, the institutional cooperation of the special services of different states is not subject to extensive debate in society (in the media) or at parliamentary level, unlike other agreements and treaties. The retention of such a degree of secrecy by the governments of the participating countries has consistently led to contradictions with the principles of democracy, and

this issue remains open. Thus, due to the impossibility of exercising full control over the services, especially, in the process of their cooperation, is an advantage for them. Detailed knowledge of the strategic situation, possible scenarios for its development, dangers and threats, options for response actions create premises for: defining national interests, developing the national security policy, planning the tasks of intelligence services.

The fast development of the international situation stimulates the search for information on national security issues which the governments of different countries are facing nowadays. With the growing predominance of internal interethnic factors, national security is becoming even more dependent on both regional and global stability and the balance of reciprocity of international support from countries participating in intelligence cooperation. As geographical remoteness cannot guarantee the necessary security against contemporary risks and threats, cooperation in the field of intelligence between states must integrate its potential in this regard. At the same time, there is a need to increasingly focus intelligence services on conflict prevention, management and prompt response to crises. The range of tasks assigned to intelligence services today is more complex and dynamic compared to previous periods.

From a historical point of view, states always had a tendency to support each other, when they shared common interests of intelligence and had common points of connection, most often that type of cooperation was mutually beneficial. Even in cases where the interests of different countries do not completely coincide, their special services cooperate in conditions where the unilateral settlement of certain security objectives is impossible. Mutual cooperation usually includes exchanges of information on topics of common interest. Such kind of cooperation may take a long time, provided that both parties strictly comply with the agreements underlying such cooperation. Its essence is that the sources and details of the information provided by the partner will be protected according to their degree of secrecy and will not be transferred to a third party.

Although countries with insufficient intelligence resources may not offer opportunities for cooperation, comparable to those of

superintendent intelligence authorities, they may condition reciprocity through other opportunities. In some cases, such countries provide geographical or other access, which would not be possible otherwise. In other cases, small country intelligence authorities may provide expertise and other types of support, which would be difficult and more costly for their counterparts in the list of superpowers. In the information age, when such geopolitical or geo-economic attributes of the state, such as territorial expansion, population size or the availability of certain raw material platforms, have decreased in importance, giving way to the development of political culture, managerial technologies and sector development, cooperation between the intelligence services becomes inevitable.

In addition to the access and opportunities in the possession of the state, there is also the extraordinary advantage of attracting new allies based on honest relationships, which can be used in situations of crisis or other difficult times. The intelligence authorities demonstrate their high utility in the process of strengthening such relations on the basis of institutional cooperation agreements in the intelligence area – a process which is constantly expanding. There are currently no special services, able to act absolutely independently and efficiently in any part of the world, which is an important reason for maintaining and developing international cooperation in this field. There are a number of international forums, recognized in different proportions.

New contemporary dangers and threats, the expansion of international intervention and multinational peacekeeping activities explain the rapid increase in the number of requests to intelligence authorities to strengthen international security. These requirements open a new opportunity for increased security and intelligence cooperation between the special services of the participating countries, as well as those interested in participating in this process. The serious threat posed by international terrorism and the danger of internal revival are the basis for the widest possible cooperation between different countries. The concept of security from the perspective of international organizations, governments and the public has expanded significantly in many areas since the end of the Cold War. The focus of

special services is now centred not only on the security of their own countries, but also on the security of other states.

However, the growing demands for the involvement of the intelligence sector in the work of ensuring international security go beyond the objectives of conflict prevention, crisis management, and the provision of information on peacekeeping operations. Intelligence agencies activities address another group of global long-term security issues. The processes of preventing and combating terrorism, in which the intelligence authorities play the most important role, are an example of such problems. Another example is the problem of limiting weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation of conventional weapons. International sanctions are the next category, according to which the special services are assigned the role of intelligence and analytical support of the activity of law enforcement authorities in combating drug trafficking, money laundering and other forms of organized crime. Last but not least, there is a dynamic need for international cooperation in protecting both national critical infrastructures, characterized by vulnerability to terrorist attacks, and global communications networks.

Conclusion

Secret actions, a less common task for foreign special services, are increasingly being discussed as a necessary part of the work of the intelligence authorities of contemporary democratic states. There is also a relative mismatch between global cooperation and traditional monitoring and counterintelligence mechanisms, which have always been national in nature. On the one hand, the need for cooperation, coercion and mutual support has been imposed as an imperative and as a vital need to ensure the responsiveness of intelligence authorities to contemporary threats, and on the other hand, the same security threats and risks require reconsideration.

The importance of the defensive side of intelligence activity, contrary to the fact that the prospect of a potential “traditional” conflict may seem incredible, remains open to research. Intelligence agencies must be able to guarantee the protection of the authenticity of sources of information and their confidentiality, and the conditions for

cooperation must completely exclude the vulnerability of such guarantees. Expecting this imperative is important not only for the information authority itself and its staff, but also for the people, who in one form or another cooperate with these authorities. The need for secrecy is due to the fact that it is the only way to ensure the security of existing and potential sources of information.

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