

IDIS “VIITORUL”

Policy Brief
**Security and defense risks in the context of
the Transnistrian conflict settlement**

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1.5.2017

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SUMMARY



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The defence, security and public order sector is one of the most complicated ones in the context of reintegration policies along with the field of public order and obviously that of assuring human rights. The functionality-related aspects of the so-called security structures will be ones of the most sensitive issues in the context of the reintegration policies within a common space of defence, security and public order.

From the perspective of structures' „functionality” which are responsible for Transnistrian border security there is a classical „foundation” for a state border that includes „green border” and border crossing points. Thus, the structures responsible for the so-called „border” security of the Transnistria region are as follows: the „Ministry of State Security”, the „Ministry of Home Affairs”, and the „State Customs Committee”.

The Russian Federation is active in the Republic of Moldova through different institutions such as diplomatic missions, would-be cultural institutions, mass-media, NGOs and not least military institutions. When speaking about military institutions, we should highlight here the Military and Air Attaché and the representative of the Federal Security Service to the Russian Federation Embassy, the agents of secret services of the Russian Federation and not least the Operational Group of Russian Forces (OGRF) and the so-called peacekeeping forces. As far as the activity of the Military and Air Attaché is concerned, there were signals of his involvement in some hostile activities towards the Republic of Moldova thus being summoned both to the Defence Ministry and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova. Some investigations prove the involvement also of the Assistant Military and Air Attaché in espionage activities against the Republic of Moldova. Why do the undercover agents circulate freely on the either controlled or uncontrolled territory of the Republic of Moldova inclusively after being caught in the act for espionage?

As regards the OGRF and the so-called armed forces of Transnistria we will seek to analyse which are they exactly and if there is a connection between them.

In 2011, the statute of the OGRF was essentially modified. As a result it became a military entity with a separate statute with special missions. It became an institution of the „West” Military District of the Russian Federation whose peacekeeping mission has a secondary role. Its role consists in fact of keeping the Chişinău authorities under control and arguing the necessity of its presence on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Actually the analysis of open data namely the number of war games proves this fact in detail.

In 26 years of the Republic of Moldova's independence, any initiative of solving the Transnistrian conflict has failed. Either the authorities were pliable, accepting the conditions imposed by the Russian Federation in 1992-1998, or some initiatives imposed by Russia were rejected in the last minute. Another reason would be the rejection of some initiatives on behalf of the Republic of Moldova or of its partners by the Russian Federation.

While awaiting for answers to more questions, another 26 years might pass, therefore the authors put forward some recommendations based on the current analysis.

1. Background

The history of „defence, security and public order area's development" of the Transnistria region roots in the history of the USSR because the Soviet Union created back then an eventual bridge head for attacking the Southern and the South-Northern part of Europe including all its logistic, human, infrastructural aspects etc. The greatest share of offensive forces was dislocated in the Eastern part of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic which is currently the territory of the Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova.

From independence until now, more experts from different countries expressed their point of view on this issue, either those who supported the Russian Federation or those who tried to bring light on events which took place after 1990. As we've already mentioned, we will seek to analyse the situation not from the perspective of historical events but from the attempt to approach the defence, security and public order sector in the context of the country's integration policies in particular with structures responsible for „border" security in the Transnistria region. At the same time, we will try to analyse the involvement of the Russian Federation in the defence, security and public order sector of the Transnistria region.

2. Functional analysis of the institutions responsible for „border" security in the Transnistria region

From the perspective of the structures' „functionality" which are responsible for the Transnistrian border security there is a classical „foundation" for a state border that includes „green border"¹ and border crossing points². All these terms are being interpreted according to the Moldovan law. If interpreting according to the so-called legislation of the Transnistria region³ we risk to enter debates in its favour which is not our intention instead we conclude that it is entirely copying the Russian Federation's legislation maybe except for the following section: „Activities in the exclusive economic zone or on the continental plate of the Russian Federation"⁴. Thus the institutions responsible for the so-called „border" security of the Transnistria region are as follows: „The Ministry of State Security" authorized by the „president of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic" as an executive body of the state power in charge of which are issues of state border protection and surveillance (see Fig. 1), the „Ministry of Home Affairs" - the executive body of the state power for migration control (see Fig. 2) and the „State Customs Committee" which is the executive body of the state power for customs control (see Fig. 3).

¹ Segment of the state border between border crossing points and the surveillance of border crossing points outside the fixed opening hours, in order to prevent persons from circumventing border check.

<http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=342894>

² Any organized and authorized place for crossing the state border,

<http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=342894>

³ The law of Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic on "State border of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic", <http://www.vspmr.org/legislation/laws/zakonodatelnie-akti-pridnestrovskoy-moldavskoy-respubliki-v-sfere-konstitutsionnogo-stroya-osnov-pravoporyadka-a-takje-deyatelnosti-organov-gosudarstvennoy-vlasti-i-upravleniya/zakon-pridnestrovskoy-moldavskoy-respubliki-o-gosudarstvennoy-granitse-pridnestrovskoy-moldavskoy-respubliki.html>

⁴ <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/9033575>

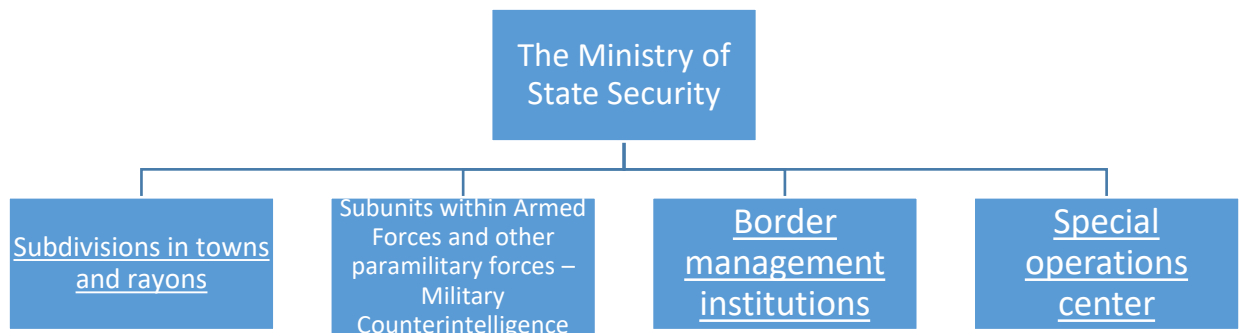


Fig. 1, source: <http://mgb-pmr.com>

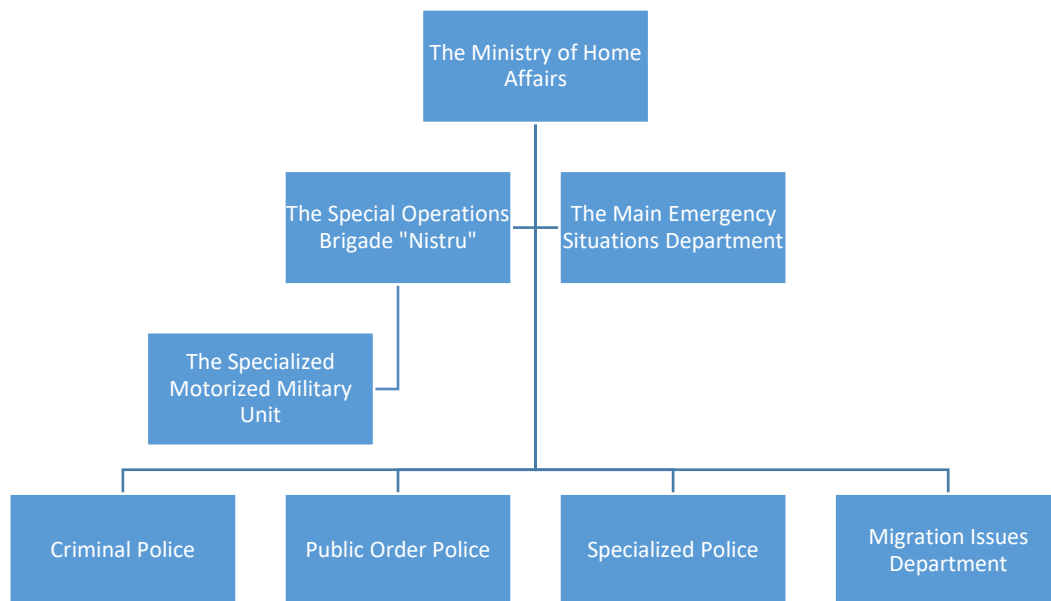


Fig. 2, source: <http://mvdpmr.org/>

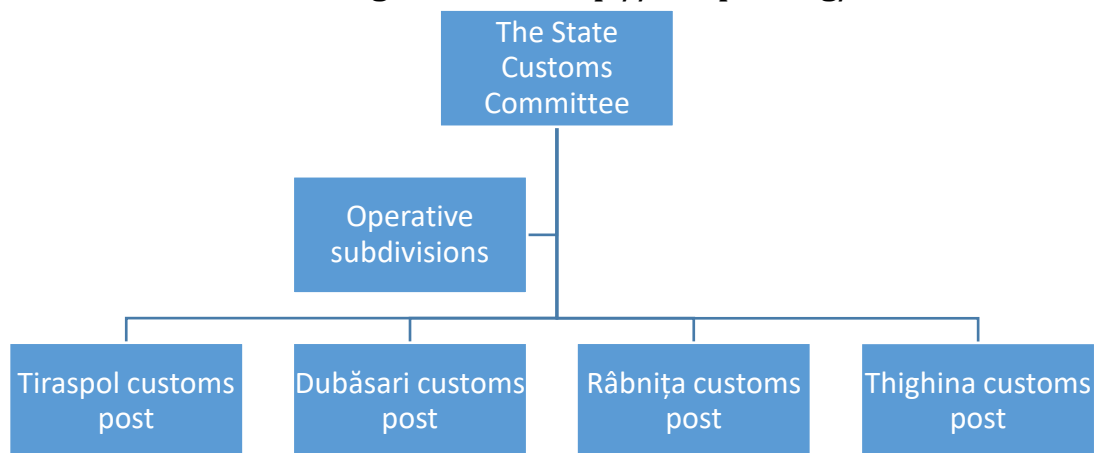


Fig. 3, source: <http://customs.gospmr.org>

The Ministry of State Security

We will take into account here only the border guard units and the Special Operations Centre (The Units of Special Destination including 2000-2500 members).

The border guard units (See Fig. 4 including a structure developed based on the analysis of information from different sources from the Russian Federation, the Republic of

Moldova, the Transnistria region, Ukraine et.al.) are responsible for the protection and guarding the so-called „border” of the Transnistria region. Moreover, they are responsible for intelligence, counterintelligence, special investigations for the purpose of ensuring the security and territorial sovereignty of the region. The border guard units are structured in 4 levels:

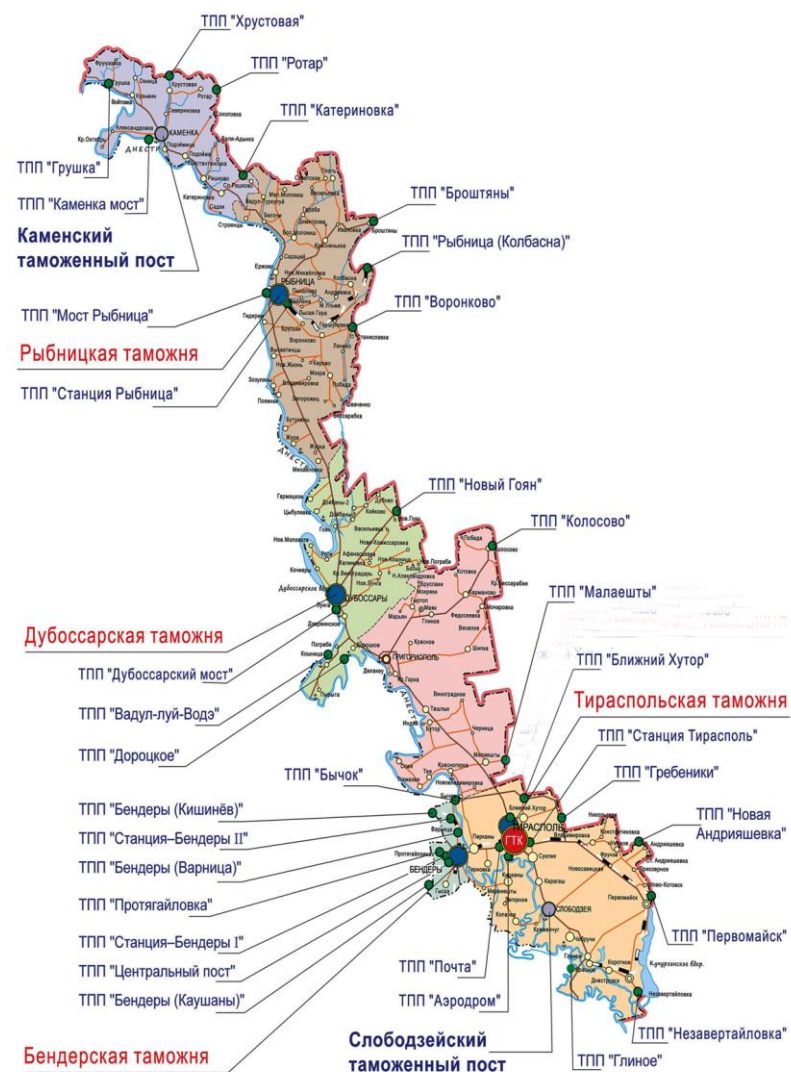
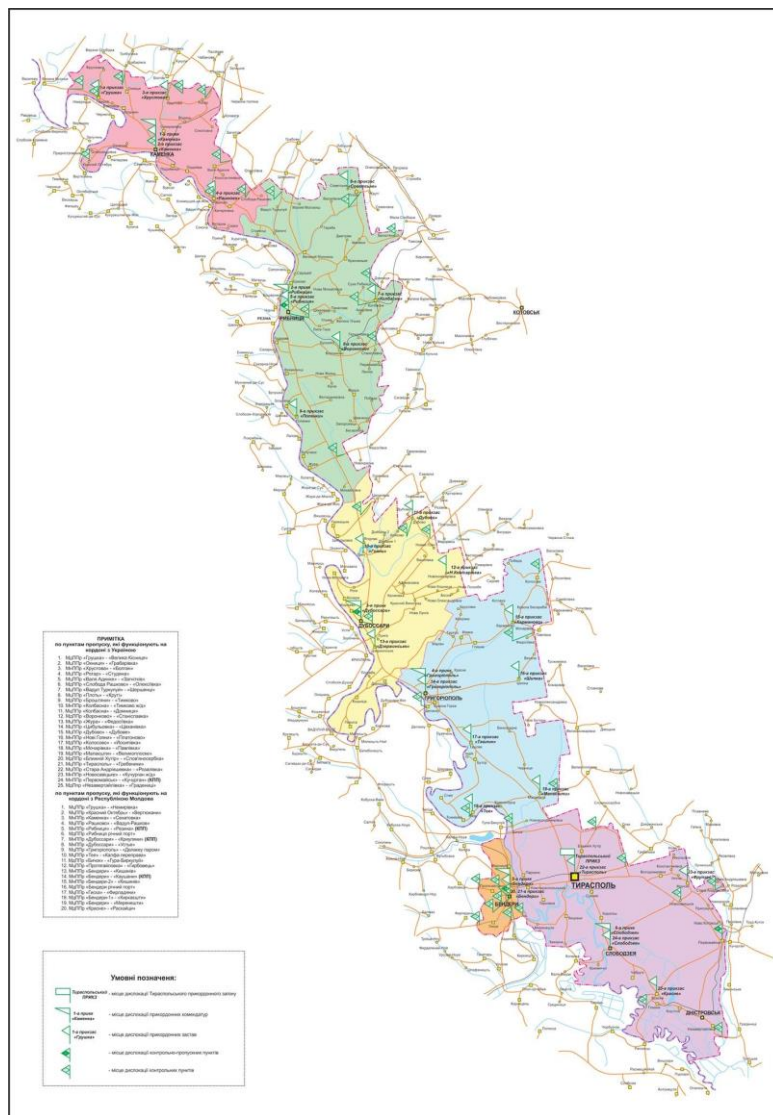
- 1– Strategic level– ensured by the Ministry of State Security;
- 2 - Operational level– ensured by the Border Guards Detachment (1500 – 2000 members) and the Cossacks Independent Reserve Border Guards Regiment (1000-1500 members);
- 3– Intermediary level– consisting of 6 territorial border guard units based on the territorial administrative division; and
- 4 – Tactical level – consisting of 25 Border guards stations and 45 border crossing points with different statutes, out of which 22 are established at the “administrative border”.

The Ministry of Home Affairs

The so-called Ministry of Home Affairs of the Transnistria region which is in charge with migration-related issues includes a “department on migration issues” with a total number of 300-400 members, who are distributed within the central apparatus of the “ministry”, 8 “rayon police offices” and as in the case of “border authorities” to the so-called “border crossing points”. In the Republic of Moldova the migration bodies are not present at the state border, but only migration checkpoints function at the “administrative border”, as well as their North, Center and South territorial offices.

State Customs Committee

This “authority” consists of 4 Territorial Customs Offices, operational subdivisions and 37 customs posts out of which 13 are placed in the Security Zone (See Fig. 5 and Annex 1, the copy is scanned from documents). There is a total number of 600-700 people working for the Committee. As compared to the region, there are 6 customs offices, customs posts at the state border and internal customs posts in the Republic of Moldova.



Staffing and staff training. Aspects regarding the financial, logistic and equipment related issues

Based on the analysis of some open⁵ and less open sources, 20.7% of all the expenditures from the Transnistria region are channeled to defense, security and public order sector. The share for defense accounts for 28.4% whereas for security and public order - 71.6%. These figures do not consider the funding from the Russian Federation for the Transnistrian military structures (see Chapter 3).

The biggest burden of the so-called 2016 budget constitutes the expenses for "armed forces" which increased by 14.4% in comparison with 2015 (see Chart 1).

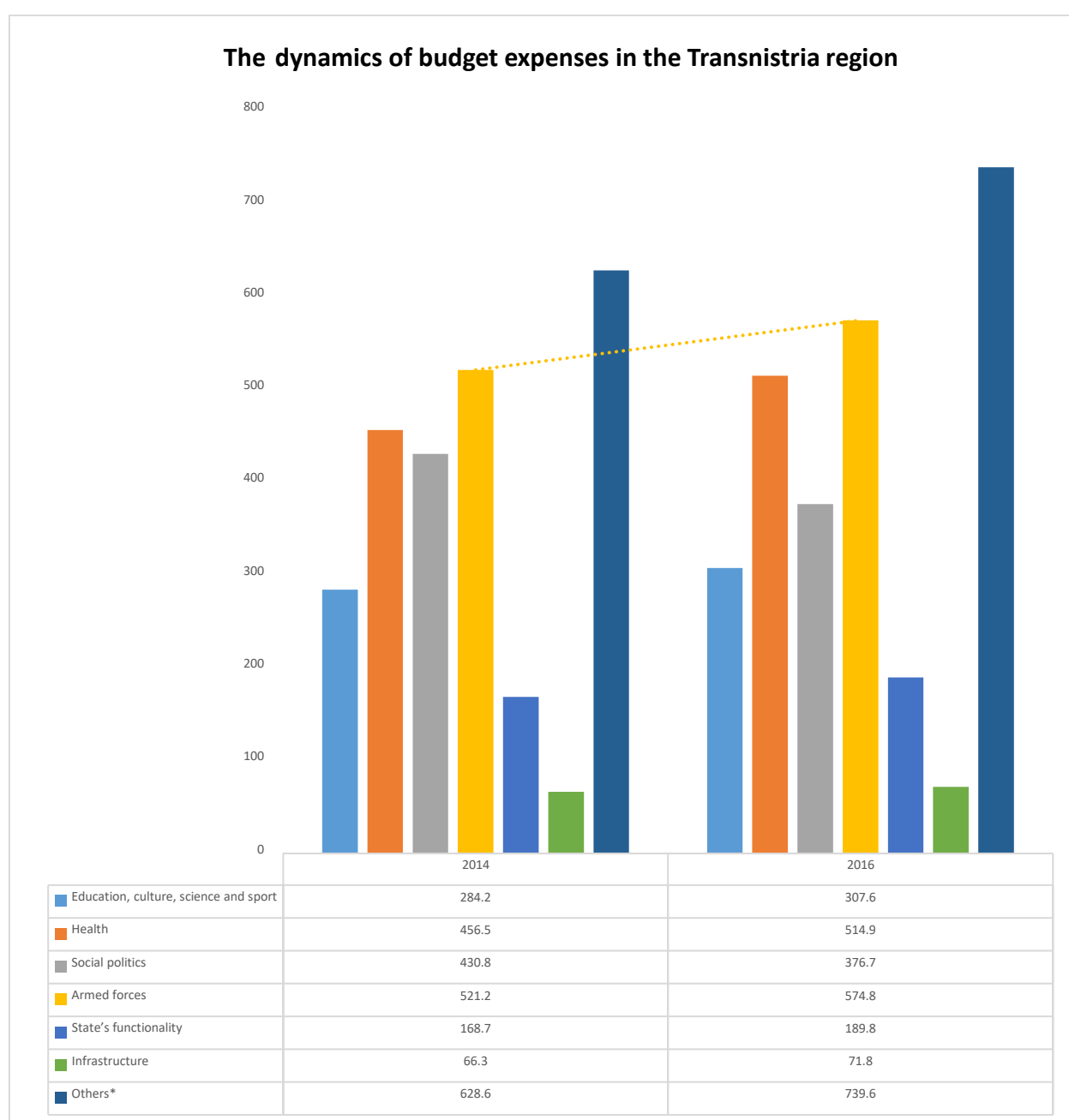


Chart 1

⁵ <http://gov-pmr.org/order>

* *Others* include the institutional expenses, targeted budgetary funds and transfers to the so-called local authorities.

These figures reflect only the financial resources that come from the Transnistria's budget. It's important to remind that in 2010 – 2014, when Victor Ianucovici, the president of Ukraine, was in power, both the OGRF from the Republic of Moldova and the so-called defense, security and public order sector were strongly supported by the Russian Federation by supplying them with last -generation IT and communication equipment. Moreover, the military structures on the left bank of the Nistru river have started the process of "modernization" by including modern equipment also for infantry and special operation units (See more details in the Annex 4 – The equipment analysis of the OGRF's special operations units, of the so-called Transnistrian security authorities and of the Special Operations Forces under the Federal Security Service and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation).

There have been brought some of the best 40 "Ural 375" trucks in the region. The trucks have the transporting capacity of 50 people and can be connected to artillery. Thus the paramilitary troops have become more mobile. 2,000 people can reach any destination⁶. Nevertheless this support was interrupted in 2014, after the events in Ukraine. According to the Russian Federation's plans, the "modernization" process, inter alia, supposed also providing the last-generation attack helicopters, assault armored equipment, drones and many others⁷.

Staffing and staff training are carried out based on two sources. First is the region's own source, i.e. the citizens from the Transnistria region who are trained in the specialized centers of the region (each authority having such centers) are subsequently "parachuted" to Moscow for "specialized" requalification. The entire leadership of the armed forces, including the so-called leaders at minister level benefit of such kind of requalification⁸. There are 12 "officials" from the so-called cabinet of ministers who have passed through requalification in the Russian Federation and additional 3 "officials" - in Ukraine. All the officials from the "armed forces block" could not avoid being trained in the Russian Federation. Second is the "external" source from Russia. What does this source include? Citizens "of deep reach"⁹ of the Russian Federation are "parachuted" to leading positions of the Transnistrian authorities¹⁰. In this context the following questions arise: Why are the "Transnistrian officials" trained in the Russian Federation? Why the new "officials" are admitted to be "parachuted" from the Russian Federation to Transnistria? The situation with the so-called diplomats (representing the diplomatic missions of South Osetia and

⁶ <http://www.ziarulnational.md/interviu-exclusiv-armata-transnistreana-poate-liber-sa-ajunga-timp-de-24-de-ore-la-prut/>

⁷ "Negotiations on helicopters re-equipment of Russian peacekeepers were carried out in Moscow not only by Evgheni Shevchuk, the current Tiraspol leader, but also by Igor Smirnov. Last year, the subject was also discussed with Dmitry Rogozin, the Deputy Prime Minister and the special representative of the Russian president in Transnistria who stated that Russian peacekeepers would have modern weapons".
<https://m.point.md/ru/novosti/politika/rusia-o-aduca-elicoptere-in-transnistria-fara-voia-chiinaului>
<http://newspmr.com/novosti-pmr/politika/10220>
<http://fakty.ictv.ua/ru/ukraine/politika/20140731-1522773/>

⁸ <http://gov-pmr.org/government>

⁹ For various infringements during the service in special structures (intelligence/counterintelligence, etc.) of Russia, or in some cases as a reward, the officers are sent to the so-called Transnistrian institutions. Currently those with experience in the Transnistria region are sent to the separatist republics of Ukraine.

¹⁰ <http://customs.gospmr.org/rukovodstvo.html>, <http://mgb-pmr.com/rukovodstvo>

Abkhazia) who are accredited in the Transnistria region is also not clear. Why do the so-called separatist diplomats represent the Transnistria region in these regions of Georgia?

At the same time when speaking about "armed forces" we have to consider that a part of their staff has participated in different armed conflicts such as military campaigns 1 and 2 from Chechnya¹¹, in those from Georgia (1995-1996) and Serbia (1996-1997). Thus these staff members are well-trained and have enough expertise in their field. Besides, we should also take into account the presence of the OGRF (13962 Military Unit of the WEST Military District) in the Republic of Moldova, which is an excellent supplier of military advisors, whose activity is not monitored by constitutional authorities in the Transnistria region.

These forces are stationed in the Security Zone the same as the so-called Transnistrian armed forces¹². For instance in the case of border authorities, practically all of them are stationed in the Security Zone including 4 brigades of 1500-2000 members each, equipment according to staffing roster (infantry weapons implying tanks, artillery, armored weapons etc.) which are dislocated in Tiraspol, Bender, Râbnîța, Dubăsari and Grigoriopol.

Findings:

- ✓ Currently "the institutions which are responsible for border security" of the Transnistria region include around 3400 - 4600 members out of which 2400-4100 are directly involved in the field of border security. The rest 1000-1500 members belong to the Cossacks Independent Reserve Border Guards Regiment, which occasionally participate in the border security activity;
- ✓ All these "institutions" including those responsible for "customs" and "migration" are excessively militarized according to their structure, tasks, equipment, weapons, participation in war games etc. If comparing them to the institutions on the right bank of the Nistru river the last ones are civil oriented institutions (those in the migration field) and with special statute such as Border Police and Customs service;
- ✓ The structure of the "border authority" in Transnistria is of Soviet type from the '40s of the last century, when the border rayons had their own territorial border guard units, and the number of the border guard stations was excessive. That anyhow doesn't answer the question: What are the border authorities preparing for? In comparison to the Republic of Moldova the country has at its tactical level a subdivision - a border police sector at around every 36-40 km of the border and a "border guard station" from the Transnistria region at every 18 km of the border;
- ✓ "The "border security system" is "supervised" by Russian intelligence officers under the diplomatic cover or by members of the OGRF¹³;
- ✓ 71.6% of armed forces resources are channelled to security and public order sector. This is without taking into account Russian support;
- ✓ Staffing and staff training in the Transnistria region are based on 2 sources. This is relevant for the OGRF too;
- ✓ A part of the combat personnel has experienced various regional conflicts;
- ✓ The Security Zone is full of separatist "military or paramilitary structures", which contradicts the agreements in force ¹⁴.

¹¹ <http://novostipmr.ru/info/vesti/2016-08-v-obron-dnestr-mvd-pmr-proshli-pokazatelnye-vystupleniya/>

¹² All 4 infantry brigades and some units of special destination

¹³ <https://deschide.md/ro/stiri/opinii/11455/%E2%80%9ESpionul%E2%80%9D-de-la-Ambasada-Rus%C4%83-%C3%AEn-suita-lui-Dodon-la-Memorialul-de-la-%C8%98erpeni.htm>

demonstrating the interdependence of the missions made by the military formations of the Transnistria region and OGRF can be highlighted in the analysis of the organizational structures (Annex 3), of the combat preparation process but also of applications (Diagrams 2 and 3).

These analyzes show that the military formations of the Transnistria region are interoperable with those of the OGRF, moreover, as some of them, and especially those with special destination, are equipped with similar equipment of OGRF of last generation (Annex 4). Such examples can also be made of other categories of specialties such as transmissions, artillery, tanks, etc. At the same time, according to official information, the total number of armed forces of the region is 15000, but in reality, sources say there are 6,000-7,500. This does not mean that the 15,000 cannot be reached while mobilization shortly. This is also about the number of military techniques. According to official data, the so-called armed forces of Transnistria region have 18 T-64BB tanks, but in case of danger, those are elaborated with considering some of the military technique and OGRF weapons, especially from warehouses. Another example of the mission character of the so-called armed forces of the region is the order of military service satisfaction. Thus, those who have the military service passage in the military units of the region are enrolled in OGRF, or vice versa. A common mission is the educational one. The so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region and the OGRF are the basic pillar in the moral-psychological education system that promotes the formation of the patriotic spirit and devotion to the region. In all possible ways (television, radio, press), not only in the army, but in the whole society, the image of the enemy from Chisinau is formed. Conversely, the so-called armed forces and OGRF are regarded as the guarantee of peace and independence for the so-called Transnistrian people. There is also appreciated the Russian world, Russian history (Peter I, Suvorov, the so-called great war for the defense of the homeland, etc.) theories and doctrines. Recently, an additional element of the system has become military parades. They are held annually on various occasions, with the joint participation of OGRF and the armed forces of the region, as well as schools and universities which have in their study program military training.

In this sense, there comes the question - Army 14 or OGRF?

We believe that the transformation of the 14th Army into the OGRF was a catcher from the Russian side, claiming that the military presence in the region was considerably diminished and that the new peace missions carried out by its troops. But the explanation closer to the truth of these metamorphoses would be the following:

1. Further use of the syntax the 14th Army was too inconvenient for Moscow because it was associated with Russia's direct involvement in the military conflict by the separatists' side.

2. The change of name gave the possibility to shrug attention from Russia's unwillingness to further fulfill the provisions of the 1992 Agreement, according to which military units in the region could not be used in the peacekeeping operation.

Indeed, if we see what OGRF is together with the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region, there is a continuing Russian military presence, because the whole potential of the military forces on the left bank of the Nistru river is constant. The military units of the 14th Army have turned into the military units of the Transnistria region, whereas the weapons and the military equipment were transmitted to the latter.

Also, following the extensive analysis of the official webpages of the Russian Ministry of Defense, and of the so-called armed forces in the Transnistria region, it shows a significant increase in the number of war games involving OGRF and the so-called "armed forces" of

the Transnistria region. Where does that actually start from? Let us remember the year 2011, when the OGRF statute was changed substantially. As a result of this reform, the OGRF became a military entity with a separate statute, with special missions under this statute, as an entity of the Russian "West" Military District¹⁸. Its peacekeeping mission was doomed to secondary roles, but it was actually a firewall to keep the authorities of Chisinau «under control», arguing about the need to be maintained on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Indeed, the analysis of open data¹⁹ that was previously discussed, proves this with a great deal of detail (see the Diagrams 2 and 3).

In addition, lately, we see an avalanche of "desants", either being those diplomatic ones of the Russian Federation (Russian authorities visiting rather the Transnistria region than the Republic of Moldova²⁰ and their statements), or the "separatist desants" (the so-called Transnistrian authorities, e.g. Vadim Crasnoselischii, Alexandru Martanov and Vitalii Igratiev) visiting Moscow. All this happening after the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, supported by foreign partners, finally relaunched the joint control at the Pervomaisc-Cuciurgan crossing point on the Transnistrian segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian state border. These "desants" prove us nothing but an open support of the separatist authorities, and a defiance of the Moldovan authorities and of Ukraine. This contradicts all international bilateral agreements between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation, where it is written in black on white ***"The high contracting parties (author's writing: the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation) will develop their relations on the basis of mutual respect, trust and cooperation. They will faultlessly respect the generally recognized principles and rules of international law: sovereign equality, non-use of force or threat of violence, inviolability of borders, territorial integrity, political independence, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for people's fundamental rights and freedoms, equality of rights and the right of people to self-determination, cooperation between states and the fulfillment in good faith of the commitments assumed under the international law"***²¹

¹⁸ <http://structure.mil.ru/structure/okruga/west/news.htm>

¹⁹ <http://www.segodnia.ru/content/180893>,

<https://novostipmr.com/ru/search/site/%D1%83%D1%87%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%8F>

²⁰ http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/rso/osce/-/asset_publisher/bzhxR3zkq2H5/content/id/2713001,

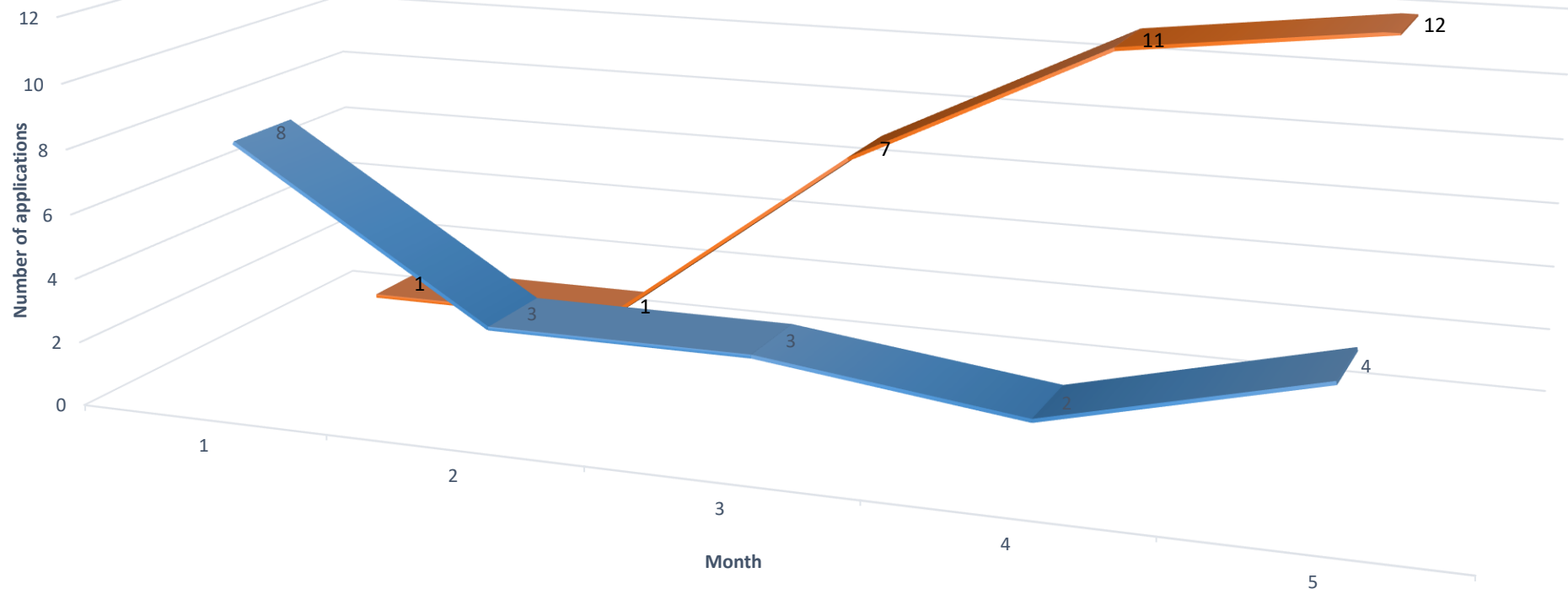
http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2612356,

http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/maps/md/-/asset_publisher/dfOot03QvCij/content/id/2739269,

<http://mfa-pmr.org/ru/xIR>, <http://mfa-pmr.org/ru/LsS>, <http://mfa-pmr.org/ru/pSI>

²¹ Art. 1 of the Treaty of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation <http://www.rusia.mfa.md/legal-base-ro/>

**The dynamics of OGRF deployment of applications in the years 2016-2017
(First 5 months)**



	1	2	3	4	5
2016	8	3	3	2	4
2017	1	1	7	11	12

Diagram 2. Open sources of the Defence Ministry of the Russian Federation, media sources from the Russian Federation, Transnistria region and Ukraine

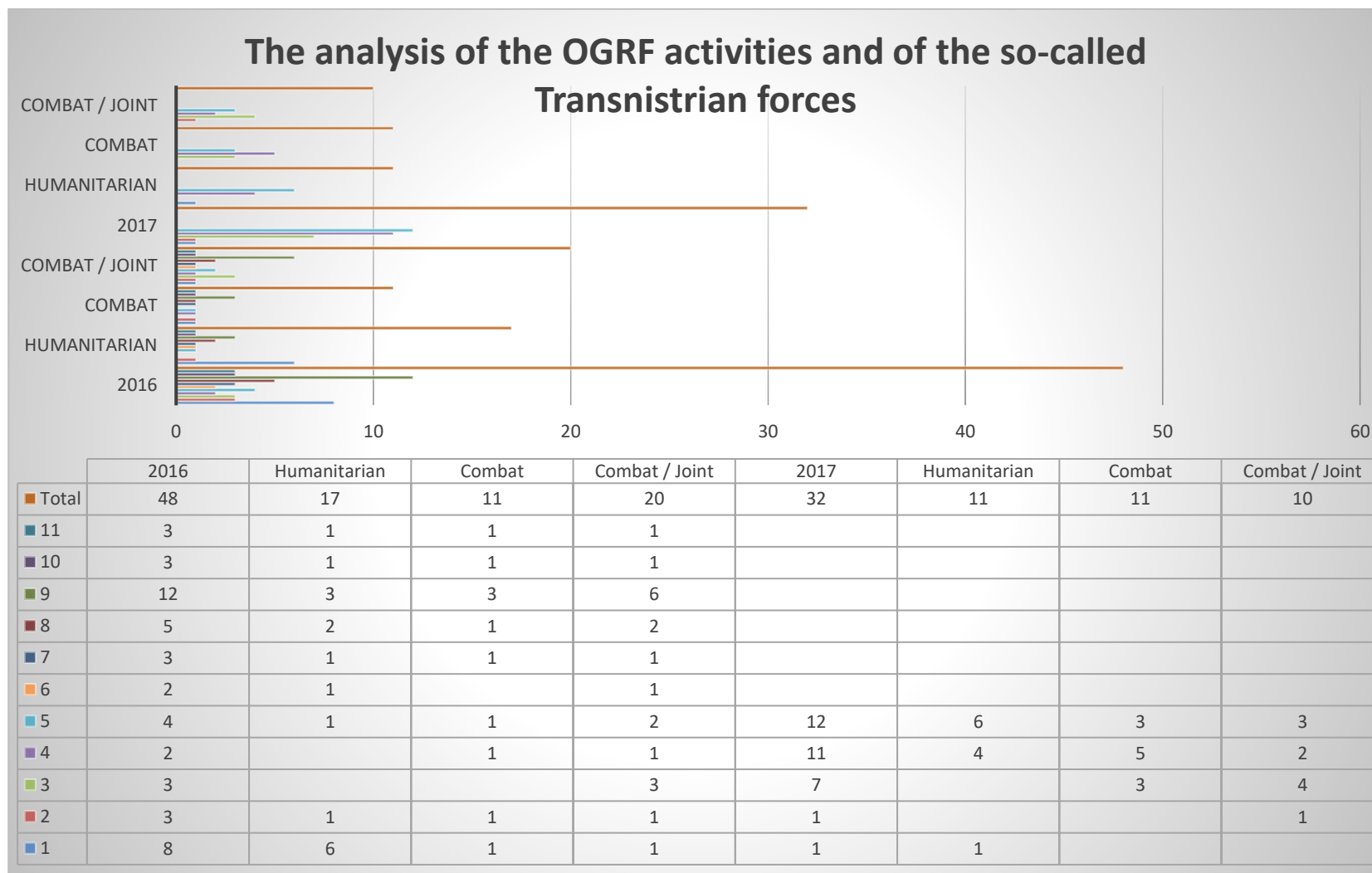


Diagram 3. Open sources of the Defence Ministry of the Russian Federation, media sources from the Russian Federation, Transnistria region and Ukraine

Findings (Diagrams 2 and 3):

- ✓ There were 47 activities in 2016, until May 20th, this year – 32;
- ✓ Those combatant are only with the participation of OGRF, the humanitarian and combat / joint ones are with the participation of the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region;
- ✓ Most of the combat and combat / joint applications are being developed with the aim of strengthening cooperation, coordination and interoperability with the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region, among them - the liquidation of the discharged groups, the rejection of the terrorist attacks (15 in total as we would be in the area with the highest degree of terrorist danger), some of them using heavy equipment (tanks and artillery), for crossing water obstacles, crossing the Nistru river and firing on the right bank of the river by OGRF combat devices along with the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region;
- ✓ Planning and deployment of some applications of the special operations centre of the Ministry of State Security, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Justice is carried out with the guidance of the Russian military advisers and intelligence services. The final phases of these applications are supervised by OGRF Commander, the colonel Dmitry Zelencov²². Just during April 6th - April 28th this year, there were 6 applications, with the participation of infantrymen, tanks and special destination units. We draw our attention to the fact that two of these applications were TAC or TAB²³ (tactical applications at the company / battalion level) ²⁴, being directly supervised by the so-called Minister of Defence and OGRF Commander, the Colonel Dmitry Zelencov (April 6th and April 13th);
- ✓ Organization of the so-called cantonments on May 11th-12th with the participation of Transnistrian authorities, of the so-called leader of the region and with involvement of a controversial legend²⁵;

²² <http://pridnestrovie-daily.net>, www.gov-pmr.org, www.gov-pmr.org,
<https://novostipmr.com/ru/news/17-04-13/v-vooruzhyonnyh-silah-proveli-takticheskie-ucheniya-s-boevoy>
<https://novostipmr.com/ru/content/o-zashchitnikah-pridnestrovyia-nashih-dney>
<https://novostipmr.com/ru/news/16-08-16/v-pridnestrove-proshyol-ocherednoy-etap-rossiysko-pridnestrovskih>
<https://novostipmr.com/ru/news/16-08-03/na-dnestre-proshli-sovmestnye-voennye-manevry-ogrv-i-minoborony>
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<https://novostipmr.com/ru/content/batalonno-takticheskie-ucheniya-ogrv>

²³ www.function.mil.ru/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12090970@egNews

²⁴ One of the main forms of tactical training, attended by about 500 soldiers and 60 technical units (tanks, armoured, individual weapons, artillery). According to the legend, the subdivisions were acting in case of rejection of any possible attack, even in the planning of the attack on a "possible enemy". Any application of this kind is finished with combat shooting from all types of weapon equipment.

²⁵ The command-post training with the participation of the Transnistria authorities will be held in two stages. The aim of the theoretical part is to consider and agree on the interaction of the armed forces in the field of guarding and defending the state border. Another task is to work out the issue of creating a state reserve of material and technical means to assure provisions to the armed forces and the civilian population in case of transition from a peaceful to a martial time. In addition, the participants of the training session should familiarize themselves with the organization order of interaction between the armed forces and the local self-government bodies. In the course of the practical part, combat shooting will be conducted. Related to this part of the command-post training there is a field hospital, which will be deployed for training purposes <http://president.gospmr.ru/press-sluzhba/novosti/glavnokomanduyuschiy-voorujennimi-silami-pmr-uchastvuet-v-komandno-shtabnoy-trenirovke.html>

- ✓ Out of the humanitarian activities, the majority of them are manipulating. They promote the superiority of the Russian army, and the so-called "Russian world", as well as the heroic deeds of the separatists in 1990-1992;
- ✓ We cannot overlook the defiance of the constitutional authorities through premeditated incorporation into the OGRF ²⁶, after which this contingent being used as a reserve of personal for the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region;
- ✓ The Russian Federation and the Transnistria region have joined their powers in the field of defence, security and public order, even if they have not declared it openly;
- ✓ The Russian Federation is "pumping" financial sources in the region, including in the defence, security and public order fields. It is very expensive to organize such military applications, especially in today's extremely difficult conditions for the region. For comparison, by 2011, the separatist paramilitary forces were organizing 2-3 applications with battle firings per year. What do we have now? See the diagrams 2 and 3;
- ✓ The so-called armed forces of the region are highly prepared and equipped with weapons from the 14th Army military arsenals;
- ✓ All these activities of the OGRF contradict the main document in the field of conflict regulation namely the *Agreement on principles of a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in the Transnistria region of the Republic of Moldova*, signed by the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation on July 21st, 1992. Particularly, the provisions of Article 4 are contradicted, which stipulates that ***"the 14th Army units of the Russian Federation, deployed in the Republic of Moldova, will strictly respect neutrality. The two parties in conflict undertake the obligation to respect neutrality and to refrain from any unlawful actions against the military heritage, the militaries of this army and the members of their families. The problems regarding the status of the army, the procedure and the deadlines for its withdrawal by stages will be settled in the framework of negotiations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova"***;
- ✓ The political, economic, military and informational support is provided by the Russian Federation that considers the Transnistria region as an area of strategic interests;
- ✓ There are military troops with a high level of training and equipped with weapons from the former arsenals of the 14th Army in the Transnistria region;
- ✓ The reaction of mediators is not clear and why do they not speak and behave as nothing happening? In fact, the answer is clear - Why should we do something, when you are pliable!

²⁶ <http://www.ziarulnational.md/promo-lex-ingrijorati-de-inrolarile-in-asa-zisa-armata-transnistreana/>

Conclusions and Recommendations

In 26 years of the Republic of Moldova's independence, any initiative of solving the Transnistrian conflict has failed. Either the authorities were pliable, accepting the conditions imposed by the Russian Federation in 1992-1998, including those with "brejnevist" finals in 1996-2000²⁷, or some initiatives imposed by Russia were rejected on the last hundred meters²⁸. Another reason would be the rejection of some initiatives on behalf of the Republic of Moldova by the Russian Federation.²⁹

In the same period 1991-2001, the state border of the Republic of Moldova was left without state coverage, except for several customs posts, one of them being settled on the Transnistrian segment of the Pervomaisc-Cuciurgan state border on the territory of Ukraine. Neither the "administrative border" was under national authorities³⁰. The question in this respect is: Why was the state border of the Republic of Moldova left "uncovered" for 10 years and whose interests served that "lack of coverage"?

Meanwhile, the Russian Federation has imposed itself in all the fields of the Transnistria region, including in the areas of defence, security and public order. This imposition has increased after 2011, and at the moment reached its peak, including with open defiance of the Moldovan authorities. At the same time, especially in the years 2012-2016, the separatist authorities have developed the legal and legislative framework in all the security fields of the so-called Transnistrian border³¹.

The situation of Transnistria is explained also by the malleability of the current president of the Republic of Moldova, Igor Dodon, who, since empowered, has visited the Russian Federation 6 times, meeting with Vladimir Putin, with whom he discusses, including the Transnistrian issue. As a result, we've gotten "appeals" to the Russian Federation on behalf of the separatists to deploy Russian military troops to the state border of the Republic of Moldova with Ukraine, a significant increase of OGRF's and separatist paramilitary forces' military applications, some direct implications of the Russian Federation's intelligence services in the Republic of Moldova and an OGRF with a no clearly defined status and mandate, but with implications not only in the military but also in the social, medical and humanitarian spheres.

The Republic of Moldova, as part of the negotiations until recently "encouraged" separatism through illegal contracts for the delivery of electricity³².

As in the case of OGRF, we have a peacekeeping mission without a clearly defined statute and mandate, the Republic of Moldova being "the prisoner" of the signed agreements, contrary to its national interests. We do not have the support of the largest "strategic partner", namely the Russian Federation, in modifying this mission into a civilian one with a policing statute and a clearly defined mandate.

The Republic of Moldova is part of the "5+2" negotiations format which has been frozen. The country also faces different manipulations and constraints from the so-called Transnistrian authorities including direct blackmail, obstructions, threats, etc.

²⁷ On March 20, 1998, the so-called leader of the Transnistria region I. Smirnov, leaders from Chisinau, Moscow, Kiev and of the OSCE signed not "for the Transnistria region of Moldova", but "for Transnistria".

²⁸ The Kozak Memorandum, https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorandumul_Kozak

²⁹ "Transnistrian settlement plan", based on "seven steps", presented on April 22, 2005 by the president of Ukraine at the GUUAM summit in Chisinau.

³⁰ Rosian Vasilo, "The administrative border and how we administer it", No.3, April 2017, <http://viitorul.org/ro/library-books/676>

³¹ „The administrative border and how we administer it”, April 2017, page 10, <http://www.viitorul.org/ro/library-books/676>

³² Impunity and cost-cutting arrangements in the energy sector of the country, April 2017, <http://www.viitorul.org/ro/library-books/663>

There is also a militarized Security Zone in the region, which contradicts the provisions of the agreements in force and a militarized region, including mercenaries and citizens of other states.

There are "military and paramilitary structures" in the Transnistria region, which serve as a firewall for the Russian forces, so we could be in the same situation as Georgians one day³³, when the so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region might be "absorbed" by the Russian Ministry of Defence, the Federal Security Service of Russian Federation and the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Nevertheless there is a European Union Assistance Mission to the state border of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine too. There are also partners' support in building confidence between the two banks of the Nistru river, through various projects for citizens and local authorities. Unfortunately, these projects are not always fully valued, taking into account the years of activity from 2005 onwards.

First of all we need to get a clear answer to the question - What does the Supreme Security Council do regarding the issue of defiance of the Republic of Moldova by the Russian Federation, especially in the last period (May 2016 - May 2017), and what actions the Council takes in solving the Transnistrian conflict in general? What measures has been taken by the Council to disable / discourage the Russian Federation and the so-called separatist authorities in their unilateral actions, including those that contradict the status of mediator (in the case of the Russian Federation) and those related to separatists' defiance and threat actions?

It might take another 26 years, waiting for answers, so, we come up with some recommendations that could assist national authorities. Thus, in the context of a new vision on the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, drafted by Moldovan authorities, with the support of the civil society and subsequent development partners, the **following recommendations** could be considered:

- 🇷🇺 The Republic of Moldova should intensify its dialogue with its partners on the replacement of the so-called military peacekeeping mission with an international mission with a police-civil statute (IMPCS) with a clearly defined mandate, transparent terms of reference under the UN / EU / OSCE flag and with the provision of a medium-term protectorate of 3-5 years;
- 🇷🇺 Until creating the IMPCS, the Republic of Moldova should develop as a provisional measure a set of instruments that would regulate the OGRF's activity implying a well-defined statute and mandate on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. In case of refusal, there will be taken legal measures required for their unilateral implementation;
- 🇷🇺 The Republic of Moldova should propose, negotiate and subsequently implement the mechanism of demilitarization, decriminalization and democratization, with a priority given to the demilitarization of the Security Zone and the Transnistrian segment of the state border. This would imply also the proposal to the Russian Federation to take over its "desant" and ensure a free return to his "motherland";
- 🇷🇺 Changing the negotiation format from "5 + 2" to "7+", which would involve changing the statute of the US and the EU from observers to full-fledged mediators, including the right of acceding any partner of the Republic of Moldova;
- 🇷🇺 The Republic of Moldova, together with its partners (the EU, the US, Ukraine and the OSCE) will resume messages regarding the withdrawal and liquidation of the Russian military arsenal, as well as the gradual replacement of the so-called peacekeeping forces with an international mission based on a police-civil statute. If this process is delayed, the

³³ <https://jamestown.org/program/russian-military-absorbs-army-south-ossetia/>

Republic of Moldova will impose clear and well-founded sanctions against the Russian Federation;

🚩 In the context of demilitarization of the Security Zone and of the region as a whole, the Moldovan authorities will propose to the international partners transparent mechanisms for the dissolution of the paramilitary entities, the destruction of arms and military equipment, as well as the social rehabilitation and re-qualification of the staff belonging to the so-called military and border security structures;

🌐 For the demilitarization process could be used the proposal package of the **Conflict Prevention Centre** of the OSCE entitled “Confidence and Security Building Measures in Moldova” from July 2005 which has been presented to all delegations within the OSCE and including some rectifications and updates. The proposal package concerns several initiatives such as:

- The Agreement on reduction of armed forces, weapons and equipment including 6 annexes;

- The Agreement on confidence-building and security measures including 7 annexes;

🌐 Launching a message to the EU regarding the intention of the Republic of Moldova to transit from the neighbourhood policy to the enlargement policy³⁴. This message is optimistic, but should be assumed, taking into account the principle that reintegration of the country should be done through euro-integration. In this respect, the share of European projects should be redirected to the Transnistria region;

🌐 Launching immediately some working groups for customs administration, demilitarization and strengthening of security, internal affairs and public order. This would enable the authorities of the Republic of Moldova to present viable solutions for problems in the dialogue with the negotiating partners and the so-called authorities from the left bank of the Nistru river in the above-mentioned fields;

🌐 To develop the dialogue with Ukraine on the issue of joint control on the Transnistrian segment of the state border and the gradual transition of all activities under the legislation of the Republic of Moldova;

🌐 The Republic of Moldova should impose clear rules of behaviour and conduct to the so-called authorities in the region (travel coordination, refusal to travel abroad if it proves other interests than those in accordance with the national legislation, not allowing the use of cars with the so-called diplomatic numbers of the region, refusal to leave the territory of the Republic of Moldova in case of presenting documents of other states, etc.). In this regard, partner assistance will be required in the existing negotiation format, including the involvement of the EU Border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine;

🌐 The Republic of Moldova with the support of the development partners should elaborate the demilitarization concept of the Republic of Moldova in the context of the reform of the armed forces including those from the Transnistria region with the so-called "security sector". There will be implemented clear mechanisms for efficient cooperation of the law enforcement bodies on both sides of the Nistru river (border police guards, customs-customs, and migration services). That would be possible only after democratization and demilitarization of the so-called Transnistrian authorities. At the same time, the reintegration policy of the Republic of Moldova in this field will suppose the creation of favourable conditions for the career officers from the eastern districts for continuing their profession in a constitutional area, protected by law. Under the national legislation, the Moldovan Parliament will stipulate the conditions allowing former and current officers of border guards service, customs and migration services in the region to decommission or continue their service within Moldovan authorities after a retraining provided by the appropriate training centres. Moldovan authorities will create legal and

³⁴ The case of Cyprus may serve as an example

social conditions for the decommissioned people, except for those groups and individuals who have committed serious abuses;

🇲🇩 The Republic of Moldova, with the support of its partners, should launch a strategic communication mechanism on both banks of the Nistru river with the participation of all the actors involved. This mechanism will serve as a tool for counteracting falsities and propaganda, informing citizens correctly about the intentions of the authorities based on the national interest of country reintegration.

All the proposals should be in strict accordance with the national interest, the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and the legislative framework³⁵, without accepting compromises that would be in contradiction with them. The fall of the Republic of Moldova under any protectorate is also not admissible. It is obvious that all these measures cannot be separated from other reintegration policies of the Republic of Moldova. The country should be aware that the policy of small steps infiltrated by the Russian Federation in the "5 + 2" negotiation format is no longer valid especially in the last 3-4 years. The country should move faster with certain steps, using the current context, but also with the support of its trusted partners. The Republic of Moldova should impose to those with no trust, messages and real actions in support of its national interest. It should be ready for a diplomatic dialogue implying only "clear red lines" which cannot be subject to any trade. One of these red lines is tracing the state border of the Republic of Moldova in all its sectors.

³⁵ <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=313004>

Annexes

Annex 1. SOURCES - Based on the analysis of open and confidential data (the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, the Transnistria region, the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation et. el.).

POSTS OF THE SO-CALLED TRANSNISTRIAN AUTHORITIES THAT DO NOT BELONG TO THE PEACEKEEPING MISSION FROM THE SECURITY ZONE

NORTH SECTOR (3 Posts)

	Name	Structure	Displacement	Number of people
1.	"Left Border Control"	BGD, SCC, MS ³⁶	The bridge over the Nistru river in Kamenka	6
2.	"Border Control"	BGD, SCC, MS	The bridge over the Nistru river in Ribnita	13
3.	State auto-inspection post "Ribnița 2"	SAI ³⁷	Main road, the south side of Râbnița town	2
Total number of people				21

THE CENTER SECTOR (9 Posts)

1.	"Corjova" post	BGD & militia	Dubăsari-Cocieri road	2
2.	"Rogi" post	BGD & militia	Village "Rogi"	2
3.	Dubăsari dam	"MAI" ³⁸	Dubăsari dam	3
4.	State auto-inspection post "Dubăsari"	SAI	Dubasari roundabout	3
5.	Checkpoint and access "Lunga 1"	BGD, SCC, MS	The bridge over the Nistru river near Dubăsari	11
6.	State auto-inspection post "Movila de Glorie"	SAI	On the main road 4 kms north-east of "Pogrebya" village	2
7.	Checkpoint and access "Lunga 2"	BGD, SCC, MS	The Koșnița junction with the Dubăsari-Tiraspol road	10
8.	Checkpoint and access "Doroțcaia"	BGD, SCC, MS	2 kms to the North of the Doroțcaia village	7
9.	State auto-inspection post "Grigoriopol 2"	SAI	Crossroads edge of South - East "Krasnaya Gorca"	2
Total number of people				42

THE SOUTH SECTOR (10 Posts)

1.	Checkpoint and access "Bâcioc"	BGD, SCC	Main road, southern part of "Bacioc" settlement	4
2.	"Border and Customs" post "Lipcani"	BGD, SCC, MS	Exiting Tighina in the direction of Varnița	7
3.	"Border / Customs / Migration" post	BGD, SCC, MS	Exiting Tighina on the main road in the direction of Chișinău	15
4.	"Border control post No. 17"	BGD, SCC	Tighina-Gârbovăț road	4
5.	"Border control post No. 18"	BGD	Gâsca-Fârlădeni	3
6.	"Border checkpoint"	BGD, SCC, MS	Tighina-Chițcani road	9
7.	"Border control post No. 27"	BGD	Slobozia-Copanca road	3
8.	"Border control post No. 17"	BGD, SCC, MS	Crasnoe-Răscăieți road	5
9.	"Border control post No. 5"	BGD, SCC, MS	Tighina-Căușeni road	7
10.	"Tighina" SAI post No. 1	SCC&Militia	Bridge over the Nistru river, the road to Tiraspol (Tighina)	3
Total number of people				60
Total for all posts		22 posts	123 people/shift	

³⁶ BGD - Border Guards Detachment, SCC - State Customs Committee, MS - Migration Service of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Transnistria region.

³⁷ SAI - State Auto Inspection

³⁸ "Guard service of the so-called Ministry of Home Affairs of the Transnistria region"

The so-called armed forces of the Transnistria region**Structure:**

- units and subunits of infantry, artillery, tanks, air defence, troops of special destination, aviation, et.al. including as a reserve those from the militia formations of the Ministry of Defence;
- the so-called presidential guard - at the company level;
- the civil defence units, the special destination unit³⁹ and the Motorized Militia Unit of the Ministry of Home Affairs;
- the border guards, the Cossacks Independent Reserve Border Guards Regiment and COS VOSTOC⁴⁰ of the State Security Ministry;
- the special destination units of the SCC and the Ministry of Justice⁴¹.

The so-called Ministry of Defence:

Name of the military unit	Dislocation	Completion
The so-called Minister	Tiraspol	90-100%
The so-called General Staff	Tiraspol	90-100%
The Infantry Brigade	Tiraspol	Semi-deployed ⁴²
The Infantry Brigade (the Training Center ⁴³) "Gvardeiskaia"	Thighina	Deployed
The Infantry Brigade	Dubăsari	Semi-deployed
The Infantry Brigade	Râbnîța	Semi-deployed
The special destination unit	Corresponds to the Tiraspol brigade ⁴⁴	Semi-deployed
The special destination unit	Corresponds to the Thighina brigade ⁴⁵	Semi-deployed
The special destination unit	Corresponds to the Dubasari brigade ⁴⁶	Semi-deployed
The special destination unit	Corresponds to the Ribnita brigade ⁴⁷	Semi-deployed
The Independent Tank Battalion	Vladimirovca	Semi-deployed
The Independent Artillery Regiment	Parcani	Semi-deployed
The Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment	Tiraspol	Semi-deployed
The Independent Aviation Detachment	Tiraspol	Semi-deployed
The Independent Transmission Battalion	Tiraspol	Semi-deployed
The Independent Engineering Battalion	Parcani	Semi-deployed
Units of insurance	Different locations	Semi-deployed

³⁹ In operative subordination in case of attacks

⁴⁰ Idem

⁴¹ idem

⁴² With some of the equipment stored

⁴³ The sources under anonymity stated that it was renovated thus satisfying the rigors in the field. All the attempts of national authorities represented in the Joint Control Committee have failed.

⁴⁴ Based on the author's estimates

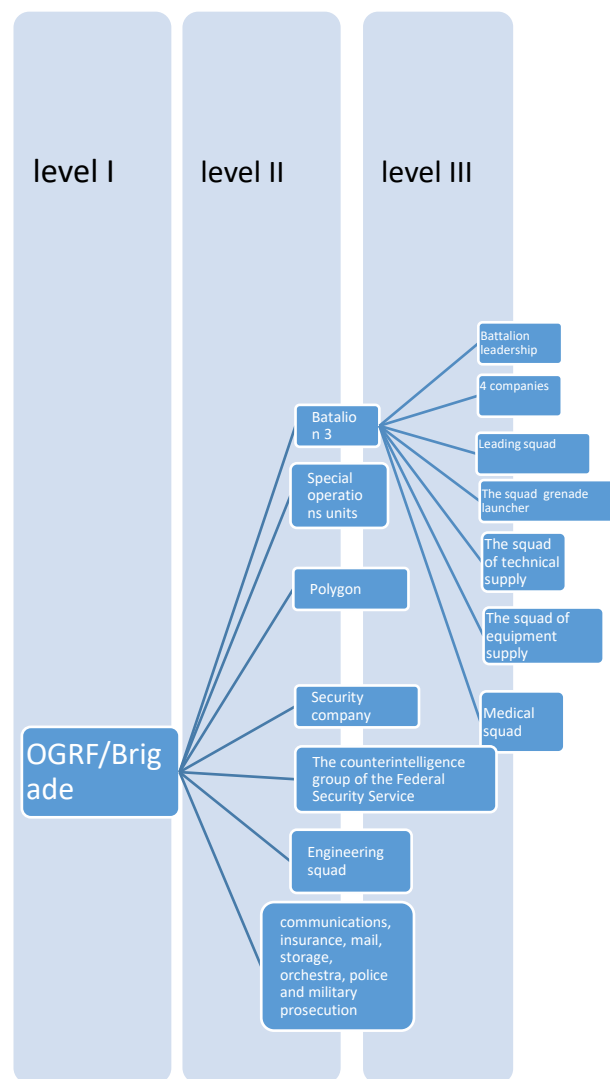
⁴⁵ Idem

⁴⁶ Idem

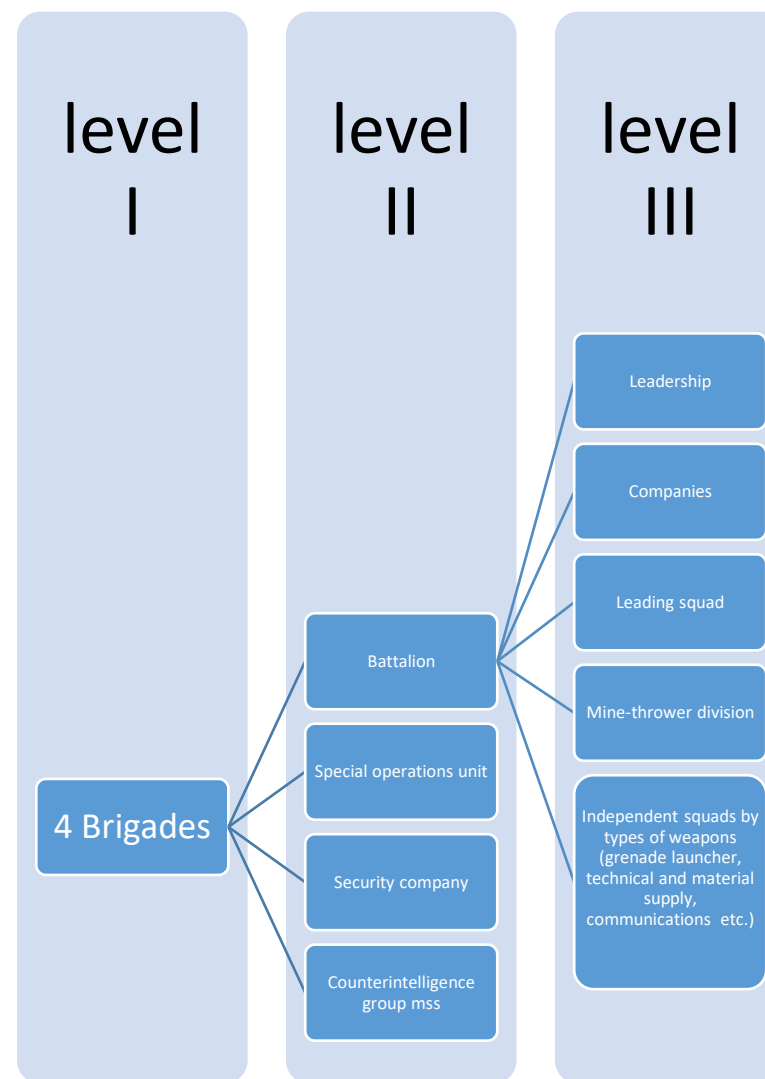
⁴⁷ Idem

Annex 3. Comparative analysis of the OGRF structures and of the so-called Defence Ministry of the Transnistria region

A. OGRF



B. The so-called Ministry of Defence



Annex 4 The equipment analysis of the OGRF's special operations units, of the so-called Transnistrian security authorities and of the Special Operations Forces under the Federal Security Service and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

A) Images of May 9th, 2017, the military town of OGRF



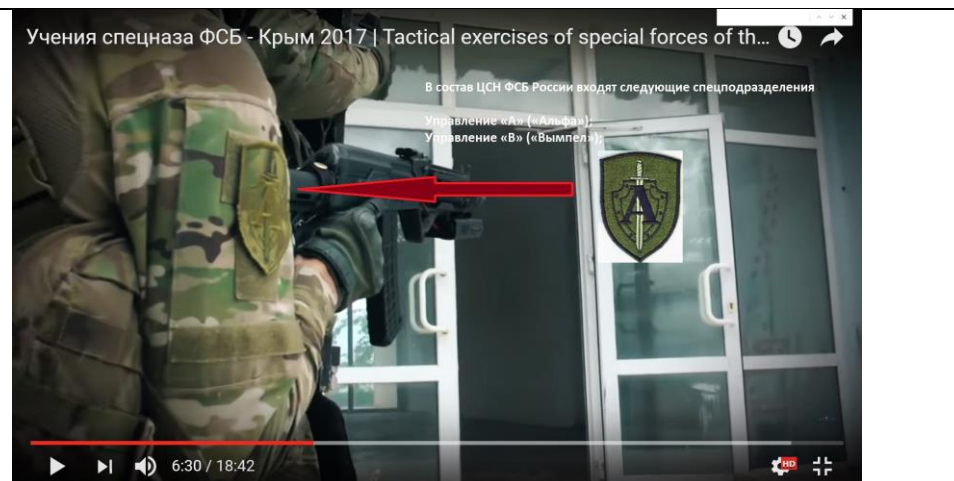


B) Images during the battles in Syria with the participation of special operations forces under the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, May 2017

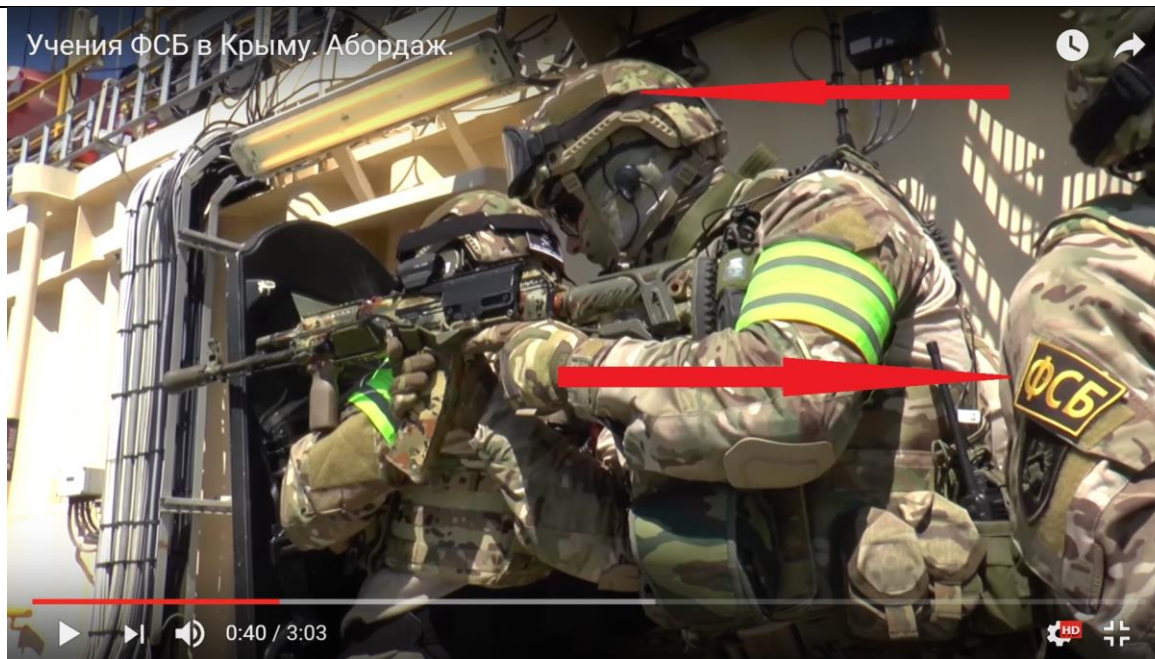




C) Images during the special operations forces applications of the Russian Federal Security Service in Crimea, 23-25 May, 2017



Учения ФСБ в Крыму. Абортж.



NOTES: