



Course: Security management

Theme: Development of security environment, actual security threats for the Czech Republic.

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Introduction

Examinations into security environment, analyses of its state and prognoses of its anticipated development are a persistent point of interest of strategic studies. This is a synthesizing study of a whole series of dynamic and complex processes that mutually influence national behavior with various intensity. Selection of relevant data, their analysis and elaboration of an accurate prognosis are extremely important from the point of view of national security maintenance and enhancement and belong to priority areas within strategic studies.

1. General Characteristics and territorial definition of Security Environment

Security environment is an external environment affecting national security policy. It can be seen as an area where national interests are implemented and where these face interests of other actors within the system of international relations and where those processes take place substantially influencing the level of national security.

Development in this environment is suggestible by the reference object (national state) on a limited scale and depending on its potential. Compared with the environment inside fully sovereign countries, the security environment **is more unknown** and possibilities to control it are more limited. Basically, its nature is influenced by the anarchic system of international relations where any supranational sovereign power absents to determine and effectively enforce “rules” and so to regulate behaviour of actors within this system. To a great extent, security environment is therefore an **uncertainty environment**.

Territorial Definition of Security Environment

From the territorial point of view, security environment of the Czech Republic can be classified into several levels, depending on importance of events occurring here and directly or implicitly affecting our national security situation. Each of these levels has its territorial and dynamic dimensions which describe their geographically determinable scope and extent of the Czech Republic influence on developments in this area:

Immediate security environment includes mainly neighboring countries (Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Poland) and possibly their neighbors, regarding certain probability of a distribution of possible crisis situation, and regional integrating, political and economical formations (Visegrad Group, Central European Initiative, CEFTA etc.). To some extent, developments in the immediate security environment are suggestible individually by the Czech Republic foreign policy and it is possible for our nation to intervene effectively using diplomatic, economic (either through providing conveniences or through sanctions) or military measures.

Close security environment includes European countries and large integration economic and security formations (European Union, NATO, Western European Union etc.).

Developments here are suggestible by the Czech Republic just in certain, substantially limited scope depending on nature and importance of each particular event. In addition, this is usually possible only implicitly, indirectly, i.e. in a form of participation (engagement) of the Czech Republic in discussions dealing with each particular matter within European international organizations (OSCE, NATO, EU), less frequently then through bilateral or other negotiations and relationships.

Wide security environment includes main areas of interests of world and European powers (e.g. strategic raw material bases, communication routes etc.) and basically, developments here cannot be influenced by the Czech Republic or just to a very limited extent, i.e. usually only in a form of the Czech Republic participation (engagement) in discussions dealing with particular matters within global international organizations (UN).

2. Prediction New Security Environment

New Security Environment

The term “New Security Environment” has emerged in the 90’s, used as a way how to distinguish the recent situation and the situation during the Cold War and world bipolarity. Following characteristics are considered to be significant for this (then) new security environment

Minimization of the risk of a global conflict occurrence between the West and East given by the Warsaw Pact dissolution (June 30th, 1991), the Soviet Union disintegration (December 12th, 1991) and a gradual factual extinction of the Eastern bloc. Simultaneously with the disintegration of the eastern part of the European continent, new contractual relations have been established with the West forming mutual relations both in political and military sphere. E.g. Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (November 19th, 1990), Charter of Paris for a New Europe (November 11th, 1990) have been signed, i.a. declaring the end of any hostility between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, treaties START I and START II (1991, 1992) have been ratified etc.

In connection with the decline of the Soviet Union influence, constitutional arrangement changed in many Central and Eastern European countries (Germany unification, split of the Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia) which definitely changed geopolitical situation in this part of the continent.

Decrease of the probability of any aggression among nations. The Warsaw Pact disintegration has substantially decreased the risk of a global conflict. Superpowers have started to focus more on solution of domestic issues and primarily the Russian Federation, as the Soviet Union successor has lost its influence on developments in former areas of the Soviet Union interests. The easement of the fixed bipolar world arrangement has enabled a reactivation of long-term tensions in many countries and caused an eruption of intrastate conflicts, mainly in Southeastern Europe and in a number of African countries.

The 90’s were primarily the period when new national states have been established. Their existence has been caused by an emancipation of so far dependent ethnical groups.

3. Actual Security Threats for the Czech Republic

Analysis of the security environment in which the Czech Republic finds itself can identify specific threats to national security.

As a responsible member of international organizations, the Czech Republic also numbers among relevant security threats those which have no direct impact on its own security, but do threaten its allies.

Terrorism

The threat of terrorism as a method for the violent pursuit of political objectives remains high. A characteristic feature is the existence of a supranational network of loosely affiliated groups, which, even in the absence of a unified command, share an ideology, objectives and plans to achieve them, as well as funding and information. They are capable of directly threatening human life and health, and also critical infrastructure)

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Certain state and non-state actors are openly or covertly seeking to obtain weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Such proliferation could have major consequences for security in the Euro-Atlantic area. A specific threat is the possible use of ballistic missiles and cruise missiles carrying conventional or non-conventional warheads. The ability of these weapons to strike the territory of the Czech Republic or its Allies from a great distance places major demands on active and passive counter-measures.

Cyber attacks

Growing dependence on information and communications technologies increases the vulnerability of the state and its citizens to cyber-attacks. These attacks could constitute a new form of warfare or may have criminal or terrorist motivations, and could be used to destabilise society. Leaks of strategic data and the hacking of the information systems of state institutions and strategic enterprises serving the basic functions of the state could threaten the Czech Republic's strategic interests.

Instability and regional conflicts in and around the Euro-Atlantic area

Unresolved conflicts, with all their negative consequences, could have a direct or indirect impact on the security of the Czech Republic. Unresolved disputes of an ethnic, territorial or political and economic nature have the potential to turn into armed conflicts or to tempt certain states to build spheres of influence and also to weaken the mechanisms of cooperative security and political and legal commitments in the field of European security.

Negative aspects of international migration

One particularly negative phenomenon is illegal migration, together with its possible consequences, such as links to organised crime. The inadequate integration of immigrants could weaken the positive benefits of legal migration for the cultural, political and economic development of society. This can be a source of social tension, resulting, for example, in the unwanted radicalisation of members of immigrant communities.

Organised crime and corruption

Organised crime is spreading in the current security environment, extending beyond national borders through business and personal relationships. Criminal networks are increasingly able to disrupt the institutions and values of states run under the rule of law, infiltrate government bodies and threaten the security of citizens. A common vehicle for this is corruption. Organised crime, in tandem with corruption practices, can take on the form of networks of influence, clientelism or corruption and undermine the very foundations of society. This could result in the loss of citizen's trust in the honesty and impartiality of public institutions, the distortion of market links, economic decline and destabilisation of the state. Moreover, the hazy boundary between political and criminal motivation fuelled by corruption often leads to the forging of links between organised crime structures and terrorist networks.

Threats to the operation of critical infrastructure

Critical infrastructure is a key system of components, the disruption or inoperability of which would have a serious impact on the security of the state, the availability of basic vital needs for the population and on the economy. In view of the high degree of mutual dependency between individual branches, critical infrastructure is exposed to a composite threat comprising natural, technological and asymmetric elements. In particular, the operational capability of energy infrastructure is at risk of both political pressures and threats with a criminal undertone. One example of such threats is the politically motivated manipulation of supplies of strategic raw materials, injections of



foreign capital with potentially dubious origins and risky objectives into the Czech Republic's critical infrastructure, sabotage and economic crime.

Interruptions to supplies of strategic raw materials or energy

In a rapidly changing global world, questions of energy and raw-material security continue to grow in importance.

Competition for access to sources of strategic raw materials, and energy sources in particular, has become an integral part of international relations. The priority is to create capacity for uninterrupted diversified supplies of strategic raw materials and then, in the domestic environment, to pave the way for stable supplies of electricity and the creation of strategic state reserves. Food security and access to sources of drinking water are also growing in importance.

Disasters of natural and anthropogenic provenance and other emergencies

Extreme weather and disasters of natural and anthropogenic origin, besides threatening the safety, lives and health of the population, its property and the environment, could also impact the economy, raw materials and drinking water supplies as well as damage critical infrastructure. The spread of infectious diseases with pandemic potential increases the vulnerability of the population and places greater demands on the protection of public health and the safeguarding of health care provision.

Conclusion

Recognition of the Czech Republic security environment is one of the key factors for a security policy definition. Events of various nature can occur at all levels of security environment directly or intermediately impacting the Czech Republic security.

Some facts are based on developments of security environment or national interests of other countries can be in conflict with national interests of the Czech Republic, can jeopardize it and become a threat to the Czech Republic. Therefore, analyses of security environment and processes arising here are extremely important and still relevant.

Literature:

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2. Security Strategy of the Czech Republic. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Prague, 2011. ISBN 978-80-7441-007-9.
3. FRANK, L. The Czech Republic Security Environment.

Self-assessment tasks:

1. To study history of security environment and trends of its development
2. Acknowledge of Security Strategy of the Czech Republic 2011. *Prague: Ministry of foreign affairs of the Czech republic, ISBN 978-80-7441-005-5.*