

New Tasks of the Hungarian Military Intelligence Office after NATO Accession

Hungarian Military Intelligence at the Turn of the Century

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to discuss the changes in the tasks and roles of the Hungarian Military Intelligence Office (MIO). The introductory paragraphs give a short view of the historical roots of Intelligence, then go on to cite milestones of MIO history, and end with an outline of the organization of the MIO, stressing its strong link to Intelligence gathering and decision making.

The major parts of the article explain first, how the MIO has adapted and responded to the challenges facing modern-era Intelligence agencies; and, second, its proposed restructuring, the result of Hungary's NATO accession. The concluding portion contains a summary of the MIO's goals.

Intelligence gathering is old business

The Old Testament Book of Numbers contains a narrative of description Moses' sending men to gather information about the land of Canaan; i.e. the customs of the people, their military strength, fortresses and towns.

Twenty-three hundred years ago in China, Sun Tzu wrote *The Art of War*, considered a masterpiece of military science. One chapter (of 13) states that "Intelligence is the most important branch of military science, because there can be no effective military planning without ample information about the enemy. Organizing Intelligence is therefore one of the most important preconditions for victory."

In *The History of the Development of War Sciences* (1895), the Hungarian author, Oszkar Barczay, calls Ghenghis Khan the greatest military strategist of all times, primarily because of his excellent Intelligence organization, mentioning also that this "important branch of warfare" was entirely neglected in Europe.

A Short History of Hungarian Military Intelligence

Independent national Intelligence has existed in Hungary since the collapse of the Hapsburg Monarchy in 1918. Between the two world wars, Intelligence was run by a department of the general staff VKF-2 (G-2). Its organization followed similar structures within the Austro-Hungarian Army. Hungarian Intelligence then was largely determined by its first director, Dome Sztójai, a staff colonel, later Prime Minister.

After the Second World War, before the political changes in the late eighties, the 2nd Directorate of the General Staff of the Hungarian People's Army was responsible for military Intelligence.

In 1995, the Parliament approved the CXXV Act about the National Security Services, which defined their legal status and task. Thus the MIO of the Hungarian Republic (MIOHR) was created in its present form.

The law directs that the MIO promote the national security interests of the country through open and covert information gathering. Its main emphasis is placed on the military elements of security policy (military policy, military industry and armed forces). Utmost attention is given to the early warning of emerging crises in the region and to the events in existing conflict zones. Together with other domestic national security services, the MIO participates in uncovering threats to the security of the country; e.g., terrorism and the illegal trade of arms and internationally controlled goods and technologies.

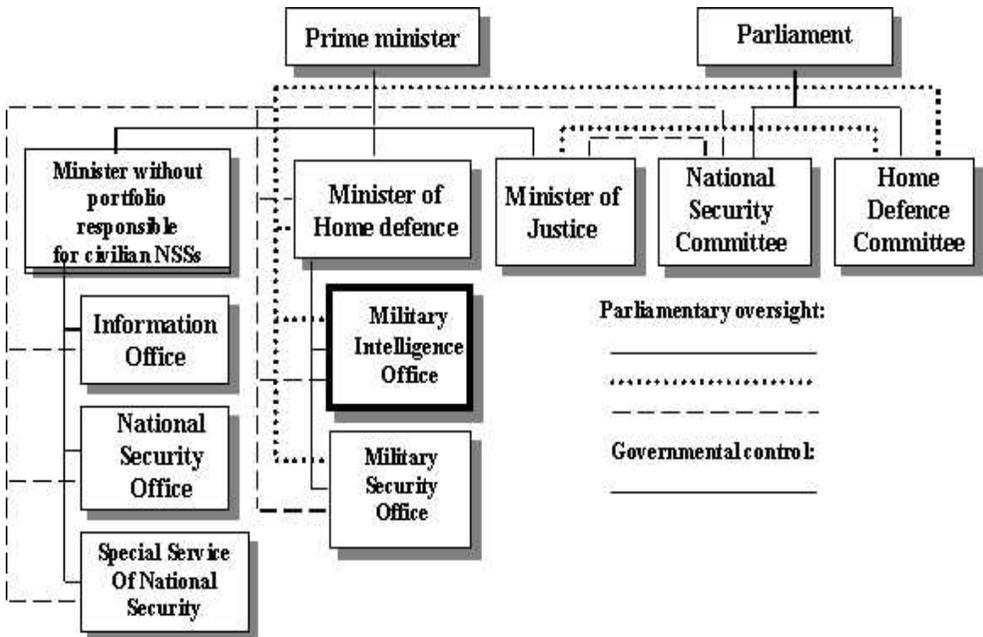
According to the law, the specific tasks of the MIO are as follows:

- Obtaining, analyzing, and disseminating information on foreign targets or of foreign origin, necessary to government decisions, on the military elements of security policy, including military policy, military industry and armed forces;
- uncovering hostile intentions against the Hungarian Republic;
- uncovering the activities of foreign military secret services directed against the sovereignty and defense interests of the Hungarian Republic;
- collecting information about illegal arms trade endangering national security and terror organizations whose activities are directed against the security of the armed forces;
- taking part in uncovering and preventing the illegal trade in

- internationally controlled goods and technologies;
- ensuring availability of information necessary for the strategic-operational planning activities of the Joint Staff of the HHDF;
- protecting Hungarian military organizations, installations and institutions abroad;
- providing national security protection and vetting of personnel under its authority.

In addition to the main tasks defined in the Act, the MIO conducts acquisition, research, development and training in the application of technical devices that are necessary to fulfil its missions and co-operates with other national security services in this field; fulfils its obligations associated with the extraordinary and emergency states as separately defined by the law; within the framework of the national security law, fulfils the tasks designated by the Government and the Minister of Defense; performs tasks of internal security and crime prevention; and ensures professional training for its officers, NCOs, and civilian public officials.

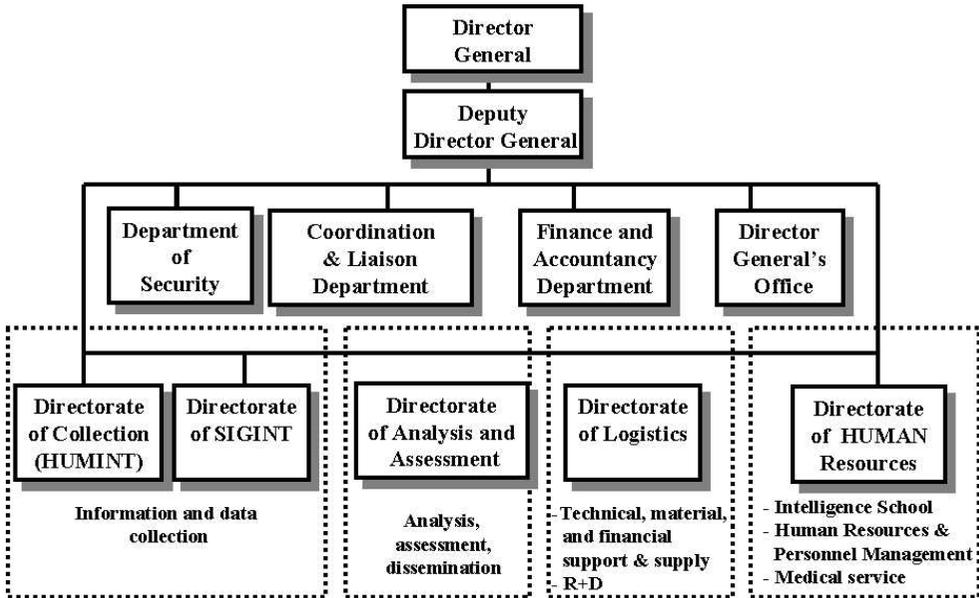
The Government, the parliamentary committees, and the state and military leaders may request special information from the MIO.



Government direction and parliamentary control of the national security services

The MIO of the Hungarian Republic is a military-type national security service; it is a government institution directed by the defense minister and concerned with strategic Intelligence activities.

Two parliamentary committees control the MIO and the MSO. In addition, certain secret information gathering methods require the permission of the Minister of Justice.



Organizational structure of the MIO

The Director General is head of the MIO. The professional and support activities are conducted by directorates. Functionally, the organization is divided into information and data collecting, analysis and assessment, and support groups.

Intelligence activities are conducted in different, but linked phases. The process starts with the formulation of requirements that govern planning, organizing, and directing of collection activities. The data obtained are registered, managed, and processed (evaluated, analyzed and assessed) and then submitted to decision-makers. They formulate new requirements, and the cycle starts again.

Changes in MIO activities

The changes in our activities (continuous from 1990) partly reflect the new developments of the last two decades of the 20th century. What follows is an analysis of four factors (challenges) that shaped our profession and determined its unavoidable reform.

- First are the consequences of the **social changes** that

occurred as a result of the **Information Boom**, which affected Intelligence gathering considerably; for example, the relationship of modern telecommunication (mass media) and Intelligence, its competition as well as its co-operation. Emphasized here are the importance and requirements of minute professional analysis of incoming information.

- Next are the immense and traumatic political changes of the end of the century, which **transformed the relationship between diplomacy and Intelligence**.
- Third is **NATO's new Strategic Concept**, and what it means to the changing roles of Intelligence, especially to transnational risks and peace support operations outside the framework of the V Article defense missions.
- And paralleling the changes in the political and geo-strategic environment is **the revolution in military affairs**, driven mainly by technological innovation, especially information science.

Information is power

A feature of our age for the decision-maker is not the lack of information. Mass communication, the written and electronic press, the new media channels, satellite television and the Internet, all are a challenge to Intelligence. They compete for the attention of the state and military leaders and influence public opinion. Politicians, wrestling with strategic problems, need Intelligence support, including military assessments and long term projections, but this can not be done within the old framework. The content, the medium, the tasks, and the professional nature of Intelligence are in transition. Intelligence is no longer primarily information collection. The flood of information must be harnessed, filtered, and selected. Useful information must be arranged, organized, assessed and tailored to support the decision-makers. The "collectors" are replaced by "finders," "browsers," "surfers," and scientific researchers. This military revolution changes the professional nature, tasks, and methods of Intelligence.

· The most important social challenge is how to handle the ubiquitous "CNN-effect." Intelligence offers accuracy and professional analysis as an alternative to the quantity and sensationalism of the mass media. A new kind of Intelligence is OSINT (open source Intelligence), which is a partial answer to the "CNN-effect"; i.e., the competition of the professional news producers all attempting to gain the favor of the decision makers. This competition is won by Intelligence; because of its professional qualities, it can provide deeper, more reliable, objective, factual, tailored, specialized and processed information than the media, which are less controlled, more sensationalist, more manipulative, and

potentially manipulated. The key phrase is “all source Intelligence”, which is based on evaluated, analyzed, and assessed data, as contrasted to the reports of “single source” correspondents, who provide quick, but at the same time unchecked and unreliable information. The modern situation centers of the Military Intelligence services process a complex of incoming information; immediately, task data collection agencies evaluate and analyze news, register, store, and manage data, and then communicate on secure channels with the customers, informing them in real time, if necessary. These information centers are capable of electronically processing and transmitting written, graphic, voice, photo and/or video data, and thus provide better decision support and almost as rapid news coverage as CNN. And this concerns only “current” Intelligence; other Intelligence disciplines, such as basic research and estimative Intelligence, also support strategic decisions with long term projections, analysis, and assessments.

Multiple and rapid political changes in the last two decades have reshaped the relationship between diplomacy and Intelligence. The result of global and strategic shifts has been an increased **uncertainty** in world affairs. Political decision-making thus becomes an ad hoc reaction to unexpected crisis situations; the main reaction of decision-makers is permanent **surprise**.

In spite of armed forces reductions, the tasks of the Intelligence services are numerous and constantly increasing. The western countries spend 3 to 10 percent of their defense budgets on Intelligence. The US and the UK, in fact, spend more on national security services than on diplomacy. Usually the Ministry of Foreign Affairs co-ordinates the complex tasks related to national security (with the participation of the Defense Ministry), so the link between foreign policy and Intelligence becomes stronger.

The British Strategic Defense Review considers **defense diplomacy** a new, separate task and defines it as the support given to foreign policy by the armed forces (i.e. conflict prevention, confidence building, military co-operation, and development programs). **Confidence building is impossible without reliable information on the other party’s position, capabilities, and intentions, as the main source of distrust is ignorance of the facts.**

The present strategic environment provides conditions for even more distrust. We must be able to manage conflicts and crises, or, better yet, prevent them. The international community recognizes that it needs a bolder approach. Lord Robertson of Britain (now NATO’s Secretary) called the conflict prevention activities of the armed forces “defense diplomacy,” and he said

its purpose was “the demilitarization of thinking.” Although these are primarily diplomatic tasks, and require non-military means, an effective diplomatic campaign also demands current and reliable information, presented in a military context, about the violations of arms control regimes.

- The main element of the new European defense diplomacy is “bridge-building”. Recent conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Chechnya prove that security is not guaranteed on the continent. European countries recognize that their security depends on the stability of the surrounding regions. Consequently, Intelligence now concentrates more on local conflicts and matters affecting regional stability, instead of being preoccupied with “target countries.”

- Defense diplomacy complements classical foreign policy; it possesses a well-organized methodological and organizational framework and has the harmonious co-operation of various ministries. On-site military representation may be necessary, and this may be in the form of a defense attaché office, a liaison group, or a program office. Military attachés play a key part in defense diplomacy, for they can assure that the sending country is aware of the interests of the receiving country. Intelligence is again significant, for the attaché offices (representing the supreme commander (president), the Defense Ministry and the General Staff) are usually run by Intelligence organizations, and for reasons other than tradition.

The complexity of defense diplomacy demands co-ordination between the various ministries - especially with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Co-operation between diplomatic and military representations is assured, for the defense attaché offices usually work within the embassy system, and the defense attaché is the military advisor of the ambassador.

Military diplomacy, run by the MIO, is only a part of the broader defense diplomacy, usually providing information and technical support.

Everybody working in defense affairs abroad is an ambassador of peace and security in the world.

- Defense diplomacy is but one element in NATO’s response to contemporary challenges. After the end of superpower rivalry, the onset of new threats, dangers, risks and challenges obliged the Alliance to participate in preventing crises, and, if they occur, to reduce their negative impact. To support this task, it is imperative to get the facts first, to assess their relationship to allied values, and then evaluate their impact on the interests of the member countries. Allied Intelligence, therefore, faces the task of answering these challenges.

- A key element in **the New Strategic Concept** is the legality and feasibility of the out-of-area, non-article V crisis prevention

operations. There will certainly be a debate on the theoretical aspects and the preconditions of such activities; however, the Alliance cannot wait for the outcome of these debates. The intervention in Yugoslavia happened before the new Strategic Concept was officially adopted. Practice thus overtook theory, and NATO answered the challenge. Operation "Allied Force", besides being a morally justifiable aid to the Albanian minority in Kosovo, was a most severe test of NATO's decision making mechanism, the organization's international acceptance, its credibility, and military-political aptitude.

This operation also subjected Intelligence organizations of the Alliance and its member countries to a severe test. Before the intervention, the situation had to be analyzed, the options uncovered, their impact assessed, and their probable outcome inferred. During operation "Allied Force" we had to support the allied forces directly and indirectly, but we also had to analyze the effects of international public opinion.

The Strategic Concept of April 1999 states that a new Euro-Atlantic security structure is emerging with NATO at its center. This is shown by its handling of the Balkan crisis and of new, complex security risks, such as oppression, ethnic conflicts, economic decline, the collapse of political regimes, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is notable that the Concept mentions mainly those dangers, in which case it is difficult to differentiate between internal and external political implications. This phenomenon reinforces the necessity of intervention and questions the absolute supremacy of the principle of national sovereignty and the spirit of non-intervention. The Concept underlines collective defense as the main task of the Alliance, but it adds the responsibility of defending common security interests in an unpredictably changing environment.

It follows, then, that the NATO countries' Intelligence organizations must preserve their traditional capabilities and tasks; they should not, however, concentrate only on military threats presented by selected target countries. They should emphasize more the events in crisis regions, determining the causes of conflicts, warning of their outbreak, assessing the legal and political conditions of intervention, and describing the risk and resource requirements for a peace support operation (peacekeeping, peace-making, peace-enforcing). Thus Military Intelligence not only serves to support NATO defense operations, but can also support intervention.

This transition from own area defense to crisis management and conflict prevention in the neighboring regions means a paradigm change for Intelligence. So instead of concentrating on the military capabilities of potentially hostile countries, the emphasis should now shift to the complex interplay of economic, political,

and social factors that lead to regional instability and its spillover effects.

Effects of NATO accession

Hungary's NATO accession expanded the geographical boundaries of its military Intelligence; it also limited its scope, in a certain sense. The shift is from its immediate surroundings to the European crisis zones and to the developments just on (or outside) the periphery of the continent. This means that Hungary has moved from a narrowly interpreted national interest to a comprehensive approach more in line with the allied requirements and our own. Unfortunately, one European crisis zone borders on Hungary's south. Thus, the meeting of allied and national interests is obvious to Hungary.

Although Hungary is a politically and economically open country, it is vulnerable to the ups and downs of global politics and economy, not only in the Euro-Atlantic area, but also in far away continents. It hopes to promote relations with Asia, South America, and others. But this does not mean that Hungarian Military Intelligence will also have global outreach (although in an era of globalization, it must be familiar with these other regions). NATO, being a Euro-Atlantic organization, does not require that its member states conduct Intelligence activities outside the regions described in the Strategic Concept. The direction of Intelligence is a sovereign matter for each country and depends on its national interests and capabilities.

Alliance security should also be considered in a global context. NATO may be affected by risks that have no territorial boundaries or national limits; terrorism, for example, or organized crime, the disruption of critical materials and energy, and mass migration of war refugees. Intelligence thus must deal with transnational risks of a non-military nature which cannot be handled by military means. But if solving such problems is delayed, crises occur which are usually solved by military means. Russia's Chechnya war is the benchmark example.

Military Intelligence uncovers and reports all developments, analyzes every tendency related to the proliferation, export, and import of weapons of mass destruction, the delivery means, and other high-tech weapons and dual-use technologies (e.g., high-end computers used for military purposes). Also of interest are violations of international arms control regimes and other agreements controlling technology flow from country to country.

Military affairs (RMA) is also changing, prompted mainly by new technologies: i.e., genetic modifications, nano-technology, and robotics. The military and civilian applications of these technologies are risky, because they are self-replicating; small groups, even individuals, can access and use them for terrorist purposes,

with catastrophic consequences. The biggest trend, however, is the spread of technologies, which can lead to information dominance.

Intelligence cannot be conducted as in Biblical times, with Moses sending agents to a likely theatre of future operations; for there are new, technological aids to Intelligence, without which the services of this and the next century could fail.

SIGINT uses electromagnetic spectrum to gain information. COMINT, a part of SIGINT, eavesdrops communications signals; ELINT captures and analyzes unintentional electromagnetic emissions, such as the electromagnetic radiation of computers. IMINT uses pictures derived from optical, infrared, radar, and "spacial" mapping technologies, mounted on land, sea, air, or space vehicles. MASINT studies the physical properties of weapons and other military technology; TELINT (telemetric Intelligence) does the same from long distance, detecting and analyzing nuclear blasts or missile lift-offs. These Intelligence disciplines are characterized by a high degree of automation, computerization, direct integration with command and control systems, and electronic communications. This enables commanders to view the battle as if it were "televised news coverage." One application, for example, is automatic indirect fire control, using data transmitted from unmanned aerial vehicles (reconnaissance drones).

By the reform, Hungary can obtain parity with other NATO countries' Intelligence organizations, but it should not be a "copycat" organization. In fact, it should strive to "overtake" some of its model examples. So what defines national security services in the NATO countries?

In most of the member states, there is more than one service; The structure of the system is usually based on subordination, and not on activity profiles (the divisions are mainly along the civilian-military line, not along the difference between Intelligence and counter-Intelligence).

Military Intelligence/counter-Intelligence is always separate, and directed by the defense ministers;

Relationship between the various services is characterized by a "community" approach; that is, co-ordination, cooperation, and task sharing. In most countries, co-ordination and advisory bodies play an important part in the system;

Depending on the constitutional provisions, the services are controlled by the prime minister or his/her designate; sometimes, the head of state has special responsibilities;

Parliamentary oversight is usually strong;

Oversight by civilian organizations is rare and very limited.

When national services are run by the same principles, they can more easily co-operate within the Alliance, understanding,

however, that NATO has no “spying” organization or Intelligence collection agencies. But the Alliance does have an integrated Intelligence system. How is that possible? This is only possible because the national Intelligence communities have combined into a broader, allied Intelligence community, and are voluntarily associated with each other on a multilateral basis.

A respected friend and colleague, General Gerard Bastiaans (former chief at SHAPE Intelligence Division) said that the services form a “cartel”, an informal association to regulate key intelligence matters and elements among themselves. Such co-operation is based on mutual trust; its strength is the sharing of evaluated information and assessments. Contributing to this system benefits all nations; for this is the way to influence allied decisions and build a consensus view on the challenges facing the Alliance.

The Strategic Review aims at reshaping the armed forces, making them smaller and cheaper, but also more effective and more professional. Hungary shares these goals. The products of MIO are of a high importance to the leadership of Hungary, for a rational distribution of the resources is based on long term vision and the knowledge of probable risks. Therefore, the MIO intends to modernize, using technological advances, improving bilateral and multilateral co-operation, and achieving comprehensive integration within the Intelligence system. Giving quality work, the MIO can prove indispensable to the decision-maker.

Creating an **Intelligence Community** is a future imperative. This informal body could eliminate the overlapping of tasks among the different national security services; it would also do away with possible rivalries among the services, would result in cost-effective sharing of tasks and responsibilities, harmonize information exchange and flow, and create a high-level discussion forum for the heads (or representatives) of the services. In this decision support committee, run by the government, there would certainly be a prominent place for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the major information-gathering-and-providing government organization.

Budapest, July 2000.