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NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA FOR PARTICIPATION OF SERBIAN ARMED FORCES IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Resume

Peacekeeping operations are one of the instruments for resolving crises in the world and preventing armed conflicts that threaten global peace and security. This article argues that the participation of the Serbian Armed Forces in UN missions contributed to peacekeeping in the world and produced positive benefits for the country. Namely, the Serbian Armed Forces inherits the tradition of many years of participation in UN and EU peacekeeping operations. This article first provides an overview of the most important contributions of the Republic of Serbia to peacekeeping operations, focusing on the important role that this activity plays in the achievement of foreign policy goals, national development and international relations. This is followed by the presentation of national legislation that regulates the Serbian Armed Forces participation in peacekeeping operations. Therefore, peacekeeping operations are recognized as a type of multilateral mechanism for achieving cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and the UN/EU and a contribution to building trust and the position of a reliable partner in international relations. The theory of international relations that explains such

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actions of states is the realism theory. In accordance with realists school of thought, state national interests for participation in peacekeeping operations are military security issues, national and strategic interests as well as economic interests, and increased credibility and power of states in international relations. Starting from the fact that global security is comprehensive and indivisible, states are even more interested in participating in peacekeeping operations and perceive it as their national interests and an element of foreign and security policy. This is the initial thesis from which the authors base their analysis presented in the paper.

Keywords: Republic of Serbia, Serbian Armed Forces, peacekeeping operations, international relations, realism theory, national interests

INTRODUCTION

In the post-Cold War era, there have been a series of crises and armed conflicts that threaten international security and world peace. The international community and international organizations need to intervene in most of them conducting peacekeeping operations. Consequently, in the modern world peacekeeping operations are becoming an instrument necessary for resolving crises in the world and preventing armed conflicts of regional and global character that are a threat to global peace and security, where, in addition to states, many non-state actors are present in international relations. Throughout recent history, peacekeeping operations have evolved and their changes have been largely tied to historical periods of current international relations.

As Professor Dragan R. Simić observes, there is a “surprisingly high agreement of authors from different schools of international relations” (2002, 45), that the keeping of peace is in third place in terms of the importance of goals whose achievement is more difficult, regardless of the international system, order or international society. Also, nations must understand that maintaining world peace takes precedence over their own ideological or political views.

Participation in peacekeeping operations is actually at the center of the concept that global security is comprehensive and indivisible (Cronin 2010). The paper starts with the interpretation of realism theorists about the participation of states in peacekeeping operations. Peacekeeping operations based on appropriate legal bases are possible

modalities for the realization and protection of the national and security interests of participating country. Neack argues that the “realist explanation of state participation in UN peacekeeping operations is that states do whatever they can, given their power resources, to protect and preserve their national interests” (Neack 1995). As Findlay (1996, 8) put it: states participate in peacekeeping operations because it is “decidedly in their national security interests.” According to this realist explanation, “participation in peacekeeping is thus understood primarily as an instrument to foster states’ national interests” (Hutabarat 2014, 190). According to Pugh (2004, 50-51), “peacekeeping enables governments of contributing states to increase their international clout or to subsidize the maintenance of their armed forces”. In the realist perspective, state national interests for participation in peacekeeping operations are not only defined in terms of military security issues, but also in terms of economic interests, as well as increased credibility and power in international relations.

In research conducted by Ishizuka (2003) it is claimed that “states have been positively and willingly participating in peacekeeping”, because “they have been attracted by the benefits from peacekeeping which enhance their national interests”. Consequently, Ishizuka concludes, that “states maintain their peacekeeping policy consistently as far as their national interests are valid and significant”. Meiske and Ruggeri (2017) are quite clear when they claim that countries see mission participation as ‘a tool of foreign policy’ to pursue national interests in the international arena.

As emphasized global security is comprehensive and indivisible, states are even more interested in participating in peacekeeping operations and perceive it as their national interests and an element of foreign and security policy. This is the initial thesis from which the authors base their analysis presented in the paper.

Peacekeeping is a technique designed to maintain peace, no matter how fragile, where the fighting has ended, as well as to assist in the implementation of agreements reached with the participation of peacekeepers. Over the years, peacekeeping has evolved from a primarily military model of monitoring ceasefires and segregation of forces after interstate wars, to incorporating a complex model composed of many elements – military, police and civilians – working together to help torn-apart countries create conditions for sustainable and lasting peace (UN 2008).

UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

UN peacekeeping began in 1948 when the Security Council approved the deployment of UN military observers in the Middle East to monitor the ceasefire agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors – an operation known as the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). Since then, the UN has conducted 71 peacekeeping operations (missions) in various environments and conditions. Over the past 75 years, more than 2 million personnel, from 125 countries, have participated in UN peacekeeping operations. The UN is currently conducting a total of 11 peacekeeping operations on three continents (United Nations Peacekeeping 2023).

According to the UN, today's multidimensional peacekeeping operations serve “not only to maintain peace and security, but also to facilitate the political process, protect civilians, assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants; support the organization of elections, protect and promote human rights and assist in restoring the rule of law” (UN Peacekeeping n. d.).

Previous experiences have also shown that in order for UN peacekeeping operations to succeed, they must be accepted as legitimate and credible, especially in the eyes of the local population. The mission achieves international legitimacy by having the approval of the UN Security Council, but also by the way it is implemented on the ground, given that the strength, discipline and honesty of peacekeepers, as well as the prudence with which they use force, respect for local customs, institutions and laws as well as the decency with which they treat the local population, can have a direct impact on the perception of its legitimacy.

Serbian Armed Forces in Peacekeeping Operations

The contribution of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations is based on the security and defense needs and interests expressed in the National Security Strategy, the Defense Strategy and other doctrinal and legal acts.

The missions of the Serbian Armed Forces (SAF) are:

“Defense of the Republic of Serbia from external armed threats;
Participation in building and preserving peace in the region and the world and

Support to civilian authorities in combating security threats”
(SAF n. d. a).

As defined in the Defense Strategy, the second mission is participation in building and preserving peace in the region and the world is realized through participation in international military cooperation and participation in peacekeeping operations (Defense Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2019; Ignjatijević 2018). Furthermore, the Defense Strategy states: “by participating in multinational operations under the mandate of the United Nations and the European Union crisis management operations, the Republic of Serbia contributes to fulfilling the function of the defence of the country, strengthening its position in international relations and protecting the universal values of the international order, such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law.” (Defense Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2019, 17).

Units of the Serbian Armed Forces conduct peacekeeping operations and missions within the peacekeeping force, under the auspices of the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Serbian Armed Forces conduct peacekeeping operations in accordance with the Law on Engagement of the Serbian Armed Forces and other Defence Forces in Multinational Operations outside the borders of Republic of Serbia (2009). During the operation, the national contingent comes under the operational control of the peacekeeping command.

Depending on the mission’s mandate, parts of the Serbian Armed Forces may participate in the following peacekeeping operations:

- Peacekeeping, maintenance and peacekeeping operations;
- Conflict prevention and peace-building operations;
- Joint defense operations, in accordance with the decisions of the competent state bodies;
- Assistance operations to address the consequences of international terrorism and large-scale terrorist attacks, and
- Humanitarian operations.

Depending on the UN mandate, peacekeeping operations can be combat or non-combat, defined as “activities undertaken within the system of collective security and collective defense, in accordance with international law and ratified international agreements”, and participation in them is the second mission of the Serbian Armed Forces, which is based on the established security and defense needs and interests of the Republic of Serbia.

The Serbian Armed Forces has a Peacekeeping Operations Centre which conducts “training, selection, equipping, preparation and

deployment of individuals and units”, from the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces to multinational operations outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia (Peacekeeping Operations Centre, SAF, 2022).

Normative and legal basis for participation of SAF in peacekeeping operations

The manner of realization and protection of national interests is defined by strategic documents, in which most countries of the world similarly define challenges, risks and threats, with certain specifics characteristic of individual cases. States are establishing legal frameworks to send members of the military to peacekeeping operations abroad, as part of security, foreign and defense policy. The normative and legal basis for the engagement of the SAF in peacekeeping operations is defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Serbia, the National Security Strategy, the Defense Strategy, the Law on Defense, the Law on the Serbian Armed Forces and the Law on Engagement of the Serbian Armed Forces and other Defence Forces in Multinational Operations outside the borders of Republic of Serbia.

Use of the Armed Forces outside the borders, Article 140, of the Constitution stipulates that the Serbian Armed Forces “may be used outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia only upon the decision of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia” (Constitution of The Republic of Serbia 2006).

Article 2 of the Law on the Serbian Armed Forces prescribes that the “use of the Serbian Armed Forces outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia shall be stipulated by law” (Law on the Serbian Armed Forces 2007, 2009).

The Law on Defense (Art. 5, para. 4) states that the country’s defense is achieved through participation in peacekeeping operations (in multinational operations). Article 11, paragraph 9 stipulates that the President of the Republic decides on sending the Serbian Armed Forces to peacekeeping operations (in multinational operations) outside the country’s borders based on the decision of the National Assembly (The Law on Defense 2009).

Also, Law on Defense in Article 9 defines that The National Assembly enacts “laws and other general acts in the field of defense, exercises democratic and civilian control of the Serbian Armed Forces”, and among others, “decides on the use of the Serbian Armed Forces outside the territory of the Republic of Serbia” (The Law on Defense 2009).

The President of the Republic according to Law on Defense, Article 11, decides, in accordance with the law, on sending members of the Serbian Armed Forces to multinational operations, based on the decision of the National Assembly (The Law on Defense 2009). The Government proposes to the National Assembly the adoption of a law on the ratification of international agreements in the field of defense and military cooperation.

According to the Law on the Use of the Serbian Armed Forces and Other Defense Forces in Peacekeeping Operations outside the Republic of Serbia, the use of the Serbian Armed Forces and other Defense Forces in peacekeeping operations is decided on the basis of the Annual Plan, which determines their missions and tasks. The National Assembly considers and adopts the Annual plan for the use of the Serbian Armed Forces for the execution of planned peacekeeping operations in the current year. Based on the Annual Plan, the National Assembly decides on the participation of members of the SAF in peacekeeping operations, as well as on the extension of the time of their engagement and withdrawal from the peacekeeping operation.

The President of the Republic, on the basis of the decision of the National Assembly on participation, in accordance with the law, decides on sending members of the Serbian Armed Forces to multinational operations, at the proposal of the Minister of Defense.

According to the Law on Engagement of the Serbian Armed Forces and Other Defence forces in Multinational Operations outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia, Article 12, “the SAF and other defence forces’ personnel only, having completed training in the country or abroad; trained for specific tasks and in possession of relevant training certificates for participation in multinational operations, may be deployed in multinational operations” (Law on Engagement of the Serbian Armed Forces and other Defence Forces in Multinational Operations outside the borders of Republic of Serbia, 2009).

For each participation of members of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations, the Minister of Defense shall issue Rules of Engagement. It also concludes technical agreements which regulate the conditions for the engagement of members of the armed forces within peacekeeping operations, in order to execute the concluded international agreement on the basis of which a specific peacekeeping operation is conducted. Members of the Serbian Armed Forces may not be continuously in a peacekeeping operation for more than a year, except in case

of health impediment to return to the country, for technical reasons or at the request of the commander of the forces in a peacekeeping operation. The costs of preparation, participation and return of members of the Serbian Armed Forces and other defense forces from peacekeeping operations are financed from the budget of the Republic of Serbia.

As Tibor Szilvgyi, very precisely states: “The Serbian Armed Forces are allowed to stay abroad only in the framework of multinational missions, according to a UN Security Resolution, international obligations and the related decision of the Serbian Parliament, in harmony with the Serbian interests” (2020, 100-128).

In this section a brief overview of the normative and legal base is outlined, actually Serbia’s commitment to participating in multinational operations through strategic documents, constitutional and legislative framework, and international agreements. The Table 1. shows a comparative analysis of the legal and strategic framework for participation in peacekeeping operations of countries in Southeast Europe (Parliamentary Assembly of BiH, 2011). It can be seen that Serbia is leading in the normative organization of this area.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the legal and strategic framework for participation in peacekeeping operations of countries in Southeast Europe

Country	Constitution	Law on Defense	Law on the Armed Forces	Law on the Use of the Armed Forces and Other Defense Forces in Peacekeeping Operations
Serbia	+	+	+	+
Albania	+			+
Bulgaria	+	+		
Romania	+			+
Hungary	+	+	+	
Slovenia	+	+	+	
Croatia	+	+		+
Bosnia and Herzegovina		+		+
Montenegro	+	+		+
North Macedonia	+	+		
Moldova	+	+		+

INTEREST OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA FOR PARTICIPATING IN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

Republic of Serbia as well as “countries around the world continue to see UN peacekeeping operations as central to maintaining the collective security system established by the UN Charter” (Fang, Li and Sun 2018). Actually, participation of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations „in the function of meeting foreign policy objectives is a very important activity, having in mind the fact that the Republic of Serbia affirms cooperative security concept. In such context, guided primarily by its national interests and capacities, our country invests great efforts in order to contribute to keeping peace and stability in the world” (Zotović 2018, 73).

On the other hand, the Republic of Serbia, like other countries that actively contribute to world peace, is aware of the facts and has built capacities that enable specialized training and education for its peacekeeping personnel.

Also, Serbia supports the institutional reforms in UN peacekeeping and assists in increasing the effectiveness of peacekeeping forces. Consequently, Serbia is committed to maintaining and strengthening the quality and sustainability of peacekeeping missions.

Through many years of participation in UN and EU missions, peacekeeping operations have been recognized as a form of multilateral mechanism for achieving cooperation between the Republic of Serbia and UN/EU and a contribution to building trust and the position of a reliable partner in international relations. It is necessary to add to that the contribution to preserving peace and stability in the region and the world, and the need to actively increase the possibility of the Republic of Serbia’s influence on the actions of international relations entities for nonviolent resolution of important international issues important for national interests.

In accordance with the National Security Strategy through the participation of military and civilian capacities in multinational operations and missions led by the United Nations, European Union and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Republic of Serbia will contribute “to maintenance of peace and stability in the region and world” (National Security Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2021, 32) and will improve its position as a reliable partner in international relations.

The participation of members of the Serbian Armed Forces in UN and EU peacekeeping operations is an important element of the foreign

policy of the Republic of Serbia, which significantly contributes to the favorable position of the Republic of Serbia in international relations. By engaging members of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations under the mandate of the European Union, within CSDP, the Republic of Serbia integrates into this important pillar of the EU. In this way, the Republic of Serbia is strengthening its security capacities towards EU membership. The participation of members of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations under the mandate of the EU has a very favorable influence on the overall process of European integration.

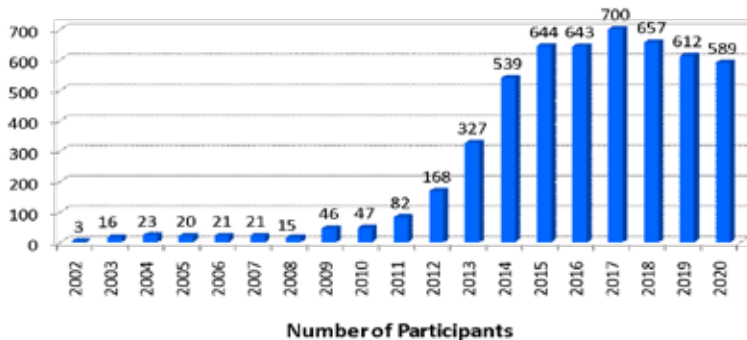
In this regard, the Serbian Armed Forces contribute to the defense and protection of national interests by building the necessary capabilities and capacities to participate in peacekeeping operations, which improves relations with collective security institutions in order to achieve world peace and develop a favorable security environment.

Namely, “since it considers the heritage of SFRY as its own, Serbia has had a long tradition of participation in the UN peacekeeping missions” (Milošević 2014, 165-183). It can be said that the Republic of Serbia has a long tradition of participation in achieving peace and security in the world, if we take into account that it is the legal successor of SFRY, which participated with its army (Yugoslav People’s Army – JNA) from the very beginning of UN engagement in peacekeeping missions.

After a decade of cessation of engagement caused by the conflicts on the territory of the former SFRY, participation in UN peacekeeping operations was renewed in 2002, when members of the Armed Forces were engaged in 16 peacekeeping operations in the world, in ten UN missions and six EU missions.

Number of participants of SAF in peacekeeping operations (Peacekeeping Operations Centre 2022) is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Number of participants of SAF in peacekeeping operations



The Peacekeeping Operations Centre is a unit directly subordinated to the Operations Directorate (J-3) of the Serbian Armed Forces General Staff. The Peacekeeping Operations Centre intended for selection, training, equipping, preparation and deployment of individuals and units from the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces to multinational operations outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia.

Also, tasks of the Peacekeeping Operations Centre include coordination and control of forces deployed in multinational operations and planning and organization of modern courses, seminars and lectures in multinational operations for SAF and foreign armies (Peacekeeping Operations Centre 2022).¹

Currently, the Serbian Armed Forces are engaging 295 of its members in 8 peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the United Nations (4 missions), 3 under the European Union (EU) and one mission in Multinational Force and Observers (Peacekeeping Operations Centre 2023).

From the above, it can be concluded that 2009 was crucial because then the foundations were laid for new legal frameworks in defining the participation of the Republic of Serbia in peacekeeping operations, which affected the progressive increase in the engagement of members of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations.

The Serbian Armed Forces is sending its largest contingent of forces to the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon (Jukić, Slavković and Dumić 2017, 28-42). The Serbian Armed Forces has been participating in the UNIFIL peacekeeping operation since December 21, 2010, with staff officers. Since November 2012, UNIFIL has engaged an infantry platoon with a logistical support element, composed of 41 members of the Serbian Armed Forces, which was replaced in November 2013 by an infantry company composed of 130 members of the Serbian Armed Forces. Since December 2014, the contingent of the Serbian Armed Forces has been increased by hiring another platoon of 33 members. Last year 177 members of the Serbian Armed Forces were engaged in UNIFIL. Serbian Armed Forces contribution to UNIFIL includes a force protection platoon, an infantry company serving as an independent unit within the Spanish Battalion, staff officers at the Mission headquarters and a group of specialists tasked with providing support to our contingent (Ministry of Defence 2015).

Members of the Serbian Armed Forces have repeatedly received official recognition from the mission management for their demonstrated

¹ More details about Peacekeeping Operations Centre available at: (SAF n. d. b).

professionalism and high level of training in the execution of tasks, which often resulted in their inclusion in higher levels of mission management (Zotović 2018, 74-75). In July 2021 Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix thanked Serbia for its strong support to United Nations Peacekeeping. He particularly highlighted the engagement and establishment of the hospital by the Serbian Armed Forces, which according to him, “this has strengthened UN peacekeeping’s capacity to ensure that its personnel are able to receive the best possible medical care.” To date, “the Serbian medical unit has provided medical support to thousands of patients, including treating cases of COVID-19. In addition to aiding UN personnel, the unit has also conducted medical outreach to the local community” (United Nations, Serbia in PKO 2022).

Participation in peacekeeping operations, in addition to Serbia’s evident contribution to peace and security in the world, has a direct impact on training SAF in part of the missions and tasks assigned to it in Defense strategy. Further participating in peacekeeping operations, neutral states gain the necessary experience on the nature of modern security threats and ways to counter them, and gain experience for the implementation of deterrence strategies (Blagojević 2022).

The certain authors especially emphasize the humanitarian aspect of the participation of the Republic of Serbia in peacekeeping operations, in accordance with the humanity inherited by the Serbian Armed Forces (Žižić-Borjanović, Vučković-Dekić 2009, 253-254). This aspect of participation in peacekeeping operations has been developed by the Serbian Armed Forces as a capability in the past two decades and has been very successfully applied in operations where it has been engaged.

The Republic of Serbia has also played a crucial role in UN peacekeeping reform efforts. In particular, Serbia has been a vocal advocate for the modernization of peacekeeping operations to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. Serbia has also been actively involved in promoting the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, which recognizes the critical role of women in all aspects of peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities (NAP for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 2017–2020). In fact, as an example, the Chief of the Peacekeeping Operations Centre is a woman Colonel PhD Mirjana Milenković. “A total of 5,500 members of the Serbian Armed Forces are engaged in ten UN missions and six EU missions, of which 12 percent are female, which is an indication that the Serbian Armed Forces respect gender aspects

according to valid UN resolutions”,² Milenković said at the 20th anniversary of the Serbian Armed Forces participation in peacekeeping operations (Ministry of Defence 2022).

In future Serbian Armed Forces have the potential to reach UN requirements with the River Flotilla as a pivot for the participation in UN riverine missions. Serbian Military Academy has opportunities for education and training military riverine units for participation in the United Nations peacekeeping operations (Radojević, Šoškić and Radić, 2017, 371–376).

CONCLUSION

An overview of the engagement of members of the Serbian Armed Forces in peacekeeping operations under the mandate of the UN and the EU clearly shows the role of the Serbian defense system in the realization of foreign policy goals. The Republic of Serbia is committed to building and preserving peace in the region and the world, EU integrations, but also the construction and strengthening of military neutrality. In this regard, the Serbian Armed Forces contribute to the defense and protection of national interests by building the necessary capabilities and capacities to participate in peacekeeping operations, which improves relations with collective security institutions in order to achieve world peace and develop a favorable security environment.

Participation the Republic of Serbia “in missions under the EU umbrella could contribute to the increased Serbian credibility within the European community and, therefore, contribute to the success of the Serbian National Security Strategy” (Chun and Lee 2016, 213-232). Therefore, as a non-member state with full membership aspirations Serbia can participate in EU missions even before accession and in that way contribute to an increase in its credibility during the negotiation process.

The issue of security has always been highlighted as a priority for each society. A unique instrument presented through peacekeeping operations was adopted as a possible solution to security issues. In the newly created and present conditions, their importance increases, while national interests are being realized through a single functional organization of states, thus creating preconditions for effective confrontation with modern challenges, risks and threats that do not recognize state borders. Peacekeeping operations are linked to the system of collective

² More details about the event available at: (Ministry of Defence 2022).

security as an instrument necessary for resolving crises in the world and preventing armed conflicts of regional and global character that are a threat to global peace and security, where many non-state actors are present in international relations.

Relations in the world, emphasizing the issues of global and collective security, have imposed as a priority participation in peacekeeping operations in order to contribute to collective security, participation in the creation and maintenance of peace. In that way, the Republic of Serbia also recognized the possibility of engaging the capacity of the Armed Forces in building trust and the position of a reliable partner in international relations. Understanding that global security is one and indivisible is the starting point for the Republic of Serbia's contribution to the preservation of peace and stability in the region and the world and an active influence on the actors of international relations to resolve important international issues non-violently.

At the same time, it is one of the ways to contribute to the keeping of peace and stability in the region and the world, through active participation and increasing the possibility of the Republic of Serbia's influence on the activities of international relations and important international issues essential for national interests. It can be argued that by sending troops to peacekeeping operations abroad, the Republic of Serbia is showing readiness and, above all, the ability to contribute to maintaining international stability; projecting a positive image of the country as a responsible nation ready to act in the interests of world peace; increases the country's influence not only in the UN system, but also in the host country and the region in which it is engaged – including the promotion of economic interests. In that way, peace operations become a reflection of the credibility of the state and an element of the foreign policy of the state in international relations.

Serbia's participation in peacekeeping operations has strategic significance in several ways. Firstly, it demonstrates the country's commitment to regional stability and security, which can help to prevent the spread of conflict and crisis beyond its borders.

Secondly, Serbia's participation sends a signal that it is committed to adhering to international norms and standards, and can help to build trust and confidence with neighboring countries and the international community at large.

Thirdly, Serbia's participation in peacekeeping operations can provide valuable experience and training for its military personnel,

enhancing their skills and professionalism, which can contribute to the country's overall defense capabilities. This is particularly important given Serbia's aspiration to join the EU, which emphasizes the importance of strong defense and security capabilities.

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НАЦИОНАЛНИ ИНТЕРЕС РЕПУБЛИКЕ СРБИЈЕ ЗА УЧЕШЋЕ ВОЈСКЕ СРБИЈЕ У МИРОВНИМ ОПЕРАЦИЈАМА

Сажетак

Мировне операције (мултинационалне операције) су један од инструмената за решавање криза у свету и спречавање оружаних сукоба који угрожавају глобални мир и безбедност. У раду се наводи да је учешће Војске Србије у мисијама УН допринело очувању мира у свету и донело позитивне користи за земљу. Наиме, Војска Србије баштини традицију вишегодишњег учешћа у мировним операцијама УН и ЕУ. Најпре се даје преглед најважнијих доприноса Републике Србије мировним операцијама, фокусирајући се на важну улогу коју ова активност има у остваривању циљева спољне политике, националном развоју и међународним односима. Након тога следи представљање националног законодавства које регулише учешће Војске Србије у мировним операцијама. Стога су мировне операције препознате као вид мултилатералног механизма за остваривање сарадње Републике Србије и УН/ЕУ и допринос изградњи поверења и позиције поузданог партнера у међународним односима. Теорија међународних односа која објашњава такве поступке држава је реализам. У складу са реалистичком школом мишљења, државни национални интереси за учешће у мировним операцијама су питања војне безбедности, национални и стратешки интереси, надаље економски интереси, као и повећање кредибилитета и моћи државе у међународним односима.

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Полазећи од тога да је глобална безбедност свеобухватна и недељива, државе су још више заинтересоване за учешће у мировним операцијама и то виде као своје националне интересе и елемент спољне и безбедносне политике. Ово је полазна претпоставка на којој аутори заснивају своју анализу изнету у раду.

На тај начин Република Србија је препознала и могућност ангажовања снага и капацитета Војске Србије у мултинационалним операцијама у изградњи поверења и позиције поузданог партнера у међународним односима. Схватање да је глобална безбедност једна и недељива је полазна основа за допринос Републике Србије очувању мира и стабилности у региону и свету и активан утицај на актере међународних односа да се важна међународна питања решавају ненасилним путем. Из анализе коју су аутори спровели може се закључити да слањем трупа у мировне операције у иностранству Република Србија: показује спремност и пре свега способност да допринесе очувању међународне безбедности и стабилности; пројектује позитивну слику земље као одговорне нације спремне да делује у интересу светског мира; повећава утицај земље не само у систему УН и ЕУ, већ и у земљи домаћину и региону у коме је ангажована – укључујући промоцију економских интереса. На тај начин мировне операције постају одраз кредибилитета државе и елемент спољне политике државе у међународним односима.

Учешће Србије у мировним операцијама има стратешки значај на више начина. Као прво аутори истичу посвећеност земље међународној и регионалној стабилности и безбедности, што може помоћи у спречавању ширења сукоба и кризе ван њених граница. Надаље, аутори истичу да учешће Србије шаље сигнал да је посвећена придржавању међународних норми и стандарда и може помоћи у изградњи поверења у суседним земљама и међународним односима у целини. Аутори као посебну и додатну вредност истичу да учешће Републике Србије у мировним операцијама може да обезбеди драгоцену искуство и обуку њених оружаних снага, унапређујући њихове вештине и професионализам, што може допринети укупним одбрамбеним способностима земље. Ово је посебно важно с обзиром на тежњу Републике Србије да се придружи ЕУ, у којој се све више наглашава значај каквих одбрамбених и безбедносних снага и капацитета.

Кључне речи: Република Србија, Војска Србије, мировне операције, међународни односи, реализам, национални интереси