

***Hungarian military forces in Africa – past and future.  
Recovering lost knowledge, exploiting cultural anthropology  
resources, creating a comprehensive system of training and  
preparation***

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My study reviews the operations of the Hungarian military forces in Africa not only from the perspective of international (UN, EU) peace operations but also through the experiences of those who served on the spot, as well as examine the professional requirements involved. Another aspect of my study is to find a solution to the use of cultural anthropology in the mission area, in order to save our soldier's lives.

**Hungarian Military Personnel in Africa**

Following the change of political regime, the Hungarian Defence Forces were increasingly approached by UN organizations to take part in various peace keeping operations. The first of these missions took place in Angola, soon followed by the one in Mozambique. On these occasions Hungary was entrusted with only "basic" peace keeping responsibilities to the all-round satisfaction of the international community. Not much later these missions were followed by various other activities in Cambodia, Liberia, Tajikistan, Mountain Karabakh, Cyprus, Rwanda, and in Georgia. The Hungarian forces performed outstandingly well both in the specific field operations and as participants in international command and control bodies and represented Hungarian interests in a satisfactory manner. As a result, Hungarian officers were invited to join the New York based UN peacekeeping directorate and were able to gain an insight into the higher levels of peacekeeping activities. This period also saw the birth of the peacekeeping branch of the Hungarian Defence Forces (a Training Centre, with training courses first abroad and then in Hungary). The good reputation of Hungarian soldiers and police officers and their good performance ensured further peace keeping opportunities. Hungary was asked to participate in the Western-Sahara peacekeeping operation with a unit. The appointment was received in 1994 and already the following year saw a 13 head strong police unit join the lines of MINURSO. Although a few years later the police unit was withdrawn from the area of operation, a small military contingent still operates today as part of the mission organization. What's more, as an acknowledgement of their outstanding service, the mission was commanded by

a Hungarian Major General, György Száraz from 8 September 2002 to 10 August, 2005. His service was greatly valued not only by the UN representatives but also by the opposing parties.

After joining NATO and the European Union, Hungary realigned its peace keeping structure according to the new demands. This meant that the country withdrew almost totally from UN peacekeeping operations, reduced the number of unarmed observers participating in basic peacekeeping operation, but there was an increase in the responsibilities related to the new treaty organizations (increased participation in operations of the Balkan, Iraq and Afghanistan regions).

The Hungarian military and police units almost completely withdrew from the African continent leaving only a small military contingent serving in Western-Sahara. During this period Hungary lost its political, diplomatic, economic, and other interests related to Africa. Most of the country's representative bodies in Africa were withdrawn, thus indicating a shift in priorities. Due to these organizational adjustments many experienced officers who had previously served on the African continent, and so had important insights into the UN operated peacekeeping system in Africa, were forced to leave the military service before their time. Nobody had processed or organized this valuable body of knowledge and experience, so in reality these were lost. A number of those who had left the service were able to find work as civil servants in various UN and OSCE organizations and mission bodies often in leading positions, but official contact and exchange of information were not ensured with them. During the structural reorganization, the peacekeeping system was reduced by the disappearance of a number of institutions that don't exist today (the Peacekeeping Training Centre, the Operation Control Centre of the DF) this change resulted in further loss of experienced professionals. The accumulated documents, maps, reports and materials were not processed and most of them were destroyed. During my research into the Western-Sahara based activities of the Hungarian Defence Forces I was shocked to discover that a substantial amount of the paperwork related to the mission had been shredded. It was almost by chance that I managed to obtain some documents, very often from private hands.

Naturally this process was not only happening in the Hungarian armed or police forces but also in "civilian" society. The obvious lack of interest shown by Hungarian Foreign Politics in the matters of the African continent resulted in many previously involved organizations turning their attention to areas that were better funded by the Hungarian Government. This was when one of the most important African research centres (besides the one at the Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest), the Tropical Department of the University of Gödöllő was closed down. The previously functioning contacts with African countries and the existing data systems were almost completely terminated. Realizing this, the associates of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry tried creating a data base that would incorporate those African individuals who had completed their degrees in Hungary or had maintained fruitful economic and other ties with the country. Due to the earlier mentioned problems this could not come to pass and thus, most of the existing relations and information was irretrievably lost.

Nevertheless, due to the economic and security policy transformations taking place on the international scene, the African continent gained importance once more in the eyes of the USA, NATO and EU as well as with the "new" arrivals such as China, India, Russia,

Japan, Turkey and Brazil (Dowden, pp. 484–508. and Tarrósy, pp. 17–33.). As a result Hungary found itself once again taking on a more important role in African matters. Northern Africa and the Maghreb region gained special importance not only due to migration, drugs and arms trafficking issues and the increased activities of militant Islamic groups but also due to the growth of its economic potential involving raw materials and resources, such as oil, natural gas, various minerals, fisheries, etc. From the point of view of security policy, the region had gained significance with NATO since the countries of the Maghreb region play an important role not only in the NATO/PfP program and are important participants of the Mediterranean Dialogue but also participate in the war waged against the Northern African al-Qaida groups.

As a sign of growing Hungarian interest, in 2005, I myself was sent as a military (logistics) advisor to the African Union mission in Darfur, Sudan. Not much later two high ranking officers were sent to the Democratic Republic of Congo and later a Sergeant Major to the EU NAVFOR mission, as well as two officers and two NCO's to the EU training mission in Somalia. While I was serving in Darfur, MOL (the Hungarian Oil Company) purchased significant concessions in Southern Sudan and various other Hungarian companies opened offices in African countries or invested in businesses on the continent. In addition, Hungarian relief organizations (Hungarian Baptist Relief Organization, ADRA, and AHU) have increased their responsibilities in various humanitarian missions to the African continent: not only in terms of financial aid, but also by delegating humanitarian workers and volunteers to the region. A growing interest in African economic and cultural events could be seen in Hungary and a number of Africa-related books, magazines and research papers were published. This clearly shows a changing attitude towards Africa and African matters in the Hungarian public sphere. Responding to the growing need for information in political and economic circles more and more organizations and institutes had begun expanding their field of interest to Africa related topics and studies. For example the University of Pécs had opened an internationally well known and acknowledged African Research Centre. Upon the request of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs a conference was organized with the goal of mapping out the African Strategies of the Hungarian State with the participation government appointed experts in African Studies, development politics and international relations as well as researchers, diplomats and civil organizations with African interests. Numerous colleges and universities started offering courses in African studies, and an increasing number of university graduates chose to examine Africa-related issues in their dissertations. Regrettably the previously acquired body of knowledge and information had not been processed or evaluated, and so was lost. Not only in the case of "civilian" sources, but also in the Hungarian Defence Forces. Between 1990 and 2000 the Hungarian soldiers and police force had participated in 16 different operations, yet not one operation had been examined or analyzed in depth.<sup>1</sup> A few articles had been published but without any serious scientific value. Recognizing this deficiency the Hungarian military leadership created a data and experience processing department as part of the Hungarian Operation Control Centre (MIK), but so far no such material has been collected.

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<sup>1</sup> Two exceptions are my books (one in English and one in Hungarian) about the Western Sahara and the MINURSO, which were published by István Tarrósy (PhD) and printed by Publicon Publisher.

I myself took part in three international peacekeeping operations (Western Sahara, Sudan – Darfur and Afghanistan) but during the training phase for all three missions I was faced with a general lack of knowledge about the history, the culture of these regions as well as inadequate information about the cause of the conflicts and the opposing parties. These gaps had to be filled in on site, in most cases without any adverse consequences, but on a few occasions I found myself in personal danger as a result. Upon my arrival from Western Sahara I was not satisfied with the knowledge gained there so I attempted to systematize it and continued with further research and study of the African continent. I was guest lecturer at a number of universities and colleges as well as at international military monitoring workshops. Over the past few years I published a number of books, research papers and articles about Africa-related topics in influential journals and through respected publishing houses. I filled various positions in the Hungarian Defence Forces where I was able to further expand my knowledge of peacekeeping operations. I became convinced that it is essential that this knowledge be preserved, processed and organized in a way that makes it accessible to those representing Hungary in Africa and to laymen interested in the region. In this paper I have set out to introduce the role of the Hungarian Defence Forces in Africa, the activities involved and the duties and responsibilities of those serving in these missions.

### **African Operations of the Hungarian Defence Forces**

One of the first missions with Hungarian involvement was UNAVEM II in Angola (UNAVEM II, 2000). This lasted from June 1991 until February 1995, at first with Hungarian soldiers and later with members of the police, too. The mission's mandate involved performing the following activities:

- Enforcing the terms of the peace treaty,
- Supervising terms of the ceasefire,
- Overseeing the Angolan Police Force,
- Observing elections and verifying their results,
- Mediation between the opposing parties.

42 officers of the Hungarian Defence Forces participated in the UNAVEM II mission. The Hungarian peace keeping unit was so successful in Angola that the UN Secretary General requested further peacekeeping troops for the peace mission in Mozambique from December 1992 till December 1994. (ONUMOZ, 1995). The ONUMOZ mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Enforcement and supervision of the ceasefire between the government and RENAMO,
- Ensuring and overseeing the withdrawal of foreign military units,
- Disarmament of various armed groups and the collection of arms,
- Ensuring the smooth operation of the UN and other international organizations,
- Assisting in the reconstruction of infrastructure,
- Participation in the electoral process,
- Coordination of humanitarian activities, overseeing the question of refugees.

51 members of the Hungarian Defence Forces served in mission ONUMOZ many of whom were promoted to key positions in the mission's HQ or served as commanders of the

military sections. In February 1995, following the successful completion of the mission in Mozambique, the UN Peacekeeping Council yet again requested Hungarian forces, this time for the UNAVEM III (UNAVEM III, 1997) peacekeeping operation. The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Enforcing the Lusaka Agreement,
- Supervising terms of the ceasefire,
- Assisting in the creation of government administration,
- Reorganizing the armed forces of UNITA into a political party,
- The disarmament of armed units and civilians – DDR programs,
- Humanitarian Assistance.

The Hungarian Defence Forces participated with 20 members in the UNAVEM III mission.<sup>2</sup> This operation was completed in June 1997, and was continued under a new name (MONUA) with the participation of 26 Hungarian soldiers (MONUA, 2001). The new mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Monitoring the redevelopment of government administration,
- Assisting and overseeing the merging of UNITA organizational bodies into the new government and armed forces,
- Elimination of the UNITA armed forces and of military bases, disarmament and integration of armed individuals into civilian society,
- Enforcing the terms of the ceasefire,
- Ensuring neutrality of the Angolan Police Force, merging of UNITA security forces, on national and local level, into the Police Force,
- Collection and elimination of arms,
- Ensuring human rights for the population, rebuilding of civilian society, offering support in the birth and operation of various NGOs,
- Supporting the work of humanitarian organizations, co-ordinating the distribution of relief funds.

In September 1993, parallel to the peacekeeping operations in Mozambique, the UN launched an operation in Liberia (UNOMIL) that ended in September, 1997 (UNOMIL, 1997). The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Ensuring that the Cotonou Agreement is observed,
- Supervision of the ceasefire and support of ECOWAS,
- Participation in the demilitarization and disarmament process,
- Border security, halting smuggling traffic,
- Support of ECOMOG, fire arm disposal activities,
- Assisting the work of the UN and other humanitarian organizations,
- Organizing and overseeing national elections.

As a result of previous positive experiences, the Hungarian Defence Forces were able to delegate a military consultant who served as a personal advisor to the political leader of the mission. The consultant, Colonel László Forgács, was part of every military decision made.

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<sup>2</sup> The number of people serving in the missions mentioned is just an approximate, as many of the documents related to the operations were not retained, nor to this very day, have the remainder been catalogued in detail.

His recommendations and advice was acknowledged in every single instance by the UN New York HQ.

At the same time, in June 1993, the United Nations began its observer mission in Uganda and Rwanda (UNOMUR) that lasted till September 1994 (UNOMUR, 2003). The training unit for the operation was led for a while by a Hungarian officer, Captain Viktor Makay, who upon completing his mandate continued serving in Angola. The UNOMUR mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Border control mission,
- Observation of Hutu and Tutsi military units,
- Suppression of arms trade and smuggling,
- Prevention of further hostilities,
- Trust building activities,
- Participation in the signing of the Arusha Agreement.

Apart from the above mentioned Viktor Makay, 4 other Hungarian military observers took part in the mission. The next African operation that involved Hungarian units was the MINURSO mission, launched in 1991 (MINURSO, 2012). Since 1997 the Hungarian Police Force have also participated in the operation, but it wasn't until 2000 that the first peacekeeping soldiers arrived to the target area. The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Monitor the ceasefire,
- Verify the reduction of Moroccan troops in the Territory,
- Monitor the restriction of Moroccan and Frente POLISARIO troops to designated locations,
- Take steps with the parties to ensure the release of all Western Saharan political prisoners or detainees,
- Oversee the exchange of prisoners of war, and implement the repatriation programme,
- Identify and register qualified voters,
- Organize and ensure a free and fair referendum and proclaim the results.

At the moment a 7-man Hungarian military contingent is serving in the Western Sahara operation, but between the years 2002 and 2005, for three years running, Major General György Száraz served as commander of the MINURSO military component. The work of the general and that of the Hungarian soldiers was deemed outstanding by the UN on many occasions. Although the international community would have been pleased to see participation of Hungarian units in other African operations, this was not supported by the political governance and stopped Hungarian involvement in all African operations except for the one in Western Sahara. This decision was, and still is, little understood by a number of those soldiers involved in the operations, and by the "civilian" security policy consultants, the financing of the troops involved in these UN operations would have been funded by the international community itself, unlike the units delegated to NATO/EU operations, where financing is the responsibility of Hungary. Additionally, involvement actually would have meant further financial gain to the country.<sup>3</sup> Thus no Hungarian

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<sup>3</sup> In the case of many other countries, e.g. Ghana, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc. delegation of military forces to UN peacekeeping operations is an important source of income. Not only do the soldiers deployed on these missions earn several times more than what they would get back home but

soldiers were sent to Africa in the following years. But joining the EU meant that the Hungarian leadership was forced to bring about certain changes, as part of Hungary's international responsibilities involved sending peacekeeping troops to Africa once more. The first mission delegated by the EU political and military leadership was the EU Support Operation to AMIS that lasted from June 2004 until December 2007 (EU Support to Amis-Darfur, 2007 and Besenyő, 2006). The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Support and operation of AMIS-II (taking African propriety rights into consideration),
- Professional training of African soldiers,
- Organizing tactical/strategic transports
- Support and consultation in logistics – advisory team,
- Assisting the Police Force,
- Participation in humanitarian programs.

The first to be sent on the mission by the Hungarian Defence Forces was Major Ferenc Kajári who served in one of the African Union filed camps in Darfur (Kabkabiya) as scout commander from June 2004 until June 2005. The leadership of the African Union was so satisfied with Major Kajári's performance that they asked for the delegation of further Hungarian military consultants by the EU. This was how in the June of 2005 I had the opportunity of serving as military (logistics) advisor at the mission HQ in El-Fasher (Besenyő, 2007). I was only able to spend six months on the mission as the increasing deterioration of the state of security meant that Hungary withdrew its earlier delegated contribution and I was leaving the mission. No further Hungarian soldiers were sent to Darfur, even though the operation lasted till the end of 2007 and the EU repeatedly requested Hungarian officers to be sent to join the consultant team serving at operation headquarters.

However Hungary was obliged to participate in the next European Union operation in Africa, so first one personnel officer was sent to the EU ARTEMIS operation in RD CONGO (DRC/ARTEMIS, 2003). The mission lasted from 12 June 2003 until 07 September 2003. For certain reasons one Hungarian staff officer was sent with national restrictions, so he completed his service in Paris, despite the fact that EU military leadership wished to see them on AO. The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Take part in the peace enforcement action in Ituri (Bunia) according to resolution No. 1484 of the UN Security Council and the decision No. 2003/432/CFSP,
- Assist the security and cooperation of the African Great Lakes countries,
- Stabilize Ituri province with a limited military operation, and secure Bunia airfield,
- Support the Congolese government and MONUC,
- Solve the Hema–Lendu conflict, security measures,
- Humanitarian activities, defend the refugees of Bunia.

After this mission soon one and then a further two high ranking officers were sent to the EU Security Sector Reform Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo from June, 2005 (EUSEC RD CONGO, 2012). The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

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the world organization also contributes substantial amounts for the development of the armed forces of these countries.

- Support of the Congolese government,
- Aiding the security and co-operation of countries of the African Great-Lakes,
- Supporting the administrative and fiscal reform of the army – transformation of the Defence Force,
- Co-operation with EUPOL RD CONGO,
- Humanitarian activities.

Over the past years 8 Hungarian officers have served in this still active operation and, although replacement of these individuals was often met with difficulties, Hungary has been able to comply with EU request and continue participation.<sup>4</sup>

The next operation, also in Congo, was the EUFOR RD CONGO where according to a previous contributory agreement Hungary sent 3 logistics and personnel officers. The operation lasted from July 2006 till the end of the same year (EUFOR RD CONGO, 2006). For various reasons the Hungarian officers' assignment involved national restrictions. As a result instead of serving AO, as it had been the intention of the EU military leadership, they completed their assignment at the mission HQ in Potsdam. The EUFOR RD CONGO mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Securing and overseeing the Congolese elections according to resolution no. 1671 of the UN Security Council,
- Supporting the activities of MONUC,
- Supporting the Congolese and Gabonese governments,
- Maintaining security,
- Humanitarian activities.

With the increase of EU involvement in African affairs, Hungary sent three medical and logistics officers to operation EUFOR CHAD/RCA from March 2008 to March 2009 (EUFOR TCAD/RCA, 2009). The Hungarian leadership, having learnt from the Congolese operations made sure that the Hungarian peacekeeping corps was sent without any national restrictions and were thus sent to AO. The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Maintaining regional security and collaboration with the UN bodies and the governmental organizations of Chad, Republic of Central Africa and the Sudan,
- Patrolling,
- Protection of the refugee camps and civilian population, ensuring the safe return of refugees,
- Ensuring the safe arrival of humanitarian aid supplies,
- Personal protection of international civilian citizens.

The work of the Hungarian officers was viewed favourably by the operation leadership, which was partly due to Major Csaba Kis Antal, MD whose health risk assessment of the operation proved extremely helpful to the military forces serving in Chad.

In the same year EU NAVFOR Atalanta/EU Naval Operation in the Somali Republic was launched from December 2008 (EUNAVFOR SOMALIA, 2012). Hungary sent IT

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<sup>4</sup> Over the past years most officers of the Hungarian Defence Force acquired a good proficiency in English, but knowledge of French is essential in the African Region. Very few officers are fluent in both. This and the lack of volunteers were the difficulties that had to be met when ensuring replacement. As a result a number of those in service extended their contracts and stayed.



Sergeants Major to the operational HQ offices in Northwood. The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Support of EU defence and security policies,
- Suppression of pirate activities, securing the trade routes, protecting “civilian” ships,
- Escorting WFP and other humanitarian convoys,
- Support of AMISOM activities,
- Supervising fisheries active in Somali waters.

The EU Training Mission Somalia was launched in April 2010 (EUTM SOMALIA, 2012). The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- Assist in the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement,
- Support for the Temporary Government and governmental organizations,
- Support for Uganda, stabilizing the region,
- Assist the activities of AMISOM,
- Train Somali government armed forces in accordance with resolution No. 1872 of the

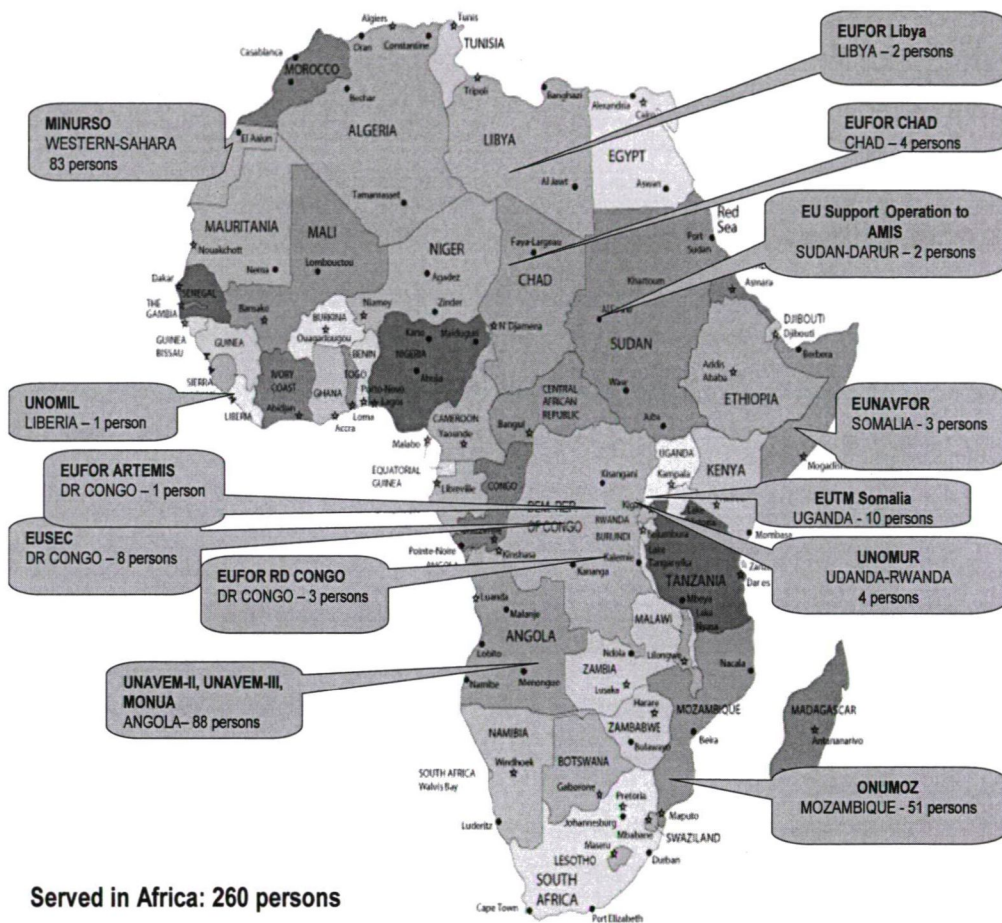
United Nations Security Council.

So far ten Hungarian soldiers served in the base camp in Uganda, and also participated in training of the Somali government's military forces.

As part of mission EUFOR Libya, launched in April, 2011, two Hungarian medical officers served in the medical team. Lieutenant Colonel Tamás Bognár, MD was responsible for preventive medical activities and he was the officer who prepared the medical risk assessment analysis of the mission. The operation was completed in November of the same year (EUFOR LIBYA, 2011). The mission's mandate involved the following activities:

- According to resolutions No. 1970 and 1973 of the UN Security Council, the EU will – if requested by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) – conduct a military operation in the framework of the Common security and defence policy (CSDP) in order to support humanitarian assistance in the region,
- Contribute to the safe movement and evacuation of displaced persons,
- Support, with specific capabilities, the humanitarian agencies in their activities.

The map below shows the Hungarian missions in Africa between 1992 and 2012:



As we can see from the above, since the change of regime in Hungary, the country's involvement in African matters has obviously been constant, yet these operations have not received as much attention or publicity as those missions operating under the aegis of NATO bodies. This happened despite the fact that the UN, EU and AU were perfectly satisfied with the performance of Hungarian soldiers. Although these organizations have continued to request Hungarian participation in their activities, it seems that Hungary does not wish to increase its role in African matters. As a result of the global economic crisis, the financial resources of the Hungarian Defence Forces have greatly decreased, yet for certain reasons the country is not permitted to reduce its peacekeeping activities. What's more, it is increasingly likely that due to NATO and EU interests Hungary will have to increase (although in a limited way at first) its involvement in African matters. This is another reason why it would be essential to document and archive the experience gained on previous African missions and to incorporate this into the training system.

## **The prospective commitments of the Hungarian Forces in Africa**

While any prognostication might prove to be pointless at this stage in terms of another Hungarian commitment in Africa, NATO is evidently going to conduct a large scale drawdown and withdrawal of its troops in Afghanistan, and the EU mission in the Balkans are unlikely to require any increase of the Hungarian contingency, therefore, the Hungarian soldiers who become available due to the lesser demand on our NATO obligations can be engaged in African contingency operations. However, the current economic crisis and the shortage of resources, as well as the growing aversion of the wider Hungarian public opinion towards foreign missions may prevent this. In a private discussions a former Hungarian chief of staff has confirmed that we cannot really reduce our mission undertakings, and that is why we have to go to Africa, otherwise our allies (NATO, EU) can rightfully have us account for our unfulfilled commitments. In the past years, Hungary has been able to counter this recurring criticism by overextension in different peace operations. The officer also said that for this reason we should prepare for our next commitment in Africa with more care, moreover we should do so with complete units, as single field officers with national restrictions sent to the areas under European command are not regarded as a serious offer. A similar opinion has been voiced by another officer returning from Afghanistan, who has been warned repeatedly that NATO and the EU are going to take a more active role in Africa, and that even peace supporting missions might be launched in the future.

Based on what has been said so far, it is worth contemplating where future peace operations might take place, and which are those ongoing operations where we could offer our contribution. I will not discuss UN missions here, as over the past decade Hungarian peacekeepers have not participated in UN missions except for those 7 troops in the West-Saharan operation. It was proposed once to send soldiers and policemen to the UN mission in Sudan (UNIMIS), but in the end the trained personnel were not sent, or they were deployed on other missions as individuals. Although, some economic advantages and efficiency considerations would make the UN participation with military/police units worthwhile, no government has undertaken this task over the last decade. For political reasons, governments have decided in favour of much more costly NATO and EU operations, thus Hungary is likely to take part in one of these operations in Africa led by one of these organizations. Earlier, NATO took part in military operations in Sudan (AMIS – UNAMID, 2005–2007), in Somalia (AMISOM, 2007), off the coast of the Horn of Africa (since 2008), and in Libya (2011). Currently the alliance is supporting the peace missions of the African Union (NATO operations and missions, 2012).

Previously, the EU was active in Congo (EU ARTEMIS, 2003; EUPOL KINSHA, 2005–2007; EUFOR RD CONGO, 2006; EUPOL RD CONGO from 2008 till now, EUSEC RD CONGO from 2005 till now) in Sudan, Darfur (EU support to AMIS, 2005–2007), in Chad (EUFOR TCHAD, 2008–2009), in Guinea-Bissau (EU SSR GUINEA BISSAU, 2008–2010), in Libya (EUFOR LYBIA, 2011), and in Somalia (EU NAVFOR, Operation Atalanta from 2008 till now, and EUTM SOMALIA from 2010 till now). Hungarian participation was represented by some staff officers. As the trend shows, the participation of these two international organizations in African peacekeeping missions is rising. It is even more likely to increase in the future since all African countries with the

exception of Mauritius and the Seychelles islands have to face to a varying degree the following factors that may induce serious internal conflicts:

- Bad governance, democratic deficit or lack of democracy, autocratic rule of the police/military, corruption, lack of division of power,
- Ethnic rivalry, ethnic or national conflicts, lack of national identity, heterogeneous society,
- The unequal division of economic, financial and natural resources, uncertain property rights, water scarcity, food security, etc.,
- Deteriorating economic conditions, poverty,
- Climate change, drought, desertification,
- Demographic boom, overpopulation, migration.

Of course, this does not mean that every country is impacted by all these factors, or that they will be the scenes of armed conflicts requiring intervention. Certain regions and countries are more vulnerable, and thus it is more likely that the AU, NATO, the EU or a regional organization, like the ECOWAS in the protracted Liberian civil war will, engage in peace support operations. In my opinion, the following countries have to be observed in this regard:

*Egypt*: apparently the Arab Spring brought to the surface a number of latent, undesirable problems, such as the conflict between the Muslims and the Copt minority, that have lead to clashes between them, and to the flight of Copts (Egypt country profile, 2012). The sectarian Salafist groups are becoming stronger and they call for the introduction of the Sharia law. As the central government has weakened, crime – drug and weapon smuggling, etc. – boomed (The World Factbook – Egypt, 2012). The economy is in recession and the tourism industry which generated much of the state's revenue previously, declined. The new leadership is more hostile towards Israel, which can even lead to a military conflict with unforeseeable consequences. There is a conflict over the division of the Nile between Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, and Egypt has already threatened the latter two with war if they use too much water (Alan Nicol, 2003). Water scarcity is going to be one of the major sources of conflict in Africa (Glied, p. 10.).

*Libya*: although Kadhafi was ousted with help of the western powers, the Transitional National Council is incapable of maintaining public order. Various armed militias and tribal groups are still fighting each other (Amitis, 2012). The ethnic and national violence which were suppressed for a long time are back and vendetta has become a daily occurrence. None of the groups or factions is strong enough to emerge as the single dominant ruler or to create stability. In addition, certain parts of the country are considering secession (Gatehouse, 2012). The earlier level of public safety no longer exists, the economy is still weak, oil production and trade have not yet reached previous levels.

*Chad*: ethnic conflicts are on the rise (between the Christian Sara and the Muslim Tubu tribes) due to the lack of division of power. Moreover the current president Idriss Deby – he has lost the support even among his own tribesmen (the Zaghawa) who turned against him in an armed uprising (Besenyő – Hetényi – Jagadics – Resperger, 2010. pp. 84–98.). The country's history abounds in civil wars and military coups. The two strongest opposition organizations are the Association for Democracy and Development (Union des forces pour la démocratie et développement – UFDD), and the Mobilization of Forces for Change (Rassemblement des forces pour la changement – RFC). The president has clashed with the

French forces stationed there on several occasions, although he can stay in power only with their help. The economy is facing serious problems as a result of the prolonged civil war, drought, and the ever scarcer territories and water supply. While substantial oil reserves have just been discovered, there are disputes between the country and the oil companies ExxonMobil, Chevron and Petronas which build the oilrigs, and China has announced its demand as well. The oil revenues are skimmed by Deby's clientele and the warlords. No wonder that Chad is regarded as one of the most corrupt countries. Several thousand Sudanese refugees are in the country causing another range of severe problems. The Chadian government has been involved in several armed conflicts with the neighboring Libya (due to a territorial dispute over the Aouzou strip) and with Sudan (due to the Darfur conflict), and their relationship is still not without problems (The World Factbook – Chad, 2012).

*Nigeria*: this country has the potential to be one of the leading powers of the continent. It is divided by the growing conflict between the Christians and Muslims, as well as by the opposition between the northern and southern states. Religious conflicts are exacerbated by the recent appearance of the Muslim terrorist group Boko Haram linked to the North-African affiliation of the al-Qaida. It is conducting bloody attacks against Christians (Cook, 2011. pp. 9–12). This rift is also made worse by the lack of meaningful division of power, the corrupt governing elite and bureaucracy, and by the secessionist movement (Movement for the Emancipation of the Nigeria Delta – MEND) of those living in the Niger Delta (M.E.N.D. 2012.). Even though the economy is growing steadily, mainly due to large-scale oil production, the inappropriate management of revenues causes further problems (Nigeria country profile, 2012).

*Mali*: having gained independence in 1960, the country was under military dictatorship for 23 years, often being troubled by civil wars and military coups (Mali country profile, 2012). The agriculture of the region is relatively well developed, especially in the Niger valley, and so are its gold and ore mining industries. Still, the country needs to import several commodities and it is dependent on international aid (The World Factbook – Mali, 2012). Droughts have appeared repeatedly over the last years cause problems coupled with the tension between Mali, Niger and Guinea over the division of water coming from the Niger River, which can easily escalate into armed conflict (Goulden – Few, 2011, pp. 25–27.). The government has lost control over the northern territories having been ruled for decades by the Tuareg rebels and the Salafist groups sympathizing with the al-Qaida.

*Niger*: Niger has been exposed to droughts, desertification and the armed uprising of the Tuareg for decades. Despite the fact that it is one of the biggest producers of uranium and it has significant mineral resources, it needs to import almost everything (Niger country profile, 2012). Water sharing generates serious tensions as well. Although the MNJ (Niger Movement for Justice) representing the Tuareg has officially made peace with the government, peace has not yet materialized, thus the Tuareg separatist aspirations remain a serious threat to the country's unity. The AQIM (Al-Qaida in Maghreb), the Salafist terror organization has established its bases at numerous sites and committed terrorist acts there. Niger has border disputes with several of its neighbors (The World Factbook – Niger, 2012).

*Ethiopia*: the country at the Horn of Africa is known one of the most stable countries of the region in spite of the fact that it has been damaged for years by civil war, droughts and

famine. The ONLF (Ogaden National Liberation Front) is a separatist movement operating in the Ogaden (a region that became part of the country at a later stage), fights the government at a varying intensity (ISVG – Ogaden National Liberation Front, 2012). Ethiopia also has border disputes with Somalia and Eritrea, which have escalated into armed conflicts several times, and between 2007 and 2009 Ethiopia sent troops into Somalia as an ally of the U.S. against Muslim extremists (Ethiopia country profile, 2012). The country does not possess any oil, and – partly due to the prolonged drought – its agriculture-based economy has been unable to provide the population with a sufficient food supply, thus Ethiopia has been reliant on aid for years as one of the poorest countries of the continent.

*Somalia*: the country established on the territory of former English and Italian colonies is regarded as one of the failed states. It has fallen apart over the past decades into Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland, and now there is fight between the Transitional Government, the warlords and the various Muslim terrorist groups (Somalia country profile, 2012). Local clans and ethnic groups have been fighting each other for several hundred years. The different Muslim extremist groups, such as Al-Shabaab, Al-Attihad, Hizb Ul-Islam, etc., rule a significant proportion of the land, while the government propped up by the troops of the African Union (AMISOM) controls just part of the capital and its power has diminished to a minimal level (Kis-Álmos – Besenyő – Resperger, 2010. pp. 48–68.). Piracy in the coastal waters has increased to the extent that the UN, NATO, the EU and the U.S. and some other countries have been operating anti-piracy missions for years. These have not borne any substantial success yet (Besenyő – Kis-Álmos, 2009). Owing to the civil war, the economic difficulties and the prolonged droughts, humanitarian crisis has developed in the country. Consequently, several hundred thousand Somali refugee live in the neighboring countries. Somalia has border disputes with Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti.

*Democratic Republic of Congo*: the country, incredibly rich in minerals, has been suffering from ethnic-tribal conflicts, civil wars and corruption since its independence in 1960 (DRC country profile, 2012). The conflict called “The World War of Africa” between 1998 and 2003 took place here involving several other African states such as Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Rwanda with a death toll of 3 million people. Despite the peace between the warring parties, in the eastern part of the country a bloody war still rages between the Hutu refugees coming from Rwanda and the different tribal militias, and between the government forces and the warlords’ private armies. The UN, EU and NATO have launched several operations in the country, some of which are still ongoing (Besenyő – Gyarmati – Hetényi – Pető – Szijj – Resperger, 2010. pp. 90–101). The country has seen significant economic development thanks to the rivalry for African mineral resources. American, European, Chinese, Indian and other countries’ companies compete to benefit from the economic opportunities. There are border disputes with Uganda and Zambia (The World Factbook – DRC, 2012).

*Zimbabwe*: The agriculture of the state known as the “bread basket” of the neighboring countries for a long period has almost completely collapsed as a result of the expulsion of the white farmers and flawed land reforms; moreover, there are some food items that Zimbabwe needs to import (The World Factbook – Zimbabwe, 2012). A large part of the population is unemployed and on the verge of death by starvation; therefore several million Zimbabweans emigrated to South-Africa to find work (Búr, 2011. p. 215). The country,

isolated by the international community, was led by the Mugabe-ruled ZANU-PF till 2008. Officially a parliamentary democracy has been restored since then, but Mugabe still refuses to share his power. The opposition, however, is becoming increasingly vocal preparing for the time “after Mugabe” as his health is declining with age, though that might lead to further conflicts as there are major tensions between the ethnic groups of the black population. The issue of division of the Zambezi River has led to conflicts with the neighboring Zambia and Botswana on several occasions and it is a security risk in the long run for the states in the basin area of the river (Mutembwa, 1998).

*Sudan and South Sudan:* On 9 July 2011, the two countries separated following several decades of union rife with bloody conflict, but separation did not lead to peace. This stems from the earlier Christian–Muslim conflicts, and also from the disagreement over the division of the remarkable oil wealth mainly located in the South, border disputes, the possession of the Abyei region, and the division of the Nile. The UN is currently stationing peacekeepers in both countries. Sudan has to deal with further secessionist attempts in Darfur and Kordofan provinces. There are several tens of thousands of refugees from the neighboring countries with a major South Sudanese group (Besenyő, 2010. p. 104.). Revenues have fallen substantially since the secession of the oil-rich South, and there is growing inflation (The World Factbook – Sudan, 2012). Border disputes are present as well. South-Sudan has remarkable economic opportunities – oilfields, minerals, arable land, water supply, etc. – years of civil war and the complete lack of the infrastructure make it one of the poorest countries of the world (The World Factbook – South Sudan, 2012). The ongoing ethnic conflicts – Dinka, Nuer, Azande, etc. – the several hundreds of thousands southern refugees returning from the northern areas cause problems, and so do the border disputes with Sudan and Kenya.

*Guinea-Bissau:* one of the poorest countries of the world, it has a significant amount of debt it is unable to pay back due to corruption and the weak economy. A large part of the population earns their living from fishery and agriculture, mainly growing cashew nuts (Guinea-Bissau country profile, 2012). The weak state is in a difficult situation also because of several military coups over the years (the last one took place in 2012), a short civil war, and the undisrupted operation of the South-American drug cartels supported by certain leaders of the military and the government (The World Factbook – Guinea-Bissau, 2012). The EU and the UN is running missions there to contain drug traffic, but with little result.

*Burundi:* since independence in 1961, the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups have been fighting constantly, which led to 12 years of civil war (Burundi country profile, 2012). Although, later the warring parties made peace, the Hutu FNL (Forces for National Liberation) unsatisfied with the power sharing started to fight against the notoriously corrupt government. In one of the poorest countries of the world a large part of the people make their living from agriculture (coffee and tea), as well as from the international aid that accounts for 42% of the country’s income (The World Factbook – Burundi, 2012). There is a border conflict with neighboring Rwanda, and it is the source of most ethnic conflicts in the area of the Great-Lakes.

*Central-African Republic:* this country is referred to as a failed state. It has been one of the most unstable states since independence. It was first ruled by the infamous dictator Bokassa, and later by different military and civilian governments (Central African Republic country profile, 2012). A number of military groups have been fighting against the

government, the best known being the UFDR (Rebel Union of Democratic Forces of Unity), and the APRD (Rebel Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic), in addition, the LRA (Lord Resistance Army) led by Kony gained growing influence in some parts of the country. The French-backed UN mission (MINURCAT) was incapable of stabilizing the country. The domestic instability has had a negative impact on the mainly agricultural-based economy (cotton, coffee and tobacco) (The World Factbook – Central African Republic, 2012). Although the country has a remarkable supply of minerals – gold, diamond, and uranium – valuable timber and water, the armed conflicts occasionally cropping up and large scale corruption hinder their exploitation. The country is flooded by tens of thousands of refugees from neighboring Sudan and Chad, but people flee from the Republic as well into bordering states. Moreover, at least 200,000 people have been displaced who live in temporary camps now (UN CAR, 2012). The roaming Arab nomads often get into conflict with the South Sudanese, which spoils the relations of the two countries even more.

I listed above only those states where an armed conflict is likely to break out at any moment, and to which the international organizations and the western states will have to react as dictated by their own interests. Further such vulnerable states are Morocco,<sup>5</sup> Eritrea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Cameron, Malawi, Uganda, Angola, Burkina Faso, Madagascar and Mauritania.

### **Cultural anthropologists in the Army?**

Many may ask whether the presence of cultural anthropologists is needed in peacekeeping operations, and if yes, why. I assume that the answer is yes, and I hope that those who read my study will come to the same conclusion persuaded by the successful results and the arguments put forward in this paper.

If someone examines the record of mankind's well known wars, it becomes obvious how important it has been to gather and analyze reliable information about the enemy. For this reason, the early empires used spies and simultaneously with the evolution of writing this information was recorded. The books of the Old Testament are some of our most ancient written relics, and reading them one can find that the Hebrews displaced by the Assyrians were replaced by the emperor with new peoples who gained reassurance only when they got to know the area's culture and customs (II. Kings 17, 24–41). The famous Sun Tzu also deemed knowing your enemy important: "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle." (Sun Tzu on the Art of War, III. 18.). Of course, cultural anthropology in itself does not ensure the comprehension of the whole society but contributes to it greatly. Cultural anthropologists usually examine smaller communities considered typical of the third world countries. In those countries where

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<sup>5</sup> However, Morocco seems stabile, but the "Western Sahara case" still unsolved. For this reason we don't know when the hostilities can break again between the inhabitants and the invaders.



modern telecommunication devices are present and the social division of labor is more complex, sociologists and social psychologists must be involved in parallel.

It is also apparent that the conquerors, sooner or later, either by themselves or forced by some other conditions, tried to study and somewhat respect the political, economic and societal (cultural, social, etc.) rules of the conquered. Of course, one can say that it only happens if a power permanently subjugates a country, but it is not quite true. Military leaders – with some exceptions – have always tried to implement the orders of their political leaders with the smallest possible loss. To achieve that, they had to obtain the support, or at least the neutrality of the local population. The British used the term “winning the hearts and minds”, and this enabled them to turn the Kachin and other Asian ethnic groups against the Japanese; and then act successfully in the Malaysian conflict against the communist guerillas, where their ability to apprehend and then gain support of the locals led to a successful winning tactic (Sunderland, 1964). Other nations also realized this through their own bitter experiences. The USA, for example, was unable to gain the support of the locals and thus lost the Vietnam War and had to accept a humiliating peace. It was articulated as early as the 1960’s that the relations between the local people and the military needs improvement, and getting to know the locals is important. Similar mistakes were made in Somalia as well, where the American forces were engaged in the conflict without understanding the local conditions properly, thus the military leaders had to accept another fiasco. Maybe that is why cultural anthropologist professor Montgomery McFate wrote his famous sentence: “Not knowing culture can kill just as well as any other weapon” (Montgomery McFate, 2004). Afterwards, numerous studies appeared devoted to the “civilian” aspects of the operations, and the U.S. tried to stay away from the African and Asian conflicts, but its great power position has made this just about impossible. It has been justified later on by the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and then the establishment of the AFRICOM.

## Human Terrain System

Between 2005 and 2006 Don Smith created the concept that suggested a new approach in the American military to the incorporation of the “civil” social sciences, such as anthropology, ethnography, linguistics, culture, etc. His idea was published in the *Military Review* at the end of 2006 (Kipp – Grau – Prinslow – Smith, 2006). In this new system later called “Human Terrain System” (HTS) different civil experts “study” those living in the operational area, outline their conditions and put forward their suggestions to the military leaders and their staff’s concerning the enhancing the efficiency of the military operations, and the reduction of the civil–military conflicts and the number of victims.<sup>6</sup> By processing and using the information gathered by the civilian specialists and by military intelligence, a multifunctional military, intelligence and scientific organization evolved proving quickly the efficiency of the method. TRADOC (US Army Training and Doctrine Command) adopted the program. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Steve Fondacaro a Human Terrain Team (HTT) was created in every fighting brigade in Iraq and Afghanistan

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<sup>6</sup> More information about HTS on <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/>

comprising civilian scientists and actively fighting troops who conducted reconnaissance and intelligence tasks.

Despite the hostility of some scientific organizations towards the goals of the program right from the beginning, the application of the first groups brought positive results and the officers and the soldiers in the field acknowledged its *raison d'être*. For example according to Colonel Martin Schweitzer, an airborne commander, the number of clashes his unit was involved in decreased by 60% with the application of the information and advice received from the HTT group (Rohde, 2007). Seeing the positive results U.S. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates allocated a further \$40 million for the program, and new groups were set up in the operational fields. There are usually 3-8 members in a HTT incorporating scientists (cultural analysts, regional specialists) and soldiers (generalists, research manager, HT analyst). The members of the group are organized into the military system and they work under military command. Although the system has been attacked by some, its worth has been proved and other NATO and allied countries – for example: Great Britain, Germany, Australia – have adopted it.

The Hungarian soldiers serving in Afghanistan have already encountered the system and many of them have reflected on it positively, therefore it would be worth implementing it here as well. It has already been initiated within the Hungarian Defense Force's Civilian-military Co-operational and Psyops Center, where not only functional expert groups have been created, but Lieutenant Colonel Gábor Boldizsár has officially hired a cultural and religious anthropologist in the organization. Currently, one cultural anthropologist, one religious anthropologist, one sociologist and a political scientist work on the staff of the Center, two of them are serving in the field, on operations in Afghanistan and in Kosovo. However, this does not denote the amount of experience expected of this kind of specialists with whom field experience is a requirement. In addition, these four peoples seem rather few in comparison to the 24,000 troops of the Hungarian Defense Forces and their ongoing operations.

It also has to be taken into account that the African conflicts are almost entirely ethnic in character, even if they are tagged under political, economic or any other label. The intensity of these conflicts can be somewhat diminished, but the borders drawn by the colonizers and later guaranteed by the international community split up some ethnicities, and at the same time forced together others. A series of civil wars and wars is inherently coded into them. It has been widely realized that these conflicts are unrestricted either by borders, or by continents, and their negative effects are soon felt in America or in Europe – including Hungary as well. That is why we need to be able to take part in peace support or peace enforcement operations, with innovative means. I believe that employing civilian experts in these kind of operations, or creating HTS-like systems could be such a means.

## **The potential tasks of Hungarian cultural anthropologists**

As the above facts underline and the American experience show, it appears necessary to use some civilian experts in certain military missions. But let us not be hypocritical: the only purpose of the employment of these experts can be the realization of the Hungarian Defense Forces' interests, that is, risk mitigation, civil co-operation, and the enhancement

of the operational efficiency. Ideally the research interests of the anthropologists and the other experts coincide with that of the army, thus the military, in a way, sponsors their on-the-spot researches, the results of which might help CIMIC, PSYOPS and certain intelligence activities. The anthropologists attached to the military forces do approximately the same work as their civilian counterparts, the only difference being that the soldiers' interests are much more incorporated into the work. In my opinion, cultural anthropologists could carry out the following tasks in the field:

- Mapping out the human conditions of the area of operations,
- Establishing rapport with local community working as a kind of “cultural interpreter”,
- Finding the key leaders of the community (tribal, military, religious, economic, etc.) and drawing their profile, and probably building contact with them,
- Collecting data on the spot,
- Collecting, cataloguing and analyzing the available data,
- Compiling educational material for the staff at home,
- Educating and preparing the personnel before filed operations.

These tasks are also conducted (with variable efficacy) partly by military intelligence and the CIMIC and PSYOPS members in the area of operations. There are some identical points and some overlaps in their work, but separately these two areas are unable to cover every aspect of operations. However, the two areas applied simultaneously could make the operations much more effective. It leads to the possibility of creating a data base of those researchers and experts who can co-operate with Hungarian Defense Forces in their prospective African missions either as voluntary reserve personnel or as contracted civilian personnel employed on occasional basis.

Because of the economic recession and the great number of professionals, there are areas where it is easy to find volunteers willing to take the risk over a given period. After the operations, when they return to their civilian occupations they could benefit from the knowledge acquired, except for the classified information, and the army could continue to support their civilian work if it agrees with its goals. Those who feel like joining the military could do so either on a contractual basis or as becoming permanent members. In this way, the military would get “ready made” and well trained professionals who could provide the missing capabilities at minimal expense. The idea is also worth considering, as we do not have enough professionals with military training. We have thousands of soldiers who have served in military and peace support missions, which has not necessarily happened in a relevant field, but only a few of them have scientific qualifications, appropriate experience, foreign language skills, or really wanted to take on such a task. On the other hand, it would take considerable resources and time to provide the specialized training for the officers and non-commissioned officers experienced in mission operations. As it is difficult even for the U.S. military to recruit experts for the HTS, it is not unlikely that the Hungarian military will finance some of this kind of training of its troops. In the 1990s there was a similar program where the officers with troop leading experience were trained as psychologists, and then they were employed in the military counseling service. I know someone personally who is still in the military counseling system. Of course, it takes time and resources, but I think a system similar to HTS could significantly contribute to the success and safety of our operations.

## Recommendations

To make my study complete, I put forward pragmatic suggestions based on Hungarian experience in expeditionary missions. The points below could contribute to the success of future missions in Africa.

- Start linguistic trainings as soon as possible:

Large part of the officers and deputy officers of the Hungarian Defense Forces (though not everyone constantly serving in expeditionary missions), acquired usable language skills in English but for some of them maintenance has not been arranged for. That is why, it would be important to use our existing capacity (Language Institute) to improve the English skills of the personnel on missions. For those serving in Africa French, Arabic and the “mediating” languages such as Swahili, Hausa or Zulu are just as important as English.

- Involve those who have served in Africa in the groundwork of conflict analysis and preparatory materials:

Over the past years, Hungarian troops have served in 13 African missions; yet there is still no book or study that could be used in training. Most of those having served in African missions have left the military as a result of continuous restructuring, thus their expertise has been lost. The experience of those still serving in active duty should be processed, published and used as training material. Some of them may even take part in future preparations.

- Mission specific training:

Special attention is needed in terms of those African countries where the EU and NATO are likely to take on further role. These are, for example, Egypt, Libya, North Sudan, Somalia, etc. It would be worth while to prepare detailed information packages usable in preparatory training for missions in these countries and conflict zones. Besides involving soldiers and policemen who served Africa, those civilians who know the area well, for example humanitarian organization employees, economic or trade professionals, etc., could be consulted as well.

- Create think tanks, including state and non-governmental “civil” organizations, universities and researchers:

Centers like this are also important, as African research work has existed for decades now in Hungary, but the researchers usually work on their own or at small independent centers coordinated on an occasional basis. Thus, there have been several research programs applicable by the Hungarian Africa missions. Such research could be incentivized by the military through grants or in some other ways.

## Conclusion

As I can see, Hungary continues its participation in the African peacekeeping and peace supporting missions in line with its alliance duties, but also because such participation is in its own well understood political and economic interest. This makes it even more advisable to process, make accessible and incorporate our experience in Africa into the training of our forces, and to set up a system like the American HTS, based on available cultural anthropologists, sociologists and African veterans under the aegis of the Hungarian Defense

Force's Civilian-military Co-operational and Psyops Center. Later on, social psychologists could be involved in the work, as well.

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