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TERRITORIAL PRIORIZATION OF CZECH MILITARY DIPLOMACY IN 1992-2018

Libor Kutěj*

ABSTRACT

After changes in Czechoslovak political regime in autumn 1989 it could be expected that the new foreign and security policy would reflect in the sphere of military diplomacy. In the Czech Republic, it has traditionally come under the competence of the Military Intelligence as a strategic intelligence agency. Its territorial configuration necessarily reflects the information interest of the intelligence agency in selected territories and in existing and predicted threats. The paper researches whether priorities in the territorial arrangement of Czech military diplomacy have been able to reflect the change in the security situation in the past thirty years. The research shows that no fundamental changes were actually made in 1992-2005 and even the Czech Republic's accession to the EU and NATO did not lead to immediate territorial transformation of Czech military diplomacy. The period from 2005 until present is characterized by the fact that information interests are the decisive motive for changes in the territorial configuration of Czech military diplomatic offices.

Key words: Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, Military Attaché's Office, Military Intelligence, Military Diplomacy, Territorial Priorities

Introduction

In November 2019, the Czech Republic celebrated thirtieth anniversary of the Velvet Revolution that saw the fall of the totalitarian regime established and led by the Communist Party and it returned to the group of democratic states following the tradition from 1918–1938. The turbulent changes included restructuring of a rather efficient intelligence community of the communist Czechoslovakia. On one hand, the changes were intended to allow for disassembly of the totalitarian national security bodies acting formerly in favour of the post-Soviet bloc and the Warsaw Pact. On the other hand, it was necessary to prevent vacuum in national security during that the transformation process as

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it would be hard to fill and also to ensure that the newly built intelligence system of the democratic state would be able to reflect new threats and security situation that arose after the end of the Cold War.

This period included transformation of Czech military diplomacy which was one of the vehicles used for implementing foreign and security policy of Czechoslovakia and later of the Czech Republic seeking intensely its place in the international system in the post-revolutionary period.

It has been a tradition since the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 that military diplomacy has been part of its military intelligence. This situation has persisted regardless of the change in the political regime and military diplomacy is still part of the Military Intelligence even in the democratic Czech Republic being a strategic military agency subordinate to the Minister of Defence.

The actual position of Czech military diplomacy in the intelligence system clearly shows that regardless of other obligations and tasks assigned, its primary mission is to gather information that can be used for compiling intelligence information for receivers such as the President of the Czech Republic, the prime minister, selected ministers and the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

It is thus a question to what degree Czech military diplomacy has succeeded in adapting to the new security situation and foreign policy of the Czech Republic with the aim of ensuring information in accordance with new political anchoring within the structure of the North-Atlantic Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). A significant indicator that might suggest the answer to the question is territorial distribution of military diplomatic offices in various regions in accordance with their intelligence importance. Military diplomatic offices are not independent bodies, but they are part of diplomatic missions of the Czech Republic abroad. Not all Czech diplomatic missions have sections with military diplomats, it is actually only about a third of them. This share is given particularly by the intelligence information importance of a given country or region and only in exceptional cases by the intent of developing bilateral relations with the host country.

1. Literature review and methods

In the past, the issue of military diplomacy was not very accentuated in the Central European academic environment. In the Cold War period, this field traditionally belonged to the realm of intelligence organizations, which also meant

that this topic was in most cases classified. Since the beginning of the post-revolutionary era thirty years ago, the development of political studies and international relations has accelerated. The academic interest in diplomacy proved as essential part of both disciplines.

The field of military diplomacy is a subject of publications, which either reflect this activity as an element of diplomacy as such, or describe the role of military diplomacy in terms of specific historical contexts, and in this way, they become the subject matter of historical studies.

Likewise with identified sources from abroad, the topic of diplomacy is adequately treated both in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as there are numerous monographs, articles published in scientific periodicals which are mostly focused on a specific area of diplomacy (business, cultural, public, etc., e.g. Patjinka, 2017), or they examine diplomacy with respect to a specific territory or formulation of diplomatic attitudes towards a particular historical period, problems of international relations or an international situation. There are also some exceptions offering a comprehensive look at the topic in order to provide a thorough insight and description of functions of military diplomatic missions at diplomatic embassies (e.g., Pajtinka, 2019).

This article deals with the territorial development of the Czech military diplomacy with an aim to present this subject as a vital tool for information gathering on the territory of interest and execution of other tasks bestowed upon the modern military diplomatic service.

From the perspective of the extent and depth of the discussed problems it is necessary to proceed from the fact that the content of this study is not classified and it does not process data or use materials containing secret information. The intent was to present the problems in a manner that would provide accurate description of the nature of military diplomatic activities performed with the view of contributing with information to strategic intelligence in the sphere of political-military, military-strategic and general security interests. This article elaborates on almost thirty years of experience the author has in the field of intelligence activities on strategic level, of which ten years in diplomatic services and managing Czech military diplomacy.

With respect to the aforementioned, the article does not include quantifying data referring to a specific activity of military diplomacy under the Military Intelligence of the Czech Republic such as the degree to which military diplomacy contributes to the amount of input information, its contribution to the information outcome for authorized receivers and the like. The objective of the study was to

ascertain to what degree territorial prioritization of Czech military diplomatic offices reflects information interests of the Ministry of Defence in the context of high-risk regions and current threats in the sphere of defence and security. In order to achieve the objective, the quantitative method consisted in gathering numeric data about selected parameters from a predefined period. The subsequent comparative analysis and application of deductive logic (deductive reasoning) allowed for defining the mutual interconnectedness of territorial distribution of military diplomatic offices and information interests of the Ministry of Defence.

The working hypothesis was that Czech military diplomacy has been able to reflect the transformation of Czech foreign policy in the past 25 years and its territorial distribution reacted to the changing security environment and relevant information priorities.

The study focused on the period between 01/01 1992 and 31/12 2018, the timeframe being defined with respect to the problems researched. The study also defined years that were or could have been crucial for territorial prioritization of Czech military diplomacy.

The critical years were, in particular, 1992 and 1993, since Czechoslovakia split on 01/01 1993 in a constitutional manner and the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic were newly formed. Naturally, this decisive step in modern history of the two countries was crucial for foreign services of both countries including new conditions for the activity of military diplomats.

Other milestone years were 1999 when the Czech Republic joined NATO and 2004 when the country joined the EU. 2005 brought around key legislative, institutional and administrative changes when new laws concerning the activity of the Military Intelligence were adopted. The monitored period ends in 2018 when changes in the long-term heading of Czech military diplomacy and its territorial influence could (have) become evident.

It is interesting to see the extent to which territorial distribution of military diplomatic offices takes into consideration interests of constitutional bodies and state bodies and institutions active in the field of defence and security of the Czech Republic.

This information need is reflected in the activity of the Military Intelligence through its legal authority (Provisions of Art. 5(3, 4) of Act No. 153/1994 Coll., on the Intelligence Services of the Czech Republic) and tasks assigned by the Government of the Czech Republic and the President of the Czech Republic (These are not classified reports on the activity of the Military Intelligence within

the meaning of the provision of Art. 8(1) of Act No. 153/1994 Coll., on the Intelligence Services of the Czech Republic). With respect to the secret nature of the tasks assigned to the Military Intelligence, this study used exclusively publicly available sources, i.e. annual reports on activity of the Military Intelligence (These are not classified reports on the activity of the Military Intelligence within the meaning of the provision of Art. 8(1) of Act No. 153/1994 Coll., on the Intelligence Services of the Czech Republic). Such reports have been published annually as of 2004. Although their structure has differed over the years and the published data change in terms of their extent and nature, they allow for understanding information interests of this defence intelligence agency that are implemented through its activities in selected territories. They are referred to as "critical regions" in annual reports and they take into account the degree of threats in the field of legal scope of the Military Intelligence.

It was accepted that the indicator of information interests of the main receivers of information outputs of the Military Intelligence would be the share of output information pertaining to the interest regions. This served as a basis for setting priority critical regions that had obviously become primary objectives of information efforts of military intelligence services.

Following from understanding the priority critical regions the study assessed changes in territorial structures of military diplomacy as one of the source elements of the activity of the Military Intelligence.

The actual information priorities are evidenced in an overview of these critical regions and in some annual reports as well as the reported amount of information submitted to the defined receivers from the defence and other spheres. The study reflects information submitted to the President of the Czech Republic and political and military representatives of the Czech Republic. It does not take account of information submitted to foreign missions of the Army of the Czech Republic, other governmental or police authorities or information exchanged within international collaboration of intelligence services.

While thematic information interests (terrorism, extremism, cyber threats, etc.) document a significant part of the Military Intelligence activity, they are not sufficiently relevant to the purpose of the study with respect to territorial distribution of military diplomacy. It is evident that, e.g., international and global terrorism has a deeper relation to a certain country or region, but its supranational nature allows for information coverage of this phenomenon on a much larger territorial scale than one would think. The specificities of problems linked with terrorism and the need for intensive international intelligence collaboration have

often formed a decisive presumption for opening a military diplomatic office in a preselected country.

Therefore, the study considers all critical regions as indicators of priority information interests in 2004-2016.

Presuming that military diplomacy took into consideration priority information interests of the intelligence agency and requirements of its analytical section, then office distribution necessarily demonstrated in the territorial transformation.

2. The Theoretical Conceptualization of the Military Diplomacy

In general sense, diplomacy refers to the management of international relations, and it is regarded as the instrument of foreign policy; in a modern sense mainly using negotiation as the main method to pursuit foreign policy (Veselý, 2011, p. 10). During the preparation and assertion of the state's foreign policy decisions, the quality of the diplomatic corps plays an irreplaceable and decisive role (Dejmek, 2012, p. 9). Diplomacy is structured in accordance with its application in respective sectors of the state's foreign policy – political (the foreign policy agenda of the state), parliamentary (the bilateral and multilateral level of contacts of the parliamentary character), preventive (to prevent conflicts and including preventive disarmament), business and economic (pursuing the state's economic interests abroad), public (communication process with foreign publics in order to positively influence their perceptions of the respective country) and military diplomacy (Veselý, 2011, pp. 23-29). According to Professor **Krejčí**, *“the contemporary Czech language perceives the term of diplomacy in several ways: it can be used to denominate official action of state representatives in the field of foreign policy; it can be perceived as a set of international relations norms; it is used to describe the diplomatic profession as well as a diplomatic corps; and in other meaning it stands for a set of interpersonal skills for managing negotiations”* (Krejčí, 2010, p. 335). Diplomacy can also be characterized as the pursuit of the state's foreign policy via diplomatic relations carried out by diplomatic missions of the sending state in the recipient state (Feltham, 2003, p. 16).

For purposes of this article, **Pajtinka's** very apt definition of military diplomacy and its functions can be used: *„Military diplomacy can be defined as a set of activities carried out mainly by the representatives of the defence department, as well as other state institutions, aimed at pursuing the foreign policy interests of the state in the field of security and defence policy, and whose actions are based*

on the use of negotiations and other diplomatic instruments. Military diplomacy as such performs several basic functions, which include the following: 1. Gathering and analysing of information on the armed forces and the security situation in the receiving state, 2. Promotion of cooperation, communication and mutual relations between the armed forces of the sending and the receiving state, 3. Organization of working visits of representatives of the defence authorities and of peaceful stay of the military units of the sending state in the receiving state, 4. Support of business contracts with arms and military equipment between the sending and the receiving state, and 5. Representation of the sending state and its armed forces at official ceremonies and other events in the receiving state.” (Pajtínka, 2016).

3. The Functional Configuration of the Czech Military Diplomacy

From the perspective of the functional structure of the military diplomacy institutions, it can be inferred that just by the title of his/her function, a defence attaché represents the whole department of defence of the sending country, while a military attaché is responsible primarily for the land forces domain, and an air attaché deals with matters related to the air force. Countries possessing naval forces also send their naval attaché with specific competence in the navy. In addition, there are less traditional categories of military attachés; for example, the United States sometimes delegate their Marine Attaché representing the U. S. Marine Corps (Art. 3e SECNAV Instruction 1300.16. U. S. Department of the Navy, p. 2). Obviously, such delegation is reasonable only when the recipient state can offer a respective counterpart and prepares for / conducts the same kind of military operations.

In accordance with the representation theory of the international law, diplomats of the abovementioned categories represent the sending authority, and therefore they should be given the same privileges and legal immunities during their stay on the recipient state territory as the sending authority, i.e., the head of state, ministers, etc. According to **Hedvábná**, *“diplomatic officials by no means assume the role of the head of state, they only represent their governments. However, the representation theory clearly supports justification of diplomatic privileges and immunity, as the right for an embassy is one of the attributes of a sovereign state’s legal personality under the international law”* (Hedvábná, 2011,

p. 8). This statement shall be analogically applied to the status of military diplomats as well.

Appointment of multiple military diplomatic officials to a diplomatic mission depends on the scope and significance of the subject matters. In case of deployment of more military diplomats, the agenda is structured and divided with respect to specific competencies, i.e., the air force attaché deals primarily with the recipient state's air force, the naval attaché with the navy, whereas the defence attaché covers the overall political and military-strategic framework. If the number of military diplomats is limited, the responsibilities of the defence attaché are usually cumulated, e.g., the defence attaché – naval attaché, which means that such a dual-headed official is responsible for the management of the office, but at the same time he or she represents the sending state's naval forces, and interacts with the navy of the recipient state.

In case of larger deployments of military diplomatic personnel, officers are appointed to the positions of the defence attaché and military, or air force or naval attaché. Similarly, in line with the practice of the sending state, officers can also take positions of assistants to the abovementioned military diplomats. In the context of the Czech military diplomacy hierarchy, the defence attaché is the highest military diplomatic position. Although today this is actually the most common military diplomatic position, it was not the case even in the recent past of the Czech military diplomacy. For example, in 1993 these positions were manned only at two out of 25 missions (the United States and the Union of the Independent States), which represented only eight percent of the countries with the Czech military diplomatic mission (Army of the Czech Republic in facts - 1993, pp. 39-40). In 1995 it was four out of 24 (the United States, Russian Federation, France and United Kingdom), which was 17 percent (Military yearbook 1995, pp. 33-34). It is evident that all the countries where the Czech Republic sent its defence attachés rank among the states with great influence in global politics. In other countries, military component of the diplomatic mission was headed by the military and air force attaché. This practice changed in January 2015, when the military sections of the Czech diplomatic missions started to be led exclusively by the defence attachés. Nevertheless, the amendment to the law on professional soldiers, which came into effect in July 2015, limited the number of OF-5 positions. The change also affected a portion of office head positions which were reduced to the rank of OF-4. As a result, the defence attaché position was retained for generals and full colonels, while the OF-4 rank was assigned to the military and air force attachés. These adjustments, however, had no significant

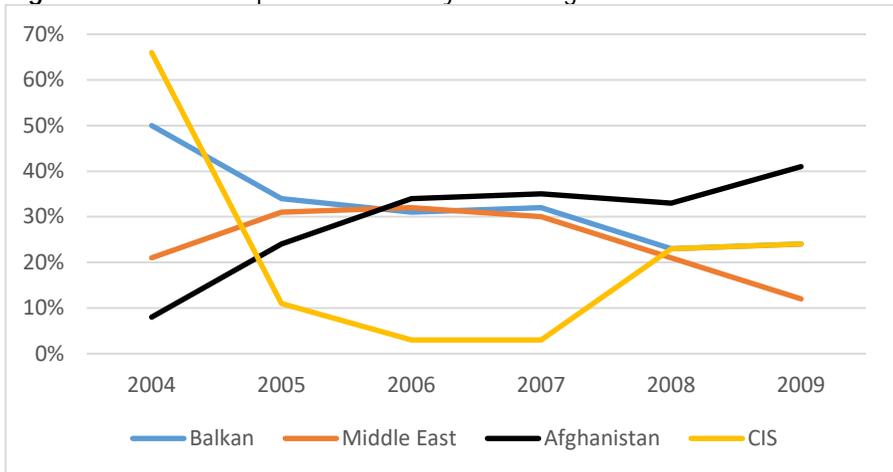
impact on the practical function and position of the office directors. In the current Czech practice, the diplomatic personnel at most military diplomatic offices include only the defence attaché or the military and air force attaché. About a fifth of the offices is manned by the defence attaché and additional diplomatic employee at the officer rank – military and/or air force attaché (the author's experience from his management positions and other related activities in the Czech military diplomacy from 2012 to 2018).

4. Priority critical regions

The following four critical regions profiled from 2004-2009 information outputs issued by the Military Intelligence: the Balkans, the Middle East, Afghanistan and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Since 2010, Africa has been referred to as an independent region (in previous years it fell under the Middle East) (Annual reports on activity of the Military Intelligence 2004-2016).

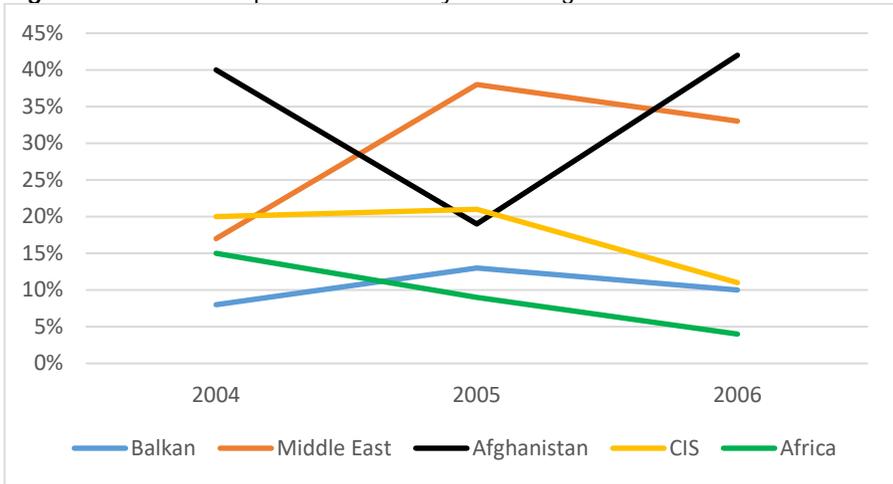
The share of critical regions in output information in 2004-2012 is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Share of output information by critical regions in 2004 - 2009



Source: Annual reports on activity of the Military Intelligence 2004-2009

Figure 2: Share of output information by critical regions in 2004 - 2006



Source: Annual reports on activity of the Military Intelligence 2004-2006

As of 2013, the Military Intelligence no longer publishes in its publicly available reports data that would show the share of the critical regions in the total amount of output information.

Nevertheless, activity in the following five critical regions was reported for 2013-2016:

- the Middle East
- Afghanistan and Pakistan
- former Soviet Union countries
- Africa
- the Balkans.

The charts above show that the share of critical regions in 2004-2012 output production of the Military Intelligence differs, in some years quite radically. The reasons for such differences cannot be completely clarified given the restricted conditions for this study, i.e., the lack of a detailed analysis of information output and assignment of authorized receivers.

It is primarily the development of political-military, military-strategic and security situation in the monitored regions that was decisive for emphasis laid on information activity in the given territories. In some spheres, the dynamics of such development has transformed to such a degree over the years that it necessarily

resulted in a change in the information significance. We can mention, for instance, the lengthy Syrian Civil War, persisting dismal security situation in Iraq, activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria and the 2015 migration crisis that affected security environment in the Balkans.

An important aspect influencing the information interest of the Military Intelligence is the activity of units of the Army of the Czech Republic in foreign operations (a typical example is the information interest in Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan as well as in the situation in Mali in Western Africa).

5. Changes in the territorial structure of military diplomacy

Structure of military diplomatic offices can only take into account the dynamics of political and security development gradually and not always as fast as it would be desirable, particularly from the perspective of information necessity. Many various factors interfere with the process of accreditation (opening) of new offices, on the part of the Czech Republic as well as host countries. Lengthiness of diplomatic administrative procedures, especially in some non-European countries, and the quality of bilateral relations affect strongly the ability to respond to the changing security situation by launching operation of a new military diplomatic unit. Furthermore, ambitions of the Military Intelligence as the administrator of this expertise are limited by the funds allocated and planning procedure concerning their expenditure under the Ministry of Defence.

Some important decisions in military diplomacy take longer to implement and their contribution on the information level shows over a longer time horizon. At the same time, military diplomacy is an effective source element, mainly in conditions where it would be much more complicated and lengthier for other intelligence services to establish themselves there. That is why investing in establishing new military diplomatic offices seems to be highly beneficial in terms of covering a certain territory or topic, despite its administrative and time complexity.

On the other hand, hasty decisions concerning opening or closing down an office may have significantly negative impact as they may prove as non-conceptual allocation of sources to non-prospective or dysfunctional elements in the system of military diplomacy abroad.

In order to assess and evaluate changes in the territorial prioritization of military diplomatic offices in line with information necessity, the study selected cases of regional relocation in a period that may have information value with

respect to the transforming international political situation, security context and the nature of threats.

5.1 The period before the Czech Republic's accession to NATO

In a simplified way, we can say that this period distinguished with a significant change in the domestic policy whose impacts manifested fundamentally also in foreign policy. The dissolution of Czechoslovakia on 1 January 1993 was a step that had undeniable impact on functioning of military diplomacy since many experienced Slovak professionals with extensive language skills who had worked for military diplomacy opted to work for armed forces of the Slovak Republic.

The period was characterized by political efforts to break out of previous alliance with states of the former Warsaw Pact and to focus on building new relations of different nature with NATO member states in the context of Czech interest to join this political-military organization. This new foreign policy was also necessarily set to manifest in actual military diplomacy. Offices in West Europe started focusing on obtaining information about the structure, arsenal and equipment of NATO armies, not from the perspective of an enemy, but rather as a possible source of inspiration for changes to be implemented in its own armed forces. Relations with former member states of the Warsaw Pact differed depending on their newly declared foreign and political-military orientation.

Military relations in "peripheries" of a formerly bipolar world, in which socialist Czechoslovakia engaged in various forms of aid and collaboration, became subject to transformation. A typical example of such former relations were Arab nationalistic regimes in the Middle East (**Ben Bella's** and **Boumédiène's** Algeria, Ba'athist Syria and Egypt from mid-1960s as well as Iraq with its anti-communist internal policy after 1963, **Gaddafi's** Libya from the beginning of the 1970s and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen striving for "scientific socialism") (Zídek and Sieber, 2009, pp. 18 – 20).

That period was also unavoidably characterized with certain chaos and hesitation concerning implementation of certain structural changes. The second half of the 1990s distinguished with a clear foreign policy objective of the Czech Republic, i.e. joining NATO (Czech Republic and NATO chronologically. The 1994-1996 period and 1997-1998 period).

Table 1 shows quantitative distribution of military diplomatic residential offices in 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1998.

Table 1: Quantitative continental distribution of Czech military diplomatic offices in 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1998

<i>Continent</i>	<i>1992</i>		<i>1993</i>		<i>1995</i>		<i>1998</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>
Europe	17	65.5%	18	66.5%	18	75.5%	19	73%
Asia	4	15%	5	18.5%	4	16.5%	4	15.5%
Africa	3	11.5%	5	7.5%	1	4%	1	4%
America	2	7.5%	2	7.5%	1	4%	2	7.5%
Total	26	100%	27	100%	24	100%	26	100%

Source: Military yearbook 1992, pp. 20 – 23, Army of the Czech Republic in facts - 1993, pp. 50 – 52, Military yearbook 1995, pp. 33 – 34 and Ministry of Defence yearbook 1998, p. 48

The numbers above clearly show that the structure of military diplomatic offices over the monitored period has not changed significantly. The number of offices and their distribution in continents testifies of the low interest in territorial restructuring. An interesting trend can be seen in an increase in their share in favour of offices located in Europe.

Split of the Czechoslovak Federation did not result immediately in relocation with the exception of a formal establishment of the office of defence attaché in Bratislava that, however, was not filled in 1993.

5.2 The period after the Czech Republic's accession to NATO

The Czech Republic's accession to NATO was undoubtedly a decisive milestone in modern history of the Czech Republic. It brought around the need for complex transformation of armed forces and their sections including intelligence service and military diplomacy.

Overviews of the numbers of continental relocation of military diplomatic offices in the year of entry and a year later (see Table 2 below) clearly show that no significant changes occurred.

Table 2: Quantitative continental distribution of Czech military diplomatic offices in 1999 and 2000

Continent	1999		2000	
	Number	Share	Number	Share
Europe	19	73%	20	71.5%
Asia	4	15.5%	5	18%
Africa	1	4%	1	3.5%
America	2	7.5%	2	7%
Total	26	100%	28	100%

Source: Ministry of Defence Yearbook 1999, p. 91, and Ministry of Defence Yearbook 2000, p. 78

As suggested above, the decisive transformation of the Military Intelligence was based on legislative changes pertaining to the activity and, most importantly, organization of this intelligence agency. The new legislation allowed for implementing the most extensive changes in the system of secret services from 1994.

The gradually changing operation of the Military Intelligence reflected also in some aspects of military diplomatic activity and the emphasis on information coverage linked not only with traditional threats, but also with new security phenomena (in particular in the context of the situation after 11/09 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S. and the growing influence of non-state actors in the international security environment). With respect to the previously described diplomatic, personnel and material context, these changes manifested in military diplomacy with a delay of several years.

The Military Intelligence commented on the activity of military diplomacy in 2009: *“A long-term trend of the Military Intelligence is to enhance its presence in critical and high-risk regions. In this connection, the defence attaché in Pakistan, who operates in a country that contributes significantly to fighting international terrorism while being plagued by internal problems caused by this phenomenon, received a consent from the Afghan government with accreditation for Afghanistan in 2009. This step resulted from the need for comprehensive coverage of this high-risk region. At the same time, 3 new defence attaché’s offices opened in 2009 in the following countries: Algeria, Ethiopia and Kuwait. One of the tasks of the Defence attaché’s office in Algeria is to develop relations with Algerian national entities fighting terrorism and with the Algerian anti-terrorist*

centre. The Defence attaché's office in Ethiopia is involved in collaboration with the African Union, covering a vast area with a very unstable security situation." (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence in 2009, p. 23)

Opening an office in Algeria, in addition to the declared collaboration with Algerian authorities in the field of fighting terrorism, proved prospective when accrediting a defence attaché in the neighbouring Mali whose intelligence significance increased sharply in March 2013 when units of the Army of the Czech Republic first participated in an EU training mission (EU TM Mali). Accreditation is at present the only way for military diplomacy to achieve information influence as the Czech Republic does not have diplomatic mission in Mali, however, it is planned to open in future.

Declaration of the Military Intelligence about the collaboration with the African Union through establishing a military diplomatic office in Ethiopia does not fully correspond with reality. The decisive motive for opening an office in Addis Ababa was undoubtedly the view of establishing and extending collaboration with African Union bodies and information coverage of terrorism spreading in the Horn of Africa and in Sahel. However, according to experiences of the defence attachés in Ethiopia concerning communication with the African Union failed to fulfil expectations to such a degree that it was decided to relocate the office from Addis Ababa to Nairobi, Kenya. This territorial relocation in Sub-Saharan Africa allowed for increasing information output depending particularly on the use of HUMINT while it created favourable conditions for developing collaboration in a specific field between selected sections of the Army of the Czech Republic and Kenyan armed forces and security corps in their fight against regional terrorism.

Similarly, the expectations concerning the information possibilities of the military attaché in Kuwait were not fulfilled either. Low information possibilities resulting from the limited number of military diplomats accredited in Kuwait together with other difficulties when asserting certain forms and methods of work in this country reflected in the decision to relocate the office from Kuwait to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

Limits in information activity led the Military Intelligence to relocate two military attaché's offices, although it was demanding in terms of administrative, organizational, logistic and financial requirements.

In 2010, another military attaché's office opened in the Near East and in Amman, Jordan. One of the main motives for this step was an envisioned increase of information possibilities in the region. (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence in 2010, p. 25)

In 2011, the network of Czech military attachés' offices expanded by opening an office in Baku, Azerbaijan. Furthermore, *"...in connection with the intention of the Military Intelligence, long-term conception was reassessed and an intention to relocate military attachés' offices was presented with the aim of transferring them to critical countries and regions and increasing their information contribution"*. (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence in 2011, p. 25)

Information priorities of the activity of military diplomatic offices openly prevail among reasons for establishing new and partially relocating existing offices, regardless of the fact that *"...activities of military diplomacy performed through official diplomatic missions of the Czech Republic abroad places considerable demands on the budget of the Military Intelligence"*. (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence in 2011, p. 25)

Emphasis on taking advantage of the information potential of military diplomacy was also presented in assessment of the activity in 2012 when *"...new concept of optimizing defence attaché's offices by relocating them to critical countries and regions proved beneficial as this measure allowed for increasing the quality and quantity of relevant information sent to institutional bodies responsible for defence and security of the Czech Republic and to representatives of the Army of the Czech Republic as well as to information-intelligence support of units deployed in operations abroad. As a result, military attaché's offices were closed in Belgium and Italy in 2012"*. (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence 2012, p. 26)

With the prospect of having the largest information coverage of the political and military development of the Syrian Civil War, the defence attaché's office, part of the embassy of the Czech Republic in Damascus, plays an irreplaceable role. The importance of its activity in terms of obtaining relevant news from this territory is indisputable, regardless of any views held by some Czech politicians who find the mere existence and functioning of the diplomatic mission led by the extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador controversial, particularly from the perspective of international policy. (Annual report on activity of the Military Intelligence 2013, p. 23.)

In summer 2015, the first military diplomatic office of the Czech Republic opened in South America: the military and air force attaché's office in Brazil. Establishment of this office was not primarily motivated by the information interest in this region, the exclusive reason was to provide support of a military diplomat to economic activities of Czech companies operating in defence industry in South America.

Table 3: Quantitative continental distribution of Czech military diplomatic offices on 01/01 2015 and on 01/07 2018

<i>Continent</i>	<i>01/01 2015</i>		<i>01/07 2018</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Share</i>
Europe	12	46%	14	48%
Asia	10	38.5%	10	34.5%
Africa	3	11.5%	3	10.5%
America	1	4%	2	7%
Total	26	100%	29	100%

Source: The chart was made by the author using data obtained in the position of the head of the Czech military diplomacy department

In an effort to extend information possibilities of military diplomacy, the number of offices was further increased after 2015 by opening residential offices in Albania and Belarus.

In order to assess territorial prioritization of military diplomatic offices in the context of information interest of the Military Intelligence it is worth noticing the share of selected regions in the total number of functional residential offices in the monitored period.

Europe was defined as a region without post-Soviet Union states with the exception of future and current NATO and EU member states (i.e., without Turkey that is sometimes considered part of Europe). Similarly, the region of the post-Soviet states does not include Baltic countries that are NATO and EU member states. When assessing the Near East, the study took into account also Turkey that is a significant regional actor in terms of its political influence, military-strategic and security positions.

Table 4: Share of selected regions in the total number of residential offices

<i>Year</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>Near East</i>	<i>Post-Soviet states</i>
1992	50%	15%	4%
1993	56%	18%	7%
1995	58%	21%	8%
1998	58%	20%	8%
1999	62%	20%	8%
2000	60%	18%	7%
2015	35%	27%	12%
2018	34%	24%	17%

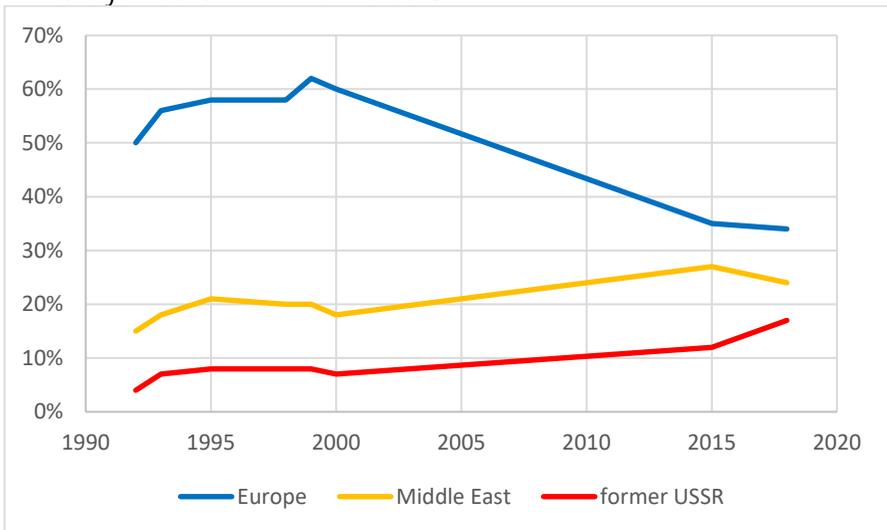
Source: Military yearbook 1992, pp. 20 – 23, Army of the Czech Republic in facts - 1993, pp. 50 – 52, Military yearbook 1995, pp. 33 – 34 and Ministry of Defence yearbook 1998, p. 48, Ministry of Defence Yearbook 1999, p. 91, Ministry of Defence Yearbook 2000, p.78, and data of the Czech military diplomacy department

The above stated data show that reform of the Military Intelligence after 2005 laid more emphasis on relocating military diplomatic offices from “rather calm” Europe to regions with an evident increase in security threats and thus with an increased information interest on the part of authorized receivers in the Czech Republic.

The share of offices in Europe dropped almost by half between 2000 and 2018 in favour of offices in, *inter alia*, the Near East (growth by approximately 6%). The change was noticeable particularly in post-Soviet states (including post-Soviet states in Middle Asia) where the number of offices grew almost 2.5 times.

Such regional changes in the structure of military diplomatic offices allowed for a more balanced representation of the regions in the context of the change of their information importance. This convergence is clearly seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Share of selected regions in the total number of residential offices in selected years between 1992 and 2018.



Source: The chart was made by the author using data from Table 4.

Many residential offices were closed to the south of the Czech Republic and in the “southern flank” of Europe. The changes were made with awareness of other forms of communication between NATO and EU member states than through military diplomats. Existence of many offices in Europe was motivated not from the perspective of their primary information use by the Military Intelligence, but by different reasons for maintaining their activity. For instance, a vast part of communication with Sweden concerns JAS-39 Gripen, Swedish fighter aircrafts used by the Czech Air Force; other examples of communication relate to existing or expected collaboration linked with foreign technologies and products used by Czech armed forces.

Conclusion

After 1990, it could be expected that fundamental changes linked with changes in the political regime of Czechoslovakia and subsequently of the Czech Republic would be implemented alongside with the change of its foreign and defence policy. However, the research shows that no fundamental changes were actually made in 1992-2005 and even the Czech Republic’s accession to the EU and NATO did not lead to immediate territorial transformation of Czech military diplomacy. This illogical situation was consequence of the persisting previous institutional arrangement and chaotic legislative conditions set shortly after the dissolution of the Czechoslovak Federation. A significant change in the legislation environment concerning the Military Intelligence was only made six years after the Czech Republic joined NATO and a year after the country joined the EU and it allowed for changes in terms of relocating military diplomatic offices. The period from 2005 until present is characterized by the fact that information interests are the decisive motive for changes in the territorial configuration of Czech military diplomatic offices. On the basis of the comparison of territorial distribution of military diplomatic offices in selected years and taking into account formulations presented by the management of the Military Intelligence in annual reports on its activity it can be concluded that territorial prioritization of Czech military diplomatic offices reflects information interests of the Czech defence sector with respect to high-risk regions and existing threats in the field of defence and security.

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