

**ZOLTÁN JOBBÁGY – LAJOS KOMJÁTHY****Countering Insider Threat in Missions: A Proposition****A belső fenyegetettség leküzdésén a missziókban: javaslatok****Abstract**

*Military and internal challenges generate countless questions in Afghanistan as the country changes in many ways. The bulk of the forces left the country by the end of 2014, the remaining force elements have different tasks. Assisting and training activities are of utmost importance, but those elements who provide this to the Afghan partners face a new sort of challenge, the so-called insider threat. The authors examine the phenomenon from multiple angles and propose actions to reduce the chance of its occurrence.*

*Keywords: insider threat, asymmetric warfare, information campaign*

**Absztrakt**

*Katonai és belső kihívások számos kérdést vetnek fel Afganisztánban, ahogy az ország folyamatosan változik. Az országban állomásozó erők nagy része elhagyta Afganisztánt 2014 végén, az országban még állomásozó erők feladata megváltozott. A tanácsadó és támogató erők számára azonban egy új fenyegetés, a belső fenyegetettség jelent kihívást. A szerzők a jelenséget több oldalról megközelítve próbálnak lépéseket javasolni a lehetséges megelőzésre.*

*Kulcsszavak: belső fenyegetettség, aszimmetrikus hadviselés, információs hadjárat*

Military and internal challenges generate countless questions in Afghanistan as the country changes in many ways. Both size and tasks of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) that promoted the democratisation process of Afghanistan altered significantly. The bulk of the forces left the country by the end of 2014, the remaining force elements in the Framework of Resolute Support Mission (RSM) have different tasks. Providing security for the population is now the responsibility of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF),

within which the Afghan National Army (ANA) bears the biggest share. Under this circumstance training and assisting activities are of utmost importance.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from obvious language and cultural differences, those training and assisting elements who provide this to the Afghan partners face a new sort of challenge, the so-called *insider threat*.<sup>2</sup> The problem of insider threat, which can be seen as an attack by someone who is in a position of trust, became a hot issue in 2011/12 when the two authors also served with ISAF.<sup>3</sup>

There is no commonly accepted definition of insider threat yet.<sup>4</sup> The authors do not propose a definition, but examine insider threat from many angles and ask if it is a new form of asymmetric warfare, an expression of cultural prejudices, a form of revenge for individual humiliation, or an action motivated by religion? To find suitable answers to the questions the authors examine the phenomenon from multiple angles and propose actions to reduce the chance of its occurrence.

#### 1) A NEW FORM OF ASYMMETRIC WARFARE?

Retrospective analyses of many recent events ending in tragedy have made clear that the attackers were in connection with the Taliban and infiltrated into the ranks of the ANSF based on their guidance. Their attacks were the results of external support and carried out at a moment that was politically or militarily seen as best. An event of this kind was the massacre of Canadian trainers and the Afghan policemen protecting them. Detecting and tracking connections to the Taliban is very difficult due to extended family relationship of the persons involved.

#### 2) AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL PREJUDICES?

In a country that is as diverse in terms of culture and ethnicity as Afghanistan, many differing perceptions exist. As a result the work of groups assisting in the democratisation process may be perceived as part of a process that aims at cultural suppression of indigenous values. Unfortunate events such as the 2012 Quran burning incident clearly contribute to such feelings. This attitude can be enforced by actions in which the Taliban

<sup>1</sup> Grare, Federic: Afghanistan Post-2014: Scenarios and Consequences, Transatlantic Security Debates, February 2014,

<sup>2</sup> Brooke-Holland, Louisa: *In Brief: Afghanistan – insider attacks*, House of Common Library, SN06423, 18 September 2012

<sup>3</sup> Howard, John (Lt. Col): *Insider Threat*, HQ ISAF COMISAF Advisory and Assistance Team (CAAT), PPT presentation, Internet, accessed 12. 08. 2015, available at [http://www.mzv.cz/file/1079230/CAS\\_LtCol\\_Howard\\_Insider\\_Threat\\_Brussels\\_Briefing.ppt](http://www.mzv.cz/file/1079230/CAS_LtCol_Howard_Insider_Threat_Brussels_Briefing.ppt).

<sup>4</sup> For the lack of definition is a good example of the entire Special Edition (Volume 4/Issue 1) of Coin Common Sense, a publication of the COMISAF Advisory & Assistance Team.

committed atrocities against the civilian population in uniforms normally associated with international allied and coalition forces thus decreasing confidence.

### 3) A FORM OF REVENGE FOR INDIVIDUAL HUMILIATION?

The pride of the Afghan people is well known. It is also well known that apart from Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan nobody could really defeat the Afghans. Although training and assistance elements always emphasise that they are in Afghanistan to help and not to occupy, some aspects of their efforts may be perceived as offence. Failure in achieving an objective, not proceeding at a required pace all may cause feelings of humiliation, a sort of loss of face. All this can be exacerbated by cultural and behavioural differences ending in serious and unfortunate incidents.

### 4) AN ACTION MOTIVATED BY RELIGION?

Wars can become religious in nature as there are many factors that promote this development. Boundaries of theatres of operations tend to become increasingly porous due to internet and media factors. Apart from active cells abroad there are also sleeping ones at home that wait for activation. Facing various financial and economic problems more and more people turn to religion even in countries where religion did not play an active role. Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/ISIS) is the best example for religiously motivated group of people.

## CONCLUSION

As it became clear there are many aspects of insider threat. In order to counter it the following actions are proposed:

- A proper information campaign aimed at the public to accept the presence of training and assistance elements;
- Proper personal relationships based on trust and mutual respect to reduce the possibility of insider threat;
- A thorough knowledge of indigenous culture and religion of training and assistance personnel;
- A constant reevaluation of existing training and assistance practices and methods to reduce friction and misunderstanding.

Should these actions be done then the chance for insider threat to occur can be reduced significantly.

## HADTUDOMÁNYI SZEMLE

2015. VIII. évfolyam 3. szám

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