The book *The Small State Facing Asymmetric Environment: A Reconsideration of the Identity? The Slovenian Experience* analyses asymmetry in warfare from the perspective of a small nation by combining a historical, a defence-strategic and also a wider security approach, including certain moral-legal and technological dimensions. Its primary objective is to prove that small countries, "often endowed" with rich historical experience, can also significantly contribute to discussions of asymmetric warfare and conflict understanding. It thus aims to fill a gap in the field, as similar studies in the field mostly focus on powerful states. The book mainly focuses on Slovenian asymmetric experiences, which went through a series of dramatic alterations in the last 60 years. The Slovenes were forced to use an asymmetric approach during the Second World War, but today Slovenia is a part of both NATO and the EU alliance. And thus it is increasingly faced with situations where an asymmetric approach is used against it (especially in Afghanistan). The book also analyses how the still present and strong historical memories of asymmetric warfare cause almost schizophrenic political and social reactions and a huge identity crisis in Slovenia. The authors argue that in Slovenia the division within the nation, which has escalated in World War II and the years that followed, is still present nowadays, and the planned reconciliation of the nation has not happened yet.

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INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War was undoubtedly characterized by the end of a relative stability and symmetric distribution of power within the international community, which was reflected mainly in the security area. Although in that period an important role was, of course, played by the so-called proxy wars, where at least two superpowers indirectly competed for supremacy, asymmetric conflicts were, from the strategic point of view, of secondary importance. This changed at the beginning of the 1990s with the demise of the Soviet Union as one of the world centres of power. Despite a flood of sources and analyses of asymmetric warfare and conflicts, a wrong perception has lately appeared – that the latter two are something new. However, it is also true that twenty years after the end of the Cold War we still witness attempts to redefine the power at the global level as well as at the level of individual societies or countries. Furthermore, the significant technological, economic, political and military supremacy of the United States has caused its new challengers to return to asymmetry, since each of the world superpowers has had to address similar challenges.

These presumptions serve as a point of departure for this monograph, in which we are analysing asymmetry in warfare from the perspective of a small nation by combining a historical, a defence-strategic and also a wider security approach, including certain moral-legal and technological dimensions. We are aware that such analysis is useful only if it can offer an answer to numerous current challenges. However, our primary objective is to prove that small countries, often "endowed" with rich historical experience, can also significantly contribute to the discussions of how we are to understand asymmetric warfare and conflicts. This is so because small states can really contribute to international security by acting as unbiased/neutral diplomatic brokers in conflicts or active participants in peacekeeping missions and other military operations, or by hosting foreign military bases.

There is no doubt that asymmetry has been a characteristic of many conflicts in history, as it is also clear that more and more authors try to look for a historical interpretation of the current conflict situations (Porter, 2006). A similar idea is also found in Grange (2001), whose main thesis is that at the present time, only the importance of asymmetry has increased. For that reason asymmetry is a historical theorem. Of course not everyone can agree with these authors, but the present work may be another in which an important element of asymmetry is its social implications – especially within the small nation. Asymmetry is largely perceived as a challenge for strong and powerful military actors (e.g. Mack, 1975, Arreguin-Toft, 2001), but at the same time an analysis which would take small/weak actors (states) to the forefront and examine the implications of asymmetric warfare (especially its counterinsurgency part) over time from their perspective is relatively rare. This is the reason why we decided to analyse Slovenian experiences with asymmetric conflicts, which, in the last 60 years, had been dramatically altered. If the Slovenes were forced to use an asymmetric approach during the Second World War, when they were victims of the great powers' policies, the situation today is completely different. Slovenia, as a small state, is a part of NATO and the EU alliance. It is increasingly faced with situations where an asymmetric approach is used against it (especially in Afghanistan). Such a situation, due to the still present and strong historical memories in Slovenia, causes an almost schizophrenic political and social reaction and a huge identity crisis in the country. This book proceeds from the assumption that asymmetric warfare leaves very deep wounds and impacts in a society and may lead to permanent instability if the counter-asymmetric-warfare fight (also called counterinsurgency) is based primarily on finding and deepening the differences in the society (in accordance with the minds behind the divide et impera doctrine). In this context, small countries with a few interconnected social networks or socio-political and economic elites are much less sustainable than bigger countries; for that reason, asymmetric warfare can be a reason for such countries' extremely difficult process of conflict management and long term peace-building. A good case study in this respect is Slovenia, where the division within the nation, which has escalated in World War II and the years that followed, is still present nowadays. For that reason, the social cohesion of the country's population is weak, since a reconciliation of the nation has not happened yet. What is more, the divisions from the

past serve as a source of ideological clashes and different political concepts stemming from these historical disputes. We can even argue that the conflict in the society is currently frozen, but it may turn hot in times that would be favourable for it. This reality makes a fertile ground for the prolongation of the social conflicts.

In the present book the empirical analysis addresses two cases of contemporary conflicts which are probably among the most challenging for the global and the Slovenian public nowadays, namely those of Iraq and Afghanistan. It also deals with the recent Slovenian experience in the two countries (particularly in latter), which indicates that Slovenes can also actively participate in a discussion at the European or global level, since the cases described have demonstrated all the fundamental theorems which develop an asymmetric paradigm that is based on the combination of **kinetic** (hard military measures for liquidation of insurgence leaders), **intelligence** (support and preventive measures which sow discord among insurgents and the population following "divide and rule"), **information** and also **social-economic-political measures** (aimed at establishing a long-term stability in the conflict region). The historical experience in the Slovenian or Yugoslav territory shows that such an approach is neither new nor original; however, our approach does include new scientific, technical and social science findings as well as advanced technologies. Nevertheless, no matter how powerful the actors in the military or technological realm are, they will continue to face huge problems if the asymmetric factor enjoys the support of the Slovenian civilian population, the neighbouring countries and/or the global actors, and if the intervention against such actors loses legitimacy in the eyes of the domestic public. On the other hand, an asymmetric cooperation, especially a counter-insurgency cooperation, is, as proved also by the Slovenian experience, extremely aggravating for the given small state's society in a long-term period, since it leads to social instability and forms the basis for the development of conflicting social groups within the supposedly "reconciled" society after the end of the original conflict. Seventy years after World War II, the Slovenian experience can teach us that Slovenia's insurgency and counterinsurgency, which both involved large parts of the population and were led by important social forces from the background, have had long-term consequences which define numerous social relations even today… Having in mind the most recent situation not just in the Middle and Near East, small states are keeping

their international positions, as they have continuously been buffer zones for regional and global powers' interests. And the analysis in the book confirms the thesis that small countries have been, are and will be often faced with asymmetry and its consequences.

The book is organised as follows. In Chapter 1, in a brief geopolitical analysis, the role of small states in the contemporary international and security environment is emphasized. This leads into the core of the book (Chapter 3 and 4), which is dedicated to Slovenian contemporary historical experiences from the Second World War till the ten-day war for independence in 1991. Also, Chapter 4, a crucial part of the book, deals with the Slovenian involvement in the Afghanistan conflict. The analysis in Chapter 4 is very detailed and goes beyond a biased approach. The main goal is to present the Slovenian armed forces' activities in the Afghan theatre as well as the reflections on the situation of the domestic publics. Here the long asymmetric (insurgent) tradition has been faced with counterinsurgency, which led to schizophrenic reactions in the Slovenian public and political elite, not to mention the conflicted feelings that the Slovenian armed forces' personnel felt because of the unclear support for their activities.

1. SMALL STATES AND THE CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1990's gave way to a myriad of states in Europe and Central Asia generally characterised as small. Though small states tended to be perceived as "irritants in international relations" during the Cold War (Lewis, 2009: vii), they are nowadays relatively even more important than they used to be during the bipolar era of international relations, when greater powers often saw strategic relevance in interfering in domestic affairs of smaller states, and violated their territorial integrity when deemed necessary. But, notwithstanding the greater number of small states in contemporary security environment, their increased relative weight, accompanied by greater interest for scientific analysis of the "small states phenomena" (their vulnerability and possibilities of survival, economic viability etc.), a unanimously accepted definition of small states has not been agreed yet.

The definitions of small states vary. Many scholars (e. g. Annette Baker Fox, David Vital) avoid the problem of definition, often considering it irrelevant. However, it is, for analytical purposes, important to have at least a bit of an agreed-upon definition (in order to know what we are talking about). Hence, scholars continued offering more or less creative definitions. Some of them link "smallness" to measurable characteristics, such as population size, territorial area of the state etc. This approach, too, does not prove to be proper because scholars usually put the threshold in a more or less arbitrary way. Further attempts to define small states emphasize the argument that the relationship between large and small states cannot be explained by measurable facts alone, but is dependent on other variables, such as the structure of the international system, states' geographical positions, and domestic political systems (Amstrup, 1976). In this manner, Keohane (1969: 296) defines a small state as "a state whose leaders consider that it can never, acting alone

or in a small group, have a significant impact on the system." Similarly, Wivel–Oest (2010: 434) perceive a small state as "a state that is the weak state in an asymmetric relationship at the global and regional levels, but typically the stronger state at the sub-regional level." The two definitions reflect a "political weight" of a state, taking into consideration that states, great or small, are equal before the law from a legal point of view, but it is "the loudness and weight of their voice" in international arena which varies significantly from one country to another.

Another approach among many might be to simply view any country that is not a middle or great power as a small state. However, that is not to say that a small state cannot be a power of sorts in its own right. Neumann–Gstöhl (2006: 7–8) warn that the distinction between small and great does not quite coincide with the distinction between strong and weak. For example, countries such as Switzerland, the Nordic countries, and the small but oil-rich Gulf States prove that even countries commonly regarded as small can have an impact on world affairs. Be it from a large and strong banking sector, through championing human rights and social equality, to a lucky endowment with raw materials, small states cannot be perceived simply as structurally weak Lilliputians in the international system controlled by the powerful, but can effectively carve a niche for themselves within which their influence can be much bigger than simply what their territory or population size might predict (Zupančič–Hribernik, 2011: 35). Slovenia, the main focus of this book, by most of the definitions, however, falls in the category of small states.[1]

1.1 The small states in the contemporary international security environment: filling the niches

At the beginning, we should outline the basic characteristics of the contemporary security environment, in which small states operate. The dimensions of the international community are changing: in some places subtly, in others evidently. New concepts of sovereignty and security have emerged (e. g. Responsibility to Protect, the concept of human security), challenging the old ones, and adding new dimensions, obligations and limitations to the behaviour of states in international relations (Grizold–Bučar, 2012). Contemporary international community has witnessed an inflation of actors with

more capacities available; more actors have the ability to shape both strategic and operational landscapes and to produce challenges and threats to the interests, territories, infrastructures, economies and assets of other actors. In addition to that, proliferation is taking place in different ways, be it weapons of mass destruction or spread of illicit networks (Nurkin, 2011: 25). Globalisation and the information revolution are making the world interconnected (new patterns of cooperation among international actors are emerging), while at the same time the security dilemmas between states and non-state actors are still being "resolved" by violent means. Though the international community is generally aware that the environmental changes will affect the world as a whole, there is still lack of common agreement on quite a few common challenges the world is facing (Grove, 2010). Last, but not least, various states introduced severe austerity measures and triggered significant cuts in defence budgets, while at the same time the others still pursue the "more guns than butter" policy.

Thus, how do the small states fit in this security environment? According to the theory of small states in international relations, small states do not have as many means to achieve their foreign policy goals as larger states have (Morgenthau, 1948/2004: 97; Keohane, 1969; Benwell, 2011). The belief that small countries have relatively limited opportunities to be important actors in international relations is particularly deeply ingrained in the realist theory of international relations, and especially characteristic of the area of high politics.[2] Departing from the realistic point of view, a small state will likely remain at the mercy of the system level to some extent – other, larger countries (often its neighbours) will, in all likelihood, set "the rules of the game". This logic is clearly illustrated in the crucial dialogue of *The Peloponnesian War* (Thucydides 431BC/1972, 402), when the Athenians say to the Melians: *"as the world goes, right is only in question between equals in power. Meanwhile, the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."*

Following the narrative of Thucydides, a small state has no choice but to operate within such a defined system, and to do what it can, despite its size and potential unfavourable geographic position.[3] However, in the 21st century, the era of the increased interdependence among the actors of international community and greater importance of supranational organizations, this realistic point of view is questionable to some extent. As Benko (1997: 252–254) suggests, precisely because a state is small, it can make the most of the

advantages in the world of big interests; there are certain niches that can be filled up by small states, since they have certain comparative advantages to larger states. On the one side, an important role can arise from the state's own ambitions to "become" an important and credible actor in the international community (e.g. with candidature for a presidency of certain international organization), while on the other side, such a role may arise from unexpected events in the international community (e. g. when an armed conflict breaks out in the vicinity of the state, certain actors in the international community may ask the state to take measures regarding the conflict).

Although there are multiple niches for small states in contemporary international community[4], we are analysing only those loopholes that are principally linked to international security:

a) small state as *a generator of ideas and advocate of international security norms*;
b) small state as *an unbiased/neutral diplomatic broker in conflicts*;
c) active participation of a small state in *peacekeeping missions and other military operations*;
d) small state as *a host of foreign military bases*.

1.2 The small state as a generator of ideas and an advocate of international security norms

Although small states are traditionally seen as lacking so much in the conventional dimension of power that they are deemed inconsequential in international relations, they are by no means powerless (Chong–Maas, 2010: 381), especially if their political elites understand the unwritten rules of contemporary international community. This is especially true for non-material factors, such as ideas and norms. It is true, indeed, that comparing to smaller states the powerful ones have greater capacities in the ideational realm, too. However, "norm entrepreneurs" (Ingebritsen, 2002) need not be powerful states only – small states may be able to play the role of norm entrepreneurs and thus influence world politics under certain circumstances.[5] Small states in particular tend to rely on international organizations and multilateral settings for their norm promoting activities (Jerneck in Björkdahl, 2002: 50). A good example

of a small, but powerful state, which is a strong promoter of internationalist norms in international community, is Sweden. As a strong supporter of the idea and practice of conflict prevention, it has gained the respect and confidence of many in the international arena (Björkdahl, 2002: 74).[6]

A small country can become a strong norm advocate by "outsourcing its knowledge" and sending its experts abroad (to the troubled region, for example), or *vice versa*, by inviting politicians, opinion leaders, experts or students from the region to different forums where the necessity of "striving for good norms" is emphasized (e.g. conferences and seminars on fighting organized crime, corruption, etc.). Thus a small state can enable another state to position itself in the network of institutions and interdependence. Such actions can also indirectly strengthen the power of international law, which is *de facto* one of the rare advantages of small countries in international relations. Be it a small or a big state, if it wishes to be perceived as a normative power and "a force of good" in global/regional affairs, it should rely on normative power at all times, and not only when it is appropriate for it to do so (and when it is not, to rely on means of hard power).

A good possibility for a small state in the realm of norms, which promote peaceful coexistence of various ethnicities and/or peaceful settlement of disputes, is the promotion of (liberal) internationalism. Such a policy, which implies fostering transnational economic and political cooperation and equality among nations (Toje, 2008), should not be mixed with solidarism (Colás, 2011), and has already been recognized by certain small states as an attractive foreign and security policy philosophy (e. g. Iceland, Sweden and other Nordic states, Canada). The natural venues of internationalism are international organizations and other international arrangements; many small states share the recognition that multilateral organizations can protect and promote their interests, so they rather support stronger multilateral organizations and multilateral norms. Canada, for example, supports "creating a multi-polar world" as the "only route to an ultimate agreement on a true global governance structure, whatever form it might take" (Johnston in Kelleher, 2006: 287). On the other hand, there are some clear examples how internationalism has been officially declared as a foreign policy norm of certain states, but in reality it serves as a disguise for pursuance of national interests (Mac Ginty, 2009).

1.3 The small state as an unbiased/neutral diplomatic broker in conflicts

The second option for a small state to find out a possible loophole in the contemporary international security environment is to act as an unbiased broker in conflicts (Kleiboer, 1996; Kelleher, 2006; Goetschel, 2011).[7] This role can serve also as a provider of national identity for small states. An inevitable precondition for a state to be recognized as an unbiased broker in conflicts is inherently linked to the above mentioned assumptions of being recognized at the same time as an impartial normative power, at least to some extent. An important precondition for such a role is that the small state is relatively resourceful in economic terms and has somehow secured its own survival in the anarchical international environment.

The chances of success as an unbiased broker are higher if the country is backed by other (influential) actors in the international community and if it enjoys the unequivocal support of its home population. In this context, a small country can act as a coordinator of actions, especially if it has cultural, linguistic, historic etc. ties to the troubled region and/or conflicting parties. This primarily concerns the stance of a small state: it has to set an example by consistently implementing, advocating and promoting normative policies, which comply with the values the country holds. Namely, a country could credibly encourage the rule of law in a third country only if it itself has an exemplary record in that area; neutral states, many among them small, have certain comparative advantages in that respect (Goetschel, 2011).

A small state can develop distinctive mediation capabilities based on attributes derived from its smallness. If a state is resourceful, long-termly committed (in the sense that it acts on the basis of a systematically applied policy priority, and not as a series of *ad hoc* decisions) and recognized as a nonthreatening mediator with no direct interest in the conflict other than its humanitarian mission, it can skilfully lead behind-the-scenes talks among the adversaries, provided it enjoys credibility on both sides.[8] An interesting example of a small state acting in that manner is presented by Kamrava (2011), who analysed the mediation efforts of Qatar in recent crises. According to him, Qatar, though a small country, has emerged as one of the world's most proactive mediators in the last decade due to the following reasons: first, the fact that it has been perceived as neutral by the disputants, second, the vast

financial resources at its disposal to host mediation talks and offer financial incentives for peace, and third, the personal commitment and involvement of the state's top leaders (intense personal diplomacy).[9]

When acting as a broker, a small country can furthermore, in coordination with the other actors engaged in the conflict, forge the collective pressure needed to nudge the parties towards agreement. An additional advantage for a small state is to develop the reputation for being able to keep negotiations discrete (Kelleher, 2006). Lastly, for other actors engaged in conflict resolution in a certain region – be it international governmental organizations, NGO's or other actors – it is often easier to cooperate with a small state than with a big, influential one, which may have a long record of interventions for its own sake only. Assuming that a small state is not ideologically encumbered, it can also generate new initiatives on how to deescalate tensions and begin the long-term solving of a conflict.

In the cases when a small state has a long-standing record of being a successful broker in conflicts and if it enjoys reputation of being "neutral" (Goetschel, 2011), it usually becomes accepted by "the nations with influence" or, in other words, it achieves direct access to great powers, which can be at some other occasions usefully utilized. Norway's mediatory role in the Sudanese peace process (see Kelleher, 2006) is a clear example how this Scandinavian country has become renowned as "a small state capable of settling big issues".

1.4 Active participation of a small state in peacekeeping missions and other military operations

The majority of small states around the world do not possess the potential and resources to perform the role of mediators in conflicts, where stakes are high. Nevertheless, there are other loopholes for small countries. Linking internationalist efforts to the theory of peacekeeping and the theory of small states,[10] a small state with the appropriate legitimization from the international community (e.g. UN Security Council) can contribute peacekeeping forces as many small states are *per definitionem* less encumbered by ideology than many major forces which often come under attack for the uncompromising pursuit of their national interests.

A good example to illustrate this point are the activities of the Nordic Battalion (NORDBATT) in the peacekeeping operation UNPROFOR/UNPREDEP in Macedonia in 1990s, which not only contributed to the prevention of the armed conflict in the country, but also provided an example of how certain countries (Nordic in that case) can be set in a position of "bench markers" in terms of impartiality, high standards of (military) professionalism, ethics and commitment to international peace, which surpasses the confinements of following national interests alone (Zupančič–Udovič, 2011: 49). On the other hand, small states can economically benefit from supplying troops to the United Nations peacekeeping operations, especially in creating employment opportunities for its youth, boosting government revenue, upgrading military skills and boosting its international image. On the other hand, there are certain limitations linked to the deployment of troops to foreign countries, especially to conflicts, where it is not clearly evident that humanitarianism alone is the rationale behind.[11]

Hereby it is also worth mentioning the commitments of small states given to the military alliances. After the collapse of Yugoslavia and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many small Central and Eastern European countries sought membership of NATO to assure security guarantees in the case of a military attack. Securing a strong umbrella protection from the Alliance, however, sooner or later triggered the deployment of small states' servicemen in the NATO military operations. Namely, big states do expect from small states, too, to contribute their "fair share" to the common good of collective defence.

In this respect, a small state can find its opportunities: for example, its armed forces, by being deployed, become acquainted with new areas of operation (new cultural and social framework, new geographically conditioned challenges…); servicemen are taking over new tasks, which results in institutional learning of the armed forces (gaining experience, getting acquainted with new weaponry etc.) and also serves as a reality-check. Furthermore, soldiers learn to cooperate with the armed forces of other nations and can, on the basis of that, figure out their comparative advantages and disadvantages. Lastly, the possible and actual contribution of a small state to the particular military operation is usually discussed on the diplomatic grounds; therefore, the diplomatic personnel and other political experts of a small country engaged in that process can also benefit from that in terms of learning and

gaining negotiation experience (Zupančič, 2010a; Stivachtis, 2010/11). If, at the very end, the political establishment of a small state is wise enough not to overlook these gains, a spill-over effect to other areas of a small state's "life" in international community can occur.

1.5 The small state as a host of foreign military bases

Some small states with strategic importance for superpowers or international organizations found a lucrative way of boosting their budgets – and eventually improve their geopolitical and economic position in international community, too – by hosting foreign military bases. According to the data from Transnational Institute, foreign military bases are found in more than 100 countries and territories worldwide.

The US currently maintains the largest network (the reported numbers varies from the Pentagon's official count of 865 to more than 1,350 according to other sources), while France and the United Kingdom have approximately 200 such military locations available (Zeijden, 2009; Cohn, 2010: 33). Although the biggest foreign bases are not found in small states (Germany, Japan, Italy and South Korea), there are some small states hosting important military bases and/or installations of the superpowers, for example Kyrgyzstan, Singapore, Tajikistan, Israel, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Djibouti, Palau and Marshall Islands with US military bases or installations; Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, the disputed breakaway "republics" South Ossetia and Abkhazia, self-proclaimed republic of Transdnistria and Syria hosting military bases or installations of the Russian Federation. Another emerging superpower, China, interestingly, follows the footsteps of other major global powers who have established military bases abroad to secure their interests; it was publicly revealed only in 2012 that China aims to build a military base in the small island state of Seychelles (Pant, 2012).

An interesting example of a small state hosting a foreign base, which explains much about the benefits (niches) and disadvantages for a small state in international community, is a land-locked Central Asian state Kyrgyzstan. The US pays $60 million annually for the use of Manas base at the outskirts of the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek, which since 2001 serves as a crucial supply

hub for the war in Afghanistan (The Associated Press, 2012).[12] As the Kyr-gyz political elites were highly aware of the necessity for the US to have an airbase in Central Asia, the Kyrgyz politicians did not hesitate to find arguments, why the rent for the airbase should increase.[13] If the rent paid by a foreign country can be seen as a direct financial resource for the government, certain amount of local civilian employees benefit, too (new jobs created, money spent by soldiers, rental housing etc.). However, benefits from hosting a foreign military base are economically hard to measure.

Contrariwise, the lower strata of society benefits from such agreements only rarely, since there are quite a few disadvantages once foreign troops arrive. If this is a small state, the impact is relatively even bigger: the proliferation of bars and prostitution is inescapable, bringing to social tensions, (over)dependence on "foreign money", military-related incidents (pollution, incidents with local population), forceful moving of population, just to name a few. Last, but not least, further drawbacks occur once the military base is closed down (Santana, 2010:159).[14] These facts notwithstanding, the political elites of small states are (especially if states experience a democratic deficit and a lack of transparency) often prone to forging such deals, without consulting the local population on benefits and drawbacks of these arrangements. The perennial question, however, remains: *who* actually gains from this niche – the small state in general or a small bunch of those in power.

1.6 A larger role for small states?

When deciding upon a role a small state wishes to play in the contemporary security environment, it is important for the state to adequately coordinate its foreign policy actions with other relevant actors of the international community, and not to act alone. A good way forward for a small country is to strengthen its role in the framework of international organizations, streamlining its resources to the fields where it has comparative advantages, and not spending time and energy on issues where other countries can do better. For a small state, it is prudent to focus on feasible political goals (e. g., in the region), rather than on long reaching and over-ambitious goals that can easily "die away" (if not before, then when the government changes). A domestic consensus on basic foreign policy goals is desired; otherwise the state

would lose credibility in international relations, if its priorities would shift on a yearly basis. It is important for a small state not only to coin a mid- and long-term strategy, but also to intertwine prudently its foreign and security policy activities with the knowledge of existing institutions, such as universities, research institutes, and think-tanks. Last, but not least, also niches for economic opportunities should be found in small state's ambitions, based on business initiatives. Only if this conundrum of many actors with its own characteristics is sagely addressed and the appropriate combination of normative, soft and hard power elements is found, a small state can emerge as "an effective power" in international relations.

2. ASYMMETRIC WARFARE: A NEW, RENEWED OR ARCHAIC CONCEPT?

Asymmetry in military conflicts – from the biblical David and Goliath narrative up until contemporary conflicts – has always been disputable; it was always either just a question of power/strength or one of innovation and creativity as well. But the asymmetric concept depends rather on techniques as well as on mere surprises. In asymmetric warfare it is merely a byproduct of innovative, adaptive, and predictive action rendered through creative intelligence. Such attributes are synonymous with traits that are more commonly identified: cunning, creativity, and deceit. While surprise may be a critical principle of war and the linchpin of many conventional combat operations (ambushes, air assaults, raids), asymmetric warfare is far from conventional (Chase, 2011: 125). Another crucial framework here is the relationship between small societies/countries and asymmetric warfare, which will be discussed further on. In cases of small states being involved in asymmetric warfare, asymmetry may be perceived as an opportunity for effective engagement, but it can lead towards victimisation at the same time. However the asymmetry is conceived, though, its importance in the current international environment is increasing dramatically.

The development of security concepts has changed substantially primarily after the Cold War, as a result of the changed global security environment, which was based on the balance of (military) power between two opposing blocs. Nowadays traditional threats, above all, military confrontations, have a different status; simultaneously, the types of military combat also underwent significant changes. Van Creveld (2006) explains that the so-called conventional wars that encompassed vast areas, represented great destruction and economic damage and left a great number of victims in their wake are being increasingly replaced by conflicts that cannot simply be described as wars.

The decline of the stable bipolar division also brought about great changes in the field of warfare, which was a result of a renaissance of nationalist tendencies of formerly disadvantaged and oppressed ethnic and national subjects that saw the decline of the stability of the bipolar world as an opportunity for achieving their goals. As Münkler–Wassermann (2015: 409) ascertained in their description of the New World Order, the collapse of the Cold War bipolarity brought a plurality and differentiation of transnational security actors, and from this point nearby regular armed forces, partisan/guerilla forces, terror networks, pirates, mercenaries and warlords characterized the conflicts. Many freedom movements (in particular national- and religion-based movements and a smaller number of traditionally ideological movements) that fully adopted the guerrilla warfare doctrine were formed (Ballentine–Sherman, 2003) as well. Wars moved into the everyday life, women and children became warriors[15], and the victims were most frequently among the innocent civilians. Similarly, wars are no longer limited in terms of time. Due to the specific nature of warfare, the states of war and peace became blurred and security (personal, national and international) a remote wish. In such wars, the situation is made additionally complex by the control over the individual warring sides, which, in particular in the Western analytic circles, led to the rebirth of the concept of asymmetric wars or asymmetric warfare. Warfare is asymmetric when its actors, from the individual to international coalitions (both ad hoc and permanent), use the methods and means of asymmetric warfare in the particular time and in such a manner that by taking into account the opponents' and their own defence and offense capabilities and vulnerability, the impacts are as out of proportion as possible to the assets used. This encompasses both military and non-military forms at all levels of interaction between actors – from peacetime to war (Svete, 2002).

Asymmetry, asymmetric warfare, approaches or possibilities and asymmetric threats are terms that are increasingly used in contemporary military, defence and security analyses; however, they are understood and explained in very different ways. Some claim that the definition of asymmetric threats and sources of threats, which today affect mainly technologically developed and dominant traditional countries or military powers, and especially superpowers, is a relatively new phenomenon or a new form of conflict in this terminological and contextual form; however, a close insight into a historical analysis of conflicts reveals a completely different picture. It is true that in asymmetric

conflicts weaker sides try to enforce their will and interests or change the balance of power; this has been the case mainly after the end of the Cold War, in the period when globalization changes not only the political, economic, cultural, social and other spheres, but also the security environment and activities of all institutions within the national security system. On the other hand, it is not negligible that asymmetry also means warfare and threats beyond the expectations and security mechanisms of the enemy, as well as exploitation of its weaknesses (negative asymmetry), while at the same time it stresses one's own comparable advantages. As such, it is therefore a result of the strategic mutual influence of the actors involved in the conflict.

Such form of warfare is by no means a novelty; nor is the majority of the new implementing strategic procedures it uses (low-intensity conflicts, operations other than war, an indirect approach strategy, guerrilla warfare and also terrorism). From the defence and security point of view, asymmetry does not refer only to quantitative (comparable and material) indicators of social power or to a comparison of natural and social resources or weapons systems, but also to the non-comparability, non-unity, diversity and innovativeness of all actors involved in conflicts. These characteristics are reflected in the use of resources for attaining objectives at the strategic and operational level, in methods of use of these resources at the tactical level, and in actual situations within both an individual society and a wider international community.

Therefore, as for the defence and security concept, here asymmetry refers to the non-comparability, non-unity and diversity of all subjects involved in conflicts; these characteristics are reflected in the use of resources for attaining objectives, in methods of use of these resources, and in actual situations within both a particular society and a wider international community. In the military area, the real asymmetry is thus reflected in technological, operational and tactical innovativeness (Meigs, 2003: 5); however, equally important is the realisation that the military level is not the only one. Asymmetry also refers to the derogation from predicted tasks of individual elements and executors in the national-security system, as well as to their non-competence for the conduct of these tasks. Furthermore, asymmetry can be perceived or actual/real. Both kinds of asymmetry (perceived and real) are important, however, as the former bears a more significant institutional weight.

We can metaphorically conclude that asymmetry is best illustrated by the battle between David and Goliath, where physical strength was defeated by

the cleverness of the physically weaker combatant, as well as by the weaker opponent's technology, which the stronger opponent did not expect to be used in such a way or at the time of its actual use. The stronger opponent's physical strength was thus disabled before it could actually be activated. The physically weaker combatant took advantage of his opponent's weakness – a mere prediction of his approach.

The fundamental point of asymmetry is therefore a pursuit of ideas which are contrary to the ideas of the balance of powers in a quantitative/conventional sense. In this context, asymmetry as a principle can be used in any sort of warfare, whereas its appropriate understanding and use always enable one opponent to find another opponent's weakness. Warfare which is based on asymmetry and whose essential element is asymmetry is called asymmetric warfare.

Asymmetry is particularly useful for weak and poor countries as well as for non-state entities since it gives them a possibility to defy a far stronger opponent. Today asymmetric approaches to warfare are very often used in engagements within countries on one side, and in global ideologies on the other (the expansion of the communist ideology during the Cold War, and the spreading of the pan-Islamist ideology after it are not isolated cases). Similarly, as for the media and economic content of asymmetry, we can say that asymmetry in conflict can be local or global[16]; in any case, one of its most important premises is the surprise factor.

The concept of asymmetric warfare therefore nowadays encompasses many civil wars, wars for independence (in which individual nations strive to break away from federal states or from their own states, become recognised nations, or join other states), (inter)ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, terrorist actions, urban and rural guerrilla actions, regional conflicts and various forms of mass repression accompanied by violations of human rights (Žabkar, 2005: 288), Not to be left out is the basic form of asymmetric warfare – e.g. operations against occupying forces in unequal conflicts, such as the one in Iraq, where the first stage of conventional warfare transitioned into (inter)ethnic and interreligious conflicts, as well as urban and rural guerrilla warfare (Svete–Žabkar, 2006). Due to the characteristics of modern combat, the category of a battlefield or theatre of operations (which fairly accurately described the area in which the military operations in Iraq were being carried out) is frequently replaced by the category of a crisis area or chaos area; the

goal is to emphasise that this is a newer, broader definition of the space and range of the conflict, encompassing not only the fields of military confrontation, but also the spheres of politics, economy, diplomacy, intelligence, information and psychology.

In addition, an increasingly important role is played by completely non-military threats, which are not being eliminated by defence systems. Non-military threats encompass all factors that lead to social conflicts, identity and culture conflicts, environmental issues and the expansion of networks of organised crime, and nowadays they include technological, demographic, and health threats and other sources of threats. In the international community, such threats to security established the concept of national and international security that includes the military, as well as political, economic, social, humanitarian and other dimensions (Grizold, 1998). Due to these changes, numerous national security systems and the accompanying defence subsystems were subject to extensive reforms and systemic adaptations to security challenges. Here an increasingly important role is given to international relations and the creators of the international dialogue, who are undoubtedly represented by foreign policy. It is turning out that military power is just one of the numerous instruments of foreign policy, and war as a consequence of use of military power is only a continuation of diplomacy by other means (Clausewitz, 1982: 25). Simultaneously other, non-military mechanisms were being developed in recent years, in particular preventive diplomacy and the system of crisis management and crisis response. Such an international environment thus redefined the role and the significance of those actors that at the start had a very unequal development of elements of social power, as well as those where the military element of power was predominant. The group of important security actors with these characteristics undoubtedly also includes the European Union. If the case of the war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia indicated that it would be possible to solve modern conflicts without the use of "hard" sources, current events in Iraq, Afghanistan and some other regions revived the softer approaches to solving conflicts (Smith, 2006). The European Union suddenly became a more important and influential actor in global politics, especially when the conflicts transitioned into the so-called stage of post-conflict reconstruction. While "hard power" can depose a certain regime, as was the case in Iraq, the reconstruction or construction of a new regime requires "soft power". Bildt (2005) warns of the

danger that the European Union will start to limit its "soft power" at the time it is needed most. Such developments would undoubtedly affect the stability in the wider region.

In an increasingly globalised world, asymmetric threats have drawn attention to the extreme vulnerability of even the highest quality security systems in Western societies. It is becoming progressively clearer that responding directly to and engaging with such threats is doomed to fail. For this reason and considering that the trend is projected to continue in the future, more attention will be focused on the emergence and timely prevention of asymmetric threats at the very source of their formation. In doing so it is becoming increasingly apparent that such threats are directly linked with crisis areas where a credible control is not possible or wanted. In part, this fact stems from conditions that are usually incredibly complex, as well as from numerous direct and indirect influence factors. Nevertheless, the question remains: why do crisis areas persist for so long, considering the emergence of different threats? An important part of the answer undoubtedly lies in the evaluation of the geographic location or in its value and the interests that arise from it.

It is relatively easy to evaluate a geographic location from the aspect of geography – an established research and methodology system is used to determine the specific properties of the location, its individual elements and the ways in which they are interconnected. While systematic research is essential, it is also important to avoid isolated examination and perception, considering that it is interaction that allows us to understand deeply connected influences. It could be argued that these are most characteristic precisely in the field of social and geographic factors. Such geographic location evaluation could be described as absolute, since here subjectivity is extremely limited due to the clearly defined qualitative and quantitative criteria applied by the researcher.

The same claim, albeit to a much lesser extent, could not be made for subjective or relative evaluations of a geographic location, which are linked to what is referred to as useful value. This type of relative evaluation is commonly linked with absolute evaluation facts but is then subjected particularly to the human and social interpretation of the location value.[17] In the modern globalisation era, social values have become more uniform, which has led to a commonly shared interpretation of geographic location value. Much like in economic sciences, the parameters of supply and demand are involved in the evaluation of a geographic location. However, this is where

the similarities end. Unlike market values, geographic locations have a specific characteristic – in addition to their value, they also function as habitats of human communities, rendering direct trade impossible. It is this dilemma that has been most frequently used throughout history as an excuse to use force and start wars.

Conflict areas, then, are areas to which considerable value is ascribed or whose specific characteristics make them desirable territories to be owned or exploited by various social groups or states. The resulting conflicts and tensions may be more or less explicit; as a rule, they have developmental characteristics and are directly dependent on the evaluation and value of the geographic location in question.[18]

The increasingly strained dialogue is a result of the inability to compromise. The disputed area reaches stage two, in which diplomatic efforts are replaced by open expressions of hostility and displays of power. This stage includes measures such as (unannounced) manoeuvres of armed forces, purchasing offensive weapons, increasing the composition of armed forces, etc. As a consequence, the perception of tension is frequently expanded to include the entire region, which means that new parties become directly or indirectly involved in the conflict. These parties generally have their own interests. At this stage, we can refer to the internationalisation of the conflict, which leads to the mobilisation of international organisations and the wider community. These are the characteristics of conflict areas. Additionally, the clearly expressed international tensions and strained relations manifest themselves amongst the local population. In many cases, wilful and deliberate destabilisation bids are attempted in the hopes of an intervention that would lead to probable control of the area. As such, conflict areas can be defined as areas where low intensity conflicts occur – the security level is low, which is reflected in the low standard of living, high mortality rate, and significant economic regression in these areas. The crucial elements involved in the development of a dispute or conflict are location value, the consequent shortage level, and the probability of the use of force. The third element grows exponentially and at given points progresses from one stage to the next. It is important to note that each of the stages is reversible and that diplomacy, mediation and international community engagement can be used to prevent further exacerbation of the conflict, thus reducing the probability of the use

of force. However, this option diminishes as the conflict grows (Prebilič, 2006: 45–47).

Latent conflict areas where the parties' efforts are no longer focused on resolving the conflict but mainly on the pursuit of their own interests are known as crisis areas. Such areas are defined by Zupančič (2005: 5) as those parts of the world where, primarily due to social factors, there has been a rapid deterioration of economic conditions as well as dramatic changes in the age, gender, nationality, and distribution of the population; strained relations between various population groups; conflicts; and isolation of economic and cultural currents and relationships. For the most part, crisis areas are effectively and even legally isolated from global flows through a variety of sanctions. This makes crisis areas indirectly dependent territories from a number of aspects, such as the economic, the political, and the security aspect. For this reason it is possible to find several similarities between individual crisis areas that might initially appear wildly different and are separated by considerable geographical, cultural, ethnic and other divides.

Figure 1:
Focus/Cost Effectiveness of Asymmetric Actions
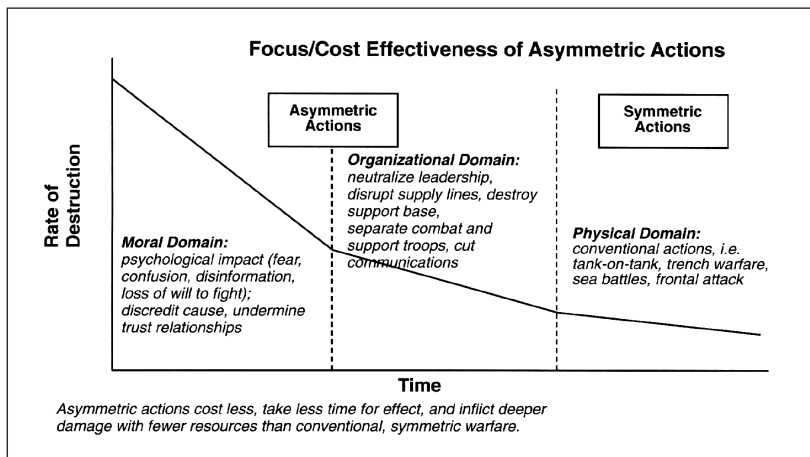
Source: Grange (2001: 31).

2.1 Discussion and conclusion

Much of the strategic studies literature of the past two decades identifies profound novelty in the conduct and challenges of modern war, novelty that ultimately calls into question the nature and even the existence of war. War has allegedly now been transformed from a regular, conventional, and purportedly symmetric exercise into an irregular, unconventional, and asymmetric event which must be understood anew. Of all the new descriptive terms for war, "asymmetric" is among the broadest. It has even been suggested that asymmetry does not bear definition: "to define the term defies its very meaning, purpose, and significance." Some, undeterred by such extreme pronouncements, have attempted to at least categorize various existing and potential concepts of asymmetry. Thus, Jan Angstrom has identified four different prisms through which asymmetry may be interpreted: "power distribution, organisational status of the actor, method of warfare, and norms" (Milevski, 2014: 77).

Concerning the fact that asymmetry is also frequently used to describe what is called "guerrilla warfare", "insurgency", "terrorism", "counterinsurgency", and "counterterrorism" it is necessary for the next chapters, where Slovenian asymmetric experiences will be analysed, to at least clarify the concept of **(counter)insurgency**. A simple theoretical construct underlies the theory and practice of counterinsurgency warfare. It is the essence of what today's theorists and strategists term asymmetric warfare: although an asymmetric distribution of resources and abilities actually favours counterinsurgent forces, they are often inappropriately wielded. The conflict is asymmetric because there is a "disproportion of strength between the opponents at the outset, and from the difference in essence between their assets and liabilities". At the conceptual level, the insurgent is endowed with the "ideological power of a cause on which to base his actions" and the counterinsurgent laden with a "heavy liability – he is responsible for maintaining order throughout the country" without undermining the ideals on which the new government is making its pleas for support (Tomes, 2004: 20–21). According to the U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide (2009) "insurgency is the organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify or challenge political control of a region. As such, it is primarily a political struggle, in

which both sides use armed force to create space for their political, economic and influence activities to be effective. Insurgency is not always conducted by a single group with a centralized, military-style command structure, but may involve a complex matrix of different actors with various aims, loosely connected in dynamic and non-hierarchical networks. To be successful, insurgencies require charismatic leadership, supporters, recruits, supplies, safe havens and funding (often from illicit activities)."

As Tomes states, "Four elements typically encompass an insurgency: cell-networks that maintain secrecy; terror used to foster insecurity among the population and drive them to the movement for protection; multifaceted attempts to cultivate support in the general population, often by undermining the new regime; and attacks against the government" (Tomes, 2004: 18).

But insurgency and counterinsurgency as well as the entire asymmetric warfare concept have to be emphasized as alternative processes where different perspectives ought to be included. Counter-insurgency campaigns of duly elected or politically recognized governments take place during a war, during an occupation by a foreign military or police force, and when internal conflicts that involve subversion and armed rebellion occur (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counter-insurgency). The best counterinsurgency campaigns "integrate and synchronize political, security, economic, and informational components that reinforce governmental legitimacy and effectiveness while reducing insurgent influence over the population. COIN strategies should be designed to simultaneously protect the population from insurgent violence; strengthen the legitimacy and capacity of government institutions to govern responsibly and marginalize insurgents politically, socially, and economically" (U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, 2009).

Trinquier[19] (in Tomes, 2004: 18) suggests three simple principles for how to be successful in counterinsurgency as well: separating the guerrilla from the population that supports him; occupying the zones that the guerrillas previously operated from, making the zones dangerous for them and turning the people against the guerrilla movement; and coordinating actions over a wide area and for a long enough time that the guerrilla is denied access to the population centres that could support him. This requires an extremely capable intelligence infrastructure endowed with human sources and deep cultural knowledge. Indeed, intelligence is key.

Table 1:
Galula's differences between insurgents and counterinsurgents
(in Tomes, 2004: 21)

Component	Insurgent	Counterinsurgent
Resource asymmetry	Limited resources/ power	Preponderance of resources/power
Objective = population	Solicit government oppression	Show that insurgency is destabilizing
Political nature of war	Wage war for minds of population	Wage war for same, and to keep legitimacy
Gradual transition to war	Use time to develop cause	Always in reactive mode
Protracted nature of war	Disperse; use limited violence widely	Maintain vigilance; sustain will
Cost	High return for investment	Sustained operations carry high political/ economic burden
Role of ideology	Sole asset at beginning is cause or idea	Defeat root of cause or idea

All these theoretical outcomes for defining and identifying asymmetry will be further elaborated in the next chapters, where, through a comprehensive approach, we aim to prove the main hypothesis: asymmetry as a concept is basically barely changeable even as it passes through different historical periods. On the other hand counterinsurgency might have long term social impacts what can lead to prolonged conflicts.

3. THE SMALL STATE IN AN ASYMMETRIC CONFLICT: WHAT LESSONS COULD BE LEARNED FROM HISTORY?

Although with just 2 million inhabitants, in the past Slovenia, as a small country, had been a theatre for many conflicts. The geostrategic Slovenian territory can be perceived as one of the most important communication junctions between South and Middle Europe and a crossroads of at least three major cultures: the Roman, Germanic and South Slavic cultures. In fact all the neighbouring empires have had an intention to hold the Slovenian territory or to take away a part of it. Without any doubt the bloodiest conflict related to Slovenia was the Second World War, when Slovenian the territory was divided among Italy, Germany and Hungary. After the occupation the next stage with resistance as well as foreign and domestic counterinsurgency began. Since Slovenia was a part of the unified South Slavic Yugoslavian state from 1918, its asymmetric conflicts must be put into and dealt with from a broader context. But with the end of the Second World War the Slovenian asymmetric experience was still not completed. The war for independence in 1991 can be characterized as asymmetric as well. Therefore in Chapter 3 the Slovenian asymmetric experience will be analysed through a "small country perspective".

3.1 Asymmetry in its development stage: the resistance movement in Slovenia, 1941–1945

3.1.1 Circumstances
At the beginning of World War II, Slovenia was a part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, forming the administrative unit of Drava Banovina, the northernmost

of the kingdom's nine provinces. Two large ethnic minorities also lived in the neighbouring Kingdom of Italy (Julian March) and in Germany (South Carinthia). Up until the beginning of 1941, Yugoslavia avoided joining either of the sides involved in the conflict. After yielding to the pressure exerted by Germany, Yugoslavia joined the Tripartite Pact on 25 March 1941. However, only two days later, a part of the Royal Yugoslav Army, supported by anti-German politicians and the British secret service, carried out a bloodless, but nevertheless successful coup, and proclaimed the young son of King Alexander, who was assassinated in 1934, as the sovereign. While the new government ensured that it will observe its joining the Pact, this was not enough to satisfy the German leadership. Orders were issued to attack Greece, where Hitler sought to help his ally Mussolini, and on the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Together with its allies Italy and Bulgaria, Germany attacked the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941, while Hungary did not participate in the actual attack. The Royal Yugoslav Army was forced to capitulate in 11 days. The Yugoslav government and the king first withdrew to Greece and then to the Middle East. Hitler personally oversaw the future destiny of the defeated state: the Independent State of Croatia was established in its central part, central Serbia was directly occupied by Germany, a part of the territory in the north was taken over by Hungary and a part of the territory in the southeast by Bulgaria, and Italy got Montenegro, western Macedonia, the larger part of Dalmatia and the central or southern part of the Slovenian ethnic territory, together with the capital Ljubljana. The remainder of the Slovenian territory went to Germany, with the exception of approximately 1,000 km^2 of the Prekmurje region, which had been a part of the Kingdom of Hungary since the Treaty of Trianon in 1919. Germany started preparing the territory of Lower Styria and Carniola for immediate annexation, while Italy, completely unprepared, annexed the western part of the territory (the Province of Ljubljana) on 3 May 1941. Prekmurje was annexed by Hungary on 6 December 1941, together with other territories of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia that Hungary got upon the state's partitioning. Germany did not follow through with its intention to quickly annex the "civil administration territory"; at the beginning of 1942, the annexation was postponed until after the war, while the territory was, in terms of administration and economy, integrated into the German state (Ferenc, 2006).

3.1.2 Formation of a resistance organisation

In the divided state, two months after the Axis powers defeated the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, Yugoslav communists, organized as the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, put up resistance against the occupying forces of four states – Germany, Italy, Bulgaria and Hungary.[20] For the central leadership of the party as the strategist behind the resistance, the trigger for immediate armed action against the occupying forces was the attack on the Soviet Union and Stalin's call for help aimed at other communist parties.[21] The leadership's assessment of the strategic position was extremely favourable for active resistance, as they expected a shift in the power relationship – even a quick victory and a revolutionary uprising in Germany and a consolidation of Soviet power in Europe, and with that, the chance to participate in the new order. Their member base encompassed 12,000 communists and 24,000 members of the youth wing (a fifth of them were women). They also counted on the reaction of those among the general populace that were affected by the quick defeat of their state in April 1941; in acquiring the resistance base, the anti-German sentiment among Serbian and Slovenian Yugoslavs was equally important, as it significantly expanded the base of potential followers (Morača, 1971: 33–78, 84–149).

Immediately following the attack on the Soviet Union, the resistance movement focused on armed combat against the occupying forces. This was based on anti-fascism, national liberation, providing assistance to the Soviet Union and social change to be brought about by the liberation, which was a veiled attempt of the Communist Party to simultaneously carry out its revolutionary project, as the Communist ascent to power as a prerequisite for the transition to a socialist social order was thought of at the time. To fight the occupiers, the Communist Party required armed forces. These were starting to be established in July 1941 in the form of "Partisan detachments and squads" that at first utilised guerrilla techniques with the important intention to, accompanied by propagandist action by the resistance structures, prompt a (general) uprising. The organisation model that was required by the decision on immediate armed resistance originated from the Party's 1940 efforts to prepare for a "popular revolution". This may also serve as an explanation for the exceptional nature of the strength and scope of the Yugoslav resistance in July 1941, as the Yugoslav resistance was the only European resistance movement to reach such dimensions (Ferenc, 1995: 15–16).

In the first few months of the occupation, the goals of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia were the clearest compared to other political parties of the time, at least on the operational level, which after all enabled such a wide and efficient resistance despite the communists' weakness in terms of numbers. Clearly defined goals are an extremely important element of asymmetric warfare, in addition to external factors (Soviet Union, which served as guidance and an ideological role model for Yugoslav Communists, entering the war) and the efforts for the goals to receive the broadest possible social support.

In spring 1941, the organizers of the resistance movement managed to establish one of its cores in Slovenia, which was divided into three occupied areas. The resistance movement declined to recognize the borders and annexations of the occupiers and worked towards national liberation and the joining of all areas predominantly inhabited by Slovenians (including those in Julian March and South Carinthia) into a single national unit within Yugoslavia. The focus on national liberation was also evident in the organisational structure of the resistance movement. The communists, organized as the Communist Party of Slovenia (part of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia) were the only ones to formalise the cooperation with certain wings of the bourgeoisie parties and together with them tried to give shape to the resistance within the framework of the political and civil resistance organisation, the Liberation Front of the Slovenian Nation, or LSFN (*Osvobodilna fronta slovenskega naroda*, OF), which was established on 26 April 1941, prior to the decision on immediate resistance (Mally, 2011). Even though acquiring the broadest possible support and the inclusion of all social groups were important for the resistance, at the beginning, the communists relied on their own forces and did not particularly concern themselves with seeking political alliances in other Yugoslav regions, which would help spread the resistance. Despite the fact that the LFSN encompassed members of nationalist, liberal and Christian-socialist political groups, the case of Slovenia indicates the great heterogeneity of the Yugoslav political culture and the accompanying political arena (Slovenska novejša zgodovina, 2005: 608–615).

In terms of inclusion of subgroups and forming operational cores of resistance, the principles for the development of the organisational power of the resistance were based on communist organisational principles. The leader (Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia) assumed the leadership of the armed resistance unambiguously and

from the first day onwards, even though he had no previous formal or informal experience with military leadership. Authoritative and centralized leadership of Josip Broz Tito as the commander of the central command of the General Headquarters of the National Liberation Partisan and Volunteer Army of Yugoslavia was undoubtedly charismatic (Pirjevec, 2011). Such leadership, however, had objective limitations, as the communication between members of the resistance was made extremely difficult, even irregular, by the establishment of the numerous borders and control systems, and did not enable coordinated operations in real time. Consequently, regional resistance commands were relatively free to choose their own methods of leadership and implementation of the guidelines issued by the general command, to which they, at least in part, also belonged (members or candidates for members of the Central Committee of the CPY). An important key to success in establishing the military organisation was that in forming the regional commands, the communists took into account the national communities: Slovenians, Croats, Macedonians and Serbs – but also Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Sandžak[22], Kosovo and Metohija. By doing so, they established in practice the national principle, which they had advocated on paper in their political activities prior to the war, and simultaneously activated the local nationally conscious population, who would have otherwise become the base of the nationalist (Yugoslav-Serbian) resistance movement, established by the colonel Dragoljub Mihailović first in Serbia and later on in Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina and the Dalmatian hinterland.

The planners of the resistance found their base, which was to participate in the resistance at the very beginning, in the members of the communist movement. They established the principle of mandatory participation of CPY members in the resistance movement, either in organizing and leading the civil resistance organisation, or, more frequently, in partisan units. As an illegal party, which had been prohibited for over twenty years and subject to state repression, party members and others (candidates for membership, the young wing – Young Communist League of Yugoslavia or SKOJ) were brought up in a stance of opposition, founded on ideology, on obeying superior political organs and on methods of underground (political) activities; in addition, they primarily belonged to the younger generation, as the majority were in their thirties or younger. Through persuasion and some severe political sanctions against doubting and disobedient members, the political leadership of CPY,

which proclaimed itself as the leadership of the resistance, managed to secure active participation of the great majority of its members. Soon, intense propaganda and the successes of resistance fighters drew into the resistance units much greater numbers of recruits, predominantly farmers, who did not even sympathize with the communist party (Strugar, 1980: 28–31).

The initial plan of the communist resistance foresaw immediate military activity. The revolutionaries were short on arms; however, the general population was not – either due to the traditional possession of arms among the farmers in patriarchal Balkan societies, or due to the possibility to claim the arms of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which were discarded or abandoned during the break-up, even prior to the Kingdom's surrender on 17 April 1941 and its soldiers largely crossing over to become prisoners of war. The popular uprising was supposed to ensure a sufficient number of fighters, which would then be promptly integrated into resistance units.

The leadership planned the immediate formation of resistance units, which were named "partisan units", primarily in rural areas, where the control of occupying units was less intense and the possibilities for manoeuvring and taking cover were greater. It was only in those areas that the partisans were able to secure access to critical supply sources as a further very important element within the framework of development principles of asymmetric warfare (in the countryside, it was easier to secure the physical survival of the resistance units and their self-sufficiency in terms of supplies). At the beginning, street combat in cities, primarily industrial centres, was also planned; as the communists had their political roots among the urban working class, the workers were also the social core they most wanted to activate. However, due to the focus on rural areas and the national liberation propaganda, the farmers responded in much greater numbers and became the social core of the resistance movement; this, in turn, also influenced the further development of the resistance movement.

Immediately after the formation of the basic core, the partisan units had to commence their activities against the occupier; due to the fact that communication in real time was impossible and due to the numerous borders in divided Yugoslavia, the leadership was able to provide the resistance only with basic guidelines, the remainder depended on the leadership of individual areas or even on unit commanders themselves. It was precisely by naming their members commanders that the communists were able to not only control the

uprising, but also to secure synergy of operation (Morača, 1971: 153–168; Anić et al., 1982: 23–28).[23] In terms of asymmetric warfare, the structure of the military leading staff is equally important, ranging from the highest and all the way to local commanders. The communists had few trained commanders, the majority of them had returned from the Spanish civil war, where they were active in international brigades. In addition to being suitable in political terms, they also brought fresh military training, which made them into commanders of central headquarters. Unless they had been active or reserve officers or junior officers in the Royal Yugoslav Army, the majority of the rest of the partisans were able to rely only on their general understanding of tactics and strategy, on their instinct and improvisation. All this in itself led to leadership methods in military actions and operations that deviated from the doctrine.

As early as in July and August 1941, the communists were able to extend their initial resistance in Montenegro and Serbia into two large-scale popular uprisings. Small guerrilla units, called detachments or squads, carried out coordinated attacks on several smaller local bases of the occupying forces and domestic collaborating organs, established by Germany in Serbia (regime under General Milan Nedić) and by Italy in Montenegro. The partisans primarily attacked gendarmerie stations, headquarters of local authorities and smaller garrisons of occupying forces. Both German and Italian occupying forces were taken by surprise by the scope and intensity of the uprising – a division of the Italian army completely withdrew to defend Podgorica, the largest city in Montenegro, and similar withdrawals were undertaken by isolated German garrisons in larger Serbian cities, as the resistance detachments continuously interrupted the communications. In this way and assisted by intense (political) propaganda, the resistance was able to integrate a portion of the previously passive population into existing partisan units, which rapidly grew in size – the partisans numbered 14,000 soldiers (23 large detachments) in Serbia and 32,000 soldiers in Montenegro, which at the time meant almost 8% of the Montenegro's population (Morača, 1971: 169–264; Anić et al., 1982: 29–38; Schmider, 2002: 54–89).

Already in summer 1941, the question of how, if at all, the partisans were to enter into an alliance with the initiators of the second resistance movement led by Dragoljub "Draža" Mihailović, a colonel in the Royal Yugoslav Army, became of political, even of key importance. The movement led by

Mihailović was established a couple of weeks after the communist movement; its members were primarily pro-Serbian nationalists and royalists, advocates of the Yugoslav state as a monarchy and under Serbian domination. The movement was not as organised and was politically weak, it drew its strength from the *chetnik* movement, which remained a tradition on the entire Serbian territory, from Macedonia to Lika.[24] Partisans and *chetniks* joined forces in certain operations in Serbia in summer and autumn 1941, without the leaderships reaching a strategic agreement; in a favourable moment, on November 11, 1941, during an extensive German counter-resistance operation in Serbia, the Mihailović's *chetniks* even attacked Tito's national liberation movement and managed to force it out of Serbia for almost three years. The consequence of these differences was a conflict between the movements until eventual destruction (Tomasevich, 1975; Marjanović, 1976; Karchmar, 1987). The case undoubtedly indicates the extremely important point of monopolizing the resistance on one hand (the side that manages to monopolize the resistance increases its legitimacy among the population) and, on the other hand, serves as a clear example of how the occupying forces managed to foster enmity between various resistance groups to such a point that one of them even to certain degree became a collaborating force.[25] By doing so, they prevented the partisan units from accessing the bases of support in Serbia and forced them to carry their activities over to the neighbouring Bosnia, at the time a part of the Independent State of Croatia, if they wanted to survive.

Under this pressure, the majority of the partisan units from Serbia and Montenegro withdrew to Bosnia, on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia, where the authorities were similarly unprepared, even though the partisan movement did not gain its true dimensions before spring 1942. Crucial for the success of the resistance movement was the fact that they drew in the Serbian and later on, the Muslim population, as the extremely nationalist *ustaša* regime attempted to eradicate or drive out the Serbian population and integrate the Muslims into its authority structures already in summer 1941 (Jelić, 1978: 37–56; Matković, 1994).

It was not until the end of 1941 that the German and Italian occupying forces, assisted by reinforcements they again brought to Serbia and Montenegro, managed to recover the majority of the lost territory by large-scale military operations. Due to military defeats, the partisan units greatly decreased in size. The military operations were accompanied by extremely severe

counter-resistance measures against the civilian population. Particularly in Serbia, the German authorities, lead by the principle of 100 people shot for every fallen German soldier, killed 7,000 civilians in several mass shootings of urban civilians, even school pupils; the largest shootings occurred in Kragujevac and Kraljevo (Schmider, 2002: 54–89; German Antiguerrilla Operations in the Balkans: 104–118). This illustrated in all its brutality the following important element of the principle of asymmetric warfare – **handling the effects of the opponent's violence**. How to act in such cases? Placing excessive stress on the opponent's violence may lead to loss of support and legitimacy among the population, as the resistance may appear futile and failed; on the other hand, violence on the part of the opponent may provoke anger and resistance, based on which the resistance movement may acquire even greater support. Ever since the Turkish and later Austro-Hungarian occupation (in 1917), there had been no shortage of resistance in the Balkans. Alongside the deliberations as to how to respond to the killings of the civil population, whether to resume intense military operations or to limit or even completely suspend all military actions, there was the conflict between the two resistance movements – as a part of propaganda, Mihailović's *chetniks* attacked the partisans as thrill-seekers (as they caused needless losses to the Serbian nation) and then reached an agreement with the German occupier on modus vivendi and military passivity, in some cases even agreements on local cooperation.

3.2 Engaging in combat with an asymmetric opponent: occupying authorities against the Slovenian resistance movement, 1941–1945

The resistance movement established in Slovenia in spring and summer 1941 was a strategic surprise to the three states that occupied the Slovenian territory in April 1941. The occupying forces believed that the (Slovenian) population of the north-eastern part of the Yugoslav territory between the former Yugoslav-Italian and Yugoslav-German border and the border of the new Independent State of Croatia[26] would not put up a serious struggle and intended to assimilate it and in part remove it by deportation and annex the territory as soon as possible to its own state. The political goal of the resistance movement was explicitly action-oriented: resistance to the German and

other occupying forces, national liberation and by means of the latter, the solution to internal national and social conflicts in the country. From the very beginning, the resistance movement meant a sharp turn from the authorities of the time, even a change of the social order. A part of this turn, which received much more attention in terms of propaganda than the social element, was the constitution of the Slovenian nation and the establishment of a nation state within the framework of the new Yugoslav community of nations (Škerl, 1966: 149–215; Godeša, 1991a: 69–85).

The resistance movement in Slovenia developed autonomously, without a direct influence of the central leadership, but nevertheless as a part of the Yugoslav resistance led by the Communist Party. The obstacle to better communications with the central resistance leadership in Serbia and later Bosnia was the Independent State of Croatia. A sizeable portion of the Croatian population perceived the Independent State of Croatia as a nation state freed from Serbian domination, as it was perceived in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; consequently, the development of the resistance movement in Croatia was slow and its scope was limited – it developed primarily in the Dalmatian hinterland, where its orientation was anti-Italian (Matković, 1994). Because of that, it could not carry out the connecting role for the Slovenian resistance and the communications with the central resistance command were slow and difficult. Despite this, **the leadership of the resistance movement was, in strategic terms, a part of the Yugoslav resistance movement and like the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, bound to the same strategy** – immediate resistance, which was to be as efficient as possible, to acquire the necessary critical mass among the population (preparations for the "popular uprising").[27] The political function of the Liberation Front was to carry out the widest possible mobilization and to assist the armed and unarmed struggle against the occupying forces. The Liberation Front developed strong propaganda activities, organized various types of unarmed resistance and collected money and goods for the needs of the resistance and particularly the partisan units. Compared to the remainder of Yugoslavia, where the focus lay on the military component and establishing partisan units, the non-military component of the resistance was most developed precisely in Slovenia.

The communist resistance leadership started to form the first military units during the short preparations and in July 1941, the first armed units in rural areas were established and immediately had to carry out attacks on the

occupying forces. In view of the concept of an immediate armed struggle against the occupying forces, the leadership was able to establish its armed units only immediately before the planned military actions. In terms of organisation, the units were weak and required time to consolidate internally. Given the principles of asymmetric warfare, it should be stressed that the offensive and defensive operations need to be adapted to the relative weakness of the participants, as in combat, the offensive and defensive state are defined by the gravitational centre of the side less or more vulnerable in a given moment. It is crucial that asymmetric warfare preserves the continuity between measures, mechanisms and objectives.

As soon as the units were formed, the resistance army was assigned as a responsibility of the Liberation Front; the leadership of the Liberation Front thus became its supreme command, even though the communist leadership retained the actual control and the defining role. The transfer of responsibility over the armed resistance units to the Liberation Front had a positive effect on acquiring provisions and volunteers even from non-communist circles.

Similarly to Serbia and Montenegro, the partisan units in Slovenia engaged in first armed combats with the occupying forces in July 1941 and planned for the coordinated uprising to begin on July 27 (Klanjšček, 1975: 123; Guštin, 1994: 123). Approximately 30 resistance – partisan – units the size of a platoon (they were named squads and until the end of 1941, some 2,000 fighters were at some point their members), established in Slovenia in 1941, were markedly asymmetric in terms of their form, composition, and above all, purpose. They were organized according to the availability and quality of human assets (inclusion of members of the communist circle, loyal to the party discipline, and volunteers, the majority of whom lacked basic military training) and military equipment, above all arms (extremely limited arms and ammunition supply options).

Their basic tactics were a form of guerrilla warfare, adapted to the Slovenian territory, which was characterized primarily by a higher population density and good accessibility in terms of transport, which shortened the reaction time of the opponent's forces. In autumn, the Slovenian command organized several coordinated actions that involved several partisan units, which were pooled from the greater area (Guštin, 2001). At this point, it is necessary to stress the absence of tactical skills regarding guerrilla warfare. For the most part, resistance members with military

training had received training in conventional warfare in the Royal Yugoslav Army. Consequently, improvisation, conducting operations based on instinct, decisions grounded on "common sense" and basic tactical principles were of key importance. In August 1941, the General Headquarters of the National Liberation Partisan Detachments prepared first combat guidelines, which contained the basic tactical principles further operationalized by the organizers of the partisan units at the General Headquarters consultations in Stolice in Serbia on 26 September 1941. At approximately the same time, one of the leaders of the armed resistance in Slovenia, a reserve officer of the Royal Yugoslav Army, prepared instructions for partisan warfare (A short course for partisan commanders), which did not go beyond adapting traditional military tactics for smaller units to the conditions in which partisan units operated (Moraća, 1971: 20–38; Zbornik dokumentov in podatkov VI/1, doc. 81). In time, however, a recognizable doctrine, termed "partisan warfare", developed (Teropšič, 2006: 57–102; Kleut, 1983).

Soon, the partisan movement was not merely content with extending on the greatest possible part of the Yugoslav territory using units operating on the basis of guerrilla tactics. For the CPY, the resistance movement and armed resistance had a greater strategic role – achieving military domination (and, finally, national liberation through the liberation of the state), improving its position in the Yugoslav political arena and ensuring participation in the post-war state leadership, with the extreme tendency of using a revolution to introduce in Yugoslavia a socialist state modelled after the Soviet Union of the time. In military terms, this meant the establishment of special, elite partisan units, first named proletarian brigades. Only the highest echelons of partisan leadership, namely the Central Committee of the CPY or the General Headquarters, could form these brigades. The first was established on 21 December 1941, after the majority of the partisan units withdrew from Serbia to Sandžak; the second on 1 March 1942. The establishment of proletarian brigades was directly related to the General Headquarters' estimate in winter 1941/1942 that the time for a communist revolution was approaching. This political estimate lasted until April 1942, when the leadership established that pushing for communists to ascend to power (too soon) was proving detrimental in terms of extending the resistance movement, especially as a part of the resistance forces had already turned to Mihailović's movement, at the time already an enemy movement (Anić et al., 1982: 117–125).[28]

In spring 1942, the leadership of the resistance movement managed to instigate a wide expansion of resistance units in the Province of Ljubljana, which was occupied by Italy. Due to insufficient control of the territory, which was a result of Italian reorganisation of several smaller military outposts in the area into outposts that were stronger, but more dispersed (to increase the safety of Italian occupation forces), the partisan units were able to claim a large portion of the land and by means of propaganda, increased in strength to approximately 4,300 members (Klanjšček, 1975; Guštin 1987). This also meant a change in their tactics. In their offensive actions, the partisans attacked at points where they were able to avoid frontal combat and assert their (short-term) local predominance. The partisans also successfully carried out their first manoeuvre combats with mobile Italian units and developed the tactics of disruptive attacks on outposts. The outposts were already being reinforced with palisades and bunkers by the occupying forces; consequently, the partisan armed forces were not able to take them, except in exceptional circumstances, while the continuous alarms eroded the morale of the opponent's units. For the first time, the partisan units were tasked with defending the population of the controlled area against the violence of the occupying forces. Communications became an important goal of the partisan operations, as this enabled to partisans to effectively impede the opponent's movements, even though this simultaneously affected the civilian population. Due to primitive technical capabilities and a lack of explosives, the attacks on communications had to be improvised and were also less successful. It was not until the partisans acquired explosives (primarily through assistance by the Allied powers) that this activity became widespread and very effective and consequently disruptive and even impeding to the occupying forces – in 1943 and particularly in 1944, the partisans nearly completely interrupted railway and road traffic on certain sections and interrupted transport on the strategically important Southern railway between Maribor and Triest (Vukotić, 1981; Guštin, 2007).

However, neither the central Yugoslav not the Slovenian leadership were content with guerrilla methods of operating and organizing military units. **The leadership tended towards organizing large units, brigades**, which it understood as an operational development into manoeuvre or "partisan warfare". The leadership intended to develop the partisan guerrilla army into a national army; on the political level and in terms of propaganda, this

intention remained a focus from autumn 1941 onwards. In spring 1942, the leadership developed a military organisation based on a network of territorial units (detachments); in summer and autumn of the same year (at an accelerated rate due to military circumstances, but justified in military terms), the leadership established four partisan brigades that took over the manoeuvre side of warfare, even though they had to continue to carry out the tasks of territorial units. It could even be stated that the resistance movement was forced into asymmetric warfare due to its smaller and different military (and political) power, but gravitated towards balancing the asymmetric aspect and establishing an army similar to armies of occupying powers at least in terms of strength, formation and equipment (Klanjšček, 1977: 332–352, 392–419, 458–489).

In autumn 1943, when its strategic and actual position vastly improved due to Italy's surrender to the Allied powers and was reinforced by the Allied powers' recognition of the movement as a fellow combatant, the resistance movement introduced mandatory participation of Yugoslav citizens in the partisan armed forces (general conscription); in Slovenia, the leadership of the Liberation Front also proclaimed a general mobilization of all men fit for service in the age range of 17 to 45 years (Klanjšček, 1976: 280). Central to this measure, which also brought considerable risks, were military reasons, but political consequences are not to be overlooked, as this measure (among other factors) communicated to the population that the partisans are the legitimate and effective authority opposing the occupying and collaborative forms of government. Measures against the conscripts that did not respond were not taken (with the exception of propagandist and moral measures) or were carried out in a limited scope. Despite that, the propagandist portrayal of military conscription gained the partisans approximately 15,000 new fighters from the areas that had been controlled by Italy, and the majority were equipped with arms that the Italian divisions had to surrender in Julian March and the Province of Ljubljana. Parallel to the growth in strength was the fast development of formations. The partisan army was uniformly structured: divisions (in terms of formation, light brigades with 1,000–4,000 fighters) were introduced and integrated into corps; the headquarters of the latter became operational, manoeuvre and territorial commands (Anić et al., 1982; Klanjšček, 1975).

The main type of warfare became manoeuvre warfare, the so-called partisan warfare – struggle to achieve local predominance, destroy smaller occupying battle units and clear the territory, so that the movement was able to establish own political powers. This remained within the scope of asymmetric warfare, as the partisans and the occupying forces continued to differ strongly in size; the partisans were much more poorly technically equipped and had higher combat morale; due to light arms or even a lack of arms and equipment, the partisan forces were also more mobile. However, their tactics were slowly starting to resemble the tactics of the occupying forces and the units were increasingly more capable of carrying out larger planned operations (Anić et al., 1982: 280–464; Klanjšček, 1975). The opponent was adjusting to the applied forms of asymmetric warfare on a tactical level; German armed forces and police, in particular, developed a doctrine of counter-guerrilla warfare, which included all the identified elements of guerrilla warfare (German Antiguerrilla Warfare).

When the basic organisational and qualitative scheme of partisan units was consolidated after two years of development, their specialization and formation of units to serve special purposes and needs began. Especially from autumn 1943, the resistance movement in particularly endeavoured for the partisan army to go beyond the asymmetric nature of primary organisation and warfare and evolve into a lightly armed military organisation organized according to traditional military principles that would also be able to engage in symmetric military actions and operations. Organized in corps (and operational zones with the same purpose), divisions, brigades and detachments, the partisan forces integrated and combined spatial and manoeuvre warfare, control of the territory and important military functions (supply/logistics, medical, intelligence and security services). Limited material and human resources prevented the partisans from achieving this goal, despite the introduced military conscription (mobilization of all men in the age range from 17 to 45 years) and Allied aid in arms and equipment (Klanjšček, 1977: 816–857, 872–928).

In 1944 in Slovenia, similarly to the remainder of the Yugoslav occupied territory, warfare alternately transitioned between offensive and defensive combat and operations and vice versa, without any of the opposing sider reaching strategic objectives. They did, however, reach operational objectives

on a local level – to avoid severe defeats and cause the greatest possible losses both in human resources and footholds to the opponent, who on this battlefield increasingly used second-rate collaborative domestic and Russian forces instead of high-quality German armed forces (Klanjšček, 1975).

All this was supported by the favourable geostrategic position of the Yugoslav resistance movement. The Allied forces controlled southern Italy, which was separated from the footholds of the resistance movement along the Dalmatian coasts and on the islands only by 150 kilometres of poorly controlled Adriatic sea; consequently, the quantities of delivered military aid primarily depended on the Allies' political decisions and less on technical possibilities. A lack of manpower forced the German army to limit the operations against the resistance movement and to defend the most important transport ways and mines of copper and lead. In 1944, the Independent State of Croatia, already the weakest force in the Balkans, started to quickly lose its internal power and the Croatian population in great numbers supported and joined the partisan movement. This meant that by the end of 1944, Tito had achieved a full distribution of partisan military units from Soča in Slovenia to Serbia. Crucial for Tito's strategic position was the fact that in autumn of 1944, in a strategic alliance with the Red Army, which broke through all the way to the Danube in October 1944, he broke through and claimed Serbia. Because of that, the German Army Group E was forced to withdraw from the Balkans and was only striving to secure its withdrawal. For Germans, the Morava direction had already been closed due to Soviet-partisan liberation of Belgrade on 20 October 1944. In this way, in November 1944, the partisan "state" achieved full liberation of the western part of the state, where it established the temporary government of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia by way of the Tito-Šubašić agreement, immediately carried out a general mobilization with state authority and formed the Yugoslav Army, which it established on 1 March 1945, while the three operational units had already been established on 1 January 1945 (Vodušek Starič, 1994). All three operational units of the Yugoslav Army were arranged on the front line, which ran through Srem (northwest Serbia) and Bosnia, where they initiated decisive battles in spring 1945 (Strugar, 1980: 245–263). The partisan units in the western half of the Yugoslav territory were primarily tasked to assist the Yugoslav Army at the rear of the enemy's arrangement at the frontline (Matović, 1986; Klanjšček, 1975).

The strategic changes listed also influenced the position of the Slovenian resistance movement and military warfare in Slovenia. In 1944, the resistance movement was actively establishing institutions of the nation state that became a federal unit of the new state in spring 1945. This activity reached the apex on May 5, 1945, when a new government of Federal Slovenia was proclaimed. By autumn 1944, the Slovenian partisan army had reached its pinnacle in terms of organisation and number of members. Two corps and one operational zone encompassed 17 brigades and just as many territorial units – detachments; the armed forces established logistics units that were tasked with providing support for the combat units (supply, medical assistance, territorial control), as well as special units for internal security. Because of the mobilization, the number of members reached 36,000. The number of soldiers in the partisan army, combined with the fact that the number of mobilised members was many times greater than the number of volunteers, caused a decline in offensive actions, reduced operational successes and increased the logistic issues of the resistance movement. Logistic issues, particularly supplies, could only be solved with Allied aid, which took great effort to bring in with aeroplanes or by land from Dalmatia through the occupied territory. An even greater issue was a substantial increase in the occupying and collaborative forces on Slovenian territory. The significance of the latter for Germany became even greater, as two important transport routes for ensuring supplies and the planned withdrawal of German units from Italy and the Balkans to Germany ran through Slovenia. According to intelligence estimates, the occupying forces on the operational area of the Slovenian partisan army reached 123,000 men, assigned into approximately 600 garrisons units. The occupier used the majority of these forces in intensified combat operations, the purpose of which was to push the resistance partisan units away from the main transport corridors and weaken them to a point where they would no longer pose threat to those corridors (Klanjšček, 1975; Ferenc, 2002). In face of such supremacy, the partisan units could operate solely in an asymmetric manner and in doing so, sustained great losses, so that when the main body of the Yugoslav Army broke through to Slovenia in April 1945, the partisan units had only approximately 24,000 members.

With the resistance movement becoming a mass national movement, the armed forces of the resistance also expanded and formed into a structured

military organisation, which pursued the intention of the leadership of the resistance movement to transform the resistance movement into the holder of the new state and political authority of the Yugoslav state. This fundamental goal was also pursued by the leadership of the Slovenian resistance movement, which strived towards developing a Slovenian federal state. Due to war conditions, the formation of the future Yugoslav Army was led from several national and provincial centres, in accordance with the structure of political centres of the otherwise uniform Yugoslav resistance.

The planned development of partisan guerrilla units into a regular armed forces was a fundamental point of the military planning of the development of the Yugoslav resistance movement. Just like the leadership of the resistance movement was striving to form itself as a national representative, so it wanted to develop its armed units into the army of the new state. This is also a telling indication regarding the role of the asymmetric warfare in the doctrine of military operations of the resistance movement. The conclusion can be drawn that the asymmetric character of the conflict was primarily the result of the conditions in which the resistance movement was able to operate and not so much a doctrine element of lasting value. It was not identified as an important feature until after the war, upon the consideration on introducing the achievements into the Yugoslav peacetime army (Kveder, 1975).

3.3 Counterinsurgency during World War II on Yugoslav territory

Within three months of occupying Yugoslavia, the three occupying states were forced to engage with the resistance movement, which successfully employed asymmetric warfare on a large scale. Each of the three occupying forces chose a different approach in its occupied areas, mostly depending on the strength of the resistance movement.

Occupying the predominantly flat "southern regions", **the Hungarian forces** only encountered a military resistance movement in Bačka. Elsewhere (including Prekmurje, where the only armed resistance group was nipped in the bud before it had time to develop), the only surviving form of resistance movement was unarmed resistance. Nevertheless, the Hungarian occupying forces responded to the resistance movement by engaging the military and police. The uncovering and suppression of the resistance organisation

and smaller groups largely involved the police, while the military initially mainly focused on suppression with speedy court-martials for the captured and arrested resistance leaders. The police and gendarmerie detected the first armed resistance group in Prekmurje while it was still forming and immediately suppressed it in September 1941. The captured members were court-martialled and sentenced to death. Until late 1944, resistance in this area was then limited to political resistance with propaganda campaigns (Mirnić, 1975; Godina, 1975).

The Italian occupying forces based their fight against the resistance movement in the occupied Province of Ljubljana on a fully operational, large scale police and intelligence apparatus as well as extensive military presence.[29] The initial dispute over the competence in the fight against the resistance movement was won by the military, which was given full competence in January 1942 for the protection and maintenance of law and order. As of January 1942, the 11th Army Corps Intelligence Centre headed all intelligence activities in the province, coordinating them with civilian intelligence structures via the central bureau of the political police. Most of their attention was focused on discovering partisan units and the Liberation Front's field network. To this end they established an intelligence service that recruited agents and intelligence sources from various levels of the population. Individual military intelligence centres (*Servizio informazioni militare*, SIM) also attempted to conduct long-term intelligence activities that were intended to gather information on the resistance leadership and other organisations with an impact on security. The high commissioner – the central political authority – obtained information mainly through local authorities and partly from the administrative authority, the lower levels of which were largely composed of Slovenians. To make surveillance work more systematic, the high commissioner delegated SIM members to operate within a special division that he established in the civil administration's military department. Additionally, the Police Directorate (*questura*) in Ljubljana developed its own intelligence network, relying on recruiting arrested suspects as well as on deception with agents that passed themselves off as supporters of the Slovenian cause and the resistance movement. Italian intelligence activities can therefore be described as dispersed and only partly coordinated (Cibic, 1979).

Until January 1942, competence for combating the resistance movement lay with the police, but when it came to fighting armed resistance groups,

they were entitled to use military units. However, once the Italian government declared a state of emergency in the province despite having annexed it, full competence for the protection and maintenance of law and order was given to the military (Ferenc, 1987: 83–86; Cuzzi, 1998: 135–202). The military then took over the battle against armed resistance as well as unarmed civil organisations, although the police in conjunction with military police (*carabinieri*) remained the enforcement authority in cases involving the latter. Due to discrepancies in organisational principles, different training for combating the resistance movement, personal differences and for the sake of prestige, tensions between the police and the military increased while cooperation worsened. In autumn 1941, the police introduced the first mixed units (police, carabinieri, fascist militia) to combat the partisan movement. The five "mobile units" were stationed south of Ljubljana but did not prove to be particularly successful. A further four motorised mobile groups with battalion strength and comprising carabinieri, soldiers, flamethrowers and motorised vehicles were established in November 1941 by the 11th Army Corps on the initiative of the Second Army command (Ferenc, 1987: 84).

As of 19 January 1942, authorised by Mussolini, the 11th Army Corps was responsible for combating the resistance movement and partisan army. To fight the resistance, the 11th Army Corps staff predominantly employed military methods combined with violence against the civilian population that supported the resistance movement. The central point of the province – the city of Ljubljana, which had a population of 97,000 at the time – was first physically isolated from the surroundings by means of a barbed wire fence 36 km in length, which encircled the city and was watched over by armed guards. The military used similar fences to isolate the towns of Novo mesto and Trebnje. The fences were intended to prevent members of the resistance from entering the city and to stop the inhabitants from leaving the city to join the resistance. The only way to enter or leave the fenced cities and towns was through guarded checkpoints (Ljubljana had six checkpoints); in order to leave the city, civilians had to obtain a special permit that would be thoroughly inspected at the checkpoint. In February 1942, the military started investigating the inhabitants and searching their homes in an attempt to replace targeted investigations supported by preliminary police and intelligence reconnaissance. Since large areas and parts of cities were included in these searches ("raids"), the only way to conduct them was with considerable help

from the army. The raids then included individual categories of the population as well as whole neighbourhoods. The entire population was examined, the male share of the population was brought in to the barracks for personal searches and identification; any men who were "recognised" were immediately placed under arrest and investigated. Informants were used to determine whether such prisoners were involved in the resistance movement.[30]

Raids were also used for preventive mass internments, in which a part of the population was taken to newly established, military-run internment camps in the north of Italy (Gonars–Visco–Palmanova, as well as the island of Rab as of summer 1942). Initially, only specific categories of the population (active officers and non-commissioned officers of the Yugoslav army, students) that were suspected of involvement in the resistance movement were interned, but in summer 1942 they were joined by inhabitants of remote areas that the Italian military command saw as difficult to control.[31] While these preventive measures were successful enough when it came to limiting the mobilisation base for armed resistance groups, they did not succeed in eliminating partisan units. On the contrary: in spring 1942, the number of partisan fighters in the Province of Ljubljana grew to a total of 4,300 in just two months. One of the reasons for the rapidly growing resistance movement was the ineffectiveness of counter-guerrilla operations. The province had been patrolled by 126 small, widely dispersed military and police units, but in early spring, control over the territory was (temporarily) relaxed. Not unreasonably, the measure was undertaken to increase the safety of these units by combining them into 22 larger garrisons and 17 garrisons stationed along the Ljubljana–Postojna rail corridor. However, by concentrating the troops into larger garrisons, the military was now only able to control much smaller areas and the weak partisan units were thus left with a larger territory, unmonitored access to a considerable share of the population and, consequently, much better recruitment opportunities. The measure also had a significant psychological impact, as the retreat of the Italian military units after minor skirmishes or even in situations where there was no conflict were interpreted by the population as a defeat and an admission of weakness, which in turn motivated people to join the resistance units. The 11th Army Corps command was aware of the need for improved methods of counter-guerrilla warfare and planned the formation of six new mobile units in spring 1942. However, the extent to which the partisan movement had grown soon led to a change of plans and

efforts were concentrated instead on finding a solution for a large-scale, radical destruction of the partisan forces. By the early summer 1942, two thirds of the province were under partisan control; the Italian army suffered considerable losses and defeats in several engagements and open combat, e.g. in Bojanski boršt in May 1942. Partisan units continued to employ guerrilla tactics and were particularly successful in ambushing partly motorised reinforcement columns, causing considerable losses that were extremely painful for the occupying forces.[32] Military units frequently took out their rage on the civilian population in the vicinity, thus providing additional cause for people to leave their homes and join the partisan movement. As early as autumn 1941, houses and other buildings in the vicinity of ambush locations were being deliberately set on fire as a form of retaliation and revenge. Additionally, in April 1942 the Italian authorities introduced a system of hostage-taking: as of April 1942, small groups of members of the resistance were shot and killed as hostages in partisan attack locations (Ferenc, 2002).

As in the hinterland of Dalmatia and Herzegovina, the military command in the Province of Ljubljana eventually realised that it was losing the battle by employing defence tactics. In response, they launched a cleansing campaign entirely in line with classic warfare rules. The commander of the 11th Army Corps started by bringing in reinforcements for over a month; his plan was to search the whole of the rebelling area, identify and eliminate any supporters of armed resistance groups, and to surround and destroy or break up all partisan units. The Corps then deployed 72,000 troops (five divisions or equivalent units) and launched a military campaign that continued uninterrupted from 15 July to early November 1942. During these 4 months, 11 operations were conducted that covered 90% of the Province of Ljubljana (4,500 km^2). In the early stages in particular, the army consistently followed all provisions on counterinsurgency warfare as described in Circolare 3C and Document No. 7000 drawn up by the Second Army staff in spring 1942. These documents demanded actions such as treating any man found outside of a settled area as a rebel, destroying the home and property of all partisan supporters, and executing all rebels in the place of capture.[33] The large-scale counterinsurgency campaign led to a large number of villages being burnt down in the Notranjska and Kočevsko regions, the execution of over 1,200 civilians, and the killing or execution of some 800 partisans. Although severely weakened, the resistance movement overcame the internal crisis in a matter of months

and was able to regain its strength thanks in part to favourable foreign policy developments.

3.3.1 Involvement of Slovenian anti-partisan units (Village Guards – MVAC) in counterinsurgency activities, 1942–1943

In addition to introducing violent measures for the suppression of the resistance movement, the Italian occupying forces swelled their ranks by incorporating counter-guerrilla forces from the local population. On 10 August 1942, the 11th Army Corps staff established the first units of Anti-Communist Volunteer Militia (*Milizia volontaria anticomunista*, MVAC) in the region; the name had been decided upon in the beginning of August.[34] Initially, the MVAC comprised the two pre-existing active Village Guard units and the "Štajerska Battalion", but by the end of 1942, a MVAC unit had been established in almost every Province of Ljubljana municipality. Most of these units were company-sized and were composed of opponents of the resistance movement: members of Village Guards, the hitherto underground Slovenian Legion and the Legion of Death. However, rather than using these forces to form operational counter-guerrilla units, the MVAC were used merely as auxiliary units to control the territory, since their members did not have the complete trust of the Italian occupier. Each of the units was supervised by a liaison officer who was also in control of the unit's operational tasks.

Village Guards took the form of military units in late summer 1942, during the extensive Italian offensive. In spring 1942, the share of the traditionalist rural population with relatively firm connections to the various underground organisations established by the Slovenian People's Party, which had enjoyed majority support before the war, felt increasingly threatened, both physically and politically, by the partisan units and authorities in the "liberated" territory. However, with the exception of a few local cases, this did not lead to active opposition of the resistance movement. After the great cleansing operation in summer 1942, when the Italian authorities escalated the violence against the civilian population and the weakened partisan army retreated deep into the forests, leaders of the counter-guerrilla side started establishing local defence units; these units were approved by the Italian military leadership and incorporated in the Anti-Communist Volunteer Militia. The number of MVAC units grew rapidly, with members joining of their own accord as well as under moral and physical pressure from the Italian authorities. As an

underground organiser, the Slovenian Legion exerted moral pressure on its supporters, while the Italian authorities frequently offered men a choice: join the Village Guard or be interned. In autumn 1942, release from internment was also made conditional on the released internees joining an counter-guerrilla unit. By mid-December 1942, the MVAC numbered 4,500 men; at its pinnacle, in summer 1943, there were 107 MVAC units with a total of 6,200 men, considerably outnumbering the partisan forces at the time.

MVAC units were usually composed of locals and could number anywhere from a few dozen to over a hundred men. They were normally stationed in the centre of a settlement, in buildings situated near the church, whose bell tower would serve as an important observation and defence point. MVAC units were expressly tasked with defence functions, predominantly reconnaissance, patrolling and the protection of individual villages or vulnerable points near villages from partisan advance or attack. Each of the 65 posts (in 1943, 107 posts with an average of 50 men) controlled the territory within a radius of several hours' walk or sometimes even a full day's walk, making it an effective form of defence against the resistance field units, activists and smaller partisan units. MVAC units mostly spent their time pursuing small groups of partisans or searching for their supporters, field agents. After these actions, the units returned to their posts. The local character of MVAC units is demonstrated by cases where Village Guard members would spend the days working their fields and the nights guarding the settlement. These units were led by Slovenian officers and non-commissioned officers and included many career and reserve officers of the (former) Yugoslav army.

MVAC units were under strict supervision of the Italian authorities, having failed to earn their trust due to the continued existence of the underground leadership and dedication to Slovenian "national goals". Individual MVAC units were therefore prevented from maintaining connections with each other and to cooperate in actions or to operate independently outside of the immediate local area. Each unit (usually called a company) communicated directly with the supervising Italian commander or liaison officer and had no hierarchy, higher command or staff. In all operations, MVAC units were subordinate to nearby Italian units. All MVAC units were supervised and supplied by the "MVAC office" at the 11th Army Corps command and by "MVAC sections (sezione)" at divisions staffs and other larger units. MVAC units were only given the most essential equipment, antiquated weapons, and

only rarely heavy infantry weapons (Mlakar, 1999; Holešek, 2004; Cuzzi, 1998: 87–112).

A unit known as the Legion of Death differed from Village Guards at least in formal terms. The Legion was established in autumn 1942 in the Novo mesto area, developing from the Štajerska Battalion, the first counter-guerrilla unit. Unable to resist partisan attacks on its own, the Battalion leadership made an agreement with the Italian authorities to legalise the Battalion, move it to Šentjošt near Novo mesto and incorporate it in the MVAC. The unit was developed into the Legion of Death formation with the strength of three mobile battalions. Nevertheless, its units (comprising some 950 men) were deployed to permanent posts in individual settlements across the Polhograjsko hribovje hills and Gorjanci, differing from the MVAC units composed of Village Guards only to the extent that Legion of Death units were not composed solely of local men (Saje, 1951; Mlakar, 2003). The only truly mobile counter-guerrilla units that included counter-guerrilla formation members where the three Arditi (storm trooper) battalions, established by the 11th Army Corps staff in early 1943. These comprised predominantly Italian soldiers and just 171 MVAC members, who were used mainly for their familiarity with the terrain and the population (Klanjšček, 1976: 440; Ferenc, 1987).

The formation of so many collaboration units, albeit limited in their activities, severely impaired the operation of partisan units and civilian resistance movement by impeding and sometimes even preventing their access to the civilian population and consequently hindering or cutting off their supply and recruiting processes. Their success was partly down to the partisan unit leadership, which decided for the sake of increasing operational effectiveness to combine a large share of the partisan forces into mobile brigades that were only loosely connected to wider areas, while a small share of the partisan forces, organised into detachments, was left with area defence tasks. Furthermore, the violence of partisan units in the spring (they killed some 600 civilians, having identified them as leaders and members of the newly formed counter-guerrilla organisation) caused a considerable share of the population to distance itself from the resistance movement in summer and autumn 1942 or even to become actively involved in counterinsurgency activities.

In addition to the military leadership, the Italian civil authorities also became involved in developing counter-guerrilla formations. In response to complaints made by the underground anti-communist leadership regarding

the ineffectiveness of the Italian police in the face of the resistance move-
ment, in October 1942 the high commissioner gave permission for the es-
tablishing of an auxiliary but autonomous police formation of the Ljubljana
Security Guard. The formation was composed of and led by proponents of
the counter-guerrilla side. Operating independently and on the basis of in-
telligence information provided by the anti-communist camp, the Ljubljana
Security Guard would arrest and interrogate Liberation Front supporters in
the city. Despite its success, the Italian authorities abolished the Guard after
five months due to the political damage caused by the excessive arbitrariness
of the leadership and members alike (Saje, 1951).

The version of counterinsurgency in the Julian March

The leadership of the Slovenian resistance movement had been endeavouring
since autumn 1941 to spread the movement to the Julian March region; pop-
ulated by Slovenians, the region was annexed to Italy in 1920. By summer
1942, using the local population as well as activists sent from the Province of
Ljubljana, the leadership succeeded in establishing a basic network of the po-
litical resistance organisation and several partisan units. These developments
caused serious concern to the central and local authorities, especially consid-
ering their belief that TIGR, an underground anti-fascist organisation active
before the war, had been successfully suppressed.[35] Starting in autumn 1940,
some 350 members of TIGR were arrested – virtually everyone who had not
been able to flee to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in time. Even before the war,
the fascist regime had developed security, police and internal intelligence sur-
veillance in the Primorska region much like in other parts of Italy. Because of
the predominantly "foreign population" – Slovenians and Croats – which the
authorities judged to be unreliably from the aspect of security, as well as due
to TIGR's anti-fascist operations and the proximity of the border, Primorska
found itself the focus of security and intelligence services. In autumn 1941,
these detected the spreading of the resistance movement to Julian March de-
spite the careful monitoring of the former Italian-Yugoslav state border. In
just a few months, the Italian authorities recognised the deficiencies of the
police and security system (organised by *questure*) and the need for better or-
ganised counterinsurgency activity. In June 1942, the Ministry of the Interior
established the General Inspectorate of Public Security (*Ispettorato Generale
di Pubblica Sicurezza*) in Trieste. The Inspectorate was given authorisation to

manage and coordinate the regional police and security activities to combat the resistance movement. Additionally, the Inspectorate was able to organise direct police and military actions, since it comprised some 40 police commissioners and agents. Several dozen mixed mobile units ("nucleo mobile") with motorised vehicles were deployed to the ethnically Slovenian area under most immediate threat, from Posočje and Kras (Isonzo region and Karst) to Istria, and a unified intelligence and alarm network established. The units were composed of *carabinieri*, soldiers, and public security agents. This measure contributed significantly towards improving the effectiveness and rate of response to any partisan units detected. Counter-guerrilla warfare was combined with mass arrests of resistance movement members as well as cruel and ruthless torture and interrogation of captured suspects and partisans for the purpose of obtaining information on resistance networks (Ferenc et al., 1974: 200, 205–206). However, none of this led to the destruction of the resistance organisation and units, since the Italian mobile units were not able to continue patrolling the territory freely after late autumn 1942, when a series of successful partisan attacks forced them to pull back. Nevertheless, these methods of counter-guerrilla warfare did manage to impede the growth of the resistance movement and partisan groups until spring 1943, when partisan ranks were swelled by deserting Slovenian recruits who had been enlisted by the authorities.[36] The partisan forces grew to an extent that necessitated a reorganisation of counter-guerrilla warfare. To achieve this, the deployment of larger military units with particular emphasis on mountain units was planned. To this end, a new military high command was established in mid-1942: the 23rd Army Corps with headquarters in Triest. After the partisan units in Primorska reorganised into two brigades in spring 1943, the counter-guerrilla forces achieved their biggest success, since it was easier for them to fight a concentrated enemy. The Italian units defeated the partisan brigade on Golobar near Bovec, prevented the two brigades from moving westwards into the ethnically Slovenian Veneto region and broke up one of the brigades in the process (Ferenc, 1983).

3. 3. 2 Counterinsurgency warfare in the German occupied area –
in the civil administration area (1941–1945) and the operative zone
"Adriatisches Küstenland" (1943–1945)

As resistance broke out in Yugoslavia in summer 1941, Germany already had a well-designed counterinsurgency system, developed in the fight against the

Polish resistance movement. German occupation policy in Slovenia comprised "national political measures": radical denationalising and forced deportation of the national elite to Serbia and the Independent State of Croatia. Although the denationalisation violence was widely disliked, only a small share of the population became sufficiently radicalised to want to join the armed resistance movement. Police surveillance of the population in the civil administration area was highly effective from the outset of the occupation and was immediately operational, functioning as early as during the forced deportation of 13,000 people between May and July 1941 (Ferenc, 1967).

The occupation authorities immediately established all branches of the police, attaching them to commander's offices in both administrative regions (*Gau*). The Secret State Police and Order Police were responsible for counterinsurgency activities, since such activities in the area intended for annexation to Germany remained within the competence of the Ministry of the Interior and consequently the security forces organised on the national level in the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). In the occupied area, temporarily defined as a civil administration area until the annexation, a security organisation was established in the form of two offices of the Security Police and Security Service commander (Kd SiPO and SD); in addition to the intelligence service, the commander also coordinated the operations of all police services run by the RSHA office with the exception of the military intelligence service, the Abwehr. The territory was controlled through district branch offices[37] situated in district centres, providing a single command structure for the Gestapo, Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*) and Criminal Police offices (Guštin, 2006; Forte, 1978). Using this type of organisation, they were able to ensure good access to information, short response times and coordinated actions. The police was given full competence and responsibility for security in the civil administration area, while the military had no such duties.

Combating the civilian field structures of the resistance movement was entirely under competence of the Gestapo, while the duties of intervention and cooperation were performed by the Gendarmerie, the Order (uniformed) Police in cities, and other police structures. The police were required to hand over to the Gestapo anyone suspected of belonging to the resistance movement, as well as all perpetrators of offences beyond normal criminal motivation. After interrogation and investigation procedures, their fate was decided by the Gestapo.

Effective coordination of intelligence and security activities was an important feature of counterinsurgency warfare. Coordination of activities was the responsibility of the Gestapo offices in Bled and Maribor, which were in charge of obtaining and using information on the resistance movement. Any extensive actions against the resistance movement planned by Gestapo offices in the district branches had to be approved by the SiPO and SD commander's office. The district branches and the two provincial offices had access to information in the central RSHA records and also contributed their own information. Other police institutions and authorities were required to inform the Gestapo of any findings regarding the resistance movement. Similarly, a special decree was issued that obliged the occupied population to collaborate and report all knowledge of resistance groups or actions. Meanwhile, severe punishments were decreed by the occupation authorities for any type of involvement in anti-German activities. Following a police investigation, captured members of the resistance movement were consistently transported to concentration camps. By decree of the SiPO and SD commander, people found guilty of more severe violations were executed and news of their execution released publicly in order to intimidate the population and discourage participation in the resistance movement (Guštin, 2006).

The main purpose of security operations was to get the upper hand on the opponent in politics as well as security. In order to achieve this, intelligence and security services were directed not just to prevent the opponent's activities but to eliminate the opponent completely. The intelligence network played an important part in the directed concentrated interventions operated by the security forces. Intelligence operations had been taken over by the Gestapo as early as autumn 1941, when instructions were issued to establish N Desks (*Nachrichten*) that would specialise in intelligence activities in each individual Gestapo district branch office. Any information received by an N Desk clerk would be forwarded immediately to an executive clerk, who would then take measures against the resistance group using the Security and Order Police or, after 1943, the army, while the Gestapo and Order Police were responsible for field organisations. In addition to their own intelligence activities, other sources of information included reports from other police divisions in the field and from the population, information extracted from captured members of the resistance movement, and information obtained by agents who had managed to infiltrate the resistance organisation or

partisan units. Another method for obtaining intelligence information was to deploy reconnaissance units of "loafers" (*Gegenbande*) into areas that were controlled by the resistance. Gegenbande units comprised trained police that passed themselves off as members of the resistance in order to find supporters of the resistance movement, uncover the resistance organisation, and eliminate small groups or individual resistance unit members.

Although combating resistance partisan groups was under the competence of regular police – the Gendarmerie as well as Police Battalions – the Gestapo also played a significant role. Due to the abundance and activities of armed (partisan) groups, Police Battalions were deployed to conduct counter-guerrilla warfare as early as summer 1941. Police Battalions (integrated in 1942 into SS Police Regiments) were uniformed police formations with military organisation, thoroughly trained in accordance with a specialised programme that differed from general military training. Police Battalions carried the full range of light weapons and were sometimes backed by light artillery and armoured vehicles. They only took part in armed conflicts with partisan units and were trained to conduct multi-day field campaigns. They sometimes operated in companies or platoons, depending on the anticipated size of partisan units and the purpose of the military operations. In 1941, there were three Police Battalions on the occupied Slovenian territory, but later their number was increased, sometimes comprising as many as four SS Police Regiments (10 to 12 battalions) to combat the growth of partisan units. Until the end of the war, Police Battalions were the main German operational formation used to combat partisan units on the Slovenian territory. Every defeat of the partisan companies in 1941 correlates with the success of the Police Battalions. However, even the less well-armed and trained partisan units were sometimes able to defeat them: on 12 December 1941, a 52-soldier platoon of the 181st Reserve Police Battalion was caught in a partisan ambush at Rovte and lost 46 men (Klanjšček, 1976: 196–197).[38] The 2nd Partisan Battalion and Second Group of Detachments also saw success in encounters with Police Battalions at Tisje near Litija in December 1941 and at Janče in May 1942 (Klanjšček, 1976: 193, 270–271). Due to the lack of auxiliary forces, the most reliable units of the paramilitary organisation *Wehrmannschaft des Steirischen Heimatbundes* were given the task of counter-guerrilla warfare in 1942. As the need for further troops increased, the entire Untersteiermark Regiment was added to the counter-guerrilla forces

in 1944.[39] Wehrmannschaft members also comprised a considerable share of area defence forces in Štajerska (Low Styria) towards the end of the war (Ferenc, 1960).

An important improvement in counter-guerrilla warfare that was maintained until the end of the war was the formation of leading staffs for counterinsurgency warfare (*"Bandenbekämpfung"*); the first on the occupied Slovenian territory was established in May 1943 and commanded by Erwin Rösener, police general and leader of the Security Police in the 18th military district. In September 1943, the competence of Rösener's staff was expanded to include the previously Italian-occupied Province of Ljubljana. To control the western parts of the Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral (Operationszone der Adriatisches Küstenland), an additional staff was established in Trieste to conduct counter-guerrilla warfare west of the Rapallo border (led by police general Odilo Globocnik). In a specific area, counter-guerrilla warfare was thus conducted by a single command that had at its disposal police forces (Police Battalions and SS Police Regiments, gendarmerie intervention forces), auxiliary police forces (Slovenian Home Guard, Slovenian National Security Corps, Gorenjska Self-Defence and military units of the Wehrmannschaft, reconnaissance units and Gegenbande) and military forces (Landschützen division, units for special employment, e.g. Mountain Riflemen, Brandenburg Regiment, 188th and 71st Division). Additionally, units that were being transported on both railway lines to the front in Italy were temporarily included in several large-scale cleansing operations. To improve control and shorten response times, in 1944 the operational staff area was divided into protective sections commanded by the most senior, but always German, officers in the area (Ferenc, 1960: 123).

3.3.3 Slovenian anti-partisan units – Domobranstvo

After the capitulation of Italy in September 1943, Germany occupied the remaining Slovenian territory that had previously been occupied by its erstwhile ally, mainly for the sake of protecting the communication channels with the Italian front. The entire western part of the Slovenian ethnic territory was incorporated in the Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral[40] and local opponents of the resistance movement were included in counterinsurgency warfare. In autumn 1943, when Slovenian opponents of the resistance movement volunteered to join the fight against the partisans with the remainder of the Village

Guards – MVAC (some 2,000 men), the German occupying forces were sufficiently lacking in numbers to welcome them, although the new recruits were not particularly significant from a military point of view. In late September, the German administration established a new armed counter-guerrilla force, the Slovenian Home Guard Legion, soon renamed to the Slovenian Home Guard. The German authorities used the Home Guard as an auxiliary police force while the Slovenian counter-guerrilla side portrayed it as a Slovenian armed force collaborating with Germany purely out of necessity in order to defend the population from partisan aggression and to protect the nation from the looming threat of sovietisation. Meanwhile, Germany had a much more ambitious plan for the collaborating units, intending to develop them in to a division of the Right Waffen SS similar to those established in other parts of Europe. However, this idea was soon abandoned due to the opposition of the Slovenian anti-communist leaders and the pressing military situation in Slovenia.

While the Slovenian Home Guard Legion and later the Slovenian Home Guard initially consisted solely of volunteers, it was soon expanded by conscription. In September 1943, German authorities in the Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral decreed the entire available (male) labour force to be employed either for the military or working needs of the Reich. After the introduction of general compulsory military service for men within the Operational Zone, one of the options was to serve in the Slovenian Home Guard and, later, in the Slovenian National Security Corps in the area west of the Rapallo border. As the German administration refused to recognise the formation of an administration unit based on Slovenian nationality, they consequently decided against forming a single Slovenian collaborating force that would cover the entire ethnic territory. This led to a separate development of several collaborating counter-guerrilla forces. The Slovenian National Security Corps was a much smaller formation, never exceeding 2,000 members, half of which came from the Slovenian Home Guard. They were also less reliable, with several units going into staged attacks and surrendering to the partisan forces (Mlakar, 1981). In the civil administration area in Gorenjska, the occupying authorities permitted the formation of a collaborating force in mid-1944 in order to compensate for the complete refusal of enlistment in the Germany army. Some 1800 members of this force were organised into 30 units and deployed to local villages, effectively impeding the growth of the resistance movement in the area (Kokalj, 1999).

The supreme commander of the Slovenian Home Guard was General Erwin Rösener in his role of commander of the Leading staff for counterinsurgency warfare, which made decisions regarding the major actions and operational use of the Home Guard units. The organisational aspect of the Home Guard was the responsibility of the organisational staff, which comprised career officers of Slovenian nationality. In all other matters, the staff was independent; it had its own recruit school and held courses for officer and non-commissioned officer training.

In September and October 1943, a network of Home Guard outposts was established around Ljubljana, along the Southern Railway and in the Polhograjsko Hills; after the German offensive in November 1943, the network was expanded to include the Novo mesto and Kočevje areas. Home Guard units were initially used to defend the Ljubljana-Triest rail corridor and to monitor the areas around larger towns, but the goal was to train them for operational warfare against the resistance movement. The project was initiated in spring 1944; by that summer, five shock battalions[41] had been formed and gradually took over the majority of counter-guerrilla warfare in the Province of Ljubljana. In addition to the five battalions, there was a police regiment stationed in the province.

By that point, the German counterinsurgency doctrine had been perfected and a school of counter-guerrilla warfare with German instructors established in Stična. The doctrine focused on operations by small, well-trained units armed with light weapons, the use of partisan warfare elements (ambush, deep breakthrough, infiltration to the rear, sudden hit and run attacks), and the ability of several days' independent operation in the field. The escalating tension and brutality of civil war led to the units frequently and intentionally combining counter-guerrilla warfare tactics with violence against the civilian population, particularly against resistance movement collaborators and sympathisers. By the end of summer, the shock battalions were replaced with a mixed formation, incorporating a company of the German police into each battalion; this was done not just to increase battalion strength but mainly to improve their reliability and to be able to monitor them (Mlakar, 2002; Kladnik, 2006).

Compared to the MVAC, the Home Guard was tasked with an entirely different mission from the very beginning. In addition to protecting and defending the railways, the Home Guard's operations were characterised by

increased activity, mobility and flexibility in adapting to the opponent's partisan strategies. Theoretical works on Home Guard tactics consistently focused on mobile units and relevant strategies in addition to permanent outposts. The Home Guard started to train for counterinsurgency warfare. To this end, several organisational changes were introduced, with flying detachments, mobile reserves and, in mid-1944, shock battalions. Home Guard units were intended to spend the majority of the time clearing the rear area, occasionally following this up with extensive offensive campaigns. The Home Guard perceived Germany's support to be an important advantage of the "anti-communist campaign", although such support was not always guaranteed. As the shock battalions began to operate, the Home Guard altered its strategy considerably, which had an impact on the effectiveness of counter-guerrilla warfare. At the same time, it spelled an end to the mentality of territorial control. On one hand, the battalions provided a larger concentration of troops (four companies, one of which was armed with heavy weaponry) with more striking and fire power; on the other hand, their purpose, mentality and strategy was that of a mobile unit; combined with other Home Guard or German units, they were capable of conducting small-scale offensive campaigns or, more usually, effective campaigns of encircling and cleansing partisan territories. In accordance with their short-term and long-term goals, Home Guard outposts – particularly those manned by shock battalion units – grew increasingly aggressive.

They progressed from defending villages to establishing control over the territory. They would start by attempting to cleanse the area of partisans and any support organisations. If they had a sufficient number of men available, this was followed by establishing a new outpost. However, in many cases they did not get beyond the planning stages, considering the fact that the partisan movement had two important elements in its favour: firstly, a very strong field network of supporters that the Home Guard failed to eliminate entirely in most areas, since this would have required the arrest or deportation of the majority of the population; and secondly, although the large, mobile, experienced partisan units (divisions, brigades and detachments) did not always do well in direct frontal combat, their continued activities and changes of movement directions were a cause of considerable trouble for the Home Guard as well as the German troops. In the end, the Slovenian Home Guard had very little to show for its plans of seizing the territory. It was not until winter 1944–1945 that they succeeded in pushing the partisan forces

from central Dolenjska to the edge of Kočevski Rog. Mobile Home Guard units achieved a number of local successes in destroying and weakening the enemy forces, particularly with occasional offensives that sometimes involved several battalions, with sudden invasions into the enemy's rear area, and with attacks on smaller units, staffs and facilities in the rear area. Home Guard outposts, particularly those manned by battalion units, were extremely zealous when it came to small-scale actions, conducting them almost every day. These actions included surprise night attacks and small-scale marches into the nearby or wider areas that would usually start in the evening and end in the morning. The attacks were sometimes aimed at a specific partisan unit or support organisations, if the Home Guard received relevant information from its intelligence service. The marches of a single company or a part of a company were not necessarily offensive in nature and were sometimes aimed at gathering information from the population. The Home Guard also frequently seized materials from partisan depots and arrested partisan field agents (Kladnik, 2006).

3.4 David vs. Goliath version 2.0: Slovenian armed forces resisting the aggression of the Yugoslav People's Army in the summer of 1991

3.4.1 Circumstances

In the 1980s, Yugoslavia was experiencing a multifaceted internal crisis. Following the death of lifelong president Josip Broz Tito in May 1980, the single-party political system began to waver. It is true that Yugoslavia's political system, no longer a typical party dictatorship, used a "democratic plurality of self-governing interests" to attempt to translate the population's apolitical interests into a self-governing system, but the scope of this system was nevertheless limited by the national authority, which was firmly in the hands of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. The plurality was even more actively determined by the state's federal structure: after the last constitutional reform in 1974, the six republics (Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia) and two autonomous provinces that were formally a part of the Socialist Republic of Serbia (Kosovo and Vojvodina) began to develop into individual states despite living within the same single-party political system. In the period of cheap oil dollar loans, Yugoslavia

accumulated a debt of USD16 billion (by 1985, the debt including interests totalled USD20 billion or approximately 15% of the GDP). The debt crisis sent the state into an economic recession; the cutbacks and repayment of re-scheduled debts led to a lower standard of living, causing unrest and a loss of legitimacy that the political system found difficult to control. In search of a political and economic way to overcome the crisis, two options took shape: one option proposed a return to the past with a focus on centrally-planned economy and an increased role of the federal centre in the distribution of goods and investments; the second, (non-unitary) reformist option favoured an increase in economic freedom for companies, i.e. more market economy rather than socialist economy, as well as an undefined reform of the political system that would ease the expression of interests but still maintain a special role for the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

The Socialist Republic of Slovenia was the most economically developed of the federal republics; even though it accounted for just 7.8% of the population, its share in the economy was approximately 17%. For the purpose of reducing the significant discrepancies in development (Kosovo–Slovenia 1 : 7), Yugoslavia introduced the concept of fast-track development for less developed regions and established a development fund that was under the control of federal authorities. Due to the lack of supervision, which was politically unacceptable for the less developed republics, considerable funds were frequently invested ineffectively and often used for the development of social infrastructure rather than manufacturing companies. Several large investments of this type (alumina processing in Obrovac, chromium processing in Kavadarci) failed completely and caused considerable financial losses. Alongside general doubts regarding the use of development funds, this led to the developed republics demanding better control over investments and even calling for direct investments with capital ties. In general, the system of management by consensus ("concerted economy") was hardly effective; the division of business entities into manageable units ("basic organisation of joint work"), ostensibly managed by people employed in each unit, caused problems in manufacture processes and integration of companies, since the latter had no capital-enabled management instruments and the concerted system did not always function properly. The economic crisis continued throughout the 1980s. The high rate of inflation developed into hyperinflation in 1987. Marković, the new president of the Federal Executive

Council (the government), managed to slow down the wage-price spiral for some time by fixing the currency, Dinar, against the value of the German currency, Deutsche Mark, on the basis of a loan he had secured for the rehabilitation of the Yugoslav economy. Since Yugoslavia remained non-aligned between the two blocs in Europe during the Cold War, it received much support from abroad in order to alleviate the crisis and restore the state's internal cohesion, which continued to disintegrate.

The attempted reforms that were intended to modernise the political system led instead to a rift that came to a head in January 1990 with the dissolution of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Its main protagonist was Slobodan Milošević, chairman of the Communist League of Serbia, who openly attempted to win a leading role in Yugoslavia while removing or reducing the influence of each republic's government. He enjoyed the backing not just of his Serbian supporters but also of military leaders, who were traditionally dedicated to the unity of Yugoslavia. Milošević's political influence was based on the complex issue of Kosovo, a province where he hoped to maintain Serbian rule despite the predominantly Albanian population (approximately 85%). This led to large-scale demonstrations and riots, first in 1981 and again in 1988, that would not cease until armed forces were brought in. Using populism to remove the inert governments in the republics and provinces within Serbia's reach ("the people happened"), Milošević succeeded in appointing new, loyal authorities in the Serbian and pro-Serbian republics and provinces. Political resistance came mostly from the leaderships of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo due to conceptual differences as well as for fear of being similarly removed. In addition to political elites, a large share of the population in the above territories also opposed Milošević because they felt threatened as a nation. This led to national homogenisation and propaganda wars between individual environments, spearheaded by the increasingly instrumentalised media.

Another, albeit very weak, group eventually formed in opposition to Milošević. Their idea for the solution of the political crisis was to open up the political space and permit public political discussion and public expression of interest under the auspices of the regime-friendly Socialist Alliance of Working People, one of the five political organisations that were not banned. It was not until 1989 and 1990 that the reformists, including Milan Kučan as the biggest name among them, decided to allow the formation of a multi-party

political system and step down from power, partly under the influence of developments in the former Eastern Bloc. The first multi-party elections were held in April 1990 in Slovenia and Croatia.

During the breakup of Yugoslavia in the late 1980s, the Republic of Slovenia decided to increase its competences in order to protect itself from the pressures of the new Communist political and national structures that pushed for a renewed centralisation of the state. They wanted to eliminate certain confederal elements that the SFRY had been exhibiting since the last reform of the federation in 1971–1974, which saw the ratification of a new federal constitution as well as new constitutions in individual republics. However, there was an obstacle in trying to remove any such confederal elements: the national feeling of individual nations, which was easy to provoke in times of crisis. Five of the six republics were nation states.

During the severe political conflicts that arose from the economic crisis in the years following Tito's death, the federal central government began to lose its power. As the political and national leadership weakened, the Yugoslav armed forces leadership gained more political power, particularly as it arose from the specific role of the military in the socialist regime; consequently, the military leadership also enjoyed greater autonomy. While the military leadership apparently supported the preservation of the 1974 federal system, they were actually in favour of centralisation, which they believed would be a more successful approach to solving Yugoslavia's economic and political problems. This brought the military closer to Milošević's option; by taking his side, the military's actions and intentions led to growing suspicions among the reformists in the Slovenian and Croatian governments.

As early as 1990, Slovenia started to support the reorganisation of Yugoslavia into an asymmetric federation and later a confederation within which Slovenia would be an independent state, but still connected with the remaining republics. The only republic to support the concept was Croatia. However, in the summer of 1990, Slovenia's new political elite, which comprised representatives of new democratic parties, set its sights on a gradual transition to an independent state while it strategically continued to support the possibility of a confederation.

This led to a considerable increase of security risks in the independence process that Slovenia had initiated in 1989. The inequality and uneven time-frame of the transition to a democratic system were significant factors

contributing to security risks, since the orthodox Communist forces – including the military leadership – perceived them as "counter-revolutionary threats to the security of the state". Nevertheless, they did not react to the democratic elections in the spring of 1990 in Slovenia and Croatia apart from a few threats. The conflict also developed on another level: the military leadership endeavoured to change the defence system, which was based on the doctrine of total war (general people's defence and social self-protection), into a modern system more fitting to the time after the end of the Cold War (Marijan, 2008). This interfered with Territorial Defence, a component of armed forces under the competence of individual republics, as well as with the considerable competences of political authorities on every level in the Slovenian system. After five years of efforts, the military leadership finally introduced a new organisation of the armed forces in early 1989, partly subordinating rather than abolishing the Territorial Defence.

3.4.2 Defence organisation in Slovenia in the summer of 1990

In the spring of 1990, the Yugoslav military leadership, with the awareness of a part of the political leadership, decided to block some 600,000 pieces of infantry weapons belonging to the Territorial Defences of the six republics. This was done predominantly with the intention of removing the weapons from the reach of Slovenia and Croatia, where all signs pointed to non-Communist parties winning the elections. Allegedly to protect them from frequent thefts in the poorly guarded Territorial Defence depots, the weapons were transported to the barracks and depots controlled by the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA). After several months of planning, they covertly proceeded with the measure on 17 May 1990 without informing the republics' governments or the lower-level TD commands. Within a few days, the majority of Territorial Defence weapons were transported to YPA depots and barracks. In Slovenia, some TD members as well as the civilian population and government resisted the order, leading to about a fifth of the weapons remaining in the hands of the Slovenian TD (Marijan, 2008; Stušek, 2011). Although the Slovenian leadership failed in its attempt to reclaim the weapons for the Territorial Defence, they refused to accept defeat. In the summer, the government decided to gain sole legal command over the Territorial Defence of Slovenia.

Following the removal of weapons and the reaction on the lower hierarchical levels, senior officials at the Secretariats of the Interior and

People's Defence of Slovenia realised that a temporary solution would be required for the interim period until such amendments to the constitution and legislation could be made that would bring the TD entirely under the command of the government of the Republic of Slovenia. In addition to ensuring at least minimum defence capabilities and being entirely controlled by the national authorities, the temporary solution was also required not to violate any federal laws so as not to give the YPA any reason for intervention, as well as to encourage the general population to participate in it. In August 1990, the solution was found in the Act on General People's Defence (GPD) and Social Self-Protection (SSP) then in force in the Republic of Slovenia; the act regulated the establishing of the National Protection, a security paramilitary organisation, and provided for the temporary enlistment of TD, YPA or Civil Protection Service conscripts into the National Protection until such time as they were drafted into the abovementioned organisations (Janša, 1992; Zvonar, 2011).

However, the groundwork for establishing a security paramilitary organisation predates this discovery and was laid in June 1990. Originally a nameless organisation based on self-initiative, it was coordinated on a national level (by the republic's Secretaries of the Interior and Defence, organisers Tone Krkovič and Vinko Beznik) and comprised members of the TD and authorities of the interior (particularly special and specialised police units). For the purposes of field service, trusted municipal officials were gradually included in the organisation. In this sense, the National Protection was a (self)-defence organisation that was only subsequently given a legal framework.

At this stage, the supreme leadership of the republic with legislative power in matters of defence was still unaware – with the exception of the abovementioned officials – that a defence organisation was being formed. The organisers were establishing it from the top down according to a detailed organisation chart known only to the leaders. New members were recruited by the head operatives[42], who would select associates on the regional level, while they in turn recruited associates and chiefs on the municipal level. The choice of associates was based mainly on personal trust and acquaintance. All new recruits were then introduced to the function and goals of the organisation, to which they were expected to be fully dedicated. Despite the fact that it was legalised by the government in accordance with the then-current laws and

concept of the GPD and SSP, the organisation continued to function in the strictest confidence; people on the national level were only aware of members down to the regional level, while they only knew members down to the municipal level. The system also worked the other way around: individuals on the municipal level often knew only their own supervisor's identity or, in some extreme cases, remained unaware even of the regional National Protection chief's identity virtually to the end. Similarly, strict security measures were in place when it came to communication, with every document and notice delivered in person or even orally; documents were frequently destroyed to erase any trace of activity. The pyramidal organisation of the Manoeuvre Structures ensured the safety of members and participants in the secret project. Although the Manoeuvre Structures of National Protection (MSNP) was organised as a typical centralist organisation from the top down, this was not how it operated. When it came to concrete tasks, members were almost completely independent and were rarely required to report to their supervisors. That was the problem and responsibility of municipal chiefs, who were highly independent. The situation was similar for the municipal chiefs' deputies and other associates, who were only aware of their own respective tasks. In some cases, deputies remained unaware of each other's identities for long periods of time. This was the MSNP's way of preventing the arrest of any one member from revealing the entire operation; for the same purpose, information was decentralised.[43] In this respect, the MSNP, its formation, methods of operation and communication were similar to many other resistance groups throughout the world.

The organisational structure was finalised in September 1990 and comprised two autonomous yet interconnected structures: the police division was composed of special and specialised police units in each of the regional and municipal departments, while departments in the other division were composed of Territorial Defence units and members. There were plans of action (defence plans) prepared that provided for the activation of all or some of the forces within the organisation in the event of a YPA intervention.

The organisation was dissolved in early October 1990, when the amended constitution enabled the Republic of Slovenia to take full command of the Slovenian Territorial Defence and reorganise it to form the Slovenian armed forces.

3.4.3 Preparations for a potential engagement after the declaration of independence

Preparations for a potential engagement in 1990 and 1991 showed that, although formed in an entirely different social, ideological and geostrategic situation, the concept of general people's defence and social self-protection was used very effectively by the new Slovenian government as a defence and security instrument to protect the Slovenian independence. In the 1970s, when the concept of GPD and SSP took shape, its logical purpose was to preserve the socialist social order and political set. The concept focused on attacks by a technologically and numerically superior enemy from the West or East. In this sense, GPD and SSP helped Slovenia's defence planners in the context of preparations and armed conflict to implement all of the available capabilities from civil to military, take advantage of the opponent's weak points and run an effective media campaign that won over the major international players which, even in late 1990, had been less than inclined to support Slovenia's bid for independence.

Slovenia's defence preparations for a potential heightening of tension after gaining independence started in March 1991, when the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia as the supreme command decided that the state's armed forces should be prepared to respond to any threats to the declaration of independence. After the plebiscite in late December 1990, the declaration of independence was publicly set to take place on 26 June 1991 at the latest. On the other hand, most preparations for it, particularly in 1990, were conducted covertly, which is entirely comparable to the beginnings of resistance movements in other areas as well as through history, whenever two unequal opponents came face to face in obvious asymmetry.

The military preparations comprised organisational consolidation of Territorial Defence units and commands. The status of the Territorial Defence as the army of the Republic of Slovenia was formalised with the adoption of the Defence Act and the Military Service Act. Military service was now conducted in the Territorial Defence – an important development that resulted in a strong reaction from the federal government and particularly from the YPA command after the first generation of recruits was drafted in May 1991. The YPA saw in this a dissolution of the previously unified Yugoslav defence system and YPA competences, as well as the final nail in the coffin of the YPA monopoly over military defence. Meanwhile, authorities of the Interior

continued to be involved in Slovenia's defence preparations, with special fo-
cus on the uniformed police[44], whose organisation and tasks in a potential
state of emergency and military conflict remained unaltered. Specialised and
special police units would be used in the event of a security crisis. For the
purpose of coordinating the various subsystems in their defence preparations,
the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia established a Contingency Op-
erational Coordination Staff, provided for by the general people's resistance
system. Headed by the Secretaries of the Interior and Defence, the Staff co-
ordinated the planning of defence and would, if the need arose, also coordi-
nate defence measures and activities.

The main players were well aware that, considering the numerical and
quality advantage of the opposing side, military preparations alone would
not suffice; other resources and the opponent's weak points had to be made
good use of, which is one of the main principles of asymmetry. An impor-
tant factor that contributed significantly to the swift and effective end of the
war in 1991 were civil defence preparations, particularly those that impeded
the YPA's logistic operations, won over the media and motivated the civil-
ian population. We have already demonstrated the importance of the civilian
population's support for the asymmetric player; the dispersal of the mecha-
nisms employed is similarly important.

Civil Defence Preparations

Civil defence preparations were of considerable importance as the new Slo-
venian government realised that using the military component of defence
alone would not be sufficient in the event of an engagement with the YPA.
The newly adopted defence legislation led to changes in civil defence. The
number of people working on defence plans was reduced, making the system
more transparent and effective. The civil defence preparations were based on
the **Guidelines for actions to be taken to ensure a state of readiness**,[45] but
took place even before May 1991; these early preparations were less directly
focused on YPA attacks, but they later proved decisive (Nered–Frankovič,
2001). A factor to be taken into consideration when talking about civil de-
fence preparations is the ancillary organisational structure: special coordi-
nation groups were formed to devise actions and measures. Additionally,
early 1991 saw the appointment of coordinators from the State Secretariat for
the People's Defence; in charge of coordinating the civil defence preparations

on the regional level, in May 1991 they also joined the coordination sub-groups.

The initial measures for planning actions to ensure the continuity of government[46] date back to November 1990, when the State Secretariats of the People's Defence and the Interior devised the Shield Plan (*Ščit*). The Shield Plan provided operative solutions for moving the Slovenian leadership to eight locations outside of Ljubljana, should the city come under direct threat. Taking into account strict security measures, the plan was tested in May 1991 (Malešič, 2012).

Early June 1991 saw the completion of the Operative Plan for Defence and Security Actions, which provided for civil defence actions as well as for organising the functioning of the system. The comprehensive civil defence actions comprised the following elements:

- In addition to the Shield, every available channel was used for international activities for the recognition of the newly independent Slovenia and its inclusion in international organisations, coordination with allies in Yugoslavia, establishing alternate locations where the bodies of immediate socio-political communities could operate, organising the state and municipal authorities' administration associations, and heightened security for people and buildings;
- Economic defence and warfare can be divided into two categories, both with regard to the measures themselves and to the timeline of their adoption. The first category comprises defensive actions[47] taken as part of economic defence before independence in response to the offensive actions of economic warfare conducted by the Socialist Republic of Serbia; the second category comprises economic warfare actions during the war of independence. The field of economic warfare involved the relevant economic administrative authorities of the state (State Secretariats of Energy, Engineering, Industry and Construction, Market and General Economic Affairs, Transport and Communications[48], and International Cooperation). Plans were made for the continued operation of individual strategic systems within their competence in the event of a state of emergency. The first priority was to ensure the provision of material and medical supplies for TD and police units; the second

priority was to ensure the continued functioning of the economy and supplies for the general population.

The economic defence (and some of its elements and systems in particular) was combined with actions that are normally a part of other civil forms of defence or even civil defence. A plan of obstruction and blockages was prepared, also known as the **non-violent obstruction plan**. At lower levels, this was the responsibility of the relevant administrative authorities for the people's defence that worked with various companies (Elektro, Železnice[49], transport companies) as well as with TD and police units and headquarters, particularly when it came to plans for obstructing the movements of YPA columns. This led to very effective barricades[50] being constructed during the war. Aside from impeding YPA manoeuvres, the obstructions and blockages were intended particularly on the local level to prevent the supplying of provisions to YPA units. In addition to the non-violent obstruction plan, a military obstruction plan was devised and formed an integral part of the engagement of TD units. It was not until after the attack that an integrated plan of obstruction was developed (Šteiner, 2001).

In addition to the above, other economic defence actions concerned dedicated industry, the cessation of its cooperation with the YPA, and the attempt to establish a dedicated industry for TD units.[51]

- The psychological defence field was one of the most successful in the 1991 war. Part of the reason for its success was the preparation, which actively involved not just the Secretariat of Information, but also the national radio and TV broadcaster, RTV Slovenija. They developed an operative plan for the media in a potential state of emergency, paying special attention to finding alternate radio and television broadcasting locations, and prepared various media counterpropaganda actions.[52] This way they were able to use the media to maintain communication between the government and the population with the goals of increasing the motivation for defence and unifying the two spheres in their perception of the situation.

- Other forms of civil defence contributed to the success of resistance against YPA intervention. The most important of these were the activities directed by the Slovenian government and the spontaneous

responses of the public (occupation of the TD headquarters in Ljubljana). Other government-led measures of note include the abovementioned preparations for infrastructure companies and institutes (Elektro Slovenije[53], PTT Slovenije, Železniško gospodarstvo Ljubljana, roadworks companies, etc.). The plan was to block communications in order to prevent the YPA special units' manoeuvre, prevent the removal of material and technical resources from the Slovenian territory, block the YPA's internal communications, and disconnect all federal authorities in Slovenia from the civilian communications infrastructure.

The preparations for war took place in the "opponent's hinterland". At the time, Yugoslavia still maintained complete international legality and domestic political legitimacy in the eyes of many of its citizens, including some Slovenians, despite the fact that in the plebiscite on 23 December 1991, 88% voted for independence within six months.

3.4.4 The armed conflict in June and July 1991
In a special session on 25 June 1991, the Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia adopted a legislative package that made the Republic of Slovenia an independent state. This was publicly declared on the following day. On the same 25 June, the Republic of Croatia also declared its independence. Declaring independence a day early than expected was an idea that gave Slovenia a few hours' head start to change the national symbols and carry out security measures.

The Yugoslav federal leadership found itself in a difficult situation. The Presidency, the supreme command, was paralysed. The military leadership was not in favour of intervention; within its competences, the executive branch – the Federal Executive Council – issued a decree for the protection of the (Yugoslav) external borders and removal of facilities for controlling internal borders between Slovenia and Croatia with the use of military and police forces. The operationalization and implementation of this intervention were the responsibility of the 5th military area with headquarters in Zagreb. They had some 40,000 troops, of which approximately 13,000 were in Slovenia, while the remainder was in the west of Croatia. Some 2,200 soldiers and police were used to occupy border crossings, while the remaining forces stayed in the barracks.

The YPA intervention started on the afternoon of 26 June and was initially limited only to the west of Slovenia. The main part of the YPA operation started early in the morning of 27 June. Organised in some 15 motorised queues and moving on roads, the YPA forces made their way towards the border crossings (and the Ljubljana airport) with the intention of sealing the borders with Austria, Hungary and Italy. This plan of action had a crucial impact on the further course of the military conflict. Slovenia's civil defence was activated already on the eve of 27 June; the leadership mainly demanded the construction of barricades that would hinder the progress of military vehicle queues. At the same time, the Slovenian forces blocked a number of barracks with the intention of capturing some of them. Since there was no time to build proper barricades, many of them were improvised using civilian vehicles. The largest barricade was constructed on the main Novo mesto–Ljubljana road at Medvedjek, where over 100 trucks were used to block the road. Around midday, the supreme command – the Presidency of the RS – issued a decree on the use of weapons for defending the barricades. Anticipating the activation of most of the YPA's remaining 13,000 troops in garrisons across the country, Slovenia rapidly increased its defence forces by mobilising the Territorial Defence and reserve police. The response to mobilisation was good – around 75% – and by day 5 of the conflict, the TD forces numbered around 34,000. Many volunteers also enlisted in the Slovenian defence forces but were not permitted to operate independently (Guštin, 2002). By rapidly increasing the active defence structures, Slovenia established an asymmetry (to its advantage) in the size of armed forces; at the same time, there was also a tactical asymmetry, which stemmed from the differences in quality and equipment of the active forces.

Slovenia's defence forces surrounded most YPA barracks on the first day of war, disconnecting then from civilian infrastructure (power supply, water, telephone lines). This was combined with psychological warfare – calls for surrender. However, the decisive moment took place inside the barracks. As soon as it became evident that they were involved in a military conflict, a share of the conscripts decided to avoid it if possible or even to escape from the barracks. In many ways, these personal decisions were related to the role of their countries in the Yugoslav crisis. The conscripts who chose to obstruct military discipline and desert were predominantly of Slovenian, Croatian and Albanian nationalities. This led to the barracks transforming

from secure bases into sources of difficult problems as the commanding officers were forced to focus on maintaining discipline inside the barracks rather than on defending them. With two exceptions, the Slovenian TD made no attempt to capture the barracks in direct attacks and stopped several attacks in the stages before execution (Kladnik et al., 2011).

Motorised YPA queues, enforced with tanks or armoured vehicles, found themselves having to circumvent or break through barricades. Most of the queues succeeded in reaching their goals on the first day, although severe armed conflicts took place in several locations (e.g. in Trzin with the queue headed to the Ljubljana Brnik airport, near Ormož with the queue headed from Varaždin to Gornja Radgona, near Pesnica with the queue headed from Maribor to the Šentilj border crossing). On 28 June, unprotected queues stopping on the way or having reached to their goal found themselves surrounded by the Slovenian defence forces, who also blocked all escape routes. Having been deployed with insufficient food and military equipment, the YPA forces were now impossible to supply, while also being exposed to psychological pressure and attacks. In the following days, the YPA's attempts to free the queues were supported by airstrikes, particularly at Medvedjek, in the Krakovski gozd forest during the same queue's return, and near Dravograd where a column was on its way from Maribor to the Vič border crossing; however, they all proved to be unsuccessful. Under attack from the Slovenian forces with an extremely limited supply of anti-tank weapons, several queues either surrendered or were scattered (e.g. at the Rožna dolina border crossing near Nova Gorica). The queue that had been blocked at the Dravograd barricades, the returning queue from Medvedjek, and the new queue at Brežice were engaged in armed combat for several days after the first ceasefires had been declared.

The specificity of military objectives, where controlling the green border and border crossings was a priority, led to a number of skirmishes in the periphery, which caused the YPA forces to fan out. The numerically considerably superior Slovenian defence forces, which had previously been a part of the Yugoslav armed forces, were better organised and found it much easier to cover the abovementioned strategic positions. They finally succeeded, with negotiations more than with military means, to force the large majority of the YPA special border units controlling the green border to surrender (Kladnik et al., 2011).

Figure 2:
Yugoslav People's Army attack directions in Slovenia
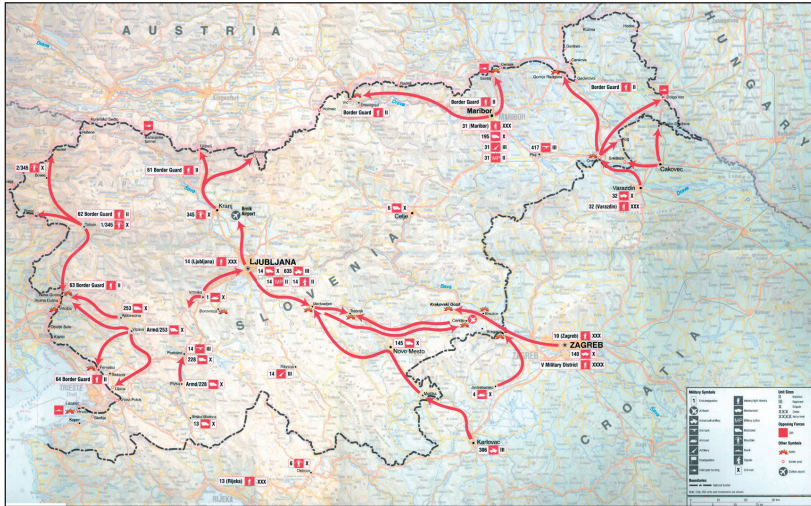
Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten-Day_War.

Although this is less important from the aspect of asymmetry in tactics and in the form of engagement, the armed conflict that continued uninterrupted for 11 days was a conflict with many ceasefires and a combination of military and political factors. The conflict developed as a consequence of changes in Slovenia's state law status; the circumstances and plans of action for the conflict were only partly anticipated. The YPA clearly expected that a quick manoeuvre to the borders would forestall a reaction from the Slovenian forces. The YPA underestimated Slovenia's military abilities, but at the same time it was impossible to overlook the state's extensive preparations for independence. When the command of the Slovenian defence forces refused to accept the aggression, mobilising and deploying instead its own troops, the YPA forces – scattered, with unreliable soldiers and poor supplies – found themselves in an inferior position. This gave the Slovenian defence forces a tactical advantage and led to the dispersal of many units, mass surrenders and desertions, and loss of depots and military equipment. The second wave

of YPA forces, comprising some 2,000 troops deployed on 30 June to free the blocked columns and regain a limited number of goals, had even less success. Political pressures from the European Community prevailed, with open questions being resolved in diplomatic talks. On the strategic level, Slovenia's success in psychological warfare was of crucial importance, attracting as it did the attention of the global and European public as well as state leaderships by highlighting the aggression against an independent state, carefully focusing on certain elements of the armed conflict, and pointing out the violations of the law of war.

At the same time, the armed conflict was sporadic, of low intensity, and used as an argument in attempts to resolve the issue. Slovenia and Yugoslavia reached their first ceasefire agreement on the first day of the armed conflict; however, this was followed by several other agreements in the following days, which neither side was able to maintain. The first agreement to be upheld was the ceasefire reached on 2 July 1991 under pressure from an EU diplomatic mission, which mediated in the conflict without defining its nature, i.e. without defining it as either a military conflict between two states or an internal conflict within Yugoslavia. The Brioni Declaration on 8 July 1991 established a three-month moratorium on independence activities to give the parties involved an opportunity to reach a peaceful agreement on the fundamental question of Slovenia's independence and the future of Yugoslavia's statehood (Repe, 2001).

3.5 Conclusion

The analysed historical cases have shown how unpredictable asymmetric conflicts could be and how minute small countries are on a strategic chessboard. The lessons that could be learned from the Slovenian past asymmetric experience just confirm the thesis that the biggest victims of this kind of warfare are small countries with limited capabilities, where social networks are really closed and people know each other, and where resentment has a long term impact. The historical analysis confirms the fundamental theorems of the asymmetric paradigm, which are a combination of kinetic (hard military measures), intelligence (support and preventive measures), information and social-economic-political measures aimed at establishing a long-term stability in the

conflict region, although there was some difference in how different occupying forces followed this goal in the Second World War. For the Slovenian territory occupied by Germans during World War II, the total control of the population by the Germans (by threats of violence, retaliation, and/or deportation), the role of the police and the Gestapo as internal intelligence services within the counterinsurgency, the very important HUMINT[54] (based on the German minority) and the engagement of Austrians (who were familiar with the Slovenian society) for leading positions within the occupying regime were all predominant practices. The result was a very limited insurgency waged by communist guerrillas, and since it was only a minor insurgency, there was no reason for supporting anti-communist forces till 1943. On the other side, on the territory occupied by Italians (the so-called Province of Ljubljana) the occupying army retained the main role. The reason for this was the cultural/linguistic gap between Italians and Slovenians and the fact that this part of Slovenian territory was never under Italian control or influence. The Italians were not able to use the domestic population for HUMINT and police operations at the very beginning, but they used another very important measure to split the population and cut the insurgency off from its safe haven. Thus they very quickly began to provide stronger support for any anti-communist activities, especially those performed by conservative and liberal political prewar political parties. They felt the Slovenian society had a potential for civil war and regretted that they were probably right. The Province of Ljubljana was a safe haven for the Slovenian communist-led insurgency (organized as a part of the broader Yugoslav resistance), which was started in July 1941. Because an insurgency must always be based on a very strong political background/ideology (in our case this was a communist background/ideology), and because of the fact that for Slovenian communists the traditional pre-war political parties presented an obstacle for carrying out a social and political revolution, for the Italians it was really not a hard task to organize and support the anti-communist counterinsurgency forces. The Italians' supporting of anti-communist forces from the very beginning (1941) caused a significant political and strategic discord among the population, which continued even after the Italian capitulation at the time when the German occupying authorities started to organize Slovensko domobranstvo (*Home Guard Troops*) as an anti-communist counterinsurgency force. The result was a bloody civil war in Slovenia during the Second World War with the following characteristics:

- It was blazed up by Italian and, later, by German civil and military authorities;
- anti-communist forces were collaborating with foreign occupying forces;
- the communist revolution was carried out by partisans and
- there were several thousand casualties on both sides.

After the end of the war in 1945 almost 15,000 anti-communist fighters killed without legal proceedings by the newly empowered Communist authorities. The rest of the anti-communists emigrated to other countries, predominantly to North and South America, and to Australia as well. Slovenia thus became a divided nation that faced typical consequences of asymmetric warfare.

How the conflict from the Second World War influenced the Slovenian way to independence from the socialist Yugoslavia has been analysed in the second case (see Chapter 3.4). By good fortune, in the early 1990s, Slovenian politicians from both sides (official Communist leaders as well as the newly coming anti-Communist opposition) had already learned lessons from Slovenia's past and were aware of how important national unity was in this crucial historic period. Therefore an official attempt at reconciliation between the two sides started after the first democratic elections in 1990 and before the Slovenian war for independence in 1991. For example, former communist leaders went to a requiem (mass) for killed anti-communist fighters in July 1990. The message and goal were very clear: Slovenia needed social cohesion before the coming war because of the fear that Yugoslav authorities would succeed in sowing discord among the Slovenes as the Germans and Italians did during the Second World War. Although the old wounds were supposed to be healed, after Slovenia ensured its independence and reached its main geopolitical objectives by entering Euro-Atlantic organisations, the old disputes did not disappear. Public debate often reopens old sores, and the historical experiences remain at the cores of today's ideology, values and political concepts. How important the (asymmetric) history of Slovenia is for the Slovenian polity was excellently described by the former American Ambassador to Slovenia Joseph A. Mussomeli: "The Left is trying to hide the history, the Right lives in history."

Figure 3:
A poll carried out by the newspaper Delo (28. 4. 2014):
Did the Slovenes reach reconciliation?
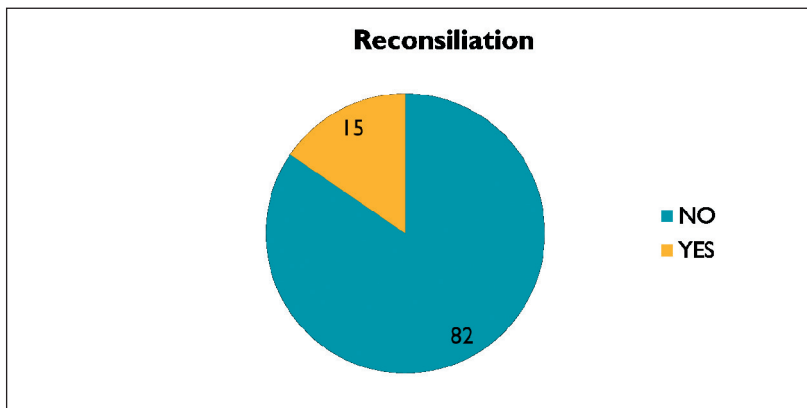
4. THE OPPOSITE PERSPECTIVE: THE ROLE OF A SMALL STATE IN A "GLOBAL" CONFLICT: THE CASE OF SLOVENIANS IN AFGHANISTAN

The next-to-last chapter (3.4) analysed an attempt of a small breakaway republic (Slovenia) to stand against a more powerful state (Yugoslavia) through the means of asymmetric warfare, which, at that time, proved to be the only viable mean for a small republic on its way to becoming an internationally recognised state. After Slovenia became a full-fledged member of the EU and NATO in 2004, its international obligations and commitments have risen. In a new international security environment, Slovenia had to start living up to the commitments it has taken and, according to its possibilities, was expected to contribute its fair share to world peace and stability. The conflict in Afghanistan, where Slovenia deployed its first troops in the framework of the NATO-led mission ISAF already in 2004 – even a few weeks before it became a full-fledged NATO member – was, in certain aspects, a turning point for the small state: its armed forces, which successfully repelled the Yugoslav National Army in 1991 and had a very strong asymmetric (insurgent) tradition, became a part of an international coalition, and thus Slovenia is no longer defending *its* national territory (as was the case in World War II and the Independence War in 1991), but rather conducting stabilisation overseas.

4.1 General characteristics of the conflict in Afghanistan

Till the war in Syria the conflict in Afghanistan has been one of the most important disputes since the end of the Cold War; this is because the parties involved represent the major global centres of power: not only the USA, but

also China, European members of NATO, and India. Another thing to take into account are the activities and interests of regional forces, Pakistan and Iran in particular. In addition to presenting a challenge on the battlefield, Afghanistan also carries significant symbolic meaning as a stumbling block for both, the US and NATO – the US as the only true global superpower since the end of the Cold War, and NATO as the organisation that is expected not just to provide collective defence, but also increasingly to ensure international peace and security in Eurasia, thus developing into an important regional factor in collective security. In 2003, NATO took over the control of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), an operation initiated by the Security Council of the UN in late December 2001 for the purpose of protecting Kabul and the surrounding area. Afghanistan is also a stumbling block for the ideology of global jihad or global Islamism, a movement that has found support on the Arabian Peninsula and in the so called Pashtunistan, an area of nowadays Afghanistan and Pakistan, predominantly inhabited by the Pashtuns.

Considering Afghanistan's history of conflicts and relationship with superpowers (Imperial Russia, the British Empire and the Soviet Union), all of which struggled enormously with controlling the state, it is clear that the Afghan case should be discussed in the context of asymmetric conflict analysis; if there is anyone who knows how to engage in practice with an enemy that has a military and technological advantage, it is the people of Afghanistan. This is not a skill they developed alone: they had plenty of assistance from outsiders who exploited these skirmishes to their advantage. It is not uncommon today to see rebels in Afghanistan employing tactics they had learned from their American Special Forces instructors to fight the Soviets. With the time, the enemy has changed and these tactics are now used against their former "teachers".

Inevitable comparison with i.e. Iraq, shows considerable differences between the two cases. On one hand, it is very much possible to compare insurgent and counterinsurgent activities. Last, but not least, whether we like it or not, the Afghanistan case is also a part of Slovenian reflection on the provision of national security and participation in allied organisations to a much greater extent than the Iraqi case. Iraq was more or less the problem of the US and its allies that took part in combat operations (NATO had a much smaller role in training Iraqi security forces). When it came to Afghanistan and the ISAF operation, NATO took on a much more difficult task

of stabilising a state still in conflict. Furthermore, there are several operations being conducted simultaneously (Operation Enduring Freedom that involves the USA, UK, and Afghan security forces; Operation ISAF; secret operations conducted by special forces, intelligence services, and private security firms; Operation Herrick, which sees the British Army participate in ISAF as well as work directly with the US) that are far from coordinated, be it with regard to goals or the means applied. Add to this a dispersed opponent, activities undertaken by neighbouring states, and Islamic volunteers, and it soon becomes clear that the Afghanistan conflict is extremely complex. In analysing it, we will therefore use variables that originate from the Heidelberg and SIPRI "schools" of conflict analysis and that take into account, to some extent, the historical circumstances surrounding the conflict. Although our analysis focuses solely on the last 9 years, the conflict in Afghanistan has been ongoing for several decades now, with occasional alterations in its nature and the key parties involved.

Afghanistan as a logistic base of international terrorism – the true cause of the current conflict?

Regardless of the political use of the term "Global War on Terror" (GWOT) that was linked particularly to the George W. Bush administration, the internationalisation of the Afghan issue indisputably began with the American response to the attacks of 11 September 2001, the formation of a global ad hoc coalition for combating terrorism, and the identification of Afghanistan's Taliban regime as the logistics headquarters of international (Islamic) terrorism. By citing the right to self-defence as granted by the UN Charter, the US accomplished its need to provide a specific target and party responsible for the 11 September terrorist attacks. A target was required, since it is not possible to attack "international terrorism" as such, but the American public, indignant and emotional, demanded a swift, concrete and effective response. Leaving aside the secret strategic objectives to strengthen the US presence in the Middle East (particularly in Afghanistan due to its endowment with natural resources, metals and minerals in particular), and at the same time offering a prime strategic position in the vicinity of Iran, as well as serving as a communication hub between Central Asia and the Indian Ocean, the decision to attack Afghanistan in 2001 was, to a great extent, symbolic.

Initiating Operation Enduring Freedom, the US attacked Afghanistan on 7 October 2001 with the aim of bringing down the Taliban regime and capturing the head of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden. In addition to the US and UK armed forces, an important part was played by intelligence and security services, which collected intelligence information that enabled armed forces to plan and conduct operations and individual attacks. Just as often, the intelligence and security services took on a decidedly proactive role and even conducted covert operations. Despite a successful and effective start that allayed the fears of another "Sovietization" of Afghanistan, today the war continues to fill the front pages of media across the world. As the number of casualties grows, so does the worldwide disapproval of the conflict. Public opinion in the states with their troops deployed to Afghanistan is increasingly opposed to the actions of said states. Opinions in the US are divided, two thirds of the British public are opposed to the state's continued involvement in Afghanistan, and some states, e.g. the Netherlands, have even decided to withdraw their troops as a consequence of public pressure.

Despite the on-going clashes, the overthrow of the Taliban regime in the 2001 was followed by gradual post-conflict restoration, which was reflected mainly in new infrastructure (unfortunately the infrastructure was physical only), new political beginnings with the cooperation and assistance of international intermediaries, the return of deported refugees, and the attempt to combat crime and drug trafficking. Western paradigms on the functioning of the state have not been and will not be effective in helping Afghanistan to achieve this. However, our intention is not to debate the effectiveness of paradigms but to discuss insurgent and counterinsurgent activities. Before we can do so, the wider background of the issue should be examined.

A multi-ethnic state with Pashtuns in the south and east, Tajiks and Uzbeks in the north, and Hazaras in the central region, Afghanistan was one of the first to join the UN in 1946. In the 1950–1970 period, the state benefited considerably from bilateral and multilateral agreements until the late 1970s when it was turned into a major front in the Cold War, a proxy war between the two leading superpowers at the time. After three coups and two communist governments, Afghanistan was invaded by the Soviet Union. In December 1979, Soviet forces deposed President Hafizullah Amin, who had risen to power in a coup against the previous president, communist Nur Muhammad

Taraki. The 1979 Soviet invasion was followed by fighting between the Soviet troops and Afghan combatants known as the *mujahideen*, who enjoyed considerable support from the US (particularly through Pakistan and ISI, the Pakistani intelligence agency) and indirect support even from states such as Israel.[55] They received arms and money from the US, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and states either opposed to the Soviet regime or looking to reduce the number of Afghan refugees – over 3 million. The *mujahideen* were joined by thousands of Islamic extremists coming in from the Middle East and North Africa for the purpose of opposing the Soviet Union in the name of global jihad. One such newcomer was Osama bin Laden, who first arrived in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the early 1980s and established several training centres for future recruits.

During the Soviet occupation and ensuing war with the *mujahideen*, both sides involved in the conflict committed severe violations of human rights, attacked civilians, and destroyed civilian infrastructure. The Afghan government, acting alongside Soviet forces, sponsored the violence against its own people. Villages and refugee camps were bombed, civilians were forcibly evacuated, arrested and imprisoned or executed. These violent, discriminatory actions led to some 5 million Afghans immigrating to the relatively stable states of Iran and Pakistan in 1987–1988. With 3 million refugees, Pakistan became a logistics base for the continued existence of the *mujahideen* and a key unknown in the equation for conflict resolution.

The war in Afghanistan resulted in considerable economic and political pressure being placed on the USSR. In the second half of the 1980s, the USSR took on the responsibility to find a solution that would allow its troops to withdraw peacefully. Negotiations were held in Geneva and promoted by the UN. After close to a decade of brutal conflicts, in 1988 the Soviets signed the Geneva Accords, agreeing to withdraw their forces. The accords also included an agreement on non-interference and non-intervention signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan. The two states were involved in a cross-border conflict at the time. The *mujahideen* were not party to the accords and refused to accept the terms of the agreement with the intention of renewing the conflict.

After the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the ethnic, tribal, religious, and personal differences between the *mujahideen* and other private militia units led to the perpetuation of the civil war. In 1992 the *mujahideen* captured Kabul, the capital. President Najibullah was ousted from power and lived

under UN protection until 1996 when he suffered a cruel death. Clashes between individual *mujahideen* fractions continued until 1996 when Kabul was seized by the Taliban. However, the Taliban never gained full control of the Afghan territory. Tajiks and Uzbeks formed the Northern Alliance, which dominated particularly in the north of the state and provided the main starting point for the 2001 US and British invasion that was a part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Taliban is an Islamic fundamentalist movement and the outcome of a network of Pakistani seminaries (madrasas) that served as a source of *mujahideen* recruits during the war with the USSR. Predominantly Pashtuns, the majority of these recruits were children of *mujahideen* fighters and had grown up in exile. They criticised the Uzbek and Tajik leaders for allowing corruption and demanded stricter adherence to Islamic laws. They were in favour of laws based on strict tribal codes and their version of Islamic law included provisions such as the amputation of limbs as punishment for theft. With Pakistan's help, the Taliban and their (spiritual) leader, Mullah Omar, overthrew President Rabbani and captured Kabul on 26 September 1996. Rabbani made his escape to the relative safety of northern Afghanistan. Former President Najibullah was seized and executed. His body, along with his brother's, was hanged in the centre of Kabul, giving inhabitants of the city some food for thought as to what they can expect from the Taliban regime, if they dare to challenge their vision of society.

The Taliban movement began when Mullah Mohammed Omar (Durrani), a former *mujahideen*, mobilised a group known as the Taliban (literally meaning "Students") and killed a local commander in Kandahar for raping two women. The movement gained momentum in Kandahar and six months later (in October 1994), the Taliban took over a third of the state, disarmed the local population and introduced an extremely strict version of Islamic law that was typical of Pashtun tribes in the south and east of the state. The Taliban were also known as the Seekers (Faganel, 2003: 53; Pike, 2002). They brought relative peace to the Kandahar region by dominating the feuding Pashtun tribes and hanging their leaders. The Taliban are predominantly of Pashtun ethnicity and their triumphs gave people hope that Pashtun rule would finally be restored in Afghanistan. In the period when the ISI (the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence) still supported Hekmatyar, the Taliban enjoyed the support of the Ministry of the Interior. They were influenced

considerably by Maulana Rehman, who was in charge of madrasas in Pakistan and rose to the position of coalition partner in the Pakistani government.

In six months the number of Taliban combatants reached 20,000. They received financial support from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and even the US. While the Americans disapproved of the Taliban drug trafficking, they were prepared to overlook it for the sake of giving an US oil company the opportunity to build an oil pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan. During the time of the Soviet invasion, all *mujahideen* groups had links to the Taliban. By disarming the civil population and introducing punishments such as the amputation of hands for theft, stoning of adulterers, and execution of opponents, the Taliban established a feeling of security in the state. Within three months of taking over Kandahar, they broke the impasse in the Afghan civil war by capturing 12 out of a total of 31 provinces. They reached the area of Kabul in the north and Herat in the west. Following the capture of Kandahar, the Taliban were joined by some 20,000 Pakistanis and Afghans from refugee camps (Faganel, 2003: 54–55).

It was clearly misguided to expect that, having beaten the communist regime in Afghanistan, the groups of *mujahideen* would be reasonable and responsible enough to take care of the state's recovery and restoration. These expectations turned out to be irrational, seeing that the groups – divided as much by personal grievances as by tribal, ethnic, and religious differences – spent their time fighting each other for domination instead. Alliances were formed and broken, truces were violated. The UN failed in its attempts to establish peace. The situation deteriorated further in 1996 when the Taliban seized power and proclaimed themselves the sole legitimate government of Afghanistan. Attempts to stabilise the state were unsuccessful. Signs of a humanitarian crisis became ever more apparent as the civil war raged on and the Taliban blocked the parts of the state controlled by the Northern Alliance. Moreover, the US and Pakistan persisted in supporting the *mujahideen*.

Despite their initial success, the Taliban failed to dominate the north of the state, where fighting continued. The Taliban controlled most of Afghanistan, but were unsuccessful in every attempt to defeat the Northern Alliance, a tightly-knit group that formed in 1996. Its government, led by President Rabbani, was recognised as legitimate by the UN (Ewans, 2005: 160). The only states to recognise the Taliban government as legitimate were Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. As a consequence of the

international community's attitude towards the Taliban government, Afghanistan came to be a hiding place for Islamic political fundamentalist groups; illegal production of drugs and drug trafficking proliferated. All of this served to destabilise the region even further.

This was the Afghanistan that Osama bin Laden returned to in 1996. The Taliban allowed him to settle in their state and carry on with his plans for global jihad. In February 1998, bin Laden formed the International Islamic Front in collaboration with the Islamic Jihad, which was led by Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian activist. In the same year, bin Laden issued a fatwa demanding the killing of US citizens. Evidence of his involvement in terrorist activities was presented in the US during the trial of four people involved in the bombings of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on 7 August 1998, in which 247 were killed (Ewans, 2005: 161).

The CIA and other intelligence and security services failed in their every attempt to bring down al-Qaeda. A closely organised, transnational network of deeply religious members, it was and continues to be extremely difficult to penetrate. In addition to CIA, al-Qaeda was also targeted by Pentagon. On 20 August 1998, they launched 66 missiles targeting training camps in Afghanistan. The problem was that bin Laden's whereabouts were unknown. It was believed that he would be in the camp at the time of the attack, but the information turned out to be wrong. 30 recruits and local inhabitants were killed, but bin Laden – the real target – evaded the attack. His reputation in the Muslim world grew. No longer a mere marginal figure in the Muslim world, he became a world famous figure. To quote a Pakistani Muslim cleric, bin Laden was, "to the Muslim world, a symbol of the fight against all outside forces that have attempted to destroy Muslims, and the bravest of Muslims for raising his voice. To them he was a hero, but it was America that made him into one" (Ewans, 2005: 161–162). For a further three years, the CIA attempted to capture bin Laden in vain. For this purpose they recruited and paid 30 Afghan agents, covertly contacting them every day. Although the agents were aware of bin Laden's approximate position most of the time, they were never able to predict his whereabouts far enough in advance to launch a missile attack. The CIA's hands were tied because assassination was prohibited. This prevented the Afghan agents to plan an ambush and kill bin Laden, although they were prepared to try. A kidnapping was planned but the scheme was rejected, partly for putting too many people's lives at risk and partly because

bin Laden would most likely not have allowed himself to be captured alive. Attempts to plant an agent in bin Laden's circle were unsuccessful (Ewans, 2005: 162), as was collaboration with the Northern Alliance.

As bin Laden continued to evade capture, Saudi Arabia and the US attempted to pressure the Taliban into giving him up. In 1999, the Security Council of the UN adopted measures against the Taliban; the measures were expanded in late 2000, but they achieved nothing. Bin Laden was a devoted Muslim who had fought against the Soviets and giving him up would violate Pashtun principles on offering asylum and hospitality; bin Laden had also contributed money and recruits for the Taliban cause; giving in to outside pressure would have been humiliating for them. Outside measures have minimal impact on an isolated regime such as the Taliban state. Before as well as after 11 September 2001, the Taliban demanded to see evidence of bin Laden's involvement in terrorist activities, which they never received. The US State Department did provide information on 30 instances when it communicated with the Taliban through bin Laden, but attempts at negotiations left them unimpressed. After the missile strike and UN measures, this was hardly surprising. Some Afghans believe that, had the course of events been different, the desired result might have been achieved: had the Americans had more patience, the Taliban might have taken care of bin Laden themselves (Ewans, 2005: 163–164).

4.1.1 The first part of the conflict – a successful combination of special and conventional operations

In late September 2001, George W. Bush gave the Taliban an ultimatum: either give up Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda supporters or suffer the consequences. With each day that passed, it became clearer that the Taliban had no intention of meeting American demands; instead, they persisted with defiant threats of holy war (*jihad*). Although no date had been set for the start of the campaign, planners in the Pentagon were aware there was not much time left until winter, when weather conditions in Afghanistan would become a major factor in conducting air strikes (Ewans, 2005: 164). Several decisions were made in rapid succession. The CIA was given permission for a lethal action. Additional efforts were aimed at Pakistan, whose cooperation was key for a successful operation in Afghanistan. A list of demands was drawn up, including the withdrawal of support for al-Qaeda, the right for planes to fly and

land in the state, access to naval bases, air bases and national borders, intelligence data and information on immigrants, restrictions on all forms of supporting terrorism, cutting off the flow of oil to Afghanistan, and the banning of all Pakistani volunteer movements that were in favour of joining the Taliban. The situation remained unclear for several days. After choosing between various possible ways to act against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, it was decided to support the Northern Alliance. While this was not ideal, there was no other option. The downsides to this decision were that they were going against the Pashtun part of the population and risking the loss of Musharraf's and Pakistan's support. Despite the risk it was decided to provide support in the shape of funds, arms and equipment as well as combined CIA/SOF special units. At the same time, it was planned to bring in some 50,000–55,000 troops. The implementation of the strategy took time because permissions for planes to fly and land in Central Asia had to be obtained first. Air strikes were launched on 7 October 2001, but their effect was limited (Ewans, 2005: 163–165). The air strikes marked the start of the war against al-Qaeda, which soon grew into the War on Terror, a global issue.

The war in Afghanistan thus began on 7 October 2001 with the allied air strikes on Taliban and al-Qaeda targets. The US, UK and other allies, working with the Northern Alliance, initiated a military offensive. They directed combined US and allied air strikes as well as Northern Alliance ground attacks. These actions led to the fall of Kabul on 13 November 2001 and to Taliban withdrawal from most of northern Afghanistan. As additional allied troops arrived in the state and Northern Alliance troops made their way further south, the Taliban and al-Qaeda combatants were forced to retreat towards the mountainous Pakistan border. Since 2002, the Taliban have been focusing mainly on the survival and renewal of their forces (The History Guy Website, 2009), recently with increased success.

4.1.2 Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Anaconda
The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 led to what has been called the Global War on Terror, launched by the US. George W. Bush had been elected president earlier in the year and it was expected of him to use any available means in order to retaliate against Afghanistan and, more specifically, al-Qaeda. The war started on 7 October 2001 with Operation Enduring Freedom[56]. A special advisory group was formed to plan the operation, advising

a combination of US and allied missile forces, covert operation forces such as the CIA and DIA, special forces, and the local Afghan ground forces (Northern Alliance units). This eliminated the need for using American troops and putting them in harm's way.

Western allies sent in 1,500 troops. An extremely important role was played by members of Western special units who provided tactical assistance to the local anti-Taliban units and directed planes towards enemy targets. Intelligence agents even bribed Taliban combatants to switch sides and join the allies. Several thousand members of Western ground forces were also brought in (Marn, 2004: 33–34).

American Special Forces had on their side British members of a special SAS unit, an elite Canadian unit now called Joint Task Force Two (JTF2). After 2002, they were joined by members of the German Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK) and French special units (GIGN) (ibid.).

The CIA operated alongside the army, organising secret paramilitary units of the Special Activities Division and founding an additional special unit with the mission of finding bin Laden; sometimes referred to as the Bin Laden Issue Station or UBL Station (for Osama bin Laden), it was named Alec Station. The plan was for these units to be flown into Northern Alliance territory prior to the launch of US air strikes. The division comprised 150 of the most experienced former members of the US military, mainly pilots and members of the Special Forces. The units were tasked with liaising with General Fahim Kham and establishing a base for the US Special Forces in Panjshir Valley. This was when the Americans became aware of the Northern Alliance's considerable capabilities, e.g. using GPS navigation to determine the whereabouts of al-Qaeda and Taliban combatants, thus providing the allied forces the necessary support for an effective operation. A week after the air strikes and prior to the arrival of special forces known as Alpha teams, intelligence service agents used Predators, unmanned aerial vehicles for reconnaissance and surveillance, to gather important information on target locations. The US air forces were able to use this information to attack and destroy Taliban front lines, annihilating their means of command, surveillance and communication. In the final week before the attack, CIA agents moved to Uzbekistan where they prepared for the upcoming operations. The Northern Alliance, whose units worked closely with Alpha forces and US Army Rangers

during the attacks on Tarnak Farms and the hunt for high-ranking al-Qaeda members, received USD70 million from the CIA (Lowther, 2007: 135–145).

The deployment of a division specialised in the Middle East was an important factor in CIA's covert operations in Afghanistan. The division comprised officers who were well-versed in the local language, culture and territory; they had already worked with the Northern Alliance in the past. As part of their covert operations, CIA members determined the locations where humanitarian assistance from the US was most desperately needed. In addition to other tasks, CIA members also interrogated any terrorists that were captured. During an interrogation in November 2001, a terrorist shot and killed a member of CIA's Special Activities Division – the first allied casualty in the operation.

In a series of ground manoeuvres, the allied forces captured several strategically important locations such as Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul, Kunduz and Kandahar, taking control of Afghanistan in two months. Once the main operation was over, the allies set to establishing a state of democracy, reconstructing the state, organising the Afghan armed forces, and continuing the search for leading members of al-Qaeda and the Taliban. During these post-conflict activities, intelligence services working with local agents and the NSA obtained the information that bin Laden was hiding in the caves of Tora Bora in eastern Afghanistan, near the Pakistan border. The eastern alliance of US Special Forces worked with allied Pashtun generals and combatants to seize bin Laden. The operation was a success in every respect save for the capturing of bin Laden. Between December 2001 and February 2002, using human sources and signals, the CIA detected a concentration of al-Qaeda forces in Shah-i-Kot Valley in southern Afghanistan. Launching Operation Anaconda in March 2002, the allied and Afghan forces attacked the southern region and defeated the Islamic fundamentalist rebels, who suffered over 500 casualties (Lowther, 2007: 135–145).

The fighting continued throughout the year 2002. The US and its allies conducted several actions against the Taliban and al-Qaeda, including Operation Anaconda in the southeast of Afghanistan. The operation was the largest ground battle in the war up to date. At least 1,500 people were killed in 2002, largely Taliban and al-Qaeda members (Ploughshares, 2009).

Operation Anaconda

Between 1 and 18 March 2002, allied forces led by the USA carried out a combined ground and air strike in Afghanistan. Codenamed Anaconda, the attack was a part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The objective of Operation Anaconda was to destroy the remains of the Taliban forces and members of al-Qaeda discovered south of the town of Gardez, in Shah-i-Kot Valley in the Paktia province (Dakič, 2002: 22). The operation, initially planned to take 3 days, developed into an intense, week-long battle and officially ended only 17 days later (Kugler, 2007: 1).

Prior to the operation, the task of the CIA was to provide safe houses for multifunctional teams composed of special units, conventional forces, and CIA members. In the period between December 2001 and February 2002 (i.e. right before the operation), the intelligence services became convinced that there were al-Qaeda members in southern Afghanistan, southeast of Gardez, in Shah-i-Kot Valley. The suspicions of the CIA, TF Dagger and Advance Force Operation personnel that Shah-i-Kot Valley was the area chosen by al-Qaeda to regroup its forces in Afghanistan were confirmed by large quantities of HUMINT and SIGINT data collected (Lowther 2007, 139). Before the operation was launched, intelligence services estimated the number of Taliban and al-Qaeda combatants in Shah-i-Kot at around 1,000, 200–300 of which were lightly armed. On top of that it was believed that there were some 800–1,000 Afghan civilians living in four villages in the valley, making any direct attack problematic as it would result in civilian casualties. The enemy was reported to be weak, demoralised and intermingled with civilians, which later proved to be incorrect. The rebels were actually more numerous (700–1,000) and better armed than intelligence data alleged. Rather than living in the villages, the majority of the rebels chose to hide in the mountains (Kugler, 2007: 6).

An important part in Operation Anaconda was played by intelligence services, especially when it came to intelligence preparation of the battle field (IPB). The CIA, for instance, collected information on the equipment, military strength and positioning of Taliban units; in March 2002, military commanders were flooded with images broadcast directly from the Predator UAVs (Ferris, 2004: 73). The CIA also provided intelligence that was used

to ensure the safe transport of US and NATO forces to combat zones (CIA, 2007), as well as monitoring and verifying the gathering of HUMINT data in Gardezu and the surrounding area. This was done by interviewing the locals who spent time near the safe houses and by buying information and hiring spies from amongst the population of Gardez (Naylor, 2005: 74).

Meanwhile, SIGINT was the responsibility of a 6-member NSA cell that monitored phone calls and e-mails. Since the use of radios, satellite phones and other transmitters in Shah-i-Kot Valley was infrequent, such information was in short supply, leading to an increased dependence on HUMINT (Naylor, 2005: 74–75).

Once the US armed forces began to plan the attack, they were faced with a serious problem: a lack of reliable intelligence regarding the number of combatants and their weapons. While the Americans relied on a many sources of intelligence, including HUMINT, interception of communications, and aerial surveillance, it was nevertheless difficult to obtain precise and reliable information. The issue was caused partly by uneven, inaccessible terrain and partly by the rebels, who were well-versed in concealment. However, the lack of intelligence did not affect the attempts to obtain more. Two weeks before the battle, the US Special Forces dispatched a number of reconnaissance units to gather more precise information about the opposing side (Kugler, 2007: 7). They frequently had to rely on HUMINT tactics alone, because the enemy mostly stuck to guerrilla fighting and had no traditional structured organisation (Headquarters United States Air Force, 2005: 23).

Operation Anaconda became increasingly problematic. Using guerrilla tactics and Sun Tzu's military strategies, the rebels avoided a decisive defeat and managed to respond to the opposing side's technological dominance in an appropriate asymmetric manner that involved traditional forms of communication and familiarity with the terrain. The rebel forces also made the most of the proximity of the Pakistani border, crossing it in order to lie low on the other side because they knew that the US would not risk an open attack on Pakistani soil. By failing to apprehend the main suspects for the terrorist attacks on the USA, the strategic goal of Operation Anaconda was not achieved. Furthermore, the outcome led to the strengthening of the rebels' position, particularly among the Pashtun population.

4.1.3 The attempt to stabilise Afghanistan and intensification of violence

Several goals aimed at stabilising Afghanistan were achieved in 2003. There were attempts to disarm and reintegrate combatants across the state. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which was under NATO supervision as of August 2003, was granted permission to expand its mandate outside of Kabul. By the end of the year, the *loya jirga* (grand assembly) members were expected to adopt a new national constitution and form a new political system in the spirit of preparing for elections in 2004.

While there were no major battles in 2004, clashes with NATO units and attacks on government employees and civilians were virtually a daily occurrence. There were at least 250 casualties in 2004. In early January, the *loya jirga* adopted the first constitution; after the election in October, Hamid Karzai was appointed President. His new cabinet included two women. Despite the fact that the new government declared plans to combat and gradually eliminate the production of opium, Afghanistan remained the world's leading provider of the drug (ibid.).

The fighting intensified in 2005 as Taliban and al-Qaeda combatants carried out several attacks on Afghan and foreign forces and were met with a number of large-scale military operations in response. At least 1,200 civilians and combatants were killed (ibid.). After 2005, the number of Taliban attacks increased, with suicidal bombings a particularly frequently employed strategy (The History Guy Website, 2009).

In 2006, the fighting intensified dramatically; the number of monthly attacks increased fourfold. There were 3,700–4,000 casualties. NATO positioned additional units across the state and expanded its command to include all Afghan regions. The Afghanistan Compact, a 5-year plan for cooperation between the government, the UN and the international community for increased security, development, and drug reduction, was signed by a total of 60 states and organisations. Meanwhile, local resistance against foreign forces continued to grow (Ploughshares, 2009).

2007 saw the most extensive fighting since the Taliban had been ousted from power in 2001. It is estimated that a third of the 6,000 casualties were civilians. President Hamid Karzai called for more caution from the Taliban and foreign forces alike when fighting in populated areas. All requests for peace negotiations were rejected; kidnapping, hostage-taking and suicide attacks

continued. Additionally, the largest amount of opium was produced in 2007, with Afghanistan accounting for as much as 93% of the world's opium supply. The US designated USD2.5 billion for a training programme for Afghan police; more than 900 police were killed due to poor training and growing corruption (ibid.).

A report from the US State Department states that after 2001, al-Qaeda and the Taliban both found refuge in tribal areas near the border with Pakistan, where they managed to rebuild their forces to some extent, although the terrorist network is believed to enjoy less public support and to be weaker today than it was before 11 September 2001. Nevertheless, they succeeded in restoring some operational capabilities, replacing key leaders, and re-establishing high command control.

Although the objective of the war in Afghanistan was to eliminate al-Qaeda, on 1 May 2009 the US State Department still described the al-Qaeda international terrorist network as the biggest terrorist threat to the US and its allies (ibid.).

The escalation of violence is evident from a more detailed analysis of civil and military casualties. Comprehensive civil casualty data has been collected by Marc Herold, a renowned professor at the University of New Hampshire. He prepared a highly accurate analysis of the number of casualties by days and weeks, also including the location, province, lowest and highest number of civilian casualties, weapons used in the attack, comments, and sources of information. For the purposes of the analysis, Herold referred mainly to media such as newspapers (*Frontier Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, etc.), magazines (*Aviation Week and Space Technology*, etc.), radio and websites, as well as his own calculations and observations (Herold, 2004).

A major reason for the high number of casualties were US air strikes in densely populated areas in Afghanistan. Since precise information on the number of casualties was not included in all media, Herold attempted to calculate the actual number himself (Herold, 2002). According to him, a detailed analysis of media reports showed that Afghan civilians were indeed casualties of barbaric air strikes, in which an average of 60–65 people were killed every day after 7 October. On 23 November, the data indicated that at least 3,006 Afghans had been killed (Herold, 2009). One of the reasons for the high rate of Afghan civilian casualties is that their lives were of little importance to US strategists and political elites, who had no qualms about

bombing even densely populated towns. Those Afghan lives were taken in order to protect the surviving US troops and US citizens in general. Other reasons for the high collateral damage include the bombing of doubtful military targets and civilian facilities as well as the use of cluster bombs, which turned the war in Afghanistan into a war against civilians, their homes and villages (Herold, 2002).

A well-known event is the "seven bombings" or "seven days of ignominy", when US attacks led to the highest number of civilian casualties; the dates were 11, 18, 21 and 23 October, 10 and 18 November, and 1 December. The air strikes targeted small farming villages, hospitals, mosques and market places in the Taliban-dominated Kandahar area (ibid.).

As shown in the diagram below, the US and allied forces suffered a total of 2,168 military casualties in Operation Enduring Freedom (Operation Enduring Freedom, 2009, and Keats, 2003). It should be noted that there was a considerable increase in casualties after 2007, which is exactly the opposite than in Iraq. As our analysis showed, the number of casualties in Iraq dropped significantly after 2007.

4.1.4 An analysis of the Afghan conflict and its comparison to Iraq

The Afghan conflict that started on 17 October 2001 is an **internationalized internal conflict**. The invasion has been carried out by the United States with some of their allies, while an important role is played also by the neighbouring countries or regional forces. This is a conflict between the Afghan Government and internal opposition groups (The Taliban and Al-Qaeda). NATO, which in Afghanistan conducts fewer combat actions than the US-led coalition, is also actively engaged in the conflict; however, in a different way than in Iraq. The conflict has lasted for nine years. Judging by its intensity, it is a war.

This is only the basic information that, however, hides quite a few regularities. Both, in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Americans and their allies successfully conducted the first part of the operation. In Iraq conventionally, using network based armed forces equipped with the state-of-art-technology, and in Afghanistan with activities carried out by Special Forces, intelligence services and the Northern Alliance. In both cases, the first part of the conflict concluded very smoothly. However, difficulties occurred when it was time to control the territory and create favourable conditions for stabilization of

both countries. At this point, the calvary started, a part of which has also been NATO in Afghanistan since 2003. The enforcement of the western model of democracy and freedom was obviously not successful (difficulties in the elections in Afghanistan, and in the formation of the coalition government in Iraq), since it led to **revitalization of insurgent groups that have gained power**. A hope that division of power among individual ethnic, religious, clan and other groups would establish the balance of power also turned out to be futile. Both cases also involved numerous efforts aiming to establish domestic security forces which would assume control in the two countries. This objective was quite successful in Iraq, whereas the Afghan security forces are still far from reaching the point when they could take over responsibility for the security situation. The progress in development of the Afghan National Army (ANA) was slow. At the end of 2003 it only included a few thousands of members. As a result, Afghanistan had to rely on the United States and NATO in the security provision area. In the years 2003 and 2004, ANA dealt with numerous departures from the army, since it lost more than a quarter of its 10,000 soldiers. In 2006, ANA consisted of 30,500 members (ibid.). In September 2008, the Joint Commission and Monitoring Board, chaired by the Afghan Government and the United Nations Organizations, decided that ANA size should increase to 122,000 members. At the end of 2011, ANA should include 134,000 members (NATO, 2009).

The US Administration has – mainly by appointing General David Petraeus as Commander of Allied Forces in Afghanistan – obviously decided to **transpose the Iraqi anti-insurgency strategy to the Afghan conflict. Reinforcement of domestic security forces, ground operations against insurgent leaders carried out mainly by special forces, field patrols, negotiations with moderate Taliban members as an attempt to sow discord among them[57], NATO efforts to restore the country that should prevent links between the civilian population and insurgents, and the use of the Human Terrain System approach** are only some of the measures that unite kinetic (military and lethal) activities of allied[58] and domestic security forces, political measures, intelligence activity, information-communication activities, non-kinetic measures (intended to ensure legitimacy) and the so called preventive operations aimed to re-educate and release detained insurgents. However, will these measures be sufficient to ensure a better and safer future to the country? The answer is yes if they can solve the problems listed in

the continuation, and if the Afghan people see in them a guarantee for their safety and non occupiers; the same that happened in Iraq. Unfortunately, the situation in this country resulted in sectarian violence that has claimed lives of the hundred thousands of Iraqis, and that will characterize the Iraqi society in the next decades, thus preventing reconciliation among its members. It is therefore logical that the appointment of General Petraeus as Commander of Allied Forces in Afghanistan has sparked heated debates as to what extent his Iraqi strategy can be used in Afghanistan (Pitzke, 2010; Heftiger Streit um richtige Doktrin in Afghanistan, 2010).

Figure 4:
Anaconda – General Petraeus's Strategy
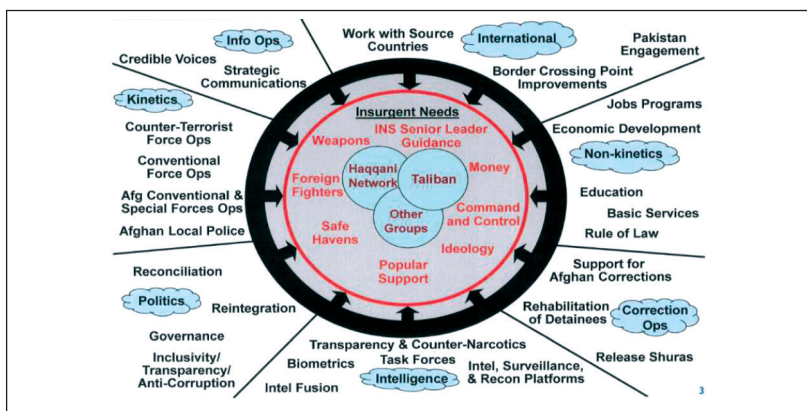
Source: http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090218_iraq_war_progress.pdf.

On the other hand, the two countries are so different that it is questionable whether the anti-insurgency measures from a relatively urbanized society can be transposed to an almost completely rural society, such as the Afghan one. One should also take into account that Petraeus's doctrine was effective in Iraq in 2007 when the number of coalition forces significantly increased. The situation in Afghanistan is different, since political discussions mention a decrease in forces and even their withdrawal in a period of one or two years.

A special problem in Afghanistan is represented also by a rather weak state-forming tradition characterized by a long-standing absence of the powerful central authority. The country is also more fragmented than Iraq, which further obstructs the establishment of the joint security forces. The continuation of the article addresses some of the reasons why the anti-insurgency strategy works differently in these two countries.

The first problem of Afghanistan is its diverse demographic structure, which largely prevents the establishment of the central authority, since mainly rural areas are completely self-sufficient. Poor communications result also from a deep division of the country caused by its topography. The Hindu Kush Mountains divide Afghanistan into north and south, which is also a rough division of ethnic-cultural areas. The south is populated mostly by the Pashtuns, the largest Afghan ethnic group (approx. 40–45%), and the north by Persian-speaking Tajikistanis (approx. 20–25%) and Turkish population (Uzbekistanis approx. 8% and Turkmenistanis approx. 3%). The Hazaras (approx. 15–18%) live in the central part, most of them speak Persian. The areas in Afghanistan are not divided only geographically, but also in terms of ethnic identity, social structure and religion.

Although Afghanistan is a religiously conservative country, the progressive northern population and orthodox Pashtuns understand Islam in very different ways. People in the north follow northern ethnic values of the Central Asia, while the Pashtuns are linked with the northern bordering Pakistani province (the so called Pashtunistan) inhabited by their people. Afghanistan is characterized by a strong Islam society where Islam continues to represent a common denominator among separated ethnic groups. However, an increasing politization of Islam in the last third of the 20th century contributed to the fact that religion is perceived as a conflict factor. This results from influence of external radical Islamic movements of mainly Pakistani, Saudi and Iranian origin. The majority of Afghans, 99%, are Muslims. Approximately 84% of Afghan Muslims are the Sunni and 15% are the Shia. The last group consisted mainly by the Hazaras and Tajikistanis. In Pashtun areas, Islam is closely connected with local customs and tradition. During the Taliban rule, the Pashtun understanding of Islam was enforced to people in the entire country. Karzai rose to power with the return of the traditional perspective. However, the radical element has remained rooted in the Afghan politics and decisively influenced the political system.

The next issue is of ethnic nature. In the recent political development of Afghanistan, the ethnic issue was the most important matter and the subject of the strong supremacy held by a small, yet a powerful and organized *"Panjshiri-Tajik minority in power. Development of the core of the Northern Alliance, supervised by the Panjshiri, could be mentioned in this context, since they controlled the most important three ministries (for defence, interior and foreign affairs), as well as the majority of the leadership in the national army (this situation could be compared to Iraq during Hussein's rule when the Arab Sunni minority controlled all key positions in the country). Supported by the United States, President Karzai successfully decreased their power; however, widespread corruption and the fact that the Afghans consider Karzai a foreigner dramatically decreased his legitimacy. Nevertheless, the goal of the current government is to achieve a better ethnic balance, which is an important step in solving this problem. Experience of the civil war, which contributed to ethnic tensions, is still fresh in the minds of Afghan citizens; therefore; a lot should still be done to ease these conflicts, especially among younger generations"* (Swanstrom–Cornell 2005: 4–5).

One of the main problems of the Afghan society is the role of the state. So far, it has traditionally exercised only little power over the provinces and had only little respect for the traditional structure of power, including the jirga system. Nevertheless, during the monarchy, the state still played an important role as a national symbol and coordinated defence and foreign affairs related matters. The state authority fell with the *delegitimization* of the state in the 1980s; however, the Taliban then wanted to restore it with a rigid and punitive state apparatus which is largely related to the loyalty of tribal leaders who are in Iraq of key importance for establishment of support bases for (Taliban) insurgents, allied forces and the central authority. Nowadays, only few Afghans perceive the state as an important instrument in their efforts for the progress in enforcement of their rights. The restoration of the state thus remains the major critical task. Worth mentioning is the fact that the Afghan Government received significant foreign support for transformation of the state apparatus and its successful integration into the society (ibid.: 7–8).

External environment is another important factor which will probably continue to influence the security and development of Afghanistan. Numerous international actors are important for development of the country. The most

important element on the structural level is location. Afghanistan is a closed country, situated at the crossroads of at least four cultural and geographic regions. As a weak country, it competes with much stronger countries that have their own interests in the region, such as the United States, Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In such a company, Afghanistan will remain vulnerable, merely because of the structural instability of its regional placement.

It is essential that Afghanistan becomes increasingly dependent on economic and trade routes as well as on the progress of its neighbouring countries, especially Pakistan and Iran because of their external trade routes. Afghanistan could find its opportunity in this field, namely to assume a role of a transit area among all surrounding economic centres. In the long-term period, this could mean the beginning of the Afghan economy; however, this is impossible without considerable international help, especially in the area of infrastructure (ibid.: 8).

Pakistan represents a special problem. When insurgency against US allies started to enhance, Bush Administration began putting blame on Pakistan and its intelligence-security service Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI). The White House more or less openly accused Pakistan, claiming that ISI cooperated with pro-Taliban groups along the Pakistani-Afghan border, warning them of threatening US attacks. Some civil servants even said that ISI was hiding Bin Laden and other important Al-Qaeda leaders. Bush Administration claimed that CIA had intercepted electronic signals proving that ISI was responsible for the bomb attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul. Although no solid evidence exists to support these allegations, the media strenuously condemn Pakistan for pretending to be US ally when acting as its enemy (Margolis, 2008). On the Council of foreign relations' website, Kaplan and Bajoria also speculate that on 11 September 2001 ISI supported the Taliban along the western Pakistani border with Afghanistan, although Pakistan denies it (Kaplan–Bajoria, 2008).

Before dictatorship of General Pervez Musharraf, ISI was the third most efficient and professional intelligence agency in the world. ISI defends Pakistan from internal and external subversives from the strong Indian espionage agency RAW and from Iran. It closely cooperates with CIA and Pentagon, and is credited with a rapid seizure of power from the Taliban in 2001

(Margolis, 2008). It has also captured several Al-Qaeda members, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed who allegedly planned the attacks on 11 September 2001 (Kaplan–Bajoria, 2008). However, ISI should also operate in line with Pakistani interests which are often not identical to the US ones, sometimes they are even completely different. The unclear position whether Pakistan is US friend or enemy results from the fact that Washington forced the Pakistani Government, army and intelligence services to support the US coalition war in Afghanistan; it paid Pakistan more than US22 billion and threatened with a war if Pakistan did not subject to its will. Since 2001, all ISI directors have thus been confirmed by Washington. This, along with the fact that the main ISI task is to defend Pakistan and not to support US interests cause tensions within ISI. Some ISI members have thus started to sympathize with the Pashtun Taliban on the Afghan side of the border (Margolis, 2008). ISI allegedly provides them with money, military supplies and strategic planning in their fight against the Americans and their allies (Express India, 2009).

Accusations against Pakistan and ISI are made also by Afghanistan. Hamid Karzai has often said that Pakistan trains combatants and sends them across the border to Afghanistan. In June 2008, Afghanistan accused Pakistani intelligence services of planning a failed attempt to assassinate President Karzai (Kaplan–Bajoria, 2008). According to Weinbaum, Pakistan runs two state policies: the official one supports stability in Afghanistan, while the unofficial one supports jihadists (ibid.).

Pakistan's controversial role was confirmed also by WikiLeaks documents that were later recapitulated by the newspaper *Der Spiegel*. However, it is no news that US unmanned aerial vehicles (Predators), managed by members of private security companies, attack targets also in the Pakistani territory. As a response to these attacks, extremists have, in the past few months, set fire to numerous fuel-trucks carrying oil derivatives for the coalition force in Afghanistan.

Numerous actors that wish to settle the situation in Afghanistan deal with considerable problems. Can the difficulties be solved, considering that the solution to this problem involves combat units, attempts to restore the country and different interests of all participants? Regardless of technological and military advantages, Afghanistan is obviously determined to remain difficult to control for quite some time.

4.2 An overview of the role of Slovenia in Afghanistan

Slovenia started participating in missions abroad in 1997, with members of Slovene Armed Forces (SAF) and Slovene police. First unit of SAF deployed to a mission abroad counted 21 members and was deployed to Albania, to operation Alba, under the auspices of OSCE. In 2012, average number of SAF members deployed to missions abroad was approximately 400 (International missions and operations).

During the fifteen years of experiences in deployments abroad not only increase of number of participants can be identified, but also the extension of the range of tasks performed: the collection of information, patrol, security facilities, cooperation in the prevention of public disorder, cooperation with specialized international organizations, participation in search and destroy illegal weapons, force protection, etc. Deployment to Afghanistan in 2004 and shift in tasks and responsibilities marks an important step in the development of SAF. Experiences SAF has gained in the Afghanistan theatre are priceless, and have proved Slovenia, together with its armed forces, being capable of performing high-demanding and out-of-Europe-missions. Deployment to Afghanistan is considered important also from the asymmetric warfare's point of view.

When analysing the history of the SAF's participation in IOMs, four milestones can be identified. The first is the year 1997 when the first Slovenian "peacekeeper" was deployed to a mission abroad. The year 2002 can be considered the second milestone. In the period between 1997 and 2001, all soldiers and policemen entered the missions on a voluntary basis. In 2002, for the first time a Slovenian contingent with a permanent military structure (an infantry motorized company) was deployed to the SFOR, Bosnia and Herzegovina. "It marked the end of ad hoc units, comprised to serve the goals of the mission only, and the start of a more organized, and also more ordered cooperation of soldiers in a mission" (Jelušič et al., 2005). The year 2004 presents a third milestone, due to the Special Forces Unit's deployment to peace enforcement operation in Afghanistan (ISAF), for the first time. The year 2007 marks the fourth milestone when, for the first time, a whole SAF battalion was deployed to a mission abroad, which presented enormous logistical and organizational achievement for the whole armed forces.

During the period from 1997 Slovenian soldiers participated in various types of operations, which were held under the auspices of various international organizations. The first operation was a humanitarian peacekeeping operation ALBA, which was held under the auspices of the OSCE. SAF has also participated in the traditional demarcation UN peacekeeping operation in Cyprus UNFICYP (*United Nations Peacekeeping Force and Cyprus*), as military observers they also participated in UNTSO (*United Nations Truce Supervision Organization*) in the Middle East, and in UNIFIL in Lebanon since 2006.

Most SAF' soldiers took part in operations in Slovenia's closest neighbourhood, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, under the auspices of NATO and EU. In 2005 for the first time in its history a whole battalion of SAF was deployed to a mission abroad, to KFOR in Kosovo.

Since 1997, SAF participated in nineteen different missions and all together 7,573 members of SAF were deployed to missions abroad, some of them on a multiple rotations (International Operations and Missions). Probably, as most dangerous can be considered a deployment to Afghanistan, which also presents a priceless experience of SAF in modern concept of asymmetric warfare.

SAF has been participating in Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) since 2004. Deployment to Afghanistan was first "out-of-Europe" deployment of the SAF, and has been declared a high-risk deployment, especially compared to previous deployments to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Not only strong professional attention was given to this deployment, but also strong media and public attention. Slovenia's participation in Afghanistan has also raised some serious issues regarding Slovenia's national interests for participation in those kinds of missions. Concerns regarding the participation in ISAF have become stronger and stronger until in 2010 a Slovene governmental party has called the government and SAF to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. Government's answer was to wait until 2012 and reassess SAF's participation in ISAF and then make a final decision. Slovenian government has decided to remain a NATO partner in ISAF operation, however in 2012 the decision has been adopted to reduce the number of Slovenian military personnel in ISAF from almost 80–90 to 35 (and later 33) service members between September 2013 and May 2014, while 2 service members remained in ISAF until the end of the year 2014.

The importance of this decision lies in the unit that was deployed (Slovenian Special Forces) and the tasks they performed (military assistance – train, assist and advise Afghani special police units).

Fourteen out of aforementioned 33 service members were deployed to Special Operations Task Unit (SOTU) Laghman; namely twelve service members were performing their tasks as part of the SOF Task Unit and two service members occupied support functions (i.e. Joint Terminal Air Controller and Combat Support) (Beršnak, 2014). The main task was to provide military assistance for the Afghani special police, hence they have been co-operating in a military organized police units assigned to act in case of severe security threats and to carry out the arrests in case when armed resistance is expected; they are known as Provincial Reaction Companies (ibid.). This was the first case, in the Slovenian history of participating in peace operations, of service-members deployed to combined Special Operations Unit and performing tasks defined as special operations in the asymmetric environment.

Additional four service members occupied the Command and Control support positions; two of them were deployed to the battalion command of CSOTF-10 in the Camp Phoenix – Vose, Kabul and two were deployed to one of the two subordinated company commands, that was the Special Operations Task Group East (SOTG-E) in Jalalabad Air Field, Jalalabad (ibid.). One of the two service members deployed to Battalion command of CSOTF-10 was also in a national chain, occupying a post of Slovenian contingent's NCO.

Therefore we could say that the tasks were more risky than before since SF unit accompanied the Afghani police on their tasks (meaning when they have identified a high profile target and went to perform arrest) and were often engaged in cross fire.

Decision to participate in ISAF was accepted by the Slovene government in May 2003. Initially only eleven members of SAF were to be deployed. However, due to decision of the Constitutional Court to temporarily halt security clearances, deployment was postponed. In December 2003 conditions for the deployment were created and Slovene government has decided SAF will start its mission in ISAF from the end of February 2004, all together counting 18 members of the Special Forces Unit. Their mainly performed the tasks of reconnaissance. Further rotations of the SAF in ISAF are presented in Figure 5.

During the time number of soldiers deployed to ISAF varied. Not only members of Special Forces Unit were deployed, but also firemen (at the Kabul international airport), veterinarians, a motorized platoon, civilian specialists within CIMIC and as advisors, etc.

Figure 5:
SAF in Afghanistan (2004–2014)

Slovenian military participation in ISAF (Afghanistan): SICON 1 - SICON 21

4.3 Slovenian casualty aversion: public perception of IOMs

Security has been redefined in the context of globalization, which ultimately ended the illusion that security issues stop at national borders; it has become internationalized and based on interdependency (Grizold, 1994). Hence, the question whether all nations are willing to participate in the endeavour to assure international peace and security and furthermore, if they agree upon the means that ought to be used in order to achieve them is raised. Data shows that the European public is inclining towards support of "safer" activities that involve a minimal use of force. The same holds true for the Slovenian public, which is generally willing to contribute to collective security; however, only to the point when lives are not endangered.

When discussing the participation to distant international operations and missions which are in the public often perceived as "war like" or "new

imperialism", the nation's historical experience needs to be taken into account. Slovenia's past military experience is exclusively bound up with wars of a defensive nature; the country has neither an aggressive nor imperialist past. Instead during the period of the late 1980s the so-called peace syndrome, which included a culture of non-violence and peace, became pronounced among the population (Malešič, 1991: 64). Further on the Slovenian cultural script is prevalently uncertainty avoiding and feminine with collectivistic characteristics of a small and closely-connected society, which all contribute to risk averseness among Slovenian society; especially when deployments to distant areas (e.g. Afghanistan or Iraq) are in question.

The purpose of following chapter is to analyse the public perception of country's international peace and security endeavours in the context of participation in international operations and missions.

Methodology

The Defence Research Centre along with Public Opinion and Mass Communication Research Centre examine the topics of international security and cooperation in international peace missions in the Slovenian Public Opinion (SPO) longitudinal survey. The following analysis of the change in Slovenian public opinion towards Slovenia's international peace activities is based on data taken from the following years: 1994, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2012. All surveys utilized a standardized questionnaire and were carried out with face-to-face surveys conducted in the field. The survey encompassed a representative sample of adult persons, over the age of eighteen with a permanent residence in the Republic of Slovenia. Approximately 1,100 persons were polled in each survey. For the purpose of this analysis relevant statistical tests were used, based on the data gathered in the above mentioned surveys.

General support to IOMs

The Slovenian Public Opinion Survey includes two questions looking into the attitudes of the public towards the cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia in international operations and missions. For the first question, "Do you support the participation of the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) in international peace and humanitarian operations?" (Figure 6), the opinions are measured using the Likert scale, i. e. with grades from 1 to 5, with 1 as the lowest and 5 as

the highest grade. In 1999, we can still note strong public support for the participation of the SAF in humanitarian operations (78.2%) that had decreased by a good 12% by 2007 and then rose to 80% in 2009. Last measurement revealed a significant fall of support to humanitarian and peace operations.

Figure 6:
Public support to SAFs' activities abroad
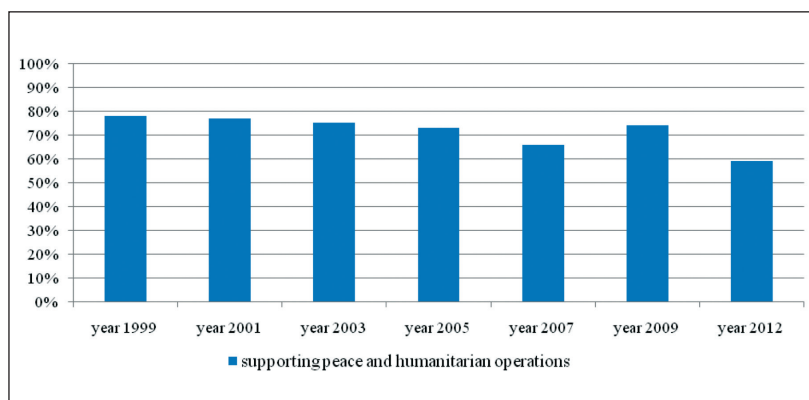
The second question concerns the degree of support, namely "Do you support the participation of the Republic of Slovenia in international peace operations or missions?" (see Figure 7).[59] The overwhelming majority of the Slovenian population supported the country's international activities at the beginning of the millennium, however the support is steadily falling since 2005. The public expressed the highest level of support (70%) in 2003 on account of previously undecided persons now taking a clear stand in favour or against Slovenia's participation. The clearer definition among the persons surveyed can be attributed to the combination of extensive media coverage of the Republic of Slovenia's Euro-Atlantic integration, the greater public debate and clearly expressed views of the politicians, the role of the expert community and various civil initiatives, all of which probably led to a greater public interest in and knowledge of security and defence politics (Vuga, 2011: 85). The latest measurement shows that the opposition to participation in IOMs has become stronger than support.

Figure 7:
Country's participation in international operations and missions
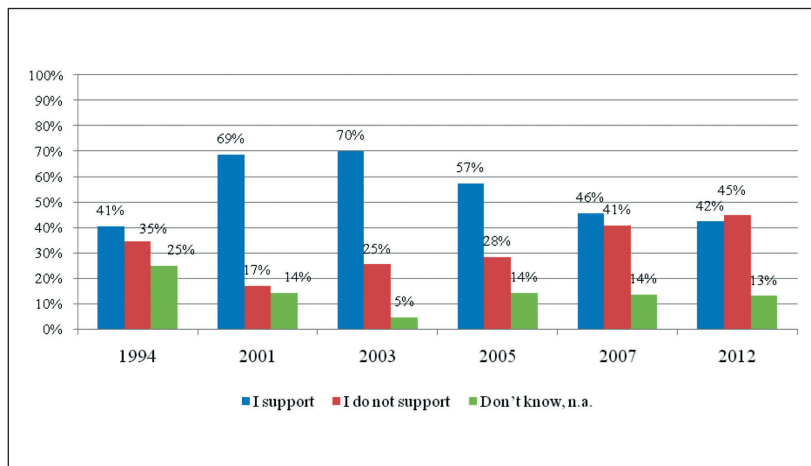
A comparison of both aforementioned questions shows that throughout the years, the public has shown a higher level of support for the participation of the SAF in international peace and humanitarian missions than it has shown for the Republic of Slovenia's broader cooperation in international operations and missions.

Interestingly the analyses of the past years revealed significant difference in support of participation to IOMs between genders, while this year a convergence of opinions between both genders has happened. The difference in support between genders has almost diminished, however the significant difference ($p = 0.01$) can be observed among undecided regarding the question. Women (70% of undecided) seem to have weaker opinions regarding the participation in IOMs compared to men (30% of undecided). Further on there is a significant difference ($p = 0.00$) among opposers of participation in IOMs based on age. It seems that the negative attitude and the restraint towards the country's activities in the IOMs are growing with age, since there are only 9.5% of opposers aged up to 30 years and notable 40.5% of them aged 61 or more. On the other hand the difference among supporters is merely few per cents.

"Yes" to humanitarianism, "no" to risk of lives

One of the factors that affect the acceptability of a certain IOM in the public perception is the security or risk level for the servicemen and servicewomen deployed in the area of operation. At this point, we must ask ourselves the question: to what degree can an IOM ever be safe? For some time now, Slovenia has been participating in IOMs with a higher risk factor (Iraq, Afghanistan, Chad, etc.). However, most of the operations of SAF members have been limited due to national caveats;[60] thereby, the risk of loss of life has been lowered, even though we certainly cannot speak of the absence of this threat.

Further on there is constantly prevailing opinion among the Slovenians, that the IOMs Slovenia is participating in are too dangerous for members of SAF. In 2007, 52% of the public held the opinion that military operations abroad are too dangerous for members of SAF;[61] in 2009 the share was 47% and in 2012, 51% of the public believed that operations abroad are too dangerous.

Table 2:
In your opinion, should Slovenia withdraw members of the SAF
in the event of death casualties?

	2005	2007	2009	2012
Yes	67%	68%	68%	67%
No	21%	21%	23%	22%
Don't know, n. a.	12%	11%	9%	11%

In the context of the event of loss of life or heavy casualties as a consequence of carrying out tasks in IOM, the public was asked to express the opinion regarding the appropriate response by the country. The vast majority of the public believe that in the event of death casualties among SAF members, Slovenia should immediately withdraw its units from the area of IOM. The opinion on military withdrawal in case of death casualties has remained stable throughout the years (see Table 2), indicating that Slovenians' opinions derive from the standpoint of strong risk averseness. Such patterns in public opinion with regard to the question of expected national reactions in case of

death casualties have also been observed in other European countries where the support for IOMs has been steadily declining (Roundtable, 2009). On the other hand, in the USA the share of casualty phobic or risk aversive society (as we are naming it in the Slovenian case) is only 20% (Feaver–Gelpi, see Smith, 2005).

The proportion of women who think that members should be withdrawn in the event of death casualties has been traditionally higher than the proportion of men; however the differences are getting smaller every year. In 2009 the difference between genders was 28%, with the majority of women (64.2%) being in favour of withdrawal and only one third of men (36%) sharing their opinion, while in 2012 the difference in opinions regarding the support of withdrawal declined (see Table 2: In your opinion, should Slovenia withdraw members of the SAF in the event of death casualties?). The difference among genders is getting smaller and the regression analysis showed that gender does not have a significant impact on risk aversion in society anymore. On the other hand analysis showed that there is correlation between gender and being undecided regarding the risk aversion. If share of women would increase the level of undecided regarding the withdrawal (risk aversion) would slightly increase (9%). The significant difference between genders among those undecided indicates that women are indeed less likely to have an opinion on security issues as established by de Konink (2000).

Table 3:
Withdrawing members of Slovenian Armed Forces
in the event of death casualties

|	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	43%	57%	100%
No	64%	36%	100%
Don't know, n. a.	28%	72%	100%
Pearson χ^2	0,000		

Further on, the latest measurement shows that younger people are less risk averse compared to older generation (p = 0.000). The overwhelming majority (79%) of the generation aged 60 and more are in favour of withdrawal in case of death casualties (as opposed to those who prefer for the SAF to remain at IOM despite the death casualties), while among the youngest (<30) and middle aged (up to 45) the share is around 50%. Similar is situation when it comes to the question of the danger IOMs present for the SAF. A high share (37.5%) of young people aged between 18 and 25 believe that IOMs abroad are not too dangerous for Slovenian soldiers, while approximately 30% believe the opposite or are undecided. The share of those who believe that IOMs are too dangerous starts to increase among people in their thirties and forties (up to 45%), while more than 60% of the respondents in the age group of 45 years and above believe in a high level of danger.

What is small country like Slovenia willing to contribute?

Further on we have been measuring the public support in participating in various types of IOMs, depending on expected use of force. Inter-annual comparisons of Slovenian public opinion survey (see Figure 8) show the highest consensus of the public regarding the cooperation of SAF in humanitarian operations without use of weapons. The support increased from 2001 onwards and has remained persuasive with 86.7% until 2009; however, in the last measurement in spring 2012 reveals a decline of the support (73%) and a slight increase in the share of opponents (17.4%). Similar public opinion is evident in the attitude towards peacekeeping operations with use of weapons for self-defence. There, the support fell from 73% in 2009 to 60% in 2012. Traditionally, the lowest support is for participation in combat operations for peace enforcement, for which support is steadily declining. Between 2007 and 2009, the level of those opposed to such operations increased from 55.5% in 2007 to 62.9% in 2009, however a slight decline in opposition (59%) has been measured in 2012. The latest measurement (2012) shows support to be just 28%.

As aforementioned the Slovenian public support low risk operations of a humanitarian type. In line with that the SPO's data reveal that IOMs on the territory of the former Yugoslavia are the most positively accepted in Slovenian public, while participation in geographically more distant IOMs is not accepted well (see Figure 8: Public support to various types of IOMs). Even

Figure 8:
**Public support to various types of IOMs**
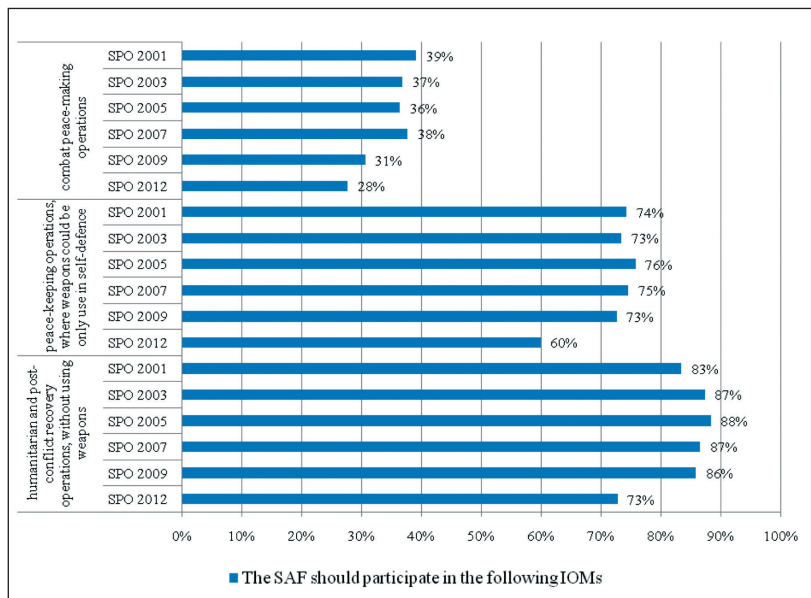
though as Afghanistan is the only "combat like" IOM Slovenia is partici-
pating in, Slovenian public does not support it any less than IOMs in other
regions (for example Middle East or Africa). That is interesting due to the
Slovenian inclination towards humanitarian and "safer" types of IOMs with
limited use of weapons.

The people's will

The postmodern armed forces are, more than ever, carriers of a country's in-
ternational obligations and expectations, which in some cases demand sac-
rificing lives.

Ben-Ari established that "peace operations and humanitarian assignments
represent new elements within the cultural script of good military deaths".
According to longitudinal analysis of the data gathered in Slovenian pub-
lic opinion survey that is partly the case in Slovenia, since there is public

Figure 9:
Areas of IOMs
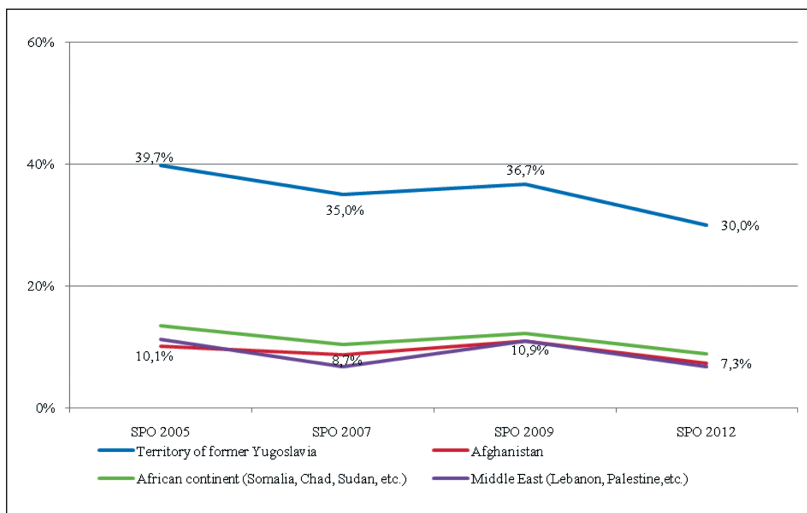
willingness to participate in the aforementioned activities, but not to sacrifice lives. The presence of fear of casualties is surprising due to the fact that there have not been any death casualties (except as a result of an illness, accident or suicide) in IOMs so far. As the risk aversion model along with other tests reveals the Slovenian society present a case of security bubble, with strong risk aversion and very narrow selection of activities worth making sacrifices.

Casualty aversion might be strong and death casualties completely unacceptable; however, both the public and the politicians should be aware of the danger of military presence without "military power".[62] Given the fact that a long-term presence in the field gives contributing parties an in-depth perspective of the situation, helps to build confidence among local population and brings better knowledge about the conflict (Zupančič, 2010b: 90), the question regarding the country's national interest and consequently the types and location of IOMs as well as whether to withdraw a nation's soldiers and other participating parties in case of casualties is extremely complex. That is despite the evident standpoint of the Slovenian public, who seems to be completely intolerant towards any kind of potential death risks for its co-citizens.

4.4 Experiences from the "asymmetric field"

Slovenia, considering its military, economic, diplomatic and in 21st century also information power, by most of the definitions falls in the category of small states (see for example Grizold–Vegič, 2001; Šabič, 2002; Brglez, 2005; Udovič, 2011; Svete, 2008: 92–93). "The smallness" is, among other, reflected by the position and role of its armed forces (Jelušič, 2007). According to the theory of small states in international relations, small states do not have as many means to achieve their foreign policy goals as larger states have (Morgenthau, 1948/2004: 97; Keohane, 1969). Despite the limited size of its armed forces, Slovenia has been actively participating in peace support operations (PSO) throughout the world since 1997. Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) are, considering their activities outside the national borders, among the strongest carriers of the Slovenian international commitments (Furlan et al., 2006; Strategy of the Participation of Republic of Slovenia in the International Operations and Missions, 2010), with approximately 400 to 500 servicemen and servicewomen deployed at any moment in the past few years. Though the number might seem humble compared to some bigger nations (more on that in Grizold–Zupančič, 2009: 204), it represents 5 to 10% of the entire SAF. Even though the trust in SAF are fairly high, which has been explained by Garb (2009: 106–107) in the context of the appearing military convergence toward society, Slovenian public is yet remaining fairly indifferent towards SAF's activities (Malešič, 2011: 173–174). Further on, the attitude towards participation in peace support operations/military operations among Slovenian public has been changeable; namely the support has been fluctuating from 45% after independence to 70% in 2003 and back to 45% in 2007 (Slovenian Public Opinion data, 1994, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009). In the past few years, the support has been rising again and is the strongest in the case of the Balkans and the weakest in the case of Afghanistan (Slovenian Public Opinion data, 2005, 2007, 2009).

Methodology and the sample
From January 2011 till March 2011 fifty interviews with members of SAF, who were engaged in the PSO, were conducted. All the interviewees come from the army, since Slovenia does not have other services, e.g. navy or air

force. The interviews were conducted with forty four servicemen and six servicewomen; eleven of them have been deployed to a single PSO and the other thirty nine to at least two or more. As far as the rank is concerned, the majority of the interviewees were rank and file; there were significantly fewer officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs).[63] The sample approximately reflects the structure of SAF.

As described above, we have gathered data using a qualitative methodology; namely conducting semi-structured interviews. The latter have been processed by using a tool for qualitative analysis (Atlas.ti). Firstly we identified the demographic characteristics of Slovenian sample; than we used open coding, to identify core issues (e.g. problems, challenges, etc.) interviewees are coping with, and memos: personal interviewer's field notes as well as code notes, both helping to clarify specific cases; and thirdly, the networking has been used to establish the level of connection between analysed categories.

The below presented results have been compared cross nationally in a book edited by Italian researcher Giuseppe Caforio (Caforio, 2013).

Preoperational training

The opinion regarding the quality of preoperational training was divided. Those who believed that they were well prepared emphasized preoperational training with other armed forces (at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany, with the US Army, etc.), its impact on homogeneity among them and lessons learned in the form of transferring experience between contingents. They found preparations sufficient and felt they had met their expectations.

> Training is very comprehensive, which is not a negative point, since you never know what you might need later during the deployment. Training for the mission is important to develop cohesion of the unit to be deployed (Interview with SIA34).

On the other hand, there was just about the same number of those who were dissatisfied with preoperational training. Their main criticism was directed towards the gap between the training and the reality in the field. They mostly felt that tasks they had been trained for were vastly different from those they were deployed to do, which made them feel unsuitable and caused

uncertainty among them. The completely different environment and climate were also pointed out as problematic in the context of preoperational preparations. As another fairly important factor, the interviewees emphasized the time for preparations. Those satisfied with the training mentioned that the preparations were long enough on several occasions, while many of the dissatisfied interviewees pointed out the lack of time and last minute preparations.

> When you are deployed to a mission as a part of such a small contingent as the Slovenian was, you have to be prepared to perform all tasks, and not only those foreseen. The number of personnel is insufficient and it's not possible to perform only one type of tasks (Interview with SIA48).

Therefore, the main challenge the SAF are facing is the lack of a systematic transfer of knowledge or experience gained during the years of participation in various PSO, as well as SAF's strong reliance on the procedures trained at JMRC. That in fact, is an important characteristic of small armed forces that only function on the tactical level and are (being deployed to the military operation) usually attached to a bigger unit within a multinational contingent.

The experience

The experience servicemen and servicewomen gained in Afghanistan was mostly estimated as extremely precious and important for further deployments, mostly in the context of monitoring one's preparedness, especially when under attack.

> This was a great experience as a commander of the platoon. Many theoretical things were now tested in real situations. This was first-hand experience with commanding and leading men in real situation, outside your own country. I was able to experience all difficulties commanding and taking decisions, using and finding different tactical solutions to given problems (Interview with SIA20).

The problematic issues affecting work in peace support operations, as perceived by the interviewees, were the knowledge of the *lingua franca* and the national caveats. The former is problematic when the command of the English language among members of certain armed forces is not solid, and the latter when expectations regarding the participation in combat operations do not meet the reality due to national caveats. The latter has been problematic among different participating forces, also in relation to the Afghan National Army (ANA).

> So we trained Afghan armed forces, but when it was necessary to go out, we had to respect national caveats. For Afghani soldiers, this was very difficult to understand (Interview with SIA36).

It is interesting that the majority of interviewees pointed out the absence of real combat experience, as if this were the only experience worth mentioning.

(Un)usual day during the deployment

Interviewees were asked to describe one usual day and one unusual day during the deployment. Description of usual day differs depending on the tasks and the positions of an individual soldier. In general their working hours intervened with their spare time in regular time periods.

> I worked 12 hours, 3 hours on the gate, 3 hours on alert, again 3 hours on the gate and again 3 hours on alert. And then I had a 12-hour-break (Interview with SIA6).

Unusual days were characterized with missile attacks and states of emergency inside the base.

Relations with others

Cooperation with members from foreign armed forces is an inevitable part of deployment for SAF's members, since they are almost[64] in every case added to a foreign contingent and under foreign command. In general, relations with members of foreign armed forces can be characterized as good. However, not intense associating with foreign soldiers during their spare time can be noted. Mainly, they spent their spare time during the deployment with their colleagues from the same country.

Some of the interviewees worked on an everyday basis with Italians. As a main obstacle in working with them majority identified lack of or weak knowledge of English language.

> Official language during the deployment is English; however when you try to explain something to the Italian soldier, he does not understand, and I had to work with them every day (Interview with SIA10).

Those interviewees working with members of the USA armed forces on an everyday basis did not have any complaints. Seven (7) members of the SAF who formed an OMLT (*Operational Mentor and Liaison Team)* were part of the US ETT (*Embedded Training Team*), and have served under US command during the whole deployment.

Intensity of relations with local actors, local authorities, local armed forces, NGOs, media depends on the positions and tasks of the interviewees. Soldiers did not have any contacts with local authorities, NGOs and media, while commanding officer of the Slovene contingent did. Whether they had contact with local population, strongly depended on the tasks they had performed in the area of deployment. Some of the interviewees performed tasks of security checks at the main entrance to the base, so their contacts with the local population were regular. Lots of local population was employed in the base. Other interviewees had regular contacts with local population during patrols in their area of responsibility.

> We did not have any major problems with local population. They were accepting us as a foreign force, because they believed they could benefit from us (Interview with SIA20).

However, not every Slovene soldier deployed to Afghanistan had a positive experience with local population. During the first deployments, in 2004, members of SAF have frequently been mistaken for members of US armed forces because they both used the same vehicles "Hummer", and for that reason they were perceived with hostile attitudes. At the beginning, members of the SAF were also being commonly mistaken for Russian soldiers because

of the similar national flag. However, step-by-step local population learned to recognize Slovene soldier, Slovene flag and Slovene vehicles.

Members of the SAF who were part of OMLT had regular contacts with members of the ANA. They trained them, they lived with them, however, due to national caveats, they were not allowed to accompany them during combat operations. This has caused some misunderstanding and mistrust on the ANA side.

Rules of engagement

Besides national caveats and occasional conflicts/contradictions between the caveats and the Rules of engagement (ROE), the changing nature of the latter has been emphasized. Changing the relations with local population on the strategic level resulted in modifying the ROE, which was especially problematic due to the reduction of the anticipated use of force for self-protection, which resulted in servicemen and servicewomen feeling more vulnerable. The interviewees also stressed the different national rules applying in participating forces, as well as variations in procedures and the ROE between ISAF and the operation Enduring Freedom. However, the general opinion among soldiers and officers was that the ROE in Afghanistan were clear and appropriate for the tasks they were performing. On the other hand, the NCOs emphasized more of the aforementioned problems/inconsistencies they were confronted with.

Impressions

Besides the challenges presented by the ROE and caveats, the most frequently mentioned impressions were connected to the specific climate conditions and the environment as such. Another important issue were cultural differences, e.g. cultural specifics of local environment that differ significantly from the European, as well as poverty, which left quite a negative impression on the members of the SAF.

> What struck me most were the poverty and children living in such poor conditions. But this has lasted for first two weeks only, later on I managed to get over this (Interview with SIA19).

Further on, the nutrition represented an important daily ritual and some negative experiences connected to the certain nationalities were mentioned on several occasions and in various operations. There were no special differences in expectations and impressions either between servicemen and servicewomen, or between ranks. Regardless of the first impressions or personal crises they were dealing with, they interviewees adapted fairly quickly, which resulted in accepting the situation as something normal and unchangeable by the interviewees. This was facilitated by the fact that some interviewees had frequent contacts with the local population, letting them through the security checkpoints at the entrance of the military base, had casual contacts with workers in the military base, talked to local civilians during patrols etc.

> I also had relations with local population; however, I believe that these relations were good as long the local population had any benefits from the ISAF servicemen and servicewomen (Interview with SIA09).

In addition, the interviewees who worked as instructors in the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) had daily contacts with ANA soldiers, while some held positions where interaction with local or national authorities was necessary. Besides contacts with the local environment, the relations among forces sharing the base also evolved. They were estimated as predominantly good, with some deviations based on personal characteristics of the soldiers, the unit they belong to, national culture and other factors. At this point, gender should be mentioned, since eventual culture-based obstacles had been overcome within time, which presents an example of positive cross-cultural influences.

> I had regular relations with the local population. I communicated with them with the help of a translator. They did not have any problems with me being a female. It seems that the local population was used to the presence of female soldiers in ISAF (Interview with SIA02).

I didn't have bad experience with the "allies" at all. Although I was under Italian command and some Italians were a little bit surprised about a female commanding the platoon, I had made it very clear why and for which purpose I am in the mission. After that, I was accepted the same as the other commanders (Interview with SIA38).

Satisfaction

A majority of the interviewees were either satisfied (64%) or even very satisfied (22%) with the mission. Amalgamating the two answers, we see that a significant majority of the servicemen and servicewomen was satisfied with the mission. Only 4% of the interviewees were on the opposite side of the scale, answering they were not satisfied with the mission. Remaining 10% could not decide if they were satisfied with the mission or not. That completely contradicts the Slovenian public poll opinions; namely, there is a strong lack of support of military participation in remote territories (like Afghanistan) among Slovenians, mostly due to the unclear political goals (Vuga, 2011: 90–91). Further on they perceive *"risking lives of Slovenian soldiers for foreign interests as unacceptabl*e" (see also Vuga, 2011).

The main reasons for perceiving the mission as satisfactory were: gaining new knowledge and experience, contributing to the stabilization of the war-torn country and learning new languages. Among the issues that could have been improved the interviewees widely pointed out the "Italian cuisine" (in the words of one serviceman: *"being in the same military base with Italians means terribly pasta, pasta and pasta 24/7"*), improper equipment, weapons and housing conditions, and also the inability to see if their engagement in Afghanistan brings the difference (progress) to the country. The latter has been observed also among members of SAF deployed to Kosovo (KFOR) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (SFOR) between 2003 and 2008, when the decline of the premodern motivation (see Battistelli, 1997) has been significant, due to the inability to see the progress within six months period of single contingent's rotation (Juvan–Vuga, 2010: 103–106). However, these relatively negative sentiments regarding the mission generally did not have a significant influence on the overall positive satisfaction with the mission.

Motivation

As it has been described by Juvan–Vuga (2010: 103–107) the strongest motivation for participating in peace support operation among SAF derive from what Battistelli (1997) has described as "modern reasons" (e.g. carrier opportunity, financial benefits, military experience, etc.). Therefore it is not surprising that most important motivational reason of the SAF servicemen and servicewomen for taking part in the mission in Afghanistan was higher salary. However, it has to be noted that the financial reason was not overwhelmingly named as the only important reason. Gaining professional and personal experience, as well as taking up personal and professional challenge, rank just slightly below the financial reasons. Significantly less interviewees pointed out other reasons, for example curiosity (*"to see the conflict with own eyes" or "to experience the different culture"*) and career reasons. When asked about the motivation, some interviewees, interestingly, answered in the manner that the motivation as such was not important, because they were deployed to Afghanistan by order (approximately one fourth of the interviewees).

Family problems

Though some researchers suggest that the family related problems and stress often occur when a soldier is being detached from his family during the deployment (see for example Litz, 1996; Juvan–Jelušič, 2007: 558–559) the analysis of SAF conducted in this research indicates that families are strongly supportive and as such present very small amount of stress for members of SAF, either when deployed or at home (Vuga–Juvan, 2011: 97–99).

Vast majority of the interviewees did not face any family problems. Among them, some (25–30%) seemed reconciled with the fact that some problems arise during the mission or after it, but they do not perceive these "misunderstandings" as family problems. They mostly answer that *"the sooner one accepts deployments as a part of soldiers' life, the better for him/her and his/her family"*. In addition to that, if the preparations for being separated were carried out properly, the chance that something serious may happen during the deployment is significantly lower. In the group that did not face serious family problems during the deployment, the following reasons were named as *"the issues that do occur during the deployment"* (but are not of a big

importance for them!): missing the children and partner (and *vice-versa*) and worrying of the family for his/her security/safety.

On the other side, a small minority of the interviewees believe that their deployment caused certain family problems. It is interesting to note that only the rank and file servicemen/servicewomen and NCO's believe he/she faced family problems during the mission, but no one from the officers' corps. In addition to that, only male interviewees pointed out that family problems occurred.

Some of the interviewees pointed out the family problems *after* returning home:

> The family got used to living without me and in the first 14 days I was wondering what am I doing at home. I had to adapt to the family and not the opposite… (Interview with SIA40).

> The problem of not being at home is that you miss certain important things, for example a friend's death, another one gets divorced, the other one move to another city… (Interview with SIA34).

Most of the interviewees, irrespective if they think they faced family problems or not, offered some solutions how to overcome these problems. Accordingly, the most important is regular communication (Skype, MSN Messenger etc.) – in addition to that, one interviewee mentioned the common 'online activities' (such as playing online games together) – and the adequate preparation of the whole family for soldier's absence are important.

Soldiers were also asked whether their families were approached or contacted by MOD or SAF during their absence in order to offer them some kind of help or assistance. It is worrying to note that the majority of participants believe family support from MOD and SAF does not work properly, and "in cases of serious emergencies MOD is not capable of helping". Not even one participant report their family members were contacted by an official MOD representative during the time of deployment. Majority do remember having receiving some brochures with an important phone numbers prior the deployment. However, they are not aware their family members have used the given

telephone numbers. In cases they needed help, MOD and SAF were the last ones they would turn for help.

Stress during the deployment

It may be interesting to note that the majority of interviewees answered they did not face a serious stress during the deployment, while less than one third of the interviewees answered the stress was present. It has to be said that these numbers may be misleading due to at least three groups of reasons: 1) unpreparedness to share their inner feelings and thoughts with the person they have not seen before (interviewer); 2) type' of armed forces, where stress is something undesirable (more on this in Braudy, 2005: 3) hidden stress/different perceptions what the stress is (although the majority of interviewees answered they did not face serious stress while being deployed, unease with certain situations (which may be characterized as stress) is evident. These three groups of reasons should be explored further.

There is no statistically significant correlation by gender, marital status or category (officer, NCO, rank and file) and the perception of stress faced during the operation. Those who answered that they faced *positive* stress, they did not face *serious* stress or that they did *not face stress at all* said that it was so due to well-working "buddy system" within their contingent, good organization of work, organized events in the military base (where they were able to express their worries/thoughts) and good communication among the servicemen and servicewomen. The servicemen and servicewomen that had admitted they faced stress while being deployed pointed out the detachment from the family/relatives/home as the biggest cause of stress, esp. due to the feeling of being powerless, since one is far away and aware that he/she cannot help solving problems at home. Thus, one is highly aware of the fact that his/her decision to go to Afghanistan is a major cause of stress and worries at home.

One soldier pointed out occasional cases of the abuse of alcohol and, in this context, it should be added that, we have also identified the "rumours" regarding the abuse of certain drugs (esp. marijuana) during the deployment of the SAF. Even though it is highly unlikely that the interviewees would entrust the existence of such an illegal act to the interviewer, the potential drug abuse among members of SAF should be explored further; especially since there have been no serious analyses of the alcohol and drug-abuse within the

SAF, only occasional articles have been published in the press (see for example Štok–Valenčič, 2009).[65] Furthermore, some suicides occurred within the SAF, also during the deployment, but whether the cause was over-stress has not been researched in details. The problem of "suicidal thoughts" during the deployment has been revealed also by one of the interviewees (SIA45). Last, but not least, the problem of splitting with the partner after returning from Afghanistan was mentioned (one of the interviewees (SIA35) claims that up to 20% of the contingent separate from their partner after returning home). However, it is impossible to argue that the deployment as such was the main reason for separation.

The interviewees listed certain strategies they often resort to in order to overcome stress, esp. jogging/fitness, reading, listening to music, watching movies and talking to their fellows and their families/partners/friends at home.

Difficulties after the mission and re-integration

The problem of eventual misleading arising from the same reasons as mentioned in the previous section is highly likely to occur also within this group of answers (see the paragraph "Stress" above), because also the issue of re-integration with the family/partner is very personal. Therefore, these paragraphs have to be understood *cum* (big) *grano salis*.

Half of the interviewees answered they did not have any difficulties integrating into civil life after returning from the military operation. Most of the interviewees said they confronted *small* (18%) or *big* problems (28%) after their return. Two of the interviewees did not want to answer this question.

The significant portion of those who said they had faced problems after returning to the homeland said that the biggest problem is the adaptation of the family/relatives/friends to your return in their lives. The social groups you belong to, esp. the family develop their own patterns of life, which do not include a deployed soldier anymore.

> After the mission you need some time to accommodate to the regular reality of life in your family and working environment. You have to cool down your readiness to act at any given time; your reaction must become less instrumental… (Interview with SIA20).

> The family needs more time to adapt, comparing to a service member. During the deployment, family develops its own mode of living. After the deployment it is better to include yourself back in the family life gradually… (Interview with SIA03).

Last, but not least, it is worth mentioning that a small portion[66] of the interviewees had been told by their families/friends that they have changed during the deployment.

> My wife told me that even two months after the return I was more nervous and aggressive… (Interview with SIA23).

What is the soldiers' message

The in-depth analysis of interviews shows that ISAF, being the only operation where the SAF face asymmetric threats, is hardly perceived much different than any other operation (e.g. Kosovo, BiH, Lebanon); servicemen and servicewomen are coping with similar professional and personal challenges and problems. The primary social environment (ie. family, close friends, parents) is strongly supportive, therefore members of SAF do not face serious family related problems during their deployment, except rare cases of frustrations due to their inability to help in the family crises. The latter presents a potential source of the stress during the deployment. However the majority of interviewees felt very little or no stress due to the good "buddy system", the integration mechanisms, effective interpersonal communication and well organized working process. Weak presence of stress can, to a certain degree, also be ascribed to the following factors; 1) servicemen/servicewomen's high level of satisfaction with operation (because it presents an opportunity for cross-national exchange of experience and an opportunity to test their preparedness for functioning in the war-like circumstances; 2) trust in national contingent's capabilities of accomplishing tasks due to the good preoperational training, especially when carried out cross-nationally.

Among negative experiences during deployment, the following issues were emphasised: discrepancy between the operational rules of engagement and the national rules and caveats; a personal contact with enormous poverty among Afghanistan people and cross-national communication gap due to the poor knowledge of *lingua franca* within armed forces of certain

nations. While after their return, the main problem is reintegration in the family's daily routine as well as the alienation between partners.

As we can see, the analysis reveals some problems that should be further explored. The question is, whether face-to-face interviews are the most appropriate tool for uncovering personal, at some cases even intimate, issues.

CONCLUSION

The turbulent times after the end of the Cold War affected both great powers and small countries like Slovenia. Maybe the consequences of the end of the Cold War were even more dramatic for Slovenia as a small and relatively young political community, especially after it joined the EU and NATO. Now for the first time in modern history (after Slovenia's secession from the Austro-Hungarian Empire) Slovenians have to think not according to the way of insurgency but from a totally opposite perspective, that of counterinsurgency. Meanwhile our military and political tradition has never been radical and offensive (the logical explanation for this is the relatively small size of the population living at the junction between Middle Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean, which is a crossroads of several geostrategic interests), but it was always tough and resistant and had two highlights: World War II and the War for Independence in 1991. Slovenia's poorly armed and equipped insurgency in the first case and its Territorial Defence Force with police support in the second proved that asymmetry is not just a theory, but a practice for prevailing in a conflict with a much stronger opponent. But there was a significant difference among these analysed cases as well. In the Second World War the occupying forces succeeded in splitting the Slovenians into conflicting groups and making use of their internal ideological differences, which led to a civil war with long term political consequences. In that sense the counterinsurgency approach was similar to those in Iraq and Afghanistan, where there were always attempts to use social tensions and inequalities for making new allies. If the newly elected Slovenian government in 1990 was conscientious enough to avoid similar internal conflicts as those that happened during the most vulnerable period of Slovene history – that of World War II – and unify the population before the country gained its independence, this was the last time that Slovenians reached a big national security consensus. The following Euro-Atlantic integration of Slovenia, the professionalisation

of the Slovenian armed forces and the international peace missions and operations that Slovenia took part in opened once again strategic questions of the military tasks, relations to great powers, new allies (which were, in fact, Slovenia's opponents sixty years ago) and the necessity of international activities and responsibilities of Slovenia as a small country. At this point, the Slovenian armed forces and politics seemed to be alienated from the public, "Americanised" and leaving behind the asymmetric (insurgence) tradition at the same time. The situation can be further explained by seeing the big similarity between the situations of the armed forces of Slovenia and the United States at the end of World War II. As Fallows (2014) pointed out, "at the end of World War II, nearly 10% of the entire U.S. population was on active military duty – which meant most able-bodied men of a certain age (plus the small number of women allowed to serve). Through the decade after World War II, when so many American families had at least one member in uniform, political and journalistic references were admiring but not awestruck. Most Americans were familiar enough with the military to respect it while being sharply aware of its shortcomings, as they were with the school system, their religion, and other important and fallible institutions." And practically the same can be said for Slovenia. From the Second World War till the independence of Slovenia the majority of the population had some ties to the military or were a part of the Yugoslav defence concept called General National Defence and Social Self-Protection, through which the defence and military doctrine was implemented in practice. Annual campaigns under the title "Nothing Should Surprise Us" took place all over Slovenia, in which defence issues within the republic's jurisdiction were dealt with much more seriously than in other republics of the former Yugoslavia. All these defence measures culminated in the War for Independence in 1991. But from that point and especially with the introduction of the all-volunteer force the alienation between the Slovenian military and the public slowly began. As our research shows, although Slovenians still believe in their country's armed forces there is a bigger scepticism towards their operations and missions in abroad, especially those outside the Balkan theatre. This is evidence for the fact that Slovenia's military history and tradition of insurgence experiences are still a very influential and important source for current political power and can hardly be comparable with the dominant doctrine in Euro-Atlantic security integrations. This does not mean that the problem of Slovenia's armed forces and history of insurgence is just

a problem of civil-military relations after the professionalisation of the armed forces, but it is much more a problem of the difficulty that a small state faces when it finds itself in the frame of a totally different international political, economic and security environment. Though Slovenia's rich historical background could be used for identifying "lessons learned" and sharing knowledge and experience with our allies, it seems that it rather becomes an obstacle for the country's foreign policy positioning as well as for reaching an internal national security consensus. Therefore it is absolutely understandable why in a period of austerity the Slovenian defence sector lost more than half of its budget, although the public's attitude toward our military is much better than its attitude towards religion, state authorities, politicians and political parties. The attitude towards the military is well described in a quote by James Fallows (2014): "We love the troops, but we'd rather not think about them." And this relation is a matter of identity and security culture. If it is based just on the asymmetric past, its reconsideration is a more or less rhetorical question. And in that case, the divided society will just wait for the next (asymmetric) chance to try to reach political ambitions and goals by force…

ENDNOTES

1   See, for example: Brglez (2005), Bučar–Šterbenc (2002), Grizold–Vegič (2001), Udovič–Svetličič (2002), Šabič (2002), Zupančič–Udovič (2011).

2   See, for example Vital (1967), Strange (1995), Brglez (2005), Steinmetz–Wivel (2010).

3   Slovenia, too, faces an unfavourable position, geographically located at the crossroads of Romanic, Germanic, (South) Slavic and Ugro-Finnic cultures. In the 20th century alone, the present day Slovenian territory in part, or in its entirety, formed a part of, or was occupied by Austria-Hungary, the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (later renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), Italy, Germany, Hungary, socialist Yugoslavia, and independent Slovenia. Perhaps this, more than any previous example, proves just how much a small state is at the mercy of a system, which it can hardly influence (Zupančič–Hribernik, 2011).

4   "Creative mentality" of economic and political elites can, besides enriching their own banking accounts, lead into lucrative, though occasionally unorthodox business for small states. Such examples of 'filling the niches' are: Internet gambling (Antigua and Barbuda), "tax havens" and offshore banking (Switzerland, Bermuda), cruise ships tourism, ecotourism (the Caribbean island countries), selling national passports to rich businessmen (Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, St Lucia, Sao Tome etc.), philately (in Tuvalu, annual philatelic revenues at one point grew to well over US $500 000), selling international telephone routing codes (Vanuatu, Guyana) and country domain names (Tuvalu selling out an attractive internet domain.tv) (Prasad, 2009).

5   For further discussion on the concept and the meaning of normative power in international relations see, for example, Dunne (2008) and Hyde-Price (2008). Normative power should not be mixed with soft power, which is also another possibility for a small state to influence international relations. More on the possibilities of a small state to smartly use its soft power in international relations in Chong (2007), who explains the soft power experiments of Singapore, Panama and Vatican.

6   See Björkdahl (2002) for a vivid explanation of how Sweden has adopted the idea and norm of conflict prevention in international relations.

7   Kelleher's article (2006) analyses the involvement of Norway in the Sudanese peace process and leads to a nuanced understanding of how complex peace agreements can occur in rampantly violent, multi-layered, long-term civil wars that have proven resistant to peaceful resolution. It is interesting to note words of a minister in Sudan's embassy in Washington, who said that "Norway is spending a lot more than it is earning in Africa" (Kelleher, 2006: 287).

8   As Egeland (in Kelleher, 2006: 288) put it, "the internal consequence of being a major power is that altruistic foreign-policy objectives are often perceived to compete with strategic and economic national interests."

9   Three of the most notable cases in which Qatar has proven itself to be a capable mediator in reducing tensions but not, crucially, in resolving conflicts, are Lebanon, Sudan and Yemen. Qatar also undertook similar though lower-profile efforts in Palestine and in the border conflict between Djibouti and Eritrea (Kamrava, 2011).

10 For more on this linkage see, for example, Keohane (1969), Diggines (1985), Bray (1987) and Vuga (2010).

11 In recent history, some small states almost "sold" support to their "patrons" in return for economic, security and political benefits. Wivel–Oest (2010) provide with an insightful analysis how and why in 2003 the great majority of the Pacific island states joined the US-led "coalition of the willing" for toppling Saddam Hussein from power.

12 To support Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, the US established bases in Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan (the later was closed due to political conflict with the country), and signed agreements for refuelling rights and airspace access throughout Central Asia (Cooley, 2005).

13 For further discussion on that topic see, for example, Schwirtz (2011).

14 Analysing the case study of Puerto Rico, Santana (2010) emphasises that community struggle against militarism does not end after the closure of military bases. In fact, only then a potentially more difficult struggle begins, that is, to ensure that the formerly militarized lands and resources will benefit the communities that were most impacted by the bases. The lands where military bases are built are often highly desirable locations in terms of fertile lands, accessible location and water resources, and they tend to become easy targets for corporate and elite control.

15 What is meant here is not "warriors" as defined by the international humanitarian law, as in most cases, modern "warriors" do not fulfil conditions such as openly carrying weapons, a clear line of leadership and command and distinguishing between soldiers and civilians. Consequently, according to the Western (primarily American) understanding, such warriors are treated as terrorists who do not have the rights of military prisoners of war even after they are captured. On the other hand, in numerous conflicts the warriors that use the concept of asymmetric warfare comply with the provisions of international humanitarian law. In such cases, their terrorist label is merely political.

16 The term glocalisation, which combines the words globalisation and localisation, first appeared in the late 1980s in articles by Japanese economists in the *Harvard Business Review*. According to the sociologist Roland Robertson, who is credited with popularising the term, glocalisation describes the tempering effects of local conditions on global pressures. At a 1997 conference on "Globalization and Indigenous Culture," Robertson said that glocalisation "means the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies" (http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/glocalization). Glocalisation seems to be a problematic term. But this is the term that best captures the essence of the emerging worldwide phenomenon of globalisation and localisation simultaneously transforming the development landscape (Sharma, 2009).

[17] The criteria applied in these interpretations have changed throughout history and were often not directly comparable. For example, in the period of great geographical discoveries, the indigenous inhabitants of America had a completely different perception of the value of gold than their Spanish and Portuguese conquerors, who were even prepared to destroy the indigenous cultures and tribes for the sake of this precious metal.

[18] In stage one, conflict areas usually turn into disputed areas. Such areas are perceived by two or more communities as being important and of significant value. The clearly formulated interests that a community has in the area will sooner or later become a subject of diplomatic discussions and balancing. Disputed areas most commonly include border areas that were claimed by either side for various historical reasons. Although disputed areas are often ascribed predominantly with a prestigious role and have no direct existential impact on either side, inadequate conflict management may exacerbate the dispute, transforming the territory into a conflict or crisis area. It is considerably more difficult to manage a diplomatic dialogue in cases where the existence of either community is imperilled by the loss of a geographic location. In relation to this issue it is important to note the difference between absolute and relative shortage. While absolute shortage is related to the actual absence of a specific good or goods and may jeopardise human existence, relative shortage is related to the perception of shortage. In general, both types of shortage are connected, but relative shortage often depends on a specific social environment, a specific standard of living, and specific patterns of behaviour and perception. This is why relative shortage must not be underestimated. It is relative shortage that indirectly shapes the politics of governments and political elites and has a considerable impact on global prices and stock exchange listings. Nevertheless, relative shortages can normally be managed through trade and without the use of force, while the same cannot be said with complete certainty of absolute shortages (Prebilič, 2006: 43).

[19] Roger Trinquier's book *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* was translated and published in its English version by Praeger in New York in 1964. But its findings were obviously based on the Second World War and the decolonisation process in which the French had been waging several counterinsurgency wars.

[20] As early as in 1940, the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia prepared strategic plan for a communist revolution with violent means, in the form of a popular uprising. The plan served as the basis for the leadership of the CPY when preparing its resistance plan from May to the beginning of July 1941.

[21] As one of the first measures for strengthening the defence of the Soviet Union, J. V. Stalin issued a call to all communist parties to immediately act against Nazi Germany; given the relationship between the communist parties joined by the Communist International (Comintern), the note could only be interpreted as an order. According to the simultaneous analysis carried out by the German security services, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the French Communist Party were the only ones to respond with actual operations (Ferenc, 2006).

[22] Territory along the borders between Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo.

[23] In this aspect, the initial communist resistance in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia is comparable to modern asymmetric combat of "Islamist extremists", who are also characterized by great decentralization, while the key connecting factor lies in (religious) ideology and fundamental goals and the carrying out of individual actions is in its entirety left to local "cells".

24   The term *chetniks* or *chetnik movement* denotes a developed form of guerrilla warfare against the Turkish state in the Balkans at the end of the 19th century and primarily prior to World War I. Unlike the similar *hajduk* movement, the *chetniks* surpassed the local level and enjoyed clear support of the Serbian state.

25   Serbia also had a collaborating and quisling domestic administration led by General Milan Nedić.

26   In the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Slovenian ethnic territories were classified as belonging to the Drava Banovina administrative unit. The latter had approximately 1,200,000 inhabitants and a territory of 15,500 km². In 1941, approximately 9,500 km² with approximately 800,000 inhabitants were allotted to Germany, 5,000 km² and 300,000 inhabitants were allotted to Italy and the north-eastern part of the territory, covering approximately 1,000 km² and 100,000 inhabitants, was allotted to Hungary (Klanjšček, 1976).

27   Some members of the leadership of the Communist Party of Slovenia voiced their doubts as to whether the Slovenian territory was suited for armed resistance and whether it would be possible to motivate the Slovenian population to participate in an armed resistance, but these doubts did not lead to actions that could be at odds with the commitment to resist.

28   When the political assessment on the damage caused by establishing special revolutionary units prevailed, the title "proletarian" was changed into a type of a decoration for military merits. The designation thus remained in force until the end of the war and was used by the Yugoslav People's Army until 1991.

29   During the occupation, there were 37,000 to 63,000 troops stationed in the Province of Ljubljana: 1 soldier for every 9 inhabitants and as much as 1 soldier for every 6 inhabitants in summer and autumn 1942 (Ferenc, 1986).

30   During the raid in Ljubljana in February 1942, all parts of the city were searched and 1,600 people arrested (Ferenc, 1986).

31   The Italian authorities implemented this measure in summer 1942 in the areas of Draga and Trava, Kočevsko, parts of Notranjska and Gorski Kotar. Whole families were sent to the island of Rab where a new camp was built in the Kampor Bay.

32   In the ambush at Prezid on 19 April 1942, 25 Italian soldiers were killed. At Hrušica on the Ljubljana–Polhov Gradec road on 25 May 1942, a returning motorised column was ambushed; 36 soldiers were killed in the crossfire, including the commanding colonel (Klanjšček, 1977: 238, 285).

33   These instructions resulted in severe aggression against the civilian population in the area around Krim, in Loška dolina and in Kočevsko. 1,120 people killed in the region during the offensive have been identified to date (Ferenc, 1999).

34   The staff of the II Army, which occupied the Yugoslav territory, had established a similar formation in its area of operations (Dalmatia, Lika and Herzegovina) in autumn 1941, incorporating in it the pro-Serbian Chetnik units. The inclusion of local forces was not formally approved by the central government in Rome until some months later.

35   TIGR, abbreviation for Trst (Triest), Istra (Istria), Gorica (Gorizia) and Reka (Rijeka), with the full name Revolutionary Organization of the Julian March T.I.G.R. (Slovene: *Revolucionarna organizacija Julijske krajine T.I.G.R.)* was a militant anti-fascist and insurgent organization, established as response to the brutal Fascist Italianization of the Slovene minority in Italy (1920–1947) on the ex-Austro-Hungarian territories given to Italy in exchange for

joining Great Britain in First World War and is considered to be one of the first anti-fascist resistance movements in Europe (Kacin Wohinz, 1990).

36 In early 1942, the German occupying forces forcibly conferred German citizenship on some 85% of the population within the civil administration area. This was followed by declaring German military law in the area and the enlistment of recruits into the German army (Žnidarič, 2006).

37 There were ten such units in the Štajerska region of the civil administration, four units in Gorenjska and four in Koroška. The area controlled by each district branch office normally corresponded with the political district.

38 The shock of losing 46 police reached all the way to the police headquarters in Berlin and had a considerable political and administrative impact, causing the annexation of the civil administration area to be postponed for an indefinite period.

39 The Wehrmannschaft was a paramilitary organisation composed of the entire male population in the Spodnja Štajerska (Lower Styria) civil administration area and organised under the territorial principle. The most reliable and effective units for counter-guerrilla warfare came from towns with a large share of German population, e.g. Ptuj, Celje and Maribor (Ferenc, 1960: 123; Zorko, 2012).

40 The Operational Zone of the Adriatic Littoral comprised the Italian provinces of Udine, Triest, Gorizia, Pula, Rijeka and Ljubljana.

41 A SHG shock battalion was a military-style unit of some 650 men, divided into three infantry companies and one heavy company. Its striking power was less than that of a German Police Battalion, since the Home Guard possessed fewer automatic and heavy weapons.

42 The chief and founder of the republic's National Protection, Krkovič employed his connections and trusted agents to select a small circle of associates, who then expanded the organisation further at lower hierarchical levels.

43 Here, it is difficult to avoid comparison with the internet, also an expressly decentralised computer network that cannot be eliminated by the shutdown of a single system or server.

44 The police was officially named Militia and had many of the characteristics of a gendarmerie.

45 These Guidelines covered all aspects of non-military defence: national and local authorities' actions for wartime functioning (on the national level this included the Presidency, Assembly, Executive Council of the Assembly of the RS, and the Secretariats of Defence and the Interior; on the local level, actions were prepared by the executive councils of municipal assemblies and municipal defence authorities. Their work was coordinated by 7 coordinators from the State Secretariat for the People's Defence, one for each region. On the national level, the planned actions covered the fields of the electrical grid, telecommunications, railways, information, medical care, and supply. The regional and municipal coordination groups that coordinated the operations of people's defence authorities and TD headquarters were put in charge of actions for providing material and medical supplies for the TD, impeding YPA manoeuvres, disconnection of the YPA water supply, and evacuation of municipal commodity reserves.), economics defence, psychological defence and other non-military forms of defence.

46 These actions are an integral part of political defence.

47 In response to the Serbian invasion into the Yugoslav finance system and the introduction of additional taxes for the Serbian companies that did business with Slovenian companies,

the Slovenian government adopted an independent tax system and took on customs services while accepting the existence of a customs union and the payment of participation fees for the federal budget, which would be sufficient for the functioning of the federal authority and the YPA at the minimum level. The Slovenian government also prepared seriously for financial independence (it is worth noting that the financial invasion was conducted immediately after the plebiscite on the sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Slovenia) (Malešič, 1998: 211).

48 The Ministry of Transport and Communications released a special statement to win over the flight control personnel (Malešič, 1998).

49 The Track I, II and III plans were developed for blocking railway communications (Nered–Frankovič, 2001).

50 This type of actions had another, even more important effect when it came of psychological warfare. Not only did they raise awareness of and garner support for the resistance, but they also served to show to the world who the attacker was and who the attacked. On the opposing side, the will to fight decreased considerably, with younger YPA conscripts unwilling to attack civilians and civilian targets, something that – despite being used for military purposes – the civilian trucks and other machinery in the barricades undoubtedly stood for.

51 These actions were focused on more intensively after the events of 23 May 1991 in Pekre, which saw the YPA openly acting against the TD units and the newly introduced role of the TD in training conscripts. After the YPA kidnapped the Commander of the East Štajerska TD, Miloševič, retaliatory measures included blocking barracks as well as interference with the YPA's dedicated industry: the Maribor company TAM that built armoured fighting vehicles (AFV). Several of the AFVs that were close to completion were removed by members of the TD and police and transported to various secret locations.

52 This came through particularly at the daily press conferences that were given by the State Secretary of Information, Jelko Kacin, and included Slovenia's highest officials. Together they conducted a highly effective media counterpropaganda campaign aimed at the national and international public alike.

53 For disconnecting the YPA's power supply, Elektro Slovenije developed the Disconnection I, II and III plans. Stage I comprised the preparations for disconnection, stage II would see a selective disconnection of the YPA's most vital facilities, and stage III was intended to disconnect the YPA infrastructure in its entirety. Similar plans were devised for limiting the use of the railway (Track I, II and III) and telecommunications infrastructure.

54 Human intelligence.

55 The role of Charles Wilson, Member of the US House of Representatives, must be mentioned here. Wilson talked the Congress into supporting Operation Cyclone, the largest CIA covert operation, which supported the Afghan *mujahideen* in their fight against the Soviet forces (Crile, 2003).

56 The UK was also involved in the operation, offering support for the air forces and submarines at the military base on the island of Diego Garcia. B-52s and B1B Lancers were able to take off from the base and were also used for air to air refuelling of allied planes. To support the operation, a TriStar and a VC10 tanker were brought in from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire. The air forces included Airborne Early Warning (AEW) E3-D Sentry, Nimrod

R1 and Canberra PR9 aircraft. The British named the campaign Operation Veritas (Operation Enduring Freedom and the Conflict in Afghanistan, 2001: 26–27).

57 Online: http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,724153,00.html.

58 A lot of indignation was caused by The Afghan War documents leak (also called the Afghan War Diary or The War Logs) published by the newspaper *Der Spiegel* in Germany, referring to activities of the Special Task Force 373 that consists of members of the special navy units Seals and members of Delta. It is directly subordinated to Pentagon, meaning it is not a part of NATO. The main task of the unit is to capture or liquidate insurgent leaders or the most influential "terrorists". The indignation was caused mainly by the fact that the unit operates within the sector where ISAF Operation takes place, which is another proof of the *multi-tier solution of the Afghan conflict* (http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,708921,00. html).

59 The respondents could choose from following answers "yes", "no" or "do not know".

60 Some operations, like the first few rotations of Slovenian contingents in ISAF, Afghanistan, were without national caveats.

61 Likert's ordinal scale was used, with the level of agreement measured from 1 to 5. 1 was used for expressing the level of complete disagreement and 5 for complete agreement.

62 The Srebrenica massacre showed how the symbolic power of any organization cannot be something to rely on. Instead of the UN stepping up and protecting local people, the safety of the Blue Helmets was a priority (Van der Meulen–Soeters, 2005). As a result, the question how the situation could have played out continues to be raised years after the fact.

63 For one interviewee, the data about rank is missing.

64 Only exception until 2012 was deployment to KFOR, Kosovo in 2007, when for the first time in our history a whole battalion of SAF was deployed.

65 This "hiding from the public" has been overcome in some other countries, e. g. Norway (see for example Thoresen–Mehlum, 2004).

66 However, although only a small number of the interviewees talked about it, it does not mean that this problem is not an important one. Again, we encounter the problem that many of the interviewees probably did not want to reveal facts about personal life to "a stranger" (interviewer).

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This book is a part of a project of the Institute of International Relations, which, ever since 2007, aims to provide deep and thorough analyses of the Czech foreign policy. Every year the team of authors works with a single unifying framework for the analysis in order to publish a comprehensive, coherent and multiperspective book that provides an insight into the Czech foreign policy. This framework of analysis consists of a focus on the political and conceptual background of the Czech foreign policy, and on the main agenda and the main actors carrying out this agenda, and it also looks into the media and public context of the foreign policy. Because of the longevity of our research, the team can work with an unprecedented amount of data, as each year s foreign policy analysis can utilize findings from previous analyses. The year 2013 was marked by a fragile and turbulent political context, the first-ever direct presidential elections of the Czech Republic, and early parliamentary elections. This book brings an insight into how this political milieu helped to shape the Czech foreign policy during that year, and identifies its most important goals, ambitions, limits, successes and failures.

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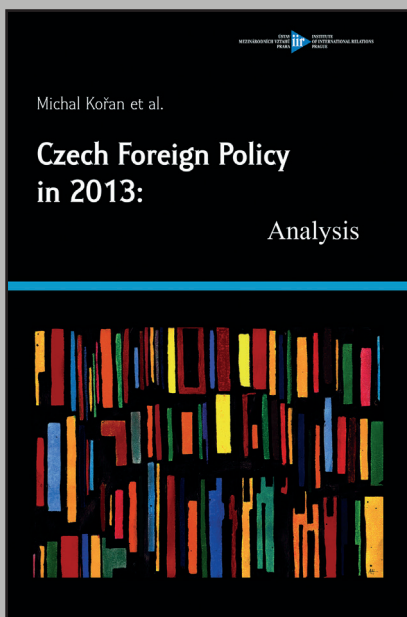
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