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1. Security Policy: the CIS Defence Ministerial Council Meeting

14.04.10. A meeting of the CIS Defence Ministerial Council is to be held in Moscow.

Comment: Delegations from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine will consider over 20 issues in various areas of cooperation between military agencies of the CIS states.

The plans also include approval of the Prospective Plan of Defence Ministries' Joint Military Memorial Activities till 2015. Defence ministers will also consider establishment and improvement of shared systems for military purpose: the participants will decide upon priority areas of military-technical cooperation for establishment of a single communications and automation system for the CIS armed forces. They will also evaluate the current state and identify development perspectives for the integrated state radar identification system "Parol".

The CIS Defence Ministerial Council was established on 14 February 1992 by the decision of CIS Heads of State Council. On 6 June 2001, Ukraine was admitted to the Defence Ministerial Council as an observer.

2. Military Policy: Approval of Multinational Exercises Plans

08.04.10. The President of Ukraine signed Decree № 523/2010 of 08.04.10 "Provision of Direction by the President of Ukraine in the National Security and Defence Areas".

Comment: In compliance with the Decree, the Defence Ministry must annually, by the 30th of January, submit a Plan of multinational exercises in Ukraine involving UAF units and their participation in multinational exercises outside Ukraine in the current year to the President of Ukraine for his approval. In addition, the Defence Ministry must obtain the President's endorsement for terms of dispatch and return of UAF personnel, their number, amount and composition of weapons and equipment used in activities provided for by the approved Plan as well as other activities outside Ukraine according to international military cooperation arrangements (agreements). In such cases, the President's endorsement must be obtained no later than 10 days prior to departure.

According to the approved Plan of multinational exercises in Ukraine involving UAF units and their participation in multinational exercises outside Ukraine in 2010 (President's Decree №253/2010 of 24.02.10) 21 multinational exercises are to be conducted – 9 of them in Ukraine and 12 outside Ukraine.

3. Manning of the Ukrainian Armed Forces: Spring Conscription 2010

07.04.10. A briefing was held in the Central Officers' Mess. The topic of the briefing was peculiarities of organization and conduct of the conscription campaign "Spring 2010". The event was attended by Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Volodymyr Artukh.

Comment: In the course of the briefing V.Artukh noted that the quality of the draftee resources deteriorated gradually with each subsequent conscription. Over 1,3 million are registered at Military registration and enlistment offices. There were only 1,2 conscripts though to fill each slot in the forces (5-8 conscripts in the eastern regions due to bigger population density). 378 000 draftees are to be called up by conscription commissions, however only slightly over 30 000 (that is, only 8%) meet the requirements that allow them to be sent to the troops for conscription service. For comparison, in the Spring of 2007, the number of eligible conscripts amounted to 46 840.

According to the results of the public survey "Identification of Priorities Impelling to Opt for Military Contract Service" taken by the DSPC in 2009, the large majority of those polled (among potential conscripts) take positive attitude towards military service, regarding it as "the University of Life" (44,64%) and an opportunity to be tempered both physically and mentally (43,94%). The number of those seeking to shirk military service by hook or by crook amounts to 13,33%.

4. Peacekeeping: Preparation for the 13th Rotation of the 56th Separate Helicopter Detachment

06.04.10. Collective training and integration of the 13th rotation of the 56th Separate Helicopter Detachment (operating as part of the UN Mission in Liberia) began at the 3rd Separate Air Aviation Regiment (8th Army Corps) in the Lviv Region.

Comment: The purpose of the training is to prepare personnel for performance of operational tasks as part of the UN peacekeeping mission; for pilots and engineers to hone their equipment-handling skills; conduct collective training for the detachment and prepare it for transportation and deployment in the mission area. Collective training implies air tactical exercise for Mi-8 and Mi-24 crews to provide search and rescue support as well as combat engagement and fire training.

The next – 13th – rotation of the 275 servicemen of the 56th separate helicopter detachment operating as part of the UNMIL is scheduled for June.

5. Peacekeeping: Increasing the Contingent in Afghanistan

Ukraine is ready to dispatch another 7 military specialist to Afghanistan. This statement was made on 8 April 2010 by the Chief of the General Staff – Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, General of the Army Ivan Syda at his meeting with the Director of the NATO International Military Staff, Lieutenant-General Joe Godderij.

Comment: To reinforce the ISAF, the Ukrainian Armed Forces are ready to dispatch 4 EOD experts in May and 3 more mine clearing experts in November. Ukraine and Poland are currently working on a Draft Technical Agreement on assigning 3 Ukrainian military medics to the Polish Provincial Reconstruction Team operating in the Ghazni Province as part of the ISAF.

As of today, 10 Ukrainian officers operate in Afghanistan as spokesman and assistant to the Lithuanian Contingent Commander, desk officers at the CIMIC cell of the MNHQ, doctors at the medical cell of the Ghor PRT, officers at the logistics team of the Lithuanian Contingent and an officer at the ISAF HQ.

6. Multinational Exercises: Participation in BLACKSEAFOR

07.04.10. The Ukrainian Naval ship "Slavutych" left Sevastopol for participation in the 14th April activation of the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group BLACKSEAFOR.

Comment: In the course of this year's April activation of the BLACKSEAFOR, the Bulgarian frigate "Verni", the Russian large amphibious landing ship "Caesar Kunikov", the Romanian corvette "Macelariu", the Turkish frigate "Yildirim" and the Ukrainian ship "Slavutych" will call at the Turkish port of Eregli, the Bulgarian port of Varna and the Romanian port of Constanta.

The Ukrainian Navy have been taking active part in BLACKSEAFOR activities SINCE 2001. The following Ukrainian vessels were sequentially assigned to participate in the BLACKSEAFOR activities: the ship "Cherkasy" in 2001, the ship "Slavutych" in 2002, the corvette "Vinnitsa" in 2003, the medium amphibious landing ship "Kirovograd" in 2004, the ship "Slavutych" and the rescue tugboat "Kremenets" in 2005, the ship "Slavutych" in 2006, the ship "Slavutych" in 2007, the corvette "Temopyl" and the ship "Slavutych" in 2008, the ship "Slavutych" in 2009.

7. Multinational Exercises: Preparation for the Command-Post Exercise "Blonde Avalanche 2010"

06.04.10. The Initial Planning Conference of the Ukrainian-Romanian-Slovak-Hungarian command-post exercise with troops "Blonde Avalanche 2010" began in the town of Vynogradiv (Transcarpathian region).

Comment: The conference was attended by armed forces representatives from the founding states of the multinational engineer battalion "Tysa", namely Ukraine, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. In the course of the conference, participants developed training and methodology documentation for the CPX, discussed support to the manoeuvres, and drafted the Technical Agreement on the conduct of "Blonde Avalanche 2010". According to plans, the Joint Command-Post Exercise "Blonde Avalanche 2010" of the multinational engineer battalion "Tysa" will be conducted in Ukraine this year.

The unit "Tysa" was formed in December 1998 for military forces of adjacent states to provide rapid response to flood threats and disaster relief in the Carpathian region. In October 2003 the first disaster relief CPX "Blonde Avalanche 2003" was conducted in Hungary. In 2004, this exercise was conducted in Romania, in 2005 – in Slovakia, in 2006 – in Ukraine, in 2007 – in Hungary, in 2008 – in Romania, in 2009 – in Slovakia. See Annex to IAR DN 14/2010 for detailed information on the battalion structure.

8. International Cooperation: Enhanced Cooperation between Ukraine and the US

06.04.10. A delegation of the US Air Force in Europe visited the Ukrainian Air Force Command in Vinnitsa.

Comment: The aim of the visit was to familiarize representatives of the Ukrainian Air Force Command and the 456th Air Transport Brigade with US and NATO standards for support to expeditionary operations; increase interoperability between the UAF and NATO forces as well as improve air space control in terms of exchange of information on the situation in the air.

The issues discussed in the course of the meeting included rapid reaction task force, deployment of forces, deployment orders, reconnaissance and advance teams, working out of paperwork, reports and accounts on deployment and redeployment of forces.

9. Ukraine-NATO: Visit of the Director of the NATO International Military Staff

07.04.10. A NATO delegation headed by the Director of the NATO International Military Staff, Lieutenant-General Joe Godderij arrived in Ukraine.

Comment: In the course of negotiations between the delegation of the NATO International Military Staff and the Ukrainian delegation, headed by the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Vice-Admiral I. Kabanenko, the participants exchanged views on key aspects and future prospects of military cooperation between Ukraine and NATO and considered ways to improve cooperation and increase operational capabilities of the UAF. They also discussed preparation for the next meeting of the Military Committee Ukraine-NATO attended by Chiefs of General Staff that will take place in the NATO HQ in Brussels in May. Besides, the NATO delegation expressed their hope that Ukraine will consider in the positive light the possibility of its participation in the Alliance's counter piracy operation "Ocean Shield".

10. The Ukrainian Armed Forces and Society: Preparation for Celebration of the 65th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War

08.04.10. The Ukrainian Defence Ministry needs additional 3,2 million UAH to ensure participation of military ships in the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. This statement was made by the Defence Minister Mykhailo Yezhel at the meeting at the Presidential Administration.

Comment: According to plans, 9 ships of the Ukrainian Fleet and 5 ships of the Russian Black Sea Fleet will take part in the celebrations and military parades. The Russian ships are expected to arrive on the 4th of May.

6 108 servicemen will be involved in the parades, all told, including 69 Russian servicemen taking part in the parade in Kiev, 746 Russian servicemen in Sevastopol, 75 Russian servicemen in Kerch, 75 Russian marines in Odessa and 75 Russian servicemen in Mykolaiv.

It should also be noted that admission of foreign military units in Ukraine requires a certain procedure established by the legislation in force. The established sequence of steps is as follows: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Defence Ministry submit their joint proposition for consideration by the National Security and Defence Council; if the Council takes a positive decision, it must be implemented in a Presidential Decree which, in its turn, must be approved by the Supreme Council.

