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07.06.2024

Weekly Analysis of Serbia's Actions in Relation to Kosovo



ISSN Online: 3006-5925

ISSN Print: 3006-5917

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Institute for Studying Hybrid Warfare "Octopus" has prepared a weekly summary of Serbia's actions that threaten Kosovo and the Western Balkans region. This report does not include the latest incidents concerning the arrest of BIA spies in northern Kosovo and Ferizaj, but the Octopus Institute is preparing separate reports on these and other topics.

1. Serbian Army Continues Military Mobilization

The Serbian army conducted significant training with members of the fighter-bomber squadron from the 98th aviation brigade at the "Morava" military airport near Kraljevo, using the "Orao" attack aircraft. The training focused on providing air support to ground and Special Forces in combat operations.

2. The air force continues to be equipped with weapons

Serbian Defense Minister Bratislav Gašić visited the air defense command in Zemun. He stated that the air forces are a key part of Serbia's defense system. "With the procurement of FK-3 and Pantsir anti-aircraft missile systems, Mi-35 and H-145 helicopters, long-range GM-400 radars, and remotely piloted aircraft, the combat readiness of the Air and Air Defense Forces has been significantly strengthened. The state leadership and the Ministry of Defense will continue to support further equipping with modern tools to meet all challenges related to the control and protection of our airspace. Our country is developing, becoming economically stronger, and we can allocate more funds for our defense. It is crucial that our Air Force strengthens with new aircraft, as only a strong Air Force and powerful Armed Forces of Serbia can guarantee peace and security for all of us," said Minister Gašić. He emphasized that one of the priorities in the coming

period will be to take care of people and further improve the material position of members of the Serbian Armed Forces.

3. Continued Recruitment of “Volunteers” in the Serbian Army

Training of "volunteer" soldiers in Serbia continues, with their training lasting for three months. For one and a half months, they will be trained in the use of light personal weapons, performing combat actions and procedures, as well as guard duties, while simultaneously improving their physical abilities. After that, they will undergo specialized individual training to be able to join the Serbian Armed Forces unit for collective training and daily duties with professional staff.

4. Hungary Arms Serbia

Hungary has donated 50 BTR-80A armored personnel carriers to Serbia, transported to the barracks in Pančevo. The 8X8 armored vehicles are armed with Soviet/Russian 2A72 automatic cannons of 30mm caliber (KBP Tula). It is expected that 30 more vehicles will be repaired by the end of this year, after which they will join the armored reconnaissance battalion based in Niš (BRDM-2MS armored reconnaissance fighting vehicles). Following this, a modern equipment package is planned to enhance their capabilities to an even higher level by installing a fire control system (SUV), a command and information system, plus an increase in the level of armor protection. It should be noted that 16 more vehicles of this type are expected to be delivered next month, increasing the total number to 66 units (more than 2 full battalions), with a certain number used for spare parts. If initial assessments are realized, which state that a group of 50+16 BTR-80A (part of which will be used for maintenance) will join the armored reconnaissance battalion in Niš, a change in its formation can be expected, where this battalion would be transformed into a motorized brigade, as it already has around 30 BRDM-2MS vehicles. The tank battalion with OBT T-72MS should not be forgotten.

5. Republica Srpska Expected to Hold Referendum for Independence

Milorad Dodik, president of Republica Srpska, has announced that there will be a referendum for the separation of this part from Bosnia and Herzegovina, but he said there is no set date yet.

6. Grand Serbian Assembly to Be Held Tomorrow

On 08.06.2024 (tomorrow), the all-Serbian Assembly is expected to be held, where the Serbian government and President Vučić will meet with the government of Milorad Dodik. This Assembly is being held now as it was postponed from 06.04.2024 to be held after the vote on the resolution for the genocide in Srebrenica. This meeting was initially announced as an Assembly where the Serbian Church would also be part, but the itinerary has now been presented slightly differently. However, the entire ceremony will start after the meeting with church representatives and prayers. Here, the "Serbian World" strategy is expected to take official form, even if not publicly.

7. Vulin Openly Reveals Serbia's Intentions

Aleksandar Vulin, who holds the position of Deputy Prime Minister in Serbia, recently revealed all of Serbia's intentions for the "Serbian World" in an interview. He speaks about the supposed impositions made on Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and for Kosovo by the Westerners, expressing their intentions to liberate the region from these Western impositions. From this interview, Serbia's clear intentions for Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Republica Srpska are seen, as he declares and indirectly expresses Serbia's goals for all of them.

8. Conclusions:

Continuous visits by Gašić to barracks, his statements, exercises, mobilizations, and continuous recruitments in the Serbian army at all levels. Cooperation in the field of armament with Hungary, open statements by Vulin and Dodik, and holding the grand Serbian Assembly are clear factors of Serbia's open preparation for war. These preparations are not for defensive purposes but offensive, and at the moment of giving space in a hybrid form or changing geopolitical circumstances, they will counteract.

These forms of Serbia's actions also have political and diplomatic goals:

- The internal political goal is to keep the people always mobilized, in fear, and ready to obey.
- In the diplomatic aspect, to instill fear in the international community and regional countries to allow Serbia to achieve its goals more easily and not impose sanctions or decisions with which it disagrees.