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ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION AND TRENDS OF ITS DEVELOPMENT IN THE DE-OCCUPIED SECTIONS OF THE STATE BORDER

Using the scenario forecasting method in combination with the system analysis method, the state and trends in the development of the situation within the de-occupied area of responsibility of a border detachment were examined.

The authors proposed possible scenarios for the development of the situation and provided their characteristics. These include: "Continuation of the active phase of hostilities"; "Ceasefire for an indefinite period"; "Stabilization of the situation – 'frozen conflict'."

Threats within the framework of border security were summarized, the presence of which indicates a tendency toward escalation of the situation and its relevance in the future.

The necessity for constant monitoring of the situation and systematic analysis of its development trends by the bodies and units of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine was outlined.

Keywords: analysis, forecast, state border, de-occupied territory, situation, border security, operational and service activities, border detachment, scenario.

Statement of the problem. Under the complex and dynamic security situation on the de-occupied section of the state border of Ukraine with the Russian Federation, the effectiveness of implementing stabilization measures to restore control over the state border depends on changes in the situation and trends in its development.

After the liberation of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, the bodies and units of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (hereinafter – SBGSU) will face the fact that threats to border security will acquire a complex and hybrid nature due to the multifactorial influence of military, informational, criminal, and other factors. On the state border of Ukraine, there remain risks of its illegal crossing and armed provocations.

Based on the results of analyzing the tasks performed by border detachments and units of the SBGSU in guarding and protecting the state border, it has been established that the imperfection of a systemic approach to analyzing the situation in de-occupied border territories complicates the managerial decision-making process for prompt response to offenders' actions.

In addition, it has been determined that without a clear understanding of trends in the development of the situation, it is impossible to form an effective system of preventive measures, adaptive management, and crisis forecasting.

Thus, the need to analyze the situation on the de-occupied section of the state border of Ukraine with the Russian Federation is not only a relevant issue for ensuring the protection and defense of the state border under current conditions, but also serves as a tool for forecasting the future security environment of Ukraine.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Research on problematic issues related to assessing the situation, forecasting its development, and organizing and conducting operational and service activities (hereinafter – OSA) by the bodies of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (SBGSU), including in de-occupied territories, has been carried out by such scholars as V. S. Nikiforenko, A. V. Vikhiuk, A. V. Bratko, B. M. Oleksiienko, V. V. Veretelnyk, V. A. Kyrylenko, D. A. Kupriienko, and others.

In their scientific works [1–4], these researchers examined issues of national security threats, particularly in the field of state border protection and defense. They developed recommendations for SBGSU command bodies concerning the organization of monitoring developments and situations at the state border, as well as

for improving the readiness of management systems to respond to changes in the socio-political situation both in Ukraine and in neighboring states.

In the article [5], the necessity for continuous analysis of the state border security situation and the implementation of effective measures to ensure it was substantiated.

In their research [6], A. Mysyk, A. Fedorchuk, and S. Mushynskyi developed a methodology for assessing the level of state border security, which makes it possible to determine a numerical value of the security indicator reflecting the degree of correspondence to existing threats.

In the scientific article [7], I. Manyakov and V. Mazur substantiated the importance of unified approaches to the assessment and forecasting of the situation in order to determine possible scenarios for further actions of border detachment units, particularly in de-occupied sections of the state border.

The authors of works [8, 9] analyzed the conditions and peculiarities of involving border commandant's offices in performing tasks related to restoring control over the state border of Ukraine, and developed recommendations for border detachments to enhance their resilience to terrorist threats and to improve the system for their detection.

Based on the generalization of the content of the scientific works of the mentioned and other scholars on the analysis of the situation at the state border of Ukraine, it has been established that these works only fragmentarily reveal issues related to the assessment of the situation in de-occupied border areas, which does not allow for a comprehensive determination of the trends in its development. Therefore, this substantiates the relevance of the chosen topic of the scientific article.

The purpose of the article is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the situation on the de-occupied section of the state border of Ukraine with the Russian Federation and to determine the trends in its development.

Summary of the main material. Modern global development trends indicate an escalation of competition and global security challenges. Rivalry among leading states for the redistribution of spheres of influence has intensified, accompanied by an increasing threat of using force to resolve existing disputes. This is particularly evident in the case of the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

The main trends influencing the military-political situation in the region surrounding Ukraine (regional aspect) include:

- the promotion of the Russian Federation's ideology of forming a multipolar world order, which views the neighboring regions within the CIS space as zones of its exclusive geopolitical influence and seeks to consolidate its dominance within the so-called Eurasian space. Over the years of war, Russia has failed to fully realize its military-political ambitions regarding Ukraine or deprive it of independence. As a result, Russia has entrenched itself in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, gradually carrying out offensive and defensive actions to force Ukraine to end the war on Russia's own terms;

- the continued involvement of the Republic of Belarus in Russia's military-political orbit, particularly through the militarization of the border with Ukraine, which creates a constant threat to Ukraine and diverts its defense forces from the eastern and southern fronts;

- periodic tensions on the state border of Ukraine with the Republic of Poland, linked to economic aspects of bilateral relations;

- the policy of open political confrontation pursued by Hungary and Slovakia, which undermines Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations;

- the intensification of Russia's subversive and intelligence activities in the Republic of Moldova, particularly its attempts to influence internal political processes.

In the national context, the main threats remain:

- ongoing hostilities in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine;
- systematic missile strikes across the entire territory of the state;
- the threat of invasion by military formations from the Republic of Belarus;
- attempts by Russian armed forces' sabotage and reconnaissance groups to infiltrate Ukrainian territory in border areas of Chernihiv, Sumy, and Kharkiv regions, as well as the continued occupation of parts of Sumy and Kharkiv regions by Russian troops;
- the growing level of organized crime related to illegal human trafficking (particularly of military-age men) and the smuggling of narcotic and psychotropic substances across the borders with EU countries, Moldova, and Belarus;
- illegal movement of goods, especially excisable products, across the state border with EU countries.

At the maritime section of the state border of Ukraine, the main threats include:

- attempts to blockade and disrupt shipping in the Black Sea;
- systematic missile attacks on Ukraine's port infrastructure;
- the threat of sabotage and intelligence operations.

Among internal risks, the following should be noted: a low standard of living and significant social stratification; the entrenchment of radical social attitudes; inconsistency and incompleteness of economic and social reforms; slow development of market relations in key sectors of the economy; corruption; declining protection of the country's information space and national information resources from unauthorized access; internal migration and displacement caused by Russia's full-scale aggression; illegal circulation of large quantities of firearms, ammunition, and explosives; deterioration of industrial and infrastructure facilities, particularly critical infrastructure; irrational use of natural resources, water basins, and agricultural lands; deforestation and ineffective waste management systems; low public trust in state authorities; poor awareness of the population about the nature of threats and crisis response procedures; and weak coordination between ministries, government agencies, local authorities, and the population.

Overall, the above aspects of security environment formation and development directly or indirectly affect the dynamics of the situation within the areas of responsibility of SBGSU bodies and units in de-occupied border territories.

The results of the situation analysis in de-occupied areas of responsibility of border detachments during 2024 and the first half of 2025 identify key development trends and reflect the nature of current threats (in the context of warfare), namely:

- continued activity of Russian armed forces in border areas with Ukraine and efforts to retain control over temporarily occupied territories of Sumy and Kharkiv regions;
- the persistent threat of enemy invasion into Ukraine to seize regional centers such as Kharkiv, Sumy, and Chernihiv, including from the territory of the Republic of Belarus;
- active intelligence, subversive, and sabotage operations;
- shelling of border settlements, military, and economic infrastructure from Russian territory;
- the use of electronic warfare, electronic intelligence, and unmanned aerial vehicles, including strike drones.

According to the analysis of law enforcement activity of border detachments, operations were conducted to seize narcotic and psychotropic substances, ammunition, and bring offenders to administrative responsibility.

The above aspects of situation development within the areas of responsibility of border detachments have defined the variability of actions and response methods to the current spectrum of threats.

Therefore, it can be concluded that depending on geopolitical tendencies, the military-political situation will continue to evolve. However, it is possible to forecast its development in Ukraine's border regions with the Russian Federation according to the following scenario options:

- the first scenario: "Continuation of the active phase of hostilities";
- the second scenario: "Ceasefire for an indefinite period";
- the third scenario: "Stabilization of the situation – 'frozen conflict'."

The authors examine these scenarios in more detail. Thus, under the first scenario — the continuation of the active phase of hostilities — the situation on Ukraine's border with the Republic of Belarus will, in the authors' opinion, not undergo significant changes compared to the present realities. The worst-case development would be the full involvement of the Republic of Belarus in Russia's military confrontation with Ukraine, creating preconditions for border armed incidents (provocations, clashes) between Belarusian forces supported by Russian formations and Ukrainian defense units.

Alongside these threats, others will remain relevant: active intelligence and subversive activity combined with missile attacks and the use of unmanned aerial systems; information and psychological operations; attempts to destabilize the socio-political situation in border regions with the active involvement of Russian special services. The enemy will also continue efforts to exhaust Ukraine's mobilization resources by facilitating illegal crossings of the state border by military-age citizens.

The second scenario – "Ceasefire for an indefinite period".

This scenario may result from increased pressure from the United States and the "coalition of willing" countries on Russia, compelling it to make military-political concessions and partially or completely halt hostilities.

According to the authors, a ceasefire could represent a transitional stage toward partial stabilization of the situation in Ukraine. However, Russia's strategy of prolonging negotiations and maintaining hybrid pressure on Ukraine will persist. Russia's strategic objectives in this phase may include: drawing the United States, coalition partners, and Ukraine into a protracted negotiation process while rebuilding its military capabilities; avoiding further sanctions; seeking ways to circumvent existing and anticipated restrictions; and increasing pressure on Ukraine to conduct new elections. This condition may become a decisive prerequisite for Russia to initiate the ceasefire process.

In this scenario, despite the difficulties along the line of contact, provocations from Russia in the areas of responsibility of the Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv, and partially Zhytomyr border detachments cannot be ruled out.

Thus, the most relevant threats may include:

- intensification of intelligence and subversive activities in border regions to destabilize the socio-political situation through intimidation, dissemination of provocative information (including against state and local authorities and security institutions), involvement of local populations in illegal border activities, and intelligence gathering regarding security and defense forces;
- terrorist acts in border regions against Ukrainian citizens and officials, sabotage of critical infrastructure, and abductions or hostage-taking;
- provocations (armed or unarmed) for which Russia will attempt to blame Ukraine;
- alleged shelling of border areas attributed to Ukrainian forces;
- intensified aerial reconnaissance from Russia and Belarus, and increased drone activity over Ukrainian territory;
- demonstrative military maneuvers near the state border, hidden troop regrouping, and covert surveillance;
- creation of strike groups along potential offensive directions.

The implementation of these threats would likely aim to disrupt the truce and resume hostilities, with Russia attempting to shift the blame onto Ukraine.

The third scenario – "Stabilization of the situation (transition period from war to peace) – "frozen conflict".

This scenario may become relevant only with positive developments in international negotiations and Russia's temporary refusal to pursue aggressive policies. However, the threat of renewed hostilities will remain, as evidenced by Russia's Chechen campaigns in the 1990s.

Based on the analysis of these scenarios and development trends, under the worst-case conditions (covert Russian preparations for renewed aggression), the projected threats to border security in de-occupied areas of the state border may include:

- intelligence and subversive activities in border regions of Ukraine aimed at forming agent networks (including within SBGSU personnel), uncovering defensive systems, assessing socio-economic and infrastructure conditions, and influencing political and electoral processes;
- increased militarization around Ukraine through the buildup of Russian and Belarusian military presence in their border regions;
- organization of illegal migration flows and smuggling operations;
- staging of anti-government protests and demonstrations by local populations in Ukrainian border areas orchestrated by Russian special services;
- aerial reconnaissance, covert observation, and military exercises near the state border.

Thus, based on the conducted analysis and forecast of the situation in de-occupied sections of the state border, it can be stated that the impact of existing challenges and threats to border security within the security environment has not diminished. This justifies the need for continuous monitoring of the situation, identification of development trends in the liberated sections of the state border and adjacent border regions of Ukraine, to ensure their reliable protection and strengthen border security by SBGSU bodies and units.

Conclusions

Thus, based on the results of the analysis of the situation in the de-occupied sections of the state border, scenario options for its development have been formulated and characterized. These include: "Continuation of the active phase of hostilities"; "Ceasefire for an indefinite period"; "Stabilization of the situation – "frozen conflict".

A number of threats to border security have been summarized, the presence and nature of which indicate a trend toward the escalation of the situation, which remains relevant for the future.

The necessity for continuous monitoring of the situation and systematic analysis of its development trends by the bodies and units of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine has been outlined.

In the future, during the process of dissertation writing, the research will focus on developing a system of indicators and criteria for assessing the quality of organizing the performance of operational and service tasks by a border detachment in the de-occupied territories of Ukraine.

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АНАЛІЗ ОБСТАНОВКИ ТА ТЕНДЕНЦІЙ ЇЇ РОЗВИТКУ НА ДЕОКУПОВАНИХ ДІЛЯНКАХ ДЕРЖАВНОГО КОРДОНУ

У науковій статті здійснено комплексний аналіз обстановки на деокупованих ділянках державного кордону України з російською федерацією та визначено ключові тенденції її розвитку. Встановлено, що сучасні загрози прикордонній безпеці мають комплексний і гібридний характер і формуються під впливом військових, інформаційних, кримінальних та соціально-економічних факторів. Проаналізовано результати діяльності підрозділів Державної прикордонної служби України щодо охорони та захисту державного кордону. Це дозволило визначити недосконалість системного підходу до оцінки обстановки, яка ускладнює прийняття оперативних і стратегічних рішень, формування превентивних заходів та прогнозування кризових ситуацій.

Обґрунтовано три основні сценарні варіанти розвитку обстановки: продовження активної фази бойових дій, припинення вогню на невизначений час та стабілізація обстановки із «замороженням конфлікту». Для кожного сценарію визначено прогнозовані загрози прикордонній безпеці, серед яких: активізація розвідувально-підтримкої діяльності, формування агентурних мереж противника, мілітаризація прикордонних регіонів російською федерацією та Республікою Білорусь, організація незаконних міграційних потоків і контрабандної діяльності, проведення повітряної розвідки, прихованого спостереження та демонстративних військових маневрів. Окремо висвітлено загрози інформаційного та інформаційно-психологічного впливу, спрямовані на дестабілізацію соціально-політичної ситуації у прикордонних регіонах, а також можливість відновлення воєнного протистояння за сприятливих для противника умов.

Визначено, що вплив наявних викликів і загроз на безпекове середовище деокупованих ділянок державного кордону залишається значним. Це факт обґрунтовує необхідність постійного моніторингу обстановки, системного аналізу тенденцій її розвитку та прогнозування можливих кризових ситуацій для забезпечення надійної охорони державного кордону та прикордонної безпеки органами і підрозділами Державної прикордонної служби України.

Ключові слова: аналіз, прогноз, державний кордон, деокупована територія, обстановка, прикордонна безпека, оперативно-службова діяльність, прикордонний загін, сценарій.

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