



Soviet special military units decontaminate trees near the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine. The plant's reactor exploded in April 1986, destroying the reactor core and setting off one of the biggest man-made disasters of the 20th century.

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# CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS DURING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## Collaborated response minimizes the impact

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**O**n April 26, 1986, at 1:23 a.m., an accident occurred at unit #4 of Ukraine's Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant during a routine shutdown for repairs after two years of operation. The reactor exploded, destroying the reactor core. This was one of the biggest disasters of the 20th century, and hundreds of thousands of people suffered as a result; 100,202 people were evacuated from the disaster area. The cleanup following the catastrophe continues to this day.

Throughout the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries, the world has seen a series of both natural and man-made disasters and emergencies.

- June 1997 and November 1999: Massive flooding in Europe, with loss of human life and major material damage.
- June 1998: A cyclone in India claimed more than 10,000 lives.
- June 1998: Catastrophic flooding of China's Yangtze River killed 3,000 and caused an estimated \$30 billion in damage.
- Dec. 26, 2003: A magnitude 6.35 earthquake struck Bam, Iran, killing around 40,000 people and injuring another 30,000.
- April 22, 2004: Two goods trains carrying liquid fuel and gas collided in Ryongchon, North Korea, and the resultant explosion destroyed a nearby passenger train, the station itself and the surrounding village, killing 157 and wounding more than 1,300.
- Dec. 26, 2004: An earthquake struck Southeast Asia, killing more than 230,000 people, while hundreds of thousands went missing and millions were left homeless.
- August 27, 2005: Hurricane Katrina destroyed thousands of buildings and homes, killed an estimated 790 people, injured hundreds of thousands, caused massive flooding, and forced the

evacuation of more than 500,000 residents from New Orleans.

- August 2009: An accident at Russia's Sayano-Shushenskaya power station caused the deaths of 75 people and the partial destruction of the station, with damage running into the billions.
- There is also a new factor causing disasters — international terrorism. These horrific acts of terror are but a few examples of events that required significant emergency management:
- Sept. 11, 2001: Terrorist attacks in the United States killed more than 2,800 people.
- March 11, 2004: Terrorist attack in Madrid, Spain, killed 200 people and injured more than 1,500.
- Sept. 1-3, 2004: Terrorist attack in Beslan, North Ossetia, Russia, where more than 1,200 children and adults were held hostage, killed 331 people, including 186 children; more than 500 people were injured.

The probability of disasters and emergencies is greatly increased by phenomena such as rapid technical progress, industrial development, a swelling planetary population, discontent, ethnic conflicts, ultranationalism and intrastate feuding, the world financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009, and acts of terrorism. This article proposes a review of the approaches to civil-military relations in the management of disasters and emergencies.

National disasters and emergencies

Civil-military relations are of great importance in the management of disasters and emergencies. State legislation often provides for a variety of approaches to engage the armed forces and other militarized units in emergency management. National disasters, those that occur within the borders of a state, and other emergencies pose a number of problematic issues for a nation's government in organizing a response and cleanup, such as:



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- Is it necessary to engage the armed forces in a rescue operation?
- Which specific armed forces units should be engaged, and in what numbers?
- What tasks should they be given?
- Who will be in command of these armed forces units, and to whom will they report during the rescue operation?
- Who will organize measures for the material and technical support of troops, and how?
- What social guarantees will be provided by the state for those participating in a rescue (or reconstruction) operation: military servicemen and their families?

Though this list is by no means exhaustive, world experience and practice in the management of both natural and man-made disasters and emergencies allow us to offer generalized answers to most of these questions. By reviewing specific examples from various countries, where the management of man-made and natural disasters and emergencies was organized with the engagement of armed forces units, an attempt to systematize responses to the questions posed above can be made.

For the cleanup of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, or NPP, accident in 1986, the largest radiation catastrophe of the 20th century, the government of the former USSR deployed not only individual units of the Soviet armed forces, but entire formations. Under a special order of the USSR Council of Ministers, army aviation units (helicopters) were deployed in the days immediately following the accident. Mobilization of radiation, chemical and biological protection, and civil defense units began, mainly consisting of reservists. Subsequently, all of these units were concentrated in a 30-kilometer zone around the accident site. In order to organize, lead and manage the execution of measures and tasks to clean up the accident, a special government commission was created, which coordinated the activities of all organizations engaged in the accident cleanup. The immediate management and command of troops deployed was effected via the USSR Operational Civil Defense Group, placed under the command of a general and subordinate to a special government

Russian special forces attempt to evacuate hostages taken by Chechen separatists and held in a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, in September 2004. The two-day siege resulted in hundreds of deaths.



committee. The main tasks and measures performed by the troops were:

- Performing radiation monitoring, with the identification and demarcation of districts and local areas, as well as premises, contaminated with radioactivity.
- Removing radioactive graphite and other radioactive materials from the roofs of buildings and installations of the third unit and territory of the NPP.
- Decontamination operations across the NPP territory, including contaminated areas, roads, buildings, installations and residential buildings.
- Performing dosimetric monitoring of people and equipment.
- Guarding restricted areas in contaminated areas.

Units of the armed forces deployed for cleanup operations at the Chernobyl NPP used standard-issue arms and equipment to perform the tasks delegated to them. Material and technical stocks, fuel and lubricants, and food for personnel were provided from state sources.

The government used calculations provided by civilian specialists in the field of nuclear energy to establish the maximum period of radiation exposure for personnel, the maximum radiation levels and the degree of radioactive contamination of food, as well as uniforms, special protective clothing, equipment, technical equipment, etc. Subsequently, as the situation stabilized and the level of radiation fell, the government established the maximum time for personnel to be present in the cleanup zone. In order to provide social protection for people who participated in the cleanup of the Chernobyl NPP accident, on February 28, 1991, Ukraine passed a law “On the Status and Social Protection of Citizens who Suffered as a Result of the Chernobyl Disaster;” which also stipulates concessions and other social protection measures for military servicemen who participated in the cleanup.

Based on the experience of the Chernobyl cleanup, a special order of the USSR Council of Ministers in 1988 confirmed the decision to create several new units, the main purpose of which was to be management of accidents at nuclear power plants and other facilities posing radiation hazards. One such unit, a self-standing mobile radiation, chemical and biological protection brigade, was deployed in an area of Ukraine where there are five nuclear power plants. The personnel in this formation received special training. The activities of units are regulated by a specially-developed manual. During the period of their existence, from 1988 to 2003, the units of this formation participated in the practical cleanup of the Chernobyl NPP, an accident involving

the spillage of hazardous chemicals at the Lisichansk railroad station (Lugansk region, Ukraine) in 1991, extinguishing fires on multiple occasions in Lugansk region, and in a number of other rescue and reconstruction operations. In connection with reforms of the Ukraine Armed Forces, this unit was disbanded in 2003.

During the summer of 1997, there was heavy flooding in the Vistula and Odra river basins in Poland. The flooding was caused by three waves of torrential rain. The first flood reports appeared on July 6, 1987. Two days later, the Polish government established a crisis committee that issued a resolution to mobilize army, police and fire units. A total of 75,000 men and women serving in the military, police and fire services supported rescue operations, utilizing a large number of river-borne equipment, boats, road vehicles, helicopters, winged aircraft and other special equipment. The disaster zone covered more than 30 percent of Poland’s total landmass, a zone from which 160,000 people were evacuated. Fifty-four people died during the initial days of the disaster, and the material damage amounted to around \$5 billion. In a period of six hours, the water level rose 6 meters. According to experts, this was the largest military-civilian operation since World War II. The command and management of the forces deployed, including military units, were performed by the Crisis Committee.

On August 27, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the southern U.S. states of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi, bringing widespread destruction and flooding. Louisiana suffered most, with approximately 30 percent of New Orleans under water three days later. Power supply, communications, water and sewer systems had failed; a large number of buildings, installations and homes had been destroyed or heavily damaged; and more than 500,000 residents remained in the city. Chaos reigned in New Orleans: convicts who had not been evacuated managed to escape from the local jails, and there were cases of looting and a threat of infectious diseases. Rescue efforts, as well as the distribution of drinking water and food to victims, were hampered by flooding over large areas as the water depths reached 6-8 meters in some places. From the first days of the catastrophe, the government resolved to involve the National Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard in the rescue operation. In the initial stage of the operation, the main task of the military units was to perform rescues and organize the evacuation of affected city residents. As the situation worsened and cases of looting became more frequent, the government resolved to introduce martial law in New Orleans. In addition to the tasks of rescuing people and organizing the evacuation of flood victims, the military was also tasked with maintaining public order, fighting looters, and providing security and escorts for shipments of humanitarian aid for the

victims. Once the main evacuation of residents was complete, between 10,000 and 15,000 residents remained in the city — people who were either unable to evacuate in time, or who consciously chose to remain in the city. In order to prevent the spread of infectious disease among the remaining residents, and to prevent fires and rioting, the government decided to begin a forced evacuation of the remaining population. The execution of this task was also delegated to special groups of the U.S. National Guard and the police. The execution of rescue and reconstruction operations required tens of thousands of troops, drawn from the National Guard, the Coast Guard and the U.S. Army. The government declared that this operation was the largest federal rescue operation ever.

On July 15, 2007, a man-made disaster occurred as 15 railroad tankers on transit through Ukraine were derailed in Lvov Region, resulting in spillage of the train's cargo: yellow phosphor, an extremely hazardous chemical. Special accident and rescue units of the Ukraine Ministry for Emergencies were engaged in the cleanup, alongside military engineering units attached to the Ministry of Transport and Communications, and radiation, chemical and biological protection units of the Ministry of Defense, using special equipment.

In the second half of August 2007, almost the entire territory of Greece was covered in massive forest fires. Operations to rescue people and extinguish the fires were hampered by the complex terrain in mountainous, forested areas. The Greek government, due to the insufficient number of local accident and rescue units, was forced to call for assistance from the international community, in the form of both material and human resources. Accident, rescue and specialized units from 20 different countries participated in this operation, including units from Russia, France, Germany and the U.S., as well as troops attached to the armed services of NATO.

Based on the above examples of cleanup of national disasters and emergencies, the following general conclusions can be drawn:

1. Given major disasters and emergencies, both natural and man-made, there is almost always a need to engage units of the armed forces in rescue and cleanup operations.
2. Command over the activities of deployed troops is performed by national committees managing disaster and emergency cleanup operations, via specially-created military command agencies.
3. The tasks set are executed by units of the armed forces, usually using standard-issue arms and equipment.
4. Material and technical resources in support of troop activity are provided, as a rule, from state material and other resources.
5. The procedure for engaging military units for the cleanup of disasters and emergencies is regulated by law or government decree.

## COMPLEX EMERGENCIES

Civil-military relations are more complicated in the event of cross-border disasters. Analysis of crisis situations encountered in recent decades by the U.N. Security Council show that the root causes of such situations were nonmilitary problems. In the materials of the Princeton Conference, these are described as “complex emergencies” — a term that has become a feature of the language of international aid, with the following definition:

“A humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where the power structure is fully or to a significant degree disrupted as a result of internal conflict, and which demands international regulation that exceeds the authorities of any one agency or program of the U.N. in the given country.”

Not all situations fit this definition, which roughly defines the situation in Cambodia, Afghanistan, the countries of the Balkans, the Caucasus and some others.

In recent decades, multinational armed forces in various regions of the world have been engaged in numerous humanitarian aid operations. Such cases may be observed in the wake of natural disasters, major acts of terrorism, as a result of the collapse of civil administration or following various conflicts. The tasks and order for engaging national armed forces following major disasters and emergencies within states have been reviewed above. What tasks may be set for armed forces given a complex emergency? The first may be participation in a humanitarian aid operation. The tasks of multinational troops during such operations may include:

- Cleanup of complex emergencies and the reconstruction of the local infrastructure.
- Distribution of aid.
- Transportation of aid and civilians.
- Rendering medical assistance.
- Supporting the operation of critical services.
- The return of displaced civilians.
- Transfer of personal property.

There have been cases where the provision of humanitarian aid has been hindered by one or several armed groups in the operations zone. In such cases, troops may be engaged to protect people providing aid, and to protect the actual goods subject to distribution.

Troops may themselves perform these aid functions, or may provide protection to other organizations that render aid and assistance. Frequently, such assistance is rendered by nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs. In many cases these organizations have little experience of working with the armed forces.

Under certain circumstances, these operations have to be run from the territory of third countries, or from the sea. However, the operations base is usually created in the operations zone itself.

In order to perform such operations, battle and auxiliary troops may be required in cases where efforts to distribute aid meet resistance. Such forces must

be equipped with weapons systems that are suitable for such operations. These situations require the creation of base zones (which usually include air and sea terminals), protected roads and corridors for the delivery of aid, and reliable distribution points for the final delivery of aid to the intended recipients.

Complex emergencies have frequently arisen in states where there have either been no governments or where there are conflicting centers of power. When state structures are heavily disrupted, the government is likely to lose control over large areas of its territory. Complex emergencies, as a rule, are typified by the presence of large groups of displaced persons, fundamentally altering the operational environment and possibly even changing the social structure of the population, increasing the general sense of vulnerability and triggering lawlessness and riots. In addition to their immediate functions, agencies active in the country encounter certain difficulties in the face of deep social changes.

Civil crisis situations have attracted the attention of various civilian organizations, and the representatives of many of these organizations have arrived at the scene prior to military troops; they have sometimes exceeded the latter in numbers and brought greater knowledge of the locality. In each complex emergency, the military component has almost always had to work shoulder-to-shoulder with at least five major agencies of the U.N. responsible for issues related to refugees, children, food, health and development; civilian groups protecting human rights, organizing elections and restoring government structures; and various NGOs.

Obviously, operations to protect humanitarian aid missions during complex emergencies are far from simple and rarely short-lived. In this connection, serious questions arise about troop training, equipment and mobility. The political, social and economic realities of today's world demand new approaches to civil-military relations during complex emergency management.

### **ORGANIZING AND EXECUTING DISASTER PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT IN NATO PLANNING**

Protecting populations and territories from disasters and emergencies has recently attracted increasing attention from various international organizations, including NATO. As early as 1953, NATO developed a mechanism for Allies to render assistance to one another, given natural disasters and catastrophes of a certain scale. However, this was restricted to signatories

of the North Atlantic Treaty.

Further expansion of the NATO mechanism occurred in 1992, when an innovative conference was held at NATO headquarters on rendering aid during natural disasters. More than 40 countries and 20 international organizations took part in this event, organized by the U.N. and the International Federation of the Red Cross, and the result was a new project to allocate military troops and resources to manage natural disasters. Thus, a new agency appeared in NATO: the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center, or EADRCC.

The mission of the EADRCC is to coordinate the deployment of response troops and resources of the 44 countries in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, or EAPC, to ensure that disaster management assistance is offered to the U.N. rapidly and effectively. The EAPC expands the capacities of the international community to respond to large-scale disasters across the expansive territory of the Euro-Atlantic region, which stretches from Vancouver, Canada, to Sakhalin Island, Russia. This region, which includes six of the seven most industrially-developed nations of the world, is most prone to serious natural disasters and man-made catastrophes, while at the same time possessing strong potential to respond to them.

In May of 1995, an important decision was taken by NATO: to extend to partner countries the same principles of mutual assistance that apply to members of the alliance. This decision became a reality in Ukraine in 1995 and again in 1997 during heavy flooding in Central Europe. In accordance with the July 1997 decisions of NATO leadership to further expand practical cooperation with partner countries, the NATO Senior Civil Emergency



Massive flooding in Poland and other European nations in 1997 killed dozens of people and forced tens of thousands from their homes. About 75,000 people serving in the military, police and fire services responded to the disaster.

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First-response units help remove victims from a train car in the aftermath of the Madrid train bombings in March 2004. More than 190 died in the terrorist attacks.

Planning Committee, with participation from EAPC, proposed the idea of bringing current policies in the field of responses to natural disasters into line with the current situation.

The new mechanism for responding to natural disasters consists of two main components:

- Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Units, or EADRUs — ad hoc sets of national elements, including rescue, medical, transportation and other resources — are provided on a voluntary basis by EAPC countries. EADRUs can be deployed in the vicinity of a large-scale natural disaster at the request of an afflicted EAPC country. EAPC members who make a contribution to EADRUs in the form of their national elements will take the decision to deploy and will cover the associated running costs.
- The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center, or EADRCC, at NATO headquarters, consists of employees of the NATO International Secretariat and a limited staff representing interested NATO member countries and partner countries. Given a natural disaster, the EADRCC is capable of providing a core group to assess the impact of the disaster. This group works closely with the local emergencies agency of the afflicted country, and the resident U.N. coordinator ascertains the need for international assistance to clean up the natural disaster.

EADRCC assumes the task of coordinating any offers of international aid made by EAPC countries with the U.N. During the process of preparing an intervention following a natural disaster, the center develops plans and procedures for the use of EADRUs, taking into account the national risk assessment, as well as existing multilateral and bilateral agreements, and response potential. The EADRCC also compiles a list of

national civilian and military elements available, and it facilitates and promotes operational interoperability by holding joint training and exercises.

### PROTECTING THE PEOPLE

Disasters and emergencies can cause death, degrade quality of life and provoke massive losses, including the cost of cleanup operations. They do not take account of nationality and do not observe national borders. Therefore, the provision of protections for the population and territories during a disaster or emergency, or given the threat of one, is one of the most important state functions. Ensuring the safety and protection of the public, as well as economic assets and the national heritage from the adverse impact of disasters and emergencies, is seen by the governments of many countries across the world as an integral part of state national security policy and state construction. With this in mind, the international aid community must do everything possible to:

- Coordinate investment in disaster response capacities.
- Enhance coordination and mobilization.
- Improve links in regional aid coordination networks.
- Determine specific projects that will systematically improve processes for delivering aid work together to mobilize the resources necessary to perform these tasks.

It is clear that much can and must be done to find new ways to expand our common efforts to effectively deploy resources to manage the impact of disasters and emergencies. Of significance here is the combination of common, international efforts to develop cooperation and expand the potential to manage disasters and emergencies. □

# EU: HAITI AND CHILE NOT ALONE

The European Union has promised to help Haiti rebuild and Chile recover in the aftermath of the earthquakes that devastated the two nations. The EU is part of a global coalition that has a massive undertaking on its hands: rebuild Haiti and help Chile recover.

More than 215,000 people died in Haiti because of the magnitude 7.0 quake Jan. 12, 2010. A magnitude 8.8 quake — one of the strongest ever recorded — killed about 800 people in Chile on Feb. 27.

Haiti's earthquake left 300,000 injured, leveled most of Port-au-Prince's government institutions and infrastructure, destroyed more than 250,000 homes and 30,000 businesses, and left almost 1 million people homeless, Haitian Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive told Agence France-Presse in February 2010. To put the scale of this disaster in perspective, the December 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia killed about the same number of people but throughout 14 nations.

Strong aftershocks followed the massive Chilean quake that struck near the city of Concepción, north of the capital Santiago. The quake — 500 times stronger than the Haiti quake — caused a tsunami felt as far away as New Zealand.

Just days after the quake, the EU pledged 440 million euros to help Haitian survivors and rebuild the country. Of that sum, 229 million euros was for immediate humanitarian aid and restoration. The remaining funds were set aside for medium- and long-term rebuilding. Non-EU nations and private donors have pledged more than 945 million euros to help Haiti.

"Haiti starts from scratch, but not alone," said Kristalina Georgieva, EU commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response. At a Feb. 3, 2010 hearing before the European Parliament, she said, "It will be my immediate duty to make sure we Europeans bring to Haiti the best our union has to offer."

The EU promised 3 million euros in aid to Chile. But Chile did not ask for immediate help from other world organizations, opting to wait until its own disaster response agencies could assess what was needed, Agence France-Presse reported in February 2010. "We are very grateful for people's good intentions, but let's let the [Chilean] emergency office get its very specific report on needs done," Foreign Minister Mariano Fernandez said. Chile did not want "aid from anywhere to be a distraction" from disaster relief, he said. "Any aid that arrives without having been determined to be needed really helps very little."

Chile's infrastructure did not sustain as much damage as Haiti's, though the quake and aftershocks destroyed or damaged an estimated 1.5 million structures. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso said in a news release that Europe is willing to "do anything necessary to assist the Chilean authorities in this difficult moment."

More than 90 percent of Europeans want a larger role in global crisis response, Georgieva

said. That should benefit Haitians, who live in one of the world's most impoverished countries. International agencies estimate it will cost up to 8 billion euros to rebuild the nation.

The EU response to Haiti's crisis has been decisive. The union sent a mission to help the Haitian government re-establish order and help with rescue operations. Initial responses came from: Austria, Belgium, Britain, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. The EU also promised to mount a military operation to bring shelters to Haiti before the rainy season starts in August.

Civil action teams quickly started to coordinate operations and work with each other and teams from around the world. First on the scene were urban search and rescue squads from seven EU nations. With their search dogs, they joined groups from other nations looking for survivors. Then, scores of medical professionals started arriving, followed by advanced and robust medical teams. Clinics and field hospitals then set up health care operations. European nations also sent assessment groups, water sanitation units and tents to house some of the homeless. EU naval ships anchored offshore to provide medical airlift and other assistance. Civilian and military police also arrived to help Haitian police restore order.

European nations have contributed medical supplies, food, water, shelter and technical support in a host of fields. They have also provided search and rescue, police, medical and civic action expertise.

The EU's actions demonstrate its commitment to help Haiti recover. "It is important to tell the people of Haiti that we stand ready to help them as much as we can in this tragedy," said Catherine Ashton, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security and the European Commission vice president. "They can count on Europe."

Earthquake survivor Hotteline Lozama, 26, smiles as members of the French aid group *Secouristes Sans Frontières* pull her from the rubble of a building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 19, 2010.



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