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FIRST HAND EXPERIENCES OF THE MULTINATIONAL LOGISTICS TRAINING PROGRAM MAGLITE 2011/1

Absztrakt/Abstract

A MAGLITE 2011/1 Multinacionális Logisztikai Képzési Program 2011 júniusában került végrehajtásra öt nemzet, köztük Magyarország, Egyesült Királyság, az Egyesült Államok, Hollandia és a Cseh Köztársaság tisztjeinek bevonásával. A képzési programnak első ízben adott helyet a Magyar Honvédség Központi Kiképző Bázisa Szentendrén. A júniusi gyakorlat tartalmát és koncepcióját tekintve új kihívások elé állította a gyakorlaton résztvevő magyar tiszti munkacsoportot. Cikkemben összegzem a gyakorlat végrehajtásának főbb tapasztalatait és azokat a lehetőségeket melyek a jövőben tovább segíthetik a gyakorlat sikeres végrehajtását.

The exercise organised within the framework of the MAGLITE 2011/1 Multinational Logistics Training Program was conducted in June 2011 with the participation of five nations: Hungary, The United Kingdom, the United States, Netherland and the Czech Republic. The Training Program first time was held at the Central Training Base of HDF in Szentendre. The exercise with its content and operational design approved itself as a great challenge for the hungarian officers' syndicate. In my article I'm going to summarize the lessons learned from the exercise and describe the possibilities which may improve its succesful execution in the future.

Kulcsszavak/Keywords: MAGLITE, Logisztikai képzési program, Összhaderőnemi logisztikai műveletek ~ Logistics training program, Joint Logistics Operations

PRELIMINARY STEPS OF THE EXERCISE MAGLITE

First part of the Multinational Logistics Training Program MAGLITE 2011/1 was conducted in June 2011 at the Central Training Base of HDF1 in Szentendre with participation of five nations: Hungary, The United Kingdom, The United States, Netherland and The Czech Republic.

The exercise MAGLITE is based upon the Joint Logistics Operations Course (JLOC) organized for the senior officers of the Army, Navy and Air Force in Deepcut by the Defence Logistics School. Though JLOC organized mainly for the British officers nowadays it is getting more international due to the invitations of the Defence Logistics School. MAGLITE is traditionally held in Hungary year by year where the officers studying at the Department of Military Logistics joining the British syndicates can get knowledge of operational level military decision making process in the field of military logistics. MAGLITE also provides a good opportunity for them to improve their language skills and get some experience of common work.

In April 2011 Lt Col Réger (Ret) and myself arrived to Deepcut to attend a coordination meeting organized by the British party. During the planning meeting we were introduced by our partner from the British Distaff² Major Shakespeare with the new operational scenario, the joint operational area (JOA) and the size and compound of the British contingent taking part in the operation. Due to the significant changes in operational scenario we had to reconsider the size and role of our contingent which would take part in operation. Since the British side wanted to adopt a finished operational scenario from their PJHQ³ we had to made a compromise with the British Distaff and give up our plans regarding the operational scenario and mission. We tried to find different solutions to the problem how we can enable Hungarian officers into the common work. We faced the problem again, that we can't involve into the task a brigade strong organization supported by Air Force elements which would allow to carry out an operational level logistic planning work. By the end of the meeting we agreed to deploy altogether three light armoured infantry battalion strong multinational contingent to the area of operation as a force protection element for the British logistic troops and their necessary military assets to enable the UN⁴ and NGO⁵'s effort to alleviate the current Humanitarian Crisis and provide C26 logistic functionality to the UN and NGOs.

After arriving home the Military Logistic Department immediately started its direct preparation for the exercise.

The preparational period of the exercise was complicated due to the fact, that our University in its today situation has been not able to accomodate the 50 member strong participants thus a decision has been made to move the exercise to the Central Training Base of HDF in Szentendre. The exercise leader also made a right decision when he created a staff including officials from different organizations of the University that made the work much easier for the Department of Military Logistics. According to my experiences a good cooperation was developed amongst the people who were involved into the preparation and execution of the exercise. The common work between the University and the Central Training Base of HDF proved to be an exemplary cooperation.

¹ Hungarian Defence Forces

² Directors' staff

³ Permanent Joint Headquarter

⁴ United Nations

⁵ Non Governmental Organization

⁶ Command and control



1. picture. Staff meeting in Szentendre
photo made by Dr. József Varga

EXECUTIONAL PERIOD OF THE EXERCISE

The Operational Area of the exercise was in Nejeru, a fictitious state in north-eastern part of Africa. There are famine and drought in Nejeru, thus several UN and NGO's are operating in the eastern part of the country trying to provide humanitarian assistance to local citizens.

The situation is complicated by the fact, that they are limited by the numbers of vehicles and logistic assets in country and requests for assistance from the NEJERU Defence Forces (NDF) to provide assistance with aid distribution have been refused and the northern part of the country is controlled by a hostile organization called Muslim League of Freedom (MLF). NDF as directed is defeating the Muslim rebellion of the Muslim League of Freedom and see the humanitarian problem as something that should be left to others to deal with.

The UK forces's mission was to conduct operations in the NEJERU JOA⁷ which would include the offload and distribution of designated UK equipment and aid from SPOD⁸s and APOD⁹s and also to provide military support to the UN (and designated NGOs) to enable the distribution of humanitarian aid within JOA. In need they had to be prepared to offer C2 logistic functionality to the UN and NGO organisations and support the maintenance of secure LoC¹⁰s and logistic hubs within JOA, in order to create the conditions within NEJERU for the attainment of the MSTP¹¹ as part of the wider cross government stabilisation plan.

In the initial period of the exercise we had to make some serious changes in the scenario. After the staff briefing of the British Distaff it became clear, that in parallel with their logistic forces the British side is about to deploy significant combat and combat service elements in the JOA. This unexpected step has made unnecessary for the multinational brigade to deploy three of its infantry battalions which would have attached to the British logistic forces as a force protection element. According to the fast decision of the Hungarian Distaff the organizational structure of the multinational contingent has been changed.

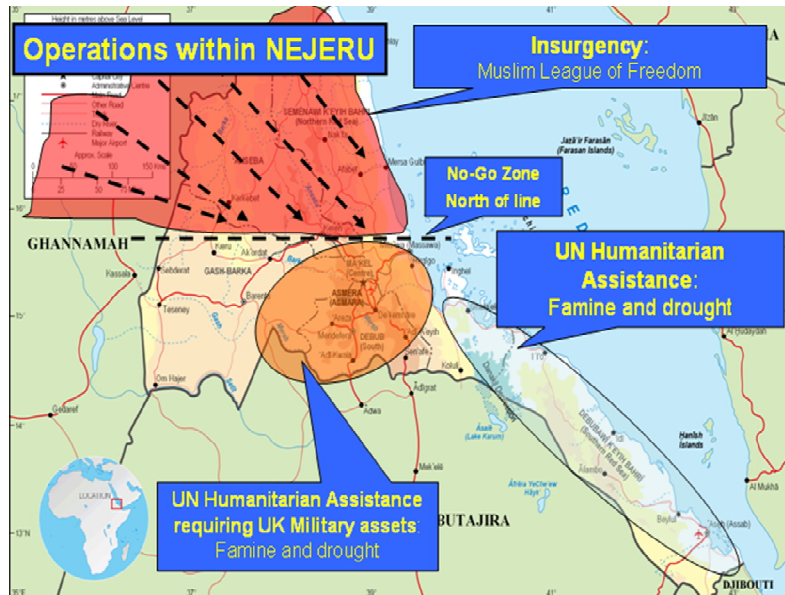
⁷ Joint Operational Area

⁸ Sea Port of Disembarkation

⁹ Air Port of Disembarkation

¹⁰ Line of Communication

¹¹ Military Strategic Transition Point



2. picture. Operational area in Nejeru (EXCON slide pack 2011, DCLPA)

A MILU12 has been created with its own NSE13 and an infantry battalion strong force protection element. In our conception a water purification platoon supported by transport subunits which were integrated into the structure of a MILU would have supplied the designated for them refugee camp. This concept was discussed with the British exercise leader who went along with us. Surprisingly from the datas were sorted out later on by the British Distaff became clear, that the UN organizations had got an enormous stockpile of water in the area enough to supply all of the refugee camps situated on the territory of Nejeru. They also had the needed transport assets for distribution. All of these misunderstandings came from the fact, that the British Distaff didn't share with us the exercise documents, and we were introduced with them in the time only when they were sorted out. Despite all of these facts we can state that Hungarian officers who were involved in the MAGLITE exercise solved their planning tasks in very flexible way.



3. picture. Syndicate work
Photo made by Dr. József Varga

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE EXERCISE MAGLITE 2011/1

¹² Multinational Integrated Logistic Unit

¹³ National Support Element

- Preparation for the exercise MAGLITE 2011/1 was a model and elicited universal admiration of the British side.
- Cooperation between the University's and the Central Training Base's staff was exemplary, without any friction.
- IT¹⁴ infrastructure and network provided by our University for the period of the exercise has proved its efficiency and contributed to the success of MAGLITE considerably.
- The infrastructure, catering service provided by the Central Training Base of HDF have fulfilled our hopes and had been praised by the British side.
- The level of professional knowledge of our MSc officers met the requirements but their language skills have to be improved so they can understand the native English speech. In my opinion NATO STANAG 3.3.3.3 should be the entrance level to take part in MAGLITE.
- Map work (electronic, paper) during the exercise has to be improved significantly. Practically I haven't found any data on the map, including friendly, neutral and enemy forces' situation, LoCs, etc.
- In the preparational period MSc officers have to be introduced with the tactical and also the operational level MDMP¹⁵ which have to be the frame for their planning work.
- Conception of the British exercise leader to form only one Hungarian syndicate working parallel with four British syndicates turned out faulty, because one planning team cannot interact with each of them and take into consideration their two or three COA¹⁶s during the planning work. Although there were LO¹⁷s included in each British syndicate, the cooperation depended only on COA has been chosen by the British side. There were British syndicates who had no interaction at all with the Hungarian planning team.

To solve this problem we have to consider 2 to 3 Hungarian MSc officers to be attached to each JLOC18 planning syndicate. Then each syndicate has its own HU syndicate to interact with. This way the Hungarian syndicate would have a need to articulate their timelines and STRAT lift 19 needs to the JLOC syndicate to have some friction.

- The other solution could be to have a completely independent task created by the Hungarian Distaff which would be universal and would not depend on any British operational scenario but combined enough to have frictions with the British Syndicates regarding the deployment, APODs, SPODs, RSOM²⁰ tasks etc.
- According to my experiences gained in last three years I can state that the British Distaff shares the detailed task with us only in last moment or during the executional period of the exercise which doesn't allow us to prepare our officers, and leads to the described above complications that is why completely unacceptable for us. If we are taking into consideration the fact that before the exercise the British participants have a one week long preparation within the framework of JLOC, we start the exercise under the unequal conditions and our role is reduced only for an assistance.

¹⁴ Information Technology

¹⁵ Military Decision Making Process

¹⁶ Course of Action

¹⁷ Liaison Officers

¹⁸ Joint Logistic Operations Course

¹⁹ Strategic Air Lift

²⁰ Reception Staging and Onward Movement

CONCLUSION

Multinational Training Program MAGLITE is playing very important role in the educational process of the Miklós Zrínyi National Defence University. It prepares the MSc officers to solve logistic planning tasks on operational level and learn the steps and content of the MDMP which role is nowadays fading away during the staff work.

Although there are some misunderstandings and differences of opinion with our British partner, we have to keep on working and developing MAGLITE which has a key position in the educational process of the Department of Military Logistics.