

COUNTER-TERRORISM CAPACITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract. *This article explores the prevention measures and international cooperation of the Republic of Moldova in the field of combating terrorism. The terrorist organization The Islamic State mentioned the Republic of Moldova among the 60 countries that they consider enemies, the question regarding the measures for preventing terrorism on the territory of the Republic of Moldova and the subject of the international cooperation of Moldova in the fight against terrorism become relevant.*

In the article the author also focuses on legislative measures introduced in the Republic of Moldova in response to the spread of terrorist activity in the European Union.

Keywords: *terrorism, security, countering terrorism, preventing terrorism, anti-terrorism activities, anti-terrorism cooperation*

At the current stage, the threat represented by terrorism has become one of the most current problems, dictating the global agenda. It can not be denied that even a particular case of terrorist attack presents in itself a danger to society, because it is a multi-objective crime that endangers people's life and health, as well as economic, social and cultural relations, and also aggravates the existing contradictions in society, demonstrating the possibility of solving them by violent means.

Following the terrorist attack in New York on September 11, 2001, terrorism is perceived as a major threat to security at all levels of the global system functioning - local, national, regional and global. The global public opinion is aware that terrorism can not be eradicated because of its interpretation as an isolated issue and only by violent means. This phenomenon has to be approached as part of the complex of global socio-economic, political and spiritual problems which for its solution require the efforts of all mankind (Attari, 2014: 3). Under conditions of globalization processes intensification, when terrorism has transformed in a serious threat to the security of states or entire regions of the world, the world community has become more insistent in seeking legal measures that would ensure the effectiveness of the fight against international terrorism. The Republic of Moldova is a full rights member of the international system and, under the conditions of globalization, of its economic and political unity, and can not remain passive to the issue of combating terrorism, including international terrorism. The problem in question is also related to the fact that "Moldova is more and more in the interest of various terrorist organizations", but in our country there are no terrorist-oriented groups, terrorism is confined just as a threat.

Terrorism as a negative phenomenon is a dangerous threat to any state and society. Thus, the Republic of Moldova National Security Strategy Draft emphasizes that the

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activization of terrorist organizations through organization of some resonance attacks in the region, reveals concerning trends of this phenomenon in the European space, what is a major challenge to regional security. Instability and military conflicts in the Near East increase the terrorist risk on the European continent. The regional security context, as well as the unresolved conflict in the Transnistrian region, place the Republic of Moldova in a risky framework with an increase in extremist terrorist aspect (Draft National Security Strategy...).

In 2015-2018 there was registered a considerable worsening of the anti-terrorist security state in most countries of the world. Instability and military conflicts in the Near East increase terrorist risk across the European continent, generating flows of refugees from conflict zones. The regional security context places the Republic of Moldova in a risk framework with a potential of ascending in terrorist aspect (Infotag: Interview...). Over the past four years, Europe has suffered a series of terrorist attacks committed by lonely terrorists with the use of cars and other means at hand.

The possibility of terrorist attacks in the Republic of Moldova is reduced, given that our country does not participate directly in the fight against the Islamic State and there is no a religious confrontation. Experts believe that terrorism in the Republic of Moldova does not have conditions for development, and the country itself is not a major interest for such an activity (Echo of Attacks...). Although the Republic of Moldova has been receiving refugees for several years, there is a small number of seekers aspiring asylum compared to the situation created in the EU member states where the policy towards migrants obviously increases the number of potential executors of terrorist acts. In the annual rating presented by the "Global Index of Terrorism", which analyzes the situation in 160 states of the world, Moldova is ranked 123rd among the states categorized as safe. At the same time, the neighboring Ukraine is ranked 12th, and the Russian Federation is ranked 23th. Research estimates the level of terrorist activity and shows which states and to what extent collide with such risks. Among the countries with the highest threat of terrorist attacks are Iraq, Afghanistan and Nigeria.

In this context and in connection with the fact that the terrorist organization The Islamic State mentioned the Republic of Moldova among the 60 countries that they consider enemies, the question regarding the measures for preventing terrorism on the territory of the Republic of Moldova and the subject of the international cooperation of our country in the fight against terrorism become relevant. Realizing the imperative of combating terrorism, the Republic of Moldova promotes its own anti-terrorist policy. In order to prevent and not admit terrorist acts, the Intelligence and Security Service continuously monitors the situation in the country, both at its borders and in the region, in order not to permit and prevent the emergence of dangers and risks (Antiterrorist Center of SIS...).

The international legal framework of the Republic of Moldova's cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism consists of: a) the universally recognized principles and norms of international law, the agreements concluded between states: universal conventions, regional agreements, bilateral treaties on legal assistance in criminal matters, international treaties of the Republic of Moldova; b) documents of international organizations (UN conventions, UN Security Council resolutions, conventions of the Council of Europe, etc.), as well as the national legislation of the Republic of Moldova. Counterterrorism cooperation is a set of principles and norms governing the work of state bodies in international counter-terrorism co-operation. According to Article 48 of Law no.120 of 21.09.2017 on the prevention and combating of terrorism, the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with the international treaties to which it is a party, cooperates with the law enforcement agencies and with the special services of other states, as well as with the

international organizations working in this field. In order to ensure the security of the person, the society and the state, the Republic of Moldova pursues in its territory the persons involved in terrorist activities, including in cases where these activities were planned or committed outside its territory, but also harmed in other cases provided by the international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a party.

The First Law on Combating Terrorism was adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova on 12 October 2001 (the Law on Combating Terrorism), followed by the Law on Countering Extremism Activity adopted on 21 February 2001 and the Law on Prevention and Combating of Terrorism adopted on 23 June 2017. The international conventions on the fight against terrorism and organized crime were also ratified: the Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft (6 March 1996), Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft (6 March 1996), the Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the Purpose of Detection (6 March 1996), the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents (16.07.1997), the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism (18.07.2002), the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (18.07.2002), the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages (18.07.2002), the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (16.09.2005), the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries (28.02.2006), the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (18.04.2008), European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism (04.05.1998). The Republic of Moldova also signed the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (16.05.2005), the Treaty on Cooperation among the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Combating Terrorism, (27.07.2001) and the formation of the Anti-Terrorism Center (ATC) of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States signed by the Presidents of these States on 1 December 2000.

The basic principles in fight against terrorism in the Republic of Moldova were determined by art. 1 of the "Law on Combating Terrorism" (2001). This law for the first time in the history of our country set up a system of measures to counteract this threat from a legislative point of view. According to art. 1 of the given law, the legal basis of the fighting activity against terrorism is constituted by the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the European Convention on the Fight against Terrorism, the generally recognized principles and the norms of international law, the international treaties to which the Republic of Moldova is a part, the present law and other normative acts regulating the relations of the given domain. For the first time in national legislation, article 2 defined terrorism as the ideology of violence and the practice of influencing through violence the decision-making by public authorities or international organizations, accompanied by intimidation of the population and/or other violent illegal actions (Law on Combating Terrorism).

The Republic of Moldova is not seen as a target for terrorist groups, but the intensification of international and regional negative processes requires national law enforcement bodies to step up early prevention and screening of potential risk situations for national security (Combating Terrorism...). In order to fight against terrorism, the Republic of Moldova improves the legal basis and the existing institutional system and also improves the interinstitutional cooperation and coordination, establishes cooperation relations with the respective subunits. In connection with the terrorist attacks in the years 2015-2016 on the territory of the EU Member States, on September 21, 2017, the

Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the Law nr. 120 on the prevention and combating of terrorism (Law on Preventing and Combating Terrorism). The Law was elaborated by the Security and Intelligence Service of the Republic of Moldova, which considers that terrorism has become a serious threat for the Republic of Moldova. The adoption of the new Law is yet another step towards ensuring citizens' security.

The document contains 11 chapters and determines the legal and organizational framework of the activity for preventing and combating terrorism in the Republic of Moldova, the mode of coordinating the activities of specialized subdivisions in the prevention and combating of terrorism, the actions undertaken by central and local public authorities, by public associations and organizations, and by responsible persons. The Antiterrorist Operational Command will be set up to coordinate and carry out anti-terrorist operations. The Law emphasizes that "Detection of terrorist activity will be carried out through information and counter-information actions by collecting, analyzing and processing data on factors that could endanger the security of the state."

The Law provides for the establishment of a local terrorist crisis management body - the Antiterrorist Territorial Council, which will be composed of district councilors, territorial representatives of the Security and Intelligence Service, the General Police Inspectorate of the Ministry of Interior Affairs and the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations of the MIA. The Law establishes the introduction of a new concept, implemented in the EU regarding the verification of airline passengers, which aims to detect attempts to leave, enter or transit the territory of the country by persons involved in the terrorist activity.

Airline companies operating flights to/from the Republic of Moldova have the obligation to hand over to the SIS the passenger list, the route information and other data. Special services will check this data until the moment the air passengers pass border control in the destination country. This fact, as the SIS mentions, will allow identification of attempts to enter, leave or transit through the territory of the country of the persons affiliated to the terrorist organizations Al-Qaida, ISIS, the Taliban, etc. Transmission of passenger lists will be done according to the following schedule: initially 24-48 hours before departure, then immediately after the aircraft's landing preparing for the take-off. Once the lists are transferred to the SIS, no passenger should be able to get on or off the board. In other exceptional cases, special services are provided with updated information. Passenger data transferred to the SIS will include the name, surname, gender, nationality, date of birth and other personal data such as the passport number and series, the country that issued it and the document's term of validity. Special services receive information about luggage, planned route and flight dates, any change of initial reservation, seat number, ticket's date of issue and number. In addition, information about the form of payment, including the credit card billing address, as well as the profile of the "permanent client", if the person is registered in the airline's loyalty program, will be transmitted to the SIS. It is mandatory to provide data about flight record, missing passengers or attempts to get on the board right before the departure without prior ticket reservation. The law prohibits the processing of information revealing the racial or ethnic origin of the passenger, religion, political beliefs, social affiliation, data on his/her state of health or sexual life. Should the Security and Intelligence Service receive such information, they will not be processed and will be destroyed immediately. These rules are also applied in the regulation of air transport in the EU. In order to verify the information, the Moldovan special services have, in real time, remote access to the databases of the foreign special structures (Special Services...).

It should also be noted that the new Law offers another definition of the term terrorism. In the 2001 Law, as has been shown above, terrorism is defined as the ideology of violence and the practice of influencing by violence decisions made by public authorities or international organizations, accompanied by intimidation of the population and/or other violent illegal actions, while in the new Law terrorism is defined as a phenomenon with a high degree of social danger, characterized by a radical ideology and a practice of influencing by violence the decision-making by public authorities and institutions or international organizations, accompanied by intimidating the population and/or other violent illegal actions.

The law clearly delimits the restrictive measures that may be imposed in the area of the anti-terrorist operation. It also provides for the public opinion to be informed about terrorist acts, regulating the conduct of the communication means and the prohibitions imposed during and outside the anti-terrorist operation. The document contains indications regarding the necessity of provisions regarding the liability of the public or religious association or another organization for carrying out the terrorist activity; the responsibility of the media for the dissemination of materials calling for terrorist activity or justifying the pursuit of such activity; the inadmissibility of using electronic communications networks to carry out terrorist activity (New Law...). At the same time, there was established the mass-media's accountability for the dissemination of the materials that expel or justify terrorism. In other words, the media has an obligation to control the information it publishes - if it meets the requirements of the new Law.

In accordance with Article 2 of the Law, the authorities with powers in the field of preventing and combating terrorism are the following:

- Chairman of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova - coordinates the entire activity of preventing and combating terrorism.
- Government of the Republic of Moldova - the main authority responsible for organizing the activity of preventing and combating terrorism, as well as ensuring it with the necessary forces, means and resources.
- Security and Intelligence Service of the Republic of Moldova - is directly involved in preventing and combating terrorism.

Authorities that directly engage in counter-terrorism work within the limits of their mandate are the following: General Prosecutor's Office; Ministry of Interior Affairs; Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection; State Protection and Guard Service; Customs Service; Public Services Agency; National Agency for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities; Department of Penitentiary Institutions of the Ministry of Justice; Money Laundering and Prevention Service.

It should be mentioned that the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe published in October 2018 its findings related to the Law of the Republic of Moldova no. 120 regarding the prevention and fight against terrorism, passed on September 21, 2017. The report mentions that the Republic of Moldova, under the conditions of a terrorist threat, has the right to take emergency measures, but these measures must be consistent, predictable and in line with the obligations that the Republic of Moldova has in the field of human rights in accordance with the international and European human rights law. The Venice Commission is convinced that it is necessary to revise the list of measures that the Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova can take in order to prevent terrorism. In this respect, it is necessary to clearly define the areas of application of the special measures, and the law should

provide for an external authorization (court order, prosecutor's resolution, etc.), detailed measures and respective procedures (The Venice Commission...).

The report also stresses that the Speaker of Parliament should not have the right to coordinate anti-terrorist activity; this should be the prerogative of the executive branch. Instead, the mechanism of parliamentary control should be strengthened with the participation of the Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova or a joint committee of experts, but with the broad participation of the opposition in both structures. In addition to examining general reports, these bodies should have access to concrete cases. An adequate record keeping system should be implemented within the Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova.

Venice experts believe that counter-terrorism operations should have a limited period and cover a limited geographical area; any extension of the geographical area or the duration of the operation should be accompanied by increased parliamentary control. In addition, the law should provide for criminal and disciplinary liability for security service personnel in the case of extremely disproportionate actions and in the case of inappropriate planning and conduct of counter-terrorism operations. The Commission emphasizes that the state should bear civil and legal liability for the injuries caused by these disproportionate actions. Unplanned use of weapons, as required by the situation, should be prohibited by law, and the actions of security personnel that led to death or serious bodily injury should be subject to an independent investigation.

Also, if restrictions are introduced for mass media during the terrorist crises, they should be short-term and should only cover certain specific topics (data on services involved in the fight against terrorism, their positions and methods etc.). Journalists should be free to inform the public about the state of affairs during the terrorist crises in accordance with their duties and under the European Convention on Human Rights. Likewise, the Venice Commission notes that the "blacklists" of terrorists made in the country should not be blindly based on the decisions of foreign courts and governments.

An effective appeal process, accessible to all persons affected by terrorist attacks, must be applied in practice. Moldovan courts must have the possibility to verify whether the person concerned is indeed a terrorist in accordance with national law and international law. Expulsion and extradition of alleged terrorists is possible only if this does not contravene the obligations of the Republic of Moldova under the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the European Convention on Human Rights (The Venice Commission...).

Combating and preventing terrorism in the Republic of Moldova is also aimed at the financing of terrorism. The legal framework for the prevention of terrorism financing is Law no. 308 of 22.12.2017 on preventing and combating money laundering and terrorism financing; the Law of Financial Institutions no. 550-XIII of 21.07.1995; Regulation on Requirements for Prevention and Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing in Banking Activity no. 200 of August 9, 2018; Recommendations on Risk-Based Approach to Customers by Banks in Order to Prevent and Combat Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, approved by the Decision of AC of NBM No. 96 of 05.05.2011; Recommendations on Banks' Monitoring Customers' Transactions and Activities to Prevent and Combat Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing Nr. 96 of 05.05.2011; Regulation on Measures to Prevent and Combat Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing on the Non-Banking Financial Market No. 49/14 of 21.10.2011; documents elaborated by the Basel Committee and the International Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The new Law on preventing and combating money laundering and terrorism financing (2017) transposes the provisions of European Parliament and Council 2015/849 of 20 May, 2015. The Law provides establishment of a Service for Prevention and Combat of Money Laundering that will be an independent public authority. The responsibilities of the Service are receiving, recording, analysis and processing of information on activities and transactions suspected of money laundering, crimes related to money laundering and terrorism financing. The information will be forwarded to the competent organs. At the same time, the authority shall notify the competent law enforcement authorities as soon as it establishes suspicion of an offense and conduct financial investigations to identify the origin of the suspicious goods.

In the analysis of the anti-terrorist legislation of the Republic of Moldova, it is also necessary to mention Regulation no. 277-284 (2018) concerning counter-terrorism protection of critical infrastructure, which was developed by SIS and aims at improving the identification, designation and protection of critical infrastructure and counter-terrorism objectives to optimize procedures for identification and inclusion of critical infrastructure targets in The National Critical Infrastructure Nomenclature, as well as to strengthen national mechanisms in the field of terrorism prevention, identification and elimination of potential risks to critical infrastructure. The actuality of approving the Regulation is based on the need to implement the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2341 (2017) of 13.02.2017 and Law no. 120 of 21.09.2017 on the prevention and combating of terrorism.

The major importance in the process of combating and preventing terrorism in the Republic of Moldova represents also the counteraction to cyber terrorism. According to the data of research by the United States Institute for Peace, the Internet for Terrorists is an ideal sphere for carrying out their activities, given that access is simple and it is very easy to assure users anonymity when the network is uncontrolled, there are no laws and there is no police. If in 1998 nearly half of the 30 terrorist organizations listed by the US had their own sites, now all the known terrorist groups publish their materials in 40 languages. Terrorist groups create polygon sites to influence people who are not directly involved in the conflict (Nigmatullina, Chernova, 2015).

In 2015, the number of cyber attacks on state institutions in the Republic of Moldova increased by 30%. Throughout 2015, the SIS identified and countered 27 attempts to penetrate or disrupt the functionality of state information systems. The majority of attacks are mostly from outside the country, and as tools are used the malware programs, which are placed on state networks through infected web pages, social networks, e-mails, and various IT applications, with the goal of disrupting the functioning of computing techniques, illicit collection of data of government interest and about state prospective policies. To exemplify some large-scale attempts, we can mention the attempt to infect from outside the country computer networks in 12 state-owned institutions through "CTB-Locker" malware arriving at employee email addresses during 2015. There has also been registered an increase in such types of cyber attacks attempts as DoS (Denial-of-Service), DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) and a new one - DrDoS (Distributed Reflection Denial of Service) (SIS...).

In 2016 by Government Decision no. 811 of 29.10.2015 was adopted the National Cyber Security Program of the Republic of Moldova for the years 2016-2020, which aims to create a cyber security management system of the Republic of Moldova. The document is based on the provisions of the National Strategy for Development of the Information

Society "Digital Moldova 2020" and the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova and includes 7 areas of intervention:

- safe processing, storage and access to data;
- security and integrity of electronic communications networks and services;
- preventive and emergency response capabilities (CERT);
- preventing and combating cybercrime;
- strengthening cyber defense capabilities;
- education and information;
- cooperation and international interaction (Cyber Security...).

On October 26, 2018, the *National Terrorist Alert System (SNAT)* entered into force. This system represents a unique platform for coordinating measures in case of terrorist threats. The territorial units authorized to fight against terrorism will be assigned to the Information and Security Service of the Republic of Moldova. Their duties will include the exchange of data and the investigation of cases that present a threat.

SNAT consists of 4 levels, distinguished by 4 codes (expressed in colours), which reflect the degree of risk depending on the intensity of the terrorist danger manifestation: low level (blue color); moderate level (yellow color); high level (orange color) and critical level (red color). It should be mentioned that, at each alert level, the competent public authorities will take specific measures to ensure national security. On March 25, 2019 the Information and Security Service (SIS) declared on the whole territory of the Republic of Moldova, for an indefinite period, the low level (blue code) of terrorist alert. The establishment of the blue code provides a series of mandatory measures for the relevant institutions, but also recommendations for the population.

In the case of the low level of terrorist alert (blue code), the authorities with expertise in the field of prevention and combating terrorism, within the limits of their competences, take the following measures:

- accumulate, evaluate and verify information and data on terrorist risks; liquidate and diminish the action of the factors that cause the emergence and spread of extremist-terrorist ideologies;
- conduct prevention activities;
- improve the legal and organizational bases for the fight against terrorism;
- develop and implement new methods and tools to combat terrorism;
- conduct actions to inform and raise awareness of the terrorist dangers and threats, as well as the rules of behavior in situations of terrorist crisis;
- form public opinion in order to promote the state policy in the field of prevention and combating terrorism;
- develop international cooperation on the level of preventing and combating terrorism.

The Counterterrorism Centre takes the following measures:

- monitors the operational situation regarding the counterterrorism security situation at national and regional level;
- collects and evaluates the information in the area of expertise in order to prevent and combat extremist and terrorist tendencies on the national territory;
- determines and analyzes the causes and conditions that contribute to the occurrence and spread of terrorism manifestations;
- provides methodical support and offers recommendations to bodies empowered to prevent and combat terrorism in identifying and annihilating the causes and conditions that lead to the occurrence and spread of terrorist manifestations;

- coordinates the activities of the authorities with expertise in the field of terrorism prevention and combating by extending cooperation with law enforcement bodies and special services of other states, anti-terrorist structures and international organizations involved in the fight against terrorism under international treaties (Blue code...).

The Republic of Moldova cooperates closely with the UN, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union and the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS) in the development of democratic reforms, ensuring the rule of law and the compliance of national human rights law and practice with relevant international standards in the fight against terrorism. The bodies responsible for combating and preventing terrorism draw up and submit to the external partners (UN, CODEXTER, OSCE) national reports on measures taken in the field of preventing and combating terrorism.

An important moment in the field of combating terrorism, spread of the mass destruction weapons and illegal arms trade was the signing of the Republic of Moldova - European Union Action Plan (adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova on April 22, 2005). Point 14 of this Plan highlights the importance of working towards strengthening the role of the United Nations in combating terrorism, as well as the practical application of the UN Convention to Stop Terrorism Financing and Assure Human Rights Against It. In order to achieve an efficient collaboration with EU structures, the Delegation of Security and Intelligence Service of the Republic of Moldova participated in the 4th SEEIC plenary session (South-East European Intelligence Conference). As a result of this collaboration, the special forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs began to use the “Antiterror” program that gathers information on terrorist and terrorism financing in the EU and CIS countries.

At the present stage, the National Action Plan for the implementation of the Moldova - European Union Association Agreement for the years 2017-2019 is of major importance. Point 11 of the Plan states that the Parties agree to cooperate bilaterally, regionally and internationally to prevent and combat terrorism in accordance with international law, UN resolutions in the field, international human rights standards, refugee law and humanitarian law. In this regard, the Parties shall cooperate in particular with a view of deepening the international consensus on the fight against terrorism, including through the legal definition of terrorist acts and by taking steps to reach an agreement on the General Convention on International Terrorism. In the context of the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and other relevant UN instruments as well as applicable international conventions and instruments, in accordance with international law and the legislation of the Parties, the Parties shall exchange information regarding terrorist organizations and groups, their activities and support networks.

In accordance with the Report on the Implementation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Republic of Moldova - European Union Association Agreement in counter-terrorism domain, the draft law on the ratification of the Additional Protocol to the EC Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism was drafted and approved in the first reading. In the same context, *the Counterterrorism Guide* and *the Potential Terrorist Profile Guide* for Law Enforcement Officers have been developed. Also, the Law on National Defense was adopted; constant exchanges of data and information with partners, regional and international specialized structures with reference to terrorist entities involved in international “jihad” have been made; steps have been taken to enforce special measures to ban entry into the territory of the Republic of Moldova and to declare certain foreign citizens undesirable from national security considerations; an Agreement

has been signed between the SIS and the State Security and Protection Service in the field of preventing and combating terrorism; the draft interinstitutional normative act between the Security and Intelligence Service, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the field of preventing and combating terrorism was elaborated, etc.

With the help of the EU, the Border Police of the Republic of Moldova implements a series of external assistance projects through the medium of the European Union Border Agency (FRONTEX) (Securing Moldova's Borders...). Thus, during the period 2009-2013, the Republic of Moldova received 22 million euros of financial investments from the EU for the establishment of an efficient communication and border monitoring system. Also in the field of counter-terrorism, the Border Police takes additional measures at the crowded border crossing points. The number of the staff was increased, certain cargoes and goods are checked, as well as personal luggage, including with help of dogs. An intense anti-terrorist training of employees is carried out with the involvement of specialists from other enforcement subdivisions and structures. Recently, in June 2018, the Border Police, in cooperation with the special services of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, participated in the anti-terrorist exercise "BUCOVINA - 2018". The operation took place in the border town of Lipcani, Briceni district. The purpose of tactical applications organized at regional level was to test, evaluate and improve the procedures and mechanisms for interaction and interoperability between authorities in situations of terrorist crisis.

An important role in securing the border of the Republic of Moldova has also the EUBAM Mission. Through this mission, the EU plays a decisive role in ensuring effective and transparent border control, what contributes to strengthening regional security.

According to the Report on the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Moldova – European Union Association Agreement in the field of combating terrorism for 2018, we mention the following measures:

- In order to implement Law no. 120 of 21.09.2017 regarding the prevention and combating of terrorism, the relevant authorities elaborated the draft Government Decisions regarding the approval of the Regulation on the organization and conduct of the anti-terrorist exercises, on the approval of the Regulation on the anti-terrorist protection of the critical infrastructure, regarding the National Terrorist Alert System, as well as regarding the approval of the Regulation of the operational counter-terrorism command;

- The continuous exchange of information with the partners on preventing and combating terrorism is ensured. At regional and international level, there is interaction with: GUAM, CODEXTER, INTERPOL, UN, SEEIC;

- On March 14, 2018, within the framework of the Police Cooperation Program of the Eastern Partnership jointly with experts from Poland and France, at the initiative of the Republic of Moldova, the tactical exercise "Simulation of a terrorist attack during a football match" was organized on the territory of "Zimbru Stadium" from Chisinau. At the same time, experts from the Republic of Moldova participated in the anti-terrorist exercise "BUCOVINA-2018".

- The exchange of information and data of common interest with the foreign special services on topics related to terrorist groups, foreign travelers, persons expelled/allowed to return for security reasons, crimes related to terrorism, mercenary etc., was ensured. During the reference period, consultations were organized on the partnership line in order to take over the practices of implementing the mechanism for verifying the air routes passengers (PNR / APIS).

– With the support of EUROJUST, the activity of the joint investigation teams (3 with Romania, 1 with the Czech Republic, 1 with Belgium, 1 with France and 1 with Germany) and the cooperation on 20 concrete cases with Romania, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Holland was negotiated, signed and facilitated.

– In cooperation with Europol, the participation in 11 joint meetings under Europol's aegis, participation in Europol operations (eg OPSON VII, SILVER AX III, 30 DAYS AT SEA) was ensured, as well as the active exchange of information through the secured channel SIENA of the EPO Europol on the cyber crime segment was equally established (Report on the implementation...).

Of particular importance in the field of combating and preventing terrorism for the Republic of Moldova is the Moldova-NATO Individual Action and Partnership Plan (IPAP), which was first approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova on 24 May 2006. Point 1.4.1. of this Plan was devoted to the fight against terrorism and organized crime. In this point was envisaged the strengthening of the Republic of Moldova's potential in the fight against terrorism, including the capacity to manage the consequences of crises caused by acts of terrorism. IPAP provided for the creation of the anti-terrorist center beside the Security and Intelligence Service of the Republic of Moldova, the improvement of the national legislation and the improvement of the interdepartmental cooperation on the fight against terrorism, as well as the "improvement of the interaction between military units and special anti-terrorist subdivisions, their preparation for possible participation in operations under the NATO auspices, in accordance with the appropriate decisions of the Moldovan authorities." According to the current Individual Action Plan of the Moldova - NATO Partnership for the years 2017-2019, in Chapter I, point 1.6. it is stipulated that the Republic of Moldova will continue to implement, in accordance with international norms and commitments, programs and strategies to combat terrorism, strengthen cooperation and coordination between its institutions and develop cooperation relations with NATO allies and partners on this issue. The Republic of Moldova will strengthen its control mechanisms on strategic and dual-use exports and will continue to take action to combat money laundering, terrorism, organized crime and trafficking in human beings.

As a result of our research, we draw the following conclusions and recommendations:

The issue of the fight against international terrorism also falls into that formula when some countries have not yet entered into conflict with it, have not fully evaluated the seriousness of the threat it represents. In this regard, as possible directions of the international cooperation which the Republic of Moldova can join, we mention the following: the joint training of the anti-terrorist special services subdivisions; the exchange of technologies and experience in anti-terrorism measures; elaboration and improvement of the legal base and of the international legal norms regarding the antiterrorist cooperation; the elaboration of the mechanism for extradition by the state of its citizens or foreign nationals on its territory and accused of terrorist acts; determining the role of the media in shaping world public opinion in the sphere of intolerance towards terrorism.

The anti-terrorist activity of the Republic of Moldova should include the following measures: the creation of an efficient system of enlightening the citizens of the country on cultural and confessional diversity, their historical unity, the history of religious intolerance, genocide and other crimes generated by extremism; condemnation of ideology and extremist and separatist practice; ensuring the effectiveness of measures aimed at counteracting the propaganda of violence and extremist ideology in the media;

developing legal consciousness; creating the conditions for solving social, national and spiritual problems for all social and ethnic-ethnic groups of the population in order to reduce the social basis of terrorism; strengthening the role of the state in ensuring the moral and ethical norms in relation to the competing parts of society.

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