"*Integration of Montenegro in NATO and crisis communication"*

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Content

1. **The achieved level of integration of Montenegro in NATO**
2. **Crisis communication**

1. The achieved level of integration of Montenegro in NATO

At the NATO summit in Wales, held on the 4 and 5 of September 2014, Montenegro was praised on its progress and the decision from the Ministerial Meeting of NATO in June 2014 was confirmed, that till the end of 2015 the decision will be made on Montenegro's readiness to join NATO .

In that direction, the intensified and focused dialoge will be continued with Montenegro in order to improve results in four areas:
 - The rule of law;
 - The functioning of the intelligence and security agencies;
 - The reform of the defense system and
 - Improving public support for Montenegro's membership in NATO

Through the V Annual National Programme MAP Montenegro is implementing its commitments towards NATO

1. The achieved level of integration of Montenegro in NATO

One of the key issues right now is the improvement of the public support for the membership of Montenegro in NATO

Currently public support is:
- IPSOS agency from Belgrade, June 2015 - for 41%, against 47%, while 12% have no opinion.
- The agency DAMAR from Podgorica, June 2015 – for 42%, against 40% no opinion 15%
- Agency CEDEM, Podgorica, July 2015 - if the referendum on membership of Montenegro in NATO was organized now – the turnout in the referendum would be 74% - from that procent 49.5% would vote for and 50.5% would vote against

1. The achieved level of integration of Montenegro in NATO

The main reasons for this level of the citizen support for NATO membership are:
- NATO bombing in 1999
- Serbia's attitude towards Euro-Atlantic integration
- Russia's influence

Currently , the resolution on Montenegro's membership in NATO is in the preparatory stage, and the discussion of the members of the Parliament of Montenegro on this topic will begin on the 15 of September 2015

Crisis communication is the process of establishing communication between the state institutions, international or regional organizations with national or international public in the event of any emergency.

Timely and accurate informing of the public about an emergency situation is of vital importance to the national and international public.

If the information is not accurate and on time, the national and international institutions lose credibility and in the public the space for manipulation and disinformation appears, which implies the loss of control in managing emergency situation itself. (examples)

Potential emergency situation:

- **Enhanced level of the security violation of the citizens and states like: terrorist attacks, natural, technical-technological, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear disasters;**

- **Deaths of the Armed Forces members in the country and international missions and operations abroad;**

- **Explosions of the military ordinance warehouses ;**

- **The disappearance of the weapons, ammunition, mines and military equipment;**

- **Road traffic accidents, accidents of the aircrafts and vessels**

- **High scale diseases, infections, epidemics and poisonings;**

- **The attacks on the members or facilities of the AF, the police, etc;**

- **The fire at the military and civilian objects;**

- **Cyber attacks and**

- **Other events that lead to danger or threat to life and health of citizens.**

Channels of the communication with the public:
- The media (electronic and print);
- Internet (especially social networks).

Establishing a professional relationship with the media is crucial.

In modern conditions, the most important news for the media is the one on which they can gain profits, so it is very important to define accurate relationship with the media in crisis situations.

2. Crisis communication

Politicians at the national and international level always tend to create public opinion and seek to protect their interests.

Politicians very often can be the reason of inadequate communication in a crisis situation, therefore the security system institutions must protect themselves with clearly defined crisis communication documents.

All states have laws and other documents in response to crises, but have no (or very few of them have) documents for crisis communications in a crisis situation.

In order to define a communication procedures NATO has made recommendations, „The NATO Public Affairs Handbook" in which procedures of crisis communication are defined.

Reccomendations:

At national level:

- Develop crisis communication plans in the security system institutions, which are activated in case of a crisis situation;
- In the crisis situation inform the media with the crisis communication procedures;
- Establish institutional cooperation in the security system regarding the implementation of crisis communication plans;
- Organize training and simulation exercises for the application of the crisis communication plan (eg. Montenegro).

Reccomendations:

At regional level:

The requirement for joint crisis management is establishing security and intelligence cooperation;
- Through the initiatives of security cooperation, crisis communication plans should be defined, especially through the regional participation in international military and civilian missions and operations (eg Croatia and Montenegro);
- Establish regional PR cooperation between the countries of the region through the use of NATO recommendations (eg Montenegro)

Thank you on your attention!