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# Military and political decisions: essence, content, classification

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## **Abstract**

The study is based on the experience of the development and practical implementation of military-political decisions aimed at countering Russian aggression by the state authorities of Ukraine. On this basis, the essence and content of military-political decisions are determined, the main approaches to their classification are proposed, taking into account the latest hybrid wars. The conclusions indicate the objective nature of the problem of military-political decisions in the state-building process. The research hypothesis was to prove the primacy of state military-political decisions in modern Ukraine over non-state ones. This hypothesis is generally proven. The main research methods were: historical, institutional, structural-functional, operational, comparative, regulatory and legal methods.

**Key words:** military policy, military-political decision, state, civil society, hybrid war.

## **Introduction**

Based on the content of “management”, “political”, “state-political” and “state-management” decisions, the meaning of which is constantly being formed in the domestic scientific space, it is possible to determine the essence and content of military-political decisions (MPD). The main theoretical approaches to their definition are political, public-management, informational, teleological and other approaches (Berezovska N.). Broadly speaking, a military-political decision should be understood as the action of a conscious (partially conscious, unconscious, uninformed) subject of power relations (a subject of political activity) aimed at achieving a specific socio-political goal with the direct or indirect use of armed force. Subjects of political activity can be both state authorities, that their competence includes the exercise of relevant powers in the field of security and defense of the state, as well as non-state actors of the political process (mainly influential parties and public movements) capable of creating and implementing solutions in the field of security and defense. Such pluralism in relation to the MPD is appropriate, first of all, for democratic states, where both the state and civil society are participants in political competition. In autocratic states, the head of state has the full concentration of authority to adopt the MPD. Other participants in political life are prohibited from doing so, and security and defense initiatives can even lead to criminal liability.

## **Result and Discussion**

The organizational and ideological basis of the MPD is the military policy of the state. There is a close generic-species connection between military policy and state decisions in the field of security and defense: military policy determines the quality, direction and timeliness of specific decisions in the field of security and defense. It is appropriate to present the very dynamics of military policy in the form of a changing series of MPD, that reflects the military-political situation in the international arena and within the country. It should be noted that there is a close feedback relationship between

them: the military potential is able to adjust the military policy of the state, sometimes to a significant extent.

The expression “means of the armed force” in the given definition makes it possible to explain the following. The military-political experience of the second half of the 20th century (primarily during the period of the Cold War between the geostrategic West led by the United States and the geostrategic East led by the USSR) allows us to distinguish two models of organizational design of the means of the armed forces at the disposal of the state – or in the form of a military organization of the state (MOS), or in the form of the security and defense sector (SDS). The difference between them is significant.

MOS is a group of state authorities and military formations whose activities are aimed at protecting the system from internal and external threats. The specificity of the “military-organizational” model is the exclusive position of the head of state in solving security and defense issues. The post-Soviet presidential republics – Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and the countries of Central Asia – chose this model as the institutional basis for the security of their political systems. The powers of the heads of these states (presidents) in the sphere of security and national defense are especially important. Suffice it to say that they are not subject not only to prohibitions, but also to ordinary corrections by other bodies.

The antithesis of the “military organization of the state” in democratic states is the “security and defense sector”, the state-administrative basis of which is broad democratic civilian control over the state’s armed forces, co-responsibility of constitutional bodies for national security. security and defense, involvement of civil society structures in solving security and defense tasks. Such control excludes sole management of legal armed formations by the head of state or a separate branch of government (legislative, executive). In addition, SDS is characterized by dosed denationalization (denationalization) of military policy, creating the possibility of its creation jointly by both state authorities and non-state structures – political parties, public organizations, analytical centers, mass media, etc. The denationalization of military policy should be considered as a way of its diversification in the conditions of democratic state formation, the basis of constructive integration of the state and civil society in matters of security and defense. Foreign policy assistance in responding to security and national defense threats looks perfectly normal in a country that relies on SBS. In addition, the creation of the SDS reflects a Western (Euro-Atlantic) approach to solving military-political problems. The post-Soviet parliamentary republics (Baltic countries, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova) chose a military policy model based on a “sectoral” vision of ways to ensure national defense potential in accordance with NATO recommendations (Slobodian O. F.), the basis of constructive integration of the state and civil society in matters of security and defense.

Ukraine has come a long way from the creation of the MOS based on the remnants of the Soviet army stationed in Ukraine (1991-2012) to the creation of the foundations of the SDS (after 2013) [3]. The domestic version of SDS is currently at a stage of rapid development. A test of its strength is the Russian-Ukrainian war, the active phase of which began in 2022 in the form of a large-scale invasion of Russian troops on Ukrainian territory.

MPD should be considered as a separate, complex and responsible element in the state administration system. Dynamic changes in the military-political situation are a norm of the development of global, regional and domestic political processes. Some changes are gradual and predictable, others appear suddenly, threatening the vital interests of the state and society. This requires a quick, sometimes instant reaction - instant analysis of the situation, making responsible and error-free decisions and their quick implementation. Such decisions should reflect the peculiarities of the situation, correspond to the constitutional provisions and the provisions of the military doctrine of the state. The effectiveness of the military-political activity of the state

authorities is evidenced by the degree of timeliness of the implementation of the MPD and the possibility of their systematic implementation.

The development of MPD is a responsible and complex stage (component) of military policy, since such decisions must be clearly understood not only by their authors, but also by their immediate executors. In democratic countries, these decisions can be (become) the object of public opinion and mass media attention. However, in any case, the MPD should be considered as an element of spiritual motivation of the life activities of the social groups that implement it – both ruling and neutral or oppositional. This explains the importance of explanatory and educational (patriotic) work among servicemen and civilians who participate in solving security tasks and military (defense) activities.

Awareness of the content of MPD is related to the identification of their specific features, which distinguish decisions of this type from other types of decisions (economic, political, military, etc.). The main characteristics of MPD include:

- state level of development, design and practical implementation;
- significant determination by national values and interests;
- the need to take into account the international (contractual, allied, neutral) obligations of the state in the field of security and defense, the impact of international processes on the level of national security and defense;
- legal and procedural registration (decisions are made by certain state bodies in a predetermined order and recorded in regulatory documents);
- mandatory performance;
- the complexity of the manifestation of social effects, which is a consequence of two circumstances: a) MPD refers to a complex subject of management, which can be presented as a rather extensive social system (people, nation, state authorities, security and defense sector, individual). social layers, structures of civil society, etc.; b) MPD always has a versatile impact on other spheres of social life (economic, political, scientific and technical, technological, informational, demographic, spiritual and cultural, etc.);
- the presence of specific methods of active influence of the subject of MPD on the subject of their implementation. Application of coercion and special control measures to the object is not excluded;
- complex nature of execution. MPD requires a high degree of organization and efficiency of state structures to preserve the necessary dynamics of practical implementation of such decisions;
- the necessity of early creation of a material and technical base for probable decisions, the adoption of which should be expected with a high probability. This dictates the need for prior allocation of resources (human, logistical, financial, informational, etc.) to prepare the necessary security and defense infrastructure;
- time limits. Even the best decision aimed at obtaining the maximum result can be ineffective if it is not taken in time. The time factor is related to requirements for the speed of information collection and processing, their processing, the need to make decisions in conditions of limited information, unreliability and possible risk. In this regard, intelligence agencies play an important role in ensuring the flow of information.

MPD is closely related to the tasks of state authorities: almost every security and defense task facing the state is formalized in a separate MPD or set of decisions. These tasks, in turn, reflect the scope and depth of legislative (constitutional) powers of state structures, as well as the nature of external influence on the state-building process. Based on this, strategic (long-term), operational (current) and calendar (phased) tasks should be distinguished among tasks for which the time factor is the most important, while crisis tasks are additionally included in the list of operational tasks.

In most cases, additional factors should be expected during the development and adoption of MPD: the availability of alternative sources of information, limited resources, various activities of pressure groups, the opposition, mass media, etc. Therefore, MPD should be understood as a process that should not be coordinated. It is quite likely that MPD can have a non-linear nature of interaction with other social actors and lead to the simultaneous generation of a number of alternative proposals and solutions as a combination of requirements, expectations, hopes, aspirations, etc.

The presence of a large number of MPDs with different degrees of detail requires their unambiguous classification, which makes it possible to establish relationships between phenomena (events) and place them in a certain sequence or system based on common features. Such features, in particular, are:

1) specificity of the subject and the object. MPD of any complexity is a social act that expresses the interests and needs of the political system (state) and society (social group), thereby fulfilling the role of subject-object concretization of the military-political process.

2) special importance of goals and tasks, which depend on the quality of life of society (people, nation) and even their very existence. These indicators are present in every MPD and fundamentally affect its content.

3) strict conditionality of temporal and spatial indicators. MPD is adopted and implemented by an authorized body at a specific time and in a specific territory.

On this basis, MPD can be classified as follows (Transformation of Ukraine's military-political decisions):

**by subject of acceptance:** a) supranational (adopted by international structures delegated by sovereign states to resolve military-political and security issues); b) state (established by authorized bodies of the sovereign state on the basis of the Basic Law and other legal acts); c) departmental (prepared and adopted by separate bodies of executive power or state structures with special status);

**depending on the subject of influence:** a) international – related to the organization and regulation of military-political relations in a separate supranational region. In this case, the population of a specific country, a group of countries, or an entire continent becomes the objects of supranational MPD; b) general – refer to large social groups (people, nation, titular ethnic group) of this country; c) partial – refer to individual social groups (age, professional, educational, gender, ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, territorial, which are structural elements of the entire nation); d) special or local - accepted in relation to a selectively determined social element (a small social group, individuals important in a specific historical situation); e) single – are non-systemic (one-time);

**by direction:** a) internal, involving the use of armed violence (mainly police) inside the country with the aim of regulating social relations in accordance with legal norms or imperative requirements of the authorities; b) external, aimed at the state's fulfillment of international obligations in the field of security and defense;

**by legal obligation:** a) directives, which are mandatory; b) recommended – used to exert moral, political or psychological influence;

**according to the method of regulating social relations:** a) organizational; b) regulatory; c) controlling;

**according to the social importance of goals (tasks):** a) main (general, main); b) secondary;

**by time criterion (duration of activity):** a) continuous – periodic; b) long-term (strategic) – short-term (operational) – one-time (tactical); c) preliminary, intermediate and final;

**according to the nature of the development of the modern military and political situation:** distinguish programmed solutions (including standard), repetitive, and non-programmed – non-standard, one-time, unique, requiring creativity, experience, professionalism, initiative.

In addition, it should be taken into account that the MPD can have a different structure. According to this feature, they are divided into oral and written. This form is explained by the complexity and variety of problems that need to be solved. The written form is dominant. This form reflects stability, legal responsibility, orderliness and consolidation of information, without which the effective organization of state administration in the field of security and defense is impossible. However, in certain situations, oral administrative decisions are also used, including those of a military-political nature. They may relate to important issues that require special confidentiality and are not subject to public discussion.

In addition, MPD can be differentiated depending on the order of their preparation and adoption. This basis allows to distinguish the following types of decisions: individual, group, collective, mixed.

It is proposed to add to this list MPD related to the approach to the factor of war and its deployment: a) pre-war; b) decision of war; c) post-war. The problem of this approach is to determine the time frame of the pre-war and post-war periods, which can fluctuate within quite significant limits. The problem is aggravated by the fact that for some countries, the distinction between the concepts of “pre-war” and “post-war” is quite conditional, since the post-war situation can be interpreted as a pre-war one aimed at preparing the country for a new war.

Taking into account the realities of today, it is necessary to additionally highlight air defense systems related to various aspects of hybrid warfare, which can be used individually, in batches or masse, depending on the goal and intensity of the aggressor’s influence on the object of the hybrid attack. At the same time, it is necessary to single out air defense systems aimed at the wide use of the following influences on the enemy: a) military-economic (energy, financial, technological, sanctions-restrictive); b) informational (informational and psychological); c) cybernetic; d) social (migration); e) terrorist and sabotage; e) ecological; g) military. Mathematical combinatorics allows you to build a set of “packages” of decomposition (weakening, exhaustion) of the state and society, against which hostilities are conducted in their hybrid form.

Another aspect of the classification of MPD is their differentiation according to the degree of interaction between the state and civil society. The following decisions can be distinguished: a) state; b) state-civil or civil-state (combined) decisions; c) civilian solutions to compensate for the weakness of the state in solving security and defense issues that are critical for the survival of the state.

The given classification of fiberboard largely meets the requirements of modern practice, opening the prospect of their timely development and application in the military-political process. The proposed bases for the classification of MPD indicate a diverse approach to understanding their social significance. At the same time, it is worth agreeing that the quantitative increase of classification databases does not allow to fully cover all the specifics of MPD adopted by various subjects in specific situations (Dereko V. N.).

## **Conclusions**

Among the general arsenal of social decisions, a special place is occupied by military-political decisions, the purpose of which is to protect society from the influence of destructive factors (challenges, threats, dangers, risks) based on the use or preparation for the use of armed force. The latter can be combined into integral state-controlled complexes in the form of: a) the security and defense sector (democratic states); b) military organization of the state (authoritarian states).

Ukraine has come a long way from laying the foundations of its own military organization of the state to the formation of the security and defense sector in accordance with democratic standards.

The main subject of the adoption of the MPD is the state. Non-state parts of the political system (parties, movements, mass media, civil society), depending on the degree of democratization of society, are able to adapt MPD, but do not act as an alternative source of their production.

The military-political decision primarily reflects the qualitative features of the state's military policy and is a means of its implementation. At the same time, the MPD has a significant ability to change state policy: success or failure in the implementation of the adopted MPD is a positive or negative correlate of subsequent state decisions in the field of security and defense.

Military-political decisions have their own structure, functional purpose, terms of deployment, social base and other important characteristics. First of all, one should distinguish the subjective and objective grounds of such decisions, their target orientation, openness or closedness to the general public.

An important theoretical problem is the classification of MPD, the content parameters of which are constantly becoming more complicated. In particular, this applies to various decisions related to the factors of hybrid warfare and the participation of civil society in solving security and defense problems.

In the conditions of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, which began in 2014, the state authorities constantly adopt the MPDs, the purpose of latter is to defeat the aggressor, return the country to peaceful development, and implement the strategy of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

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