

## EDITORIAL

### 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNING OF WORLD WAR I – HAVE WE LEARNED ANYTHING FROM THE CONFLICTS IN THE PAST 100 YEARS

With this thematic issue the editorial board wishes to commemorate this important anniversary. Our objective was not to discuss military history, for we, as the name says, deal with *Contemporary* military challenges. However, we cannot avoid mentioning certain military topics and facts, as it is rather difficult to assess what we have learnt from the conflicts in the past one hundred years without examining and presenting the framework of certain events.

It has been a long and dynamic century. A lot has been written about this period, especially from the security as well as military and defence aspects. World War One and Two were unexpectedly extensive in political, security, defence, economic, societal, geographical and geopolitical sense. The twentieth century was also marked by two other wars: the Cold War and the fight against terrorism. The latter was gradually renamed into combat against terrorism. In Slovenia, however, we came to an agreement that this area in fact refers to counter terrorism.

The aforementioned wars were strongly influenced by developments in various fields, such as technology, informatics, civil engineering, logistics, engineering, aviation, armament, transport and so on.

A lot of interesting individuals influenced the course of events in this period. It all started with Gavrilo Princip who fired at the heir to the throne Franz Ferdinand on that fatal Sunday, 28 June 1914. This eventually resulted in Austria-Hungary's decision to attack Serbia. A lot of names found their place on the historical timeline; some of them with a positive and others with a negative connotation. For Slovenians, the best symbol of that time is undoubtedly the first Slovenian General Rudolf Maister, even though some generations never even heard of him in school. The times are changing, and so are our views on certain historical memories and the facts related to them. It is therefore appropriate to remember certain things, persons and events, and it is

also appropriate to analyse and to assess them in order to learn from them. Especially with the intent of not repeating that which is seen throughout the eyes of the history as wrongful, bad or harmful to an individual, nations, nature, states and the world.

As the answer to our question whether we have learnt anything in the past one hundred years, **Uroš Tovornik** prepared a paper titled *The time of the formation of a new world order*, in which he claims that modern security issues originate, in particular, from the decisions adopted at the Versailles Peace Conference and the events that followed. In the conclusion, the author sums up that modern geopolitical situation differs substantially from the one a hundred years ago or, on the other hand, resembles it very much.

In her paper *Chemical weapons – particularity of World War I or a still imminent danger*, **Valerija Bernik** takes us through the history of the use of different types of chemical weapons. The latter were first tested by the Austro-Hungarian soldiers on the Isonzo Front in combat with their Italian opponents. Further on she presents all efforts the international community invests in the prevention and limitation of the use of chemical weapons as well as in protection against them.

It is nowadays difficult to imagine that a Slovenian would voluntarily engage in a war far from their homeland and fight in the region that lies on the border between Romania and Bulgaria. **Jože Rozman** writes about this particularity in his paper titled *Military geographical dimension of Dobrogea and (Slovenian) volunteers in this battlefield in World War I*. What was once a territory where severe combats took place, is now an area important for the allied forces combating the crisis in Ukraine.

In the paper titled *Market Garden – the epic and the tragedy of allied paratrooper units in the Netherlands*, **Mircea Tănase** presents and analyses the mentioned allied operation in World War One in detail, assessing what went according to plans and what went wrong. Tănase concludes the paper by stressing the importance of intelligence both in the present and in the future.

**Viktor Potočnik** writes about *Slovenian Armed Forces size and character*. A lot has already been written, in general, about how many members and which types of units the Slovenian Armed Forces should have. In this paper, the author confronts us with facts. His overview and the calculations are very simple and transparent. Is there anyone among the readers who does not share his opinion and would be willing to write an article about it?

In her paper titled *Military medical intelligence with limited resources in the case of small countries*, **Tanja Kremžar Kovač** states that essential to this sub-type of intelligence and security activities is the acquisition of data on medical and environmental hazards and the medical capabilities in the international area in which members of the armed forces are engaged. Integrating her experience in the paper, the author also explains why this is an important topic and how this activity takes place.

**Maja Garb** read the book of Thomas R. Mockaitis *Soldiers of Misfortune?* and wrote a peer review titled *The challenges of military and security contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan*.

With this issue, we conclude the year of important anniversaries, as we have named the year 2014 at the very beginning. We invite you to write on and read about the topics for which we have prepared an open invitation for articles for 2015, which is published on our website <http://www.slovenskavojska.si/en/publications/>.