

Main Staff of the Army
of Republika Srpska
Strictly confidential no. 02/5-210
19 November 1992

/handwritten/: Deadline for the Decision of
the Main Staff of the Army of Republika Srpska
is 1200 hours on 23 November 1992

Very urgent

Directive for further operations of
the Army of Republika Srpska

To the Commander (Chief of Staff) personally
Directive operational no. 4

Map 1:200,000

1. Despite the ceasefire arranged by the Army of Republika Srpska, the Croatian Defence Council and the Main Staff of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Muslims), the enemy, as usual, are continuing intensive combat operations, particularly in areas where our forces are going over from the offensive to the defensive due to the ceasefire. Even if they are "observing" the ceasefire in some places, it is because they do not have enough strength or they are regrouping and concentrating their troops for further offensive operations.

The Command of the regular Croatian Army, whose brigades are operating on the territory of the former Bosnia and Herzegovina, did not even want to sign the ceasefire. Since United Nations institutions are doing nothing to contain or condemn the aggression of the regular Croatian Army against Republika Srpska, the Croatian Army is even launching large-scale offensive operations in Herzegovina, Posavina and Central Bosnia with intensive and massive fire support from the territory of the State of Croatia. What is more, the Security Council and other United Nations institutions are finding ways to prevent Croatia from being portrayed as an aggressor in order to avoid imposing economic sanctions on it and are even finding ways to blame the Serbs for the presence of regular Croatian Army forces on our territory. We should not be surprised if all the forces of the regular Croatian Army in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina are placed under the unified command of the Main Staff of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In that way Croatia's aggression against Republika Srpska would be disguised, and the possibilities of supplying weapons, ammunition, personnel and other /resources/ to the enemies of the Serbian people would reach unimaginable proportions without the possibility of our proving it to the world.

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The Muslim armed forces and the HVO /Croatian Defence Council/ forces have largely been crushed as large military formations, particularly after their mutual armed clashes in Central Bosnia. However, what brings them together is the Serbs as their common enemy and the regular Croatian Army as a factor of cohesion. The enemy's offensive power should not be disregarded, particularly their sabotage, terrorist, ambush and surprise attacks.

The UNPROFOR forces are growing in number, and although they are on a peacekeeping mission, they are not unbiased. Only the Serbian side has to render accounts. It is demanded of us to do favours, make concessions and ensure compliance while the enemy and their actions are mainly protected and even covered up.

It is obvious that the enemies of the Serbian people do not intend to comply with the ceasefire, but are trying to create conditions to get through the winter as easily as possible so that in the spring, when they are better armed, organised and rested, they can start an even stronger offensive with the ultimate goal of annihilating the Serbs in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in the Balkans. The possibility of foreign factors providing them with ample assistance should not be ruled out.

A directive by the Main Staff (operational no. 3), strictly confidential no. 02/5-92 of 3 August 1992, and its amendments, set the Army of Republika Srpska the task of crushing the enemy offensive through the most persistent defence along the border of Serbian territories and launching offensive operations in selected areas to cut off, encircle and smash enemy groups, liberate parts of Serbian territory and ensure normal communications through Republika Srpska.

Most of the tasks have been carried out in full, and among the most significant we would stress the following: (1) The 1st Krajina Corps has preserved and expanded the borders of Republika Srpska, smashed enemy groups in Central Bosnia and Bosanska Posavina, liberated Bosanski Brod, Jajce and other settlements in its area of responsibility, protected the Serbian people and preserved the corridor through Posavina. (2) The 2nd Krajina Corps is successfully defending the north-western borders of the Republic on the Una river, has participated in the liberation of Jajce together with the 1st Krajina Corps, and is holding positions towards Livno and Bugojno. (3) The Eastern Bosnia Corps has managed to preserve the combat readiness of most of its units, neutralise most of the paramilitary formations in Semberija, preserve the corridor, crush enemy forces in the wider area of Bosanski Šamac and /Mount/ Majeveca, and strengthen command and control of the Corps and subordinate units. (4) The Sarajevo-Romanija Corps has fully stabilised the command and control system of the Corps and subordinate units, prevented the enemy from lifting the blockade of Sarajevo, severed the Muslim corridor Konjic – Trnovo – Goražde in the areas of Igman and Jabuk /?village/ and considerably expanded the free territories towards Olovo, Pazarić and Žepa.

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(5) After the withdrawal of the Army of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from the wider area of Prevlaka, thanks to the superhuman efforts and heroic struggle of the soldiers and people of Herzegovina, the Herzegovina Corps crushed two enemy offensives and preserved the compactness of Eastern Herzegovina, established the Foča – Gacko corridor and, in coordinated action with the Sarajevo-Romanija Corps, severed the Muslim corridor Delijaš - Jabuka – Goražde. (6) Meanwhile, the Drina Corps was formed. Its command and units have been brought up to the highest level of combat readiness, and are successfully crushing the enemy in Podrinje. (7) The Air

Force and Anti-Aircraft Defence have achieved maximum results in supporting the ground forces, which, according to /the number of/ a/p /sorties/, has not been recorded anywhere in the world.

The following tasks from Directive no. 3 have not been carried out:

(1) The towns of Goražde, Gradačac, Maglaj, Bugojno, Olovo and Orašje have not been liberated. (2) The Posavina corridor has not been substantially widened. (3) The enemy groups in the wider area of Goražde, Žepa, Srebrenica and Cerska have not been totally routed. (4) The Herzegovina Corps has failed to reach the left bank of the Neretva river and secure access to the sea.

In the forthcoming period, the Army of Republika Srpska has the following tasks:

(1) Put up the most persistent defence on all fronts to preserve the free territories of Republika Srpska. (2) Launch offensive operations to crush and drive out of our territory the units of the regular army of the State Of Croatia, crush the Croatian-Muslim forces on the approaches to Doboj and in the areas of Gradačac, Brčko, Orašje, Goražde, Srebrenica and on the right bank of the Una river, and open a corridor towards Herzegovina. (4) Create conditions for the state leadership of Republika Srpska to participate equally in resolving the crisis in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina with other international factors. (6) Create all the conditions necessary to see the army and the Serbian people successfully through the winter.

3. Despite all the political manoeuvres of most of the international factors and our enemies, the State of Republika Srpska has become a reality in the Balkans and a factor which the international community must take into account whether they like it or not. The aggression by the armed forces of the State of Croatia has also shown Croatia's claims on the Republic of the Serbian Krajina. Slowly but surely, this is polarising the international public and is gradually absolving us from unjust accusations that we are to blame for this war.

The world is becoming more and more aware that we are waging a defensive war for our freedom and against the genocide of the Serbian people, and that we are waging this war by ourselves, without any external influence and without the participation of other armed forces.

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4. I HAVE DECIDED THE FOLLOWING: The main forces of the VRS /Army of Republika Srpska/ are to stabilise the defence on the lines reached, cleanse the free territory of Republika Srpska of the remaining enemy groups and paramilitary formations, crush and drive the regular Croatian Army forces out of our territory, while the auxiliary forces are to crush the Muslim forces in the Podrinje /Drina river valley/ recover the lost territories in Herzegovina and open a corridor through Herzegovina.

The aims of these operations are as follows:

- crush and drive out the regular units of the armed forces of Croatia from the territory of the former Bosnia and Herzegovina,

- preserve the free territories on all fronts, set up a border service, stabilise the existing corridors and open new ones to ensure unimpeded communication in Republika Srpska,
- launch offensive operations to crush large HVO /Croatian Defence Council/ and Muslim groupings in the territory of Republika Srpska and force them into unconditionally surrendering their weapons or destroy them,
- continue offensive operations in Central Bosnia,
- open a corridor to Herzegovina and recover the lost territories in Herzegovina by reaching the left bank of the Neretva river and the administrative borders with Croatia to the south and, if possible, gain access to the sea,
- create conditions for the functioning of civilian government in the Republic, and make possible for the State leadership to act in international relations as an equal partner that has an armed force at its disposal, and
- ensure the best possible living conditions for the army and the civilian population during the winter.

This operation is to be carried out in two stages of indefinite duration.

During the first stage lasting between 20 and 30 days, crush the regular units of the armed forces of Croatia and drive them out of the territory of the former Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the second stage, lasting until the final liberation of all the territories of Republika Srpska and following the crushing of the regular forces of the State of Croatia, regroup your forces and achieve the remaining aims of the operation.

Combat activities during the operation will be supported by the Air Force and Anti-Aircraft Defence of the VRS in accordance with the international situation, the capabilities and requests /handwritten till the end of the sentence/ of corps commanders, but exclusively by decision of members of the Supreme Command, the Commander or the Chief of Staff of the VRS.

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The city of Sarajevo, the corridors and the liberated territories are to be defended with determination. Readiness for defence – immediately, and for offensive operations – 24 November 1992.

5. The tasks of the units:

a) The 1st Krajina Corps, together with the Doboj Operative Group, the 89th RABR /Rocket and Artillery Brigade/ and the POHE /expansion unknown/ Section, is to continue securing the liberated territories and breaking up the enemy forces in Central Bosnia and Bosanska Posavina, focusing on the crushing of the regular /handwritten/ HVO forces.

/Handwritten/ Tasks: (1)

Launch active operations on the Jajce – Turbe and the Jajce – Bugojno axes and on the approaches to Doboj (Malešići village – Gračanica, Jablanica village – Maglaj, Teslić – Novi Šeher) to tie down as many of the enemy forces as possible and link up on the wider front with the Ozren brigades. (2) Continue attacks towards Maglaj, Gradačac and Gračanica to liberate them. (3) The 2nd and 3rd Brigades are to coordinate their operations with the Eastern Bosnia Corps in the Orašje area. (4) Carry

out additional mobilisation of forces, resubordinating two brigades to the Eastern Bosnia Corps and one to the Sarajevo-Romanija Corps.

Set up a KM /Command Post/ in Banja Luka, and an IKM /Forward Command Post/ as decided by the Commander.

b) The 2nd Krajina Corps shall put up persistent and active defence to prevent the Corps area of responsibility being split from the direction of Bihać towards Petrovac and from Livno towards Glamoč.

Task: Regroup your forces and launch offensive operations on the Petrovac-Bihać and the Petrovac-Bosanska Krupa axes to crush the Ustasha forces and drive them from the left bank of the Una river, take the dominant high ground on the right bank of the Una river, take control of the other bank and go over to the defensive along the Novi – V. Ljutoč (tt /trig point/ 941) line. Coordinate the activities of some of your forces with those of the 30th Krajina Division on the Donji Vakuf – Bugojno – Gornji Vakuf axis. Defend with great determination the routes leading from Western Herzegovina towards the Kupres and Glamoč plateaux. In the event of the movement of strong enemy forces from Western Herzegovina, attack them in the assembly stage without letting them attack first.

Set up a Command Post in Drvar and a Forward Command Post as decided by the Commander.

c) The Eastern Bosnia Corps is again to carry out additional mobilisation in its area of responsibility to bring its units up to strength, and then use its main forces in coordination with the 1st Krajina Corps to crush the Croatian-Muslim forces in the wider Orašje area, liberate Orašje and reach the Sava river where it is to go over to the defensive and secure the international border. Then it should regroup its forces, roll back the enemy forces from the wider Brčko area and as far away from the corridor as possible.

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Some of its forces are to coordinate their activities with the Drina Corps on the Kalesija - Caparde - Zvornik axis, operating from the /Mount/ Majevisa area. After taking control of dominant features, stand by for operations towards the Tuzla basin.

Set up a Command Post in Bijeljina, and a Forward Command Post as decided by the Corps Commander.

d) The Drina Corps: From its present positions, its main forces shall persistently defend Višegrad (the dam), Zvornik and the corridor, while the rest of its forces in the wider Podrinje region shall exhaust the enemy, inflict the heaviest possible losses on him and force him to leave the Birač, Žepa and Goražde areas together with the Muslim population. First offer the able-bodied and armed men to surrender, and if they refuse, destroy them. After that, unblock and repair the Konjević Polje – Zvornik road, make it fit for traffic, and stand by for intensive combat against infiltrated sabotage, terrorist, surprise and ambush attacks and paramilitary groups.

Set up a Command Post in Vlasenica, and a Forward Command Post as decided by the Corps Commander.

e) The Sarajevo-Romanija Corps: Through persistent defence, its main forces are to keep Sarajevo and Igman under full blockade, and in accordance with developments, tighten the circle, cut off and isolate parts of the city and the surrounding communities. Coordinate the activities of the other forces with the Drina and the Herzegovina Corps, expand the corridor towards Herzegovina on the Sarajevo – Dobro Polje - Miljevina - Foča route. Through active operations of some of the forces, tie down as many of the enemy forces as possible on the Pale – Prača village – Goražde route, and coordinate your activities with the Drina Corps in breaking up the Muslim forces in the Podrinje. In coordination with the Herzegovina Corps open a corridor towards Herzegovina on the Sarajevo – Miljevina – Foča route. Set up a Command Post in the Pale area and a Forward Command Post in Lukavica.

f) The Herzegovina Corps: Through decisive defence preserve the territorial compactness of Eastern Herzegovina and carry out additional mobilisation to bring the Corps units up to strength.

Task: Through decisive defence prevent possible enemy advances along routes leading from the Neretva valley to Podveležje, Nevesinje, Stolac, and through offensive operations on the Trebinje – Dubrovnik axis and the Trebinje – Grude axis recover the previously lost territories, take control of Ivanica village and Konavle, and reach the sea. In coordination with the Sarajevo-Romanija Corps, open a corridor on the Foča – Miljevina – Trnovo – Sarajevo route to ensure communication between Herzegovina and other areas of Republika Srpska and cut off the Goražde basin from the Muslim-controlled Konjic – Pazarić – Trnovo – Goražde corridor.

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At the request of the Corps Command, the Main Staff of the Army of Republika Srpska will strengthen the Corps with non-establishment combat hardware (artillery, tanks, armoured personnel carriers, vehicles, etc.).

Set up a Command Post in Bileća and a Forward Command Post as decided by the Corps Commander.

g) The Air Force and Anti-Aircraft Defence: Keep combat aircraft on standby for operations in Bosanska Posavina, the Neretva river valley and at the request of the Corps Commander. The use of aircraft can be ordered by (1) members of the Presidency of Republika Srpska / the Supreme Command, (2) the Commander of the Army of Republika Srpska, and (3) the Chief of the Main Staff of the Army of Republika Srpska. Resubordinate one squadron of POHE in sections (each with two helicopters) to the 1st Krajina Corps, the Drina Corps and the Herzegovina Corps. Redeploy the helicopters immediately. Their bases will be designated by Corps commanders. The use of POHE is to be announced to the Main Staff of the Army of Republika Srpska three hours in advance.

Helicopters for communications and for the transport of the wounded may be used only on the orders of the Commander of the Army of Republika Srpska and the Chief of the Main Staff of the Army of Republika Srpska. Take complete care of all the aircraft and make them fit for use in winter conditions.

Set up a Command Post in Banja Luka and a Forward Command Post in an area in which aviation will be concentrated, as decided by the Commander of the Air Force and Anti-Aircraft Defence.

6. Combat support

a) Intelligence and security support:

The focus of intelligence and security support is to be on combat reconnaissance and the discovery of infiltrated sabotage and terrorist groups and paramilitary formations. Since the Muslim and HVO forces cannot put up an organised resistance to larger units, they are forced to resort to guerrilla warfare. They are mainly operating in small groups and are inflicting serious losses on us.

The focus of security support is to be on the screening of personnel joining our army units and commands, and special attention is to be paid to “volunteers”. Particularly noticeable are losses in the officer corps (about 24% of the personnel knocked out of action are officers).

b) Engineering support:

In view of the fact that efforts to ensure engineering support have been hampered by winter, it is necessary to pay maximum attention to ensuring movement and erecting additional obstacles.

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Remove the snow from the roads and protect the roads from snowdrifts at critical points. Spread sand and grit on uphill and downhill sections of road. Keep a team with engineering machinery on round-the-clock duty on mountain passes and sections of roads exposed to snowfall. Engage road maintenance companies on main and regional roads.

Depending on the height of snow and the degree to which roads are affected by it, erect additional obstacles as prescribed for minefields and groups of mines in snow.

c) Other combat support measures, command and communications – as in Directive no. 3.

d) The decisions of the Corps commanders are to be sent to the Main Staff by 2000 hours on 23 November 1992.

Drafted by: Major-General Manojlo MILOVANOVIĆ

Typed by: Gordana PEJANOVIĆ

COMMANDER

Lieutenant-General

Ratko MLADIĆ

To: 1st Krajina Corps, 2nd Krajina Corps, Eastern Bosnia Corps, Herzegovina Corps,
Air Force and Anti-Aircraft Defence, 14th, 27th, 30th and 35th POB /logistics
bases/

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