

**Analytical report:**  
**National security and defence**  
**(October 2022)**

**The most important events of the month.** On October 8, 2022, the Belarusian authorities announced that they had reliable information about Ukraine planning military strikes against Belarus. On October 10, 2022, Aliaksandr Lukashenka said at a meeting on security issues that NATO and a number of European countries are considering options for possible aggression against Belarus, up to a nuclear strike. He mentioned primarily Poland and the United States. Due to the fact that "... training of militants from among the Belarusian radicals to carry out sabotage, terrorist attacks and organize a military rebellion in Belarus" has begun on the territory of neighbouring countries, the State Security Committee (SSC) was instructed to carry out the necessary counter-terrorist measures. Lukashenka once again accused Ukraine of planning strikes against Belarus. After that, he announced the start of the deployment of a joint Belarusian-Russian regional group of troops.

**Developments within the month.** The beginning of partial mobilisation in Russia caused a stir and a wave of fears in Belarus about the possible involvement of the country in the Russian-Ukrainian war. This topic had to be commented on at the highest level. On October 4, 2022, Lukashenka said that there is no need to announce mobilisation in Belarus, but it is necessary to study the Russian experience in its implementation. Including registration of those liable for military service as well as the training of trained reserves. Once again Lukashenka expressed concern about the military preparations of Poland.

After that, on behalf of Lukashenka, the heads of law enforcement agencies were sent "to the people" – to talk about the peace-loving policy of official Minsk and the intrigues of the West. Here are the main narratives:

- The West not only builds up military forces near the borders of Belarus, but also conducts a subversive information campaign, may try to provoke an internal armed conflict in Belarus. It also plans to destroy Russia.

- It is possible for armed formations to enter Belarus from both Ukrainian territory and from the territory of other countries to seize a bridgehead and subsequently advance to Minsk. But for this it is necessary to destabilise the domestic political situation.

- The West is fighting with the hands of Ukrainians against Russia.

- The West and Ukraine have aggressive plans against Belarus under the pretext of the alleged possibility of Minsk entering the war.

On October 10, 2022, Lukashenka signed decrees on the activities of state security agencies. Which are withdrawn from the executive authorities and are directly subordinate to Lukashenka.

On October 11, 2022, the State Secretariat of the Security Council began a comprehensive check of the readiness of the army to perform tasks. During which the troops trained putting on alert, making a march, deploying in designated areas with the performance of combat training tasks.

On October 13, 2022, Minister of Foreign Affairs Uladzimir Makei, in an interview with the Russian media "Izvestia", announced the introduction of a counter-terrorist operation regime in Belarus. Which caused quite a stir. On October 14, 2022, Makei's statement was refuted by the SSC. After that, Makei began to claim that his statement was

taken out of context – he meant counter-terrorism measures. Lukashenka confused the situation even more by saying that a regime of increased terrorist threat was introduced “... due to the aggravation of the situation along the perimeter of our borders”, but not due to a terrorist act inside the country. And the first step of this regime was the deployment of the Belarusian-Russian group of troops. The probable reason for all this was Makei’s slip of a tongue against the background of general tension.

On October 14, 2022, at the CIS summit, Lukashenka stated that “... a real hybrid war has been unleashed against all of us. And Ukraine is just a pretext here. The plans of individual countries for revenge for the lost campaigns of the last century have been hatched for a long time, starting, as you know, from the first days after the victory in the Great Patriotic War, and maybe even earlier”. According to Lukashenka, The goal of the West is to establish control over the resources of the post-Soviet space. Unfortunately for Lukashenka, the CIS countries do not demonstrate the proper level of solidarity. Judging by the lack of public reaction to such statements during the CIS summit, the Belarusian ruler was again left alone with his anti-Western maxims.

On October 18, 2022, the government decided to allocate funds to increase the salaries of state employees from the reserve funds of local authorities. This will also apply to monetary allowances for certified employees of emergency situations units.

On October 20, 2022, the SSC head, Ivan Tsertsel, said that the activities of the military intelligence network of Ukraine were stopped in Belarus: a citizen of Ukraine and two citizens of Belarus were detained. A former soldier who worked for the Security Service of Ukraine was detained as well. A large number of citizens of this country, who were thrown into Belarusian territory to conduct intelligence activities, were also detained. Obviously, we are talking about several independent stories. Interestingly, the Ukrainian side did not comment on this spy story.

On October 25, 2022, Lukashenka received reports from the heads of departments of the State Security Committee for the Brest and Hrodna regions. The issues of the situation in the adjacent territories of neighbouring states were also discussed.

On October 31, 2022, Lukashenka approved a draft agreement with Russia on the creation and operation of combat training centres for joint training of military personnel of the armed forces. We have devoted a [special article](#) to this event.

In October, a command and staff exercise of the Collective Rapid Response Forces of the CSTO “Interaction-2022”, special exercises “Search-2022” and “Echelon-2022” were held on the territory of Kazakhstan. The total number of participants was more than 6,500 people, over 850 units of military and special equipment, including aviation (with UAV) were used.

The CSTO CRRF trained the preparation and conduct of a joint operation to localise the armed conflict in Central Asia. For the first time, a joint division of the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Protection Troops as well as medical support were involved.

During the “Interaction-2022” the troops trained the following tasks:

- interaction between reconnaissance and fire destruction units;
- actions in a settlement;

- suppression of the channel for the supply of drugs;
- liquidation of the consequences of chemical, biological contamination and conducting search and rescue operations.

The issues of the use of the Coalition Aviation Group and air defence, the joint formation of the NBC protection troops and the medical support of the CSTO were also studied. The medical support troops completed the task of eliminating the outbreak of a particularly dangerous infection.

During the exercise with the forces and means of reconnaissance “Search-2022”, issues of reconnaissance planning, organisation and conduct of various types of reconnaissance in the interests of using the CSTO CRRF in localising a border armed conflict were trained. Most of the tasks were trained in the dark. Air (including UAV), radar, electronic, special, military and artillery reconnaissance units were combined into a single system.

Landing of reconnaissance groups by parachute as well as the evacuation of the units by air transport has been practised.

During the exercise with the forces and means of logistic support of the troops “Echelon-2022”, the troops worked on the issues of organising logistics, managing logistic support units, replenishing stocks of materiel and restoring weapons, military and special equipment during a joint operation. The soldiers trained in the conditions of sabotage on the railway during the transportation of troops. The training included interaction with rescue units and the railway operator, unloading military equipment on an unequipped area of the terrain, bypassing it on its own a destroyed area of the terrain and loading it for further transportation by rail.

As part of monitoring the active phase of the CSTO exercises, Chief of the General Staff of the Belarusian Army Viktor Hulevich visited Kazakhstan. He held talks with his Kazakh counterpart on the status and prospects of bilateral military cooperation.

In October, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Belarus conducted a series of exercises:

- Anti-sabotage exercise “... in connection with the complication of the military-political situation”. This latter refers to the statements of opponents of the Lukashenka regime about their readiness to switch to armed forms of struggle.
- An exercise in Minsk for practising actions in emergency situations. Among other things, an attempt at an armed seizure of a settlement and objects in it was one of the emergencies.

Last month, the annual operational gathering of the army command was held. The purpose of the event was to develop common approaches to the training of subordinates. Interestingly, as part of the practical part of the gathering, the participants were shown samples of Western-made anti-tank weapons that are being used by the Ukrainian troops. Obviously, this is a Russian “gift”.

In October, there was information about the export of weapons and military equipment from Belarusian bases to Russia. This was regarded as the transfer of the equipment to the Russian army to make up for the losses incurred during the invasion of Ukraine.

As a result, the Ministry of Defence issued a refutation. The re-equipment of tank, mechanised and landing units with new types of armoured weapons and vehicles has been completed. As a result, certain reserves of obsolete Soviet-made equipment were not used. And some of them were sent for modernization to Russia. After that, they will either be returned to active units, or will be used for the reserve formations. First of all, we are talking about T-72 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and some samples of automotive equipment.

**Conclusions.** The rhetoric of the regime in October had the main message: the situation is alarming, but it will become dangerous only if protests start again in Belarus. Thus, the fact of disagreement with the policy of the regime and the threat of war are linked. And the Belarusian citizen is faced with the choice of “either the current regime, or war”. Despite the obvious manipulativeness, Lukashenka has a positive experience of such a game. He passed the presidential election campaign in 2015 against the backdrop of the war with Russia very easily, without protests. Unlike all the others. So in this case there may be an attempt to enter the same river twice.

It is not yet clear what practical changes the withdrawal of state security agencies from the system of executive power will entail. Practically before that the SSC was subordinate to Lukashenka. The government / prime minister’s control of this structure may have been formal and was on secondary matters. But in practice it didn’t happen. Now the same prime minister, even in theory, will not be able to give binding instructions for the SSC. What can be of practical importance if there are doubts about the loyalty of the head of government to the head of state. For example, in the case of his appointment on an “offer” from outside, which is impossible to be refused.

In addition, it is impossible to exclude the clarification of the functions of the SSC itself and the state security agencies. New ones may appear, and some of the existing ones may be transferred to other structures. For example, to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In this regard, in particular, the possibility of creating various structures within the state security agencies is envisaged. Including ones with the right of a legal entity. Which can be dictated by the new functionality.

The reorganisation of the Institute of National Security of the Republic of Belarus into the Academy of National Security is probably associated with the planned change in the structure of the educational institution itself, the number of its teaching staff. Which can be caused, among other things, by the organisation of a bachelor’s degree at the Academy.

It is worth recalling that, according to the Budget Law for 2022, it was possible to allocate resources for the growth of monetary allowances for employees of law enforcement agencies from the reserve funds of the president and local authorities. So it can be assumed that in parallel with the allocation of resources for these purposes for the Ministry of Emergency Situations employees from local reserve funds, the resources for other law enforcement agencies will be allocated from the main fund.

The story of the capture of a large number of Ukrainian citizens on charges of espionage is not only about espionage itself. It’s more about political communication between Minsk and Kyiv. Obviously, in the process of discussing the fate of the detained Ukrainians, the Lukashenka regime may raise other issues. These stories are not directly

related. It is worth recalling that the Belarusian SSC has a practice of expelling foreigners from Belarus who have been detained for espionage.

Reports by regional SSC leaders on the situation in neighbouring countries are something new. At least publicly, this has never happened before. It is unlikely that Lukashenka heard something that the SSC central apparatus would not have told him. Rather, there is a propaganda motive: to demonstrate attention and concern about the situation to grassroots intelligence officers.

Obviously, despite the disparaging remarks about the opponents of the regime, volunteer armed groups are perceived as a real threat by the Lukashenka regime.

The information of the Ministry of Defence about sending to Russia for the modernization of armoured vehicles and vehicles has several dimensions:

- Statements about the end of putting modern models of armoured vehicles into service are unexpected. The Belarusian army received less than a battalion of upgraded T-72B3 tanks and two battalion sets of BTR-82s. Which is clearly not enough. Probably, the Russian military-industrial complex is not currently able to fulfil orders in the interests of Belarus due to the workload of its army with orders. It is also possible that in Minsk they decided to change the priorities of financing in the field of rearmament.

- Belarus has its own enterprises that could modernise tanks and armoured personnel carriers. Which would leave the money in the country. Another thing is that the cost of services of the Belarusian military-industrial complex may be higher than ones in Russia.

- The media report about the T-72A (not the newer T-72B tanks) tanks being sent to Russia. These tanks have been in storage for a long time. So it cannot be ruled out that some of the equipment may be transferred to Russia as a kind of payment for the previously announced deliveries of the S-400 air defence system and the Iskander missile complexes. Which has not yet been confirmed. Previously, there was already experience in the supply of products of the Belarusian military-industrial complex in exchange for the transfer of the S-300 air defence system. So such a scheme is not new.