



DEVELOPMENT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT CONCEPT FOR NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF

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SUMMARY:

In the article the author pointed out key features of the crisis and crisis situation. These findings are complemented with selected management's concepts and offer the base for development of crisis management concept. Presented theory deal with crisis management solutions adopted in numerous countries.

KEYWORDS: Crisis, crisis situation, crisis management

INTRODUCTION

July's 1997 Great Flood and local floods of 2000 and 2010 in Poland, as well as other types of catastrophes which has been occurred in contemporary age, including terrorist acts, prove that crisis situations requires from managers of these situations extra ordinary decision making process compare with normal conditions. Frequently, the lessons learned from these crisis situations show that the national and local laws and regulations are inadequate to act and solve unexpected events on the ground. In addition it is witnessed insufficient either status or preparation level numerous of bodies that are responsible for handling these crisis situations. In such case a question arises to specify whether the crisis situations was indeed a crisis situation or a normal situation. It appears that the answer depends on who ask question, since definitional sharp boundaries for each specific case does not exist. Various approaches will be presented by the people who might become a potential victims of the crisis and managers responsible for handling crisis situation. It was also a "crisis situation" of region's security system or even country's whose decision makers were not prepared to solve the problem. It was not a crisis situation

for decision makers themselves, who did not enforce legal measures to legally introduce emergency state, at least in region facing crisis situation, what would improve the functioning of reaction systems in case of special events. It is often also not a crisis situation for the people who treat crisis as a state that leads to changes in the chart of the organization⁴.

The main issue that needs defining is specifying and subsequent division of two main types of situation. First is so called "normal situation" and consequently the required management level. Second is functioning of region's and country's security system in the danger of crisis situation and as a result required level of crisis management which should be introduced⁵.

The analyses of existing solutions, practiced in Poland suggest the fast majority of these are specific solutions as opposed to system solutions.

It is generally agreed that the problem is solved in case of political-military crisis that affects the entire country. It is currently resolved due to strong theoretical background and in particular NATO's development of Crisis Management procedures⁶. Yet for non-military crises the preparation is much worse. In such case formally the competency to solve crisis situation is in hands of general country

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⁴ W. Kitler www.straz.gov.pl oraz Zamiar Z., Sosnowski A., *Wybrane aspekty zarządzania bezpieczeństwem państwa*, Akademia Świętokrzyska, Kielce 2001, s. 43.

⁵ Compare - there., s.43

⁶ NATO handbook., Crisis Management., Part II, Chapter 2., Brussels 2006

administration and local municipalities and main rescue groups are organized by resort. This causes specific problems with proper reacting in crisis situation. Yet before the management of crisis situation is explained it is vital to define crisis and crisis situation.

1. CRISIS SITUATION

Last ten years in Europe witnessed decreasing probability of military aggressions against any of European countries, including Poland.

Yet, the geo-political situation is characterized by antagonisms and ethnical, national and religious antagonisms, freedom movements in some countries and political conflicts. Mentioned above, as well as other occurrences, such as modern terrorism, ecological and industrial catastrophes, breakdowns, mafia and organized crime can seriously endanger stability and security of specific region and even country.

Furthermore, in addition to occurrences as a result of international conflicts, political, social religious and economic situation modern societies are troubled by negative effects of civilization development that are the result of human influence over environment and environmental events (non-conflict events).

All these events mentioned above and the varieties of sources that cause them (often more than one source) are less and less predictable. These events, cause increased risks of threats, frequently without any option to analyze them according to pre-defined principles.

These difficult, unpredictable situations that affect the security of the country are defined as „**crisis situations**”.

The definition of crisis has many dimensions. It means turning point, the moment of change in which it is decided the following state that is existence or non-existence of specific item.

Characteristic issue that is visible in definition of crisis is the fact of change (bad or good) in functioning of specified object, organization, institution or organ of government.

The authors who define “**crisis**” stress:

- crisis always means change between two different states of a process
- can be more or less severe
- can last for different amount of time, yet it always finishes existing situation
- crisis means breaking status quo
- if crisis is not resolved in specific time it causes breaking of development cycle

All features that define and describe crisis point out that **in order to define certain phenomena as a crisis, there must exist**

sudden, real and non-accepted danger to the interests and goals of specific entity. It is also important to verify the closeness of the danger. If given crisis event is distant in time and / or space there might be a crisis situation that has lower level of influence. Further on if the danger itself is considered small we have a crisis with lower impact and influence; on contrary if danger is considered substantial we face a high influence.

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Western European specialists use terms like seriousness of crisis and intensity of crisis to bridge the gap between theory of crisis management and practice.

In the paper so far, despite best efforts, it was impossible to omit phase **crisis situation**.

There exist a subtle, yet important difference between “**crisis**” and “**crisis situation**”. If, as was previously described, crisis means breaking of the existing state (system, order) that results in change of its structure. The phenomena of this change, existing in specific time, starting with existing situation, continued across instability and through new equilibrium and stability (qualitatively different than previous state) is called **crisis situation**.

In his perspective crisis, defined as a moment of instability, is just one of the phases of crisis situation, that ultimately is suppose to lead to an improvement is current state. Therefore

already described definitions and existing discussion allow pointing out that:

- crisis situations (also crisis) can have a conflict character (in particular political-military) and non-conflict character so called civil (including social, economic, ecological and other)⁷;
- each of these crisis can have only conflict character or civil character or can be a mixture of both
- crisis situations require undertaking special counter-measure steps including introduction of the state of emergency
- crisis situations are subjective, their importance depends on how they affect on the security feeling of defined entity
- require to make system (interdisciplinary) activities, that have at least for different parts:
 - in conflict crisis- prevention – counteraction – division (peace pact) and peace building)
 - in non-conflict based crisis- prevention – counteraction – returning normal state – preventing future repetition of crisis
- in crisis situation, similarly to other situations of great impact, it is important to conduct decisions efficiently and having – previously accepted – procedures of reaction, including management

Further on in crisis situation:

- there is always a surprise factor and time pressure
- there is limited access to information and increase demand for it both from the management organs and society
- issues and problems roll out faster than the solutions
- the body responsible for management of crisis situation often loses control over that situation what is a natural result of its inertia and willingness to protect its image
- there is a conflict of interests
- there is a panic

deciding factor is adjustment of planned actions to specific situation with restricting the collegial decision process, that often prolongs the reaction to crisis situation.

⁷ Crisis situation can be also divided depending on the source and place of their origin into internal and external. Both internal and external crisis situations can be classified as conflict and non-conflict crisis situations. See for instance. St. Koziej *Między pokojem a wojną*, Polska Zbrojna nr 33, 22 sierpnia 1997 r. s. 20. When army is used to solve crisis situation, conflict based crisis situations (political, economical...) are becoming political-military crisis situations

2. CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Crisis situations (crisis) have their sources in intended or unintended activities against human or nature or in impact of nature. Their outcome is significant – above accepted level – loss in terms of people and monetary value. This means that road accidents, explosion of gas installation in the building, area limited fire or strong snow are not crisis situations since these are problems characteristic to every day life and can be attributed to climate, time of the year etc.). It might happen that these everyday life problems can cause local level problems, in road transport, in functioning of air or sea transport etc. and seem to be a crisis situation. Crisis situation is created by phenomena that cause breaking of social, economic and structural bonds. They require taking extraordinary activities. On contrary, ordinary situation is usually considered as additional difficulty that must be solved in traditional manner according to procedures in place within such institutions as police, fire brigade, rescue teams or army and other.

It is therefore acknowledged that crisis management is a broader concept than management during crisis situation, under assumption that crisis situation is a broader concept than crisis; **crisis management already starts during normal conditions by monitoring situation and researching what are the possible dangers. Crisis management also means preparation to counteract the crisis, counteracting it, rebuilding so the situation can return to normal and preventing so that similar situation does not take place in future**⁸.

Within the context of the requirements during crisis situation this paper looks at political leadership, command-in-chief, and general staff of army as well as territorial organs of government administration.

The above mentioned management bodies (parts of administration system) have different position within power hierarchy and various interests in solving the crisis related problems depending on crisis range. Despite these differences it should be assumed that **every management body is managing under the same rules if crisis situation should arise**.

Therefore it is possible to characterize, in general, the function, tasks and in consequence structure of management body⁹.

Management is synonymous with ruling, administering, directing, giving orders and

⁸ Zamiar Z., Sosnowski A., *Zarządzanie...*, s. 52.

⁹ Kitler W., *Wybrane aspekty kierowania państwem w sytuacjach kryzysowych*, AON, Warszawa 1999, s. 75.

recommendations. In core management means having the authority to formulate goals of action, acquiring and directing human and monetary resources, planning and controlling realization of goals.

Looking deeper into the core meaning of management we find that it is a specific case of broader defined phenomenon called "directing". Frequently managing and directing are used as synonyms, which is correct until we do not decide with regard to the management process.

This is because **directing** means influencing the organization and its elements with the use of established rules (procedures) to reach specified goal. It can take a form of:

- **administrating**, whenever the source of power is (right to influence the organization) are the formal competences of administrator, acquired when selected, chosen or nominated to the role of administrator
- **management**, when the source of power is the right to manage resources that have impact on functioning of the organization, in particular its future goals
- **leadership**, when the source of power is moral or intellectual authority of management body

Thus, the key feature of the manager is ability to decide about the resources. These resources are both fixed capital and the opportunity to its restocking and modernization thanks to access to new technologies, as well as variable capital such as raw materials, cash, bank deposits (...), stocks, obligations and other securities, as well as access to energy, manpower and creativity potential that directs scientific progress¹⁰.

The main feature of management body is defined by the right to formulate goals, plan, acquiring and ordering resources and the right to control. The analysis of the management functions leads to conclusion that these functions do not constrain each other, but instead complement each other. At the same time, sometimes by intuition, we feel that all the activities aimed at fulfilling the management functions are realized by different bodies of management organ, or even by different organs.

Management in crisis situation, similarly to other complex situations, is a continuous process of deciding. This process can be divided into three main phases: **acquiring, accumulating, processing and distribution of information.** These three phases of the

process reveal the main decision bodies responsible for management in crisis situation: information acquiring, accumulation and processing of information body; body responsible for evaluation of the information and preparation of ground for decision making process; decision-making body which makes the choice often based on processing specified variant of decision¹¹.

Therefore, management body, in reality in a set of three elements ordered according to their goals, where first body has responsibility for information acquisition and processing, second is analytical (headquarters) and third is decision making (direction body)

All the institutions in the country, from central body to municipality are the part of management system. If we include the rules and social norms that tie that management system as well as relation between these bodies we are discussing system of managing the country.

System of managing the country is a set of elements distinguished with regards to relations appearing between them and showing certain order.

Considering the notion that "on any object made of elements" we can describe various interdependent systems, depending on the ordering criteria, so we can accept that.¹²

System of managing the country in crisis situation (SZPwSK) is a set of elements distinguished with regard to relations between them and presenting some order.

Such definition of SZPwSK does not yet mean that it is entirely different set of elements than the elements in country management system. It means that this is a set of elements in which:

- is a set of relations caused by crisis situation
- there are rules ordering this set of elements during crisis

Thus what is the specificity of management system during crisis situation?

This system has the aim of¹³:

a) In case of crisis with element of conflict:

- preventing crisis based on conflict situation
- decreasing tension to prevent them changing into crisis situation
- preventing change of conflict into war
- supporting movement towards normal state

¹⁰ Kitler W., *Wybrane...*, s. 78.

¹¹ Kitler W., *Wybrane...*, s. 78.

¹² Sosnowski A., *Zarządzanie w sytuacjach kryzysowych w mieście*, Rozprawa doktorska. Warszawa 2004, s.129.

¹³ Kitler W., *Wybrane...*, s. 79.

b) In case of crisis without conflict element

- preventing crisis
- reacting and minimizing the results of crisis
- rebuilding (returning to normal state)

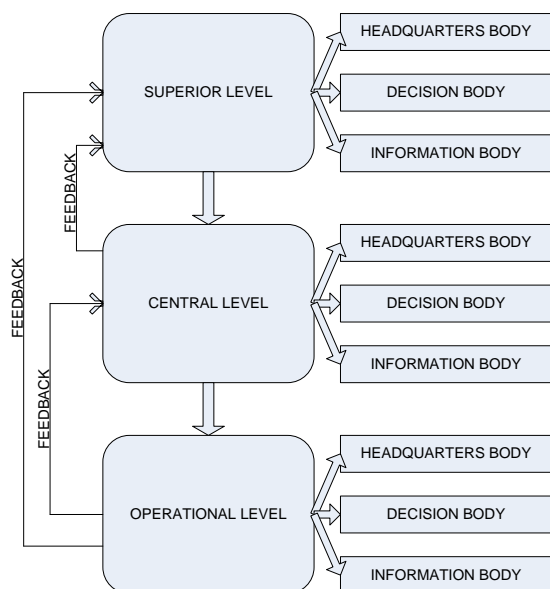
3. MODEL OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Considering the fact that crisis situation with element of conflict can also cause crisis situation without conflict, and vice-versa, we accept that there should not be two different systems one for conflict related crisis situations, the other for non-conflict crisis situations. This is in fact one system which has certain management specializations, depending on problems faced.

Therefore this system is made of¹⁴:

- superior sub-system of managing country during crisis situation, which is very much related to political level
- central sub-system of managing country during crisis situation, which is related to highest coordination-execution level
- territorial (operating) sub-system of management in crisis situation

On each level there are described earlier elements: information body, headquarters body and decision body.



Graph 1. Crisis management system;
authors made

Superior level, a system that is above central and operational sub-systems, has a formal authority and power therefore it can take over functions that:

- determine the realization of national goals

- define missions, goals and construction of crisis management system including the budgeting issues and designating monetary funds for it.

Central level is the level of realization (organization) through coordination, creation of central plans through use of influence and negotiation tools.

Operational level is responsible for realizing the goals, creates territorial plans that improve central plans. It can use formal coercion powers, but often it encourages, gives instructions and persuades.

All countries on a daily basis face problems related to crisis situation. Some of the countries are less advanced in that matter, while the others are more advanced. Considering strong relation of western European economies with NATO pact, modern world can effectively and efficiently solve crisis situations of political-military character.

The other sphere of crisis situations is related to non conflict based crisis situations. In general every country has its own way of solving these crisis situations and often can count on international humanitarian help.

Among various country specific solutions one can observe a number of similar characteristics that confirm a general character of crisis management systems. Most countries has councils, committees, cabinets or commissions that deal with crisis situations.

This means that responsibility for crisis management is given to a small group of specialists under supervision of specific minister or his representative

In case of crisis committee is working under supervision of prime minister (or his representative) and it is defined as **Committee for Managing Crisis Situations**. Its work is cyclical, or when required it is continuous until situation is "*is adapted*" to normal functioning of the country.

The work of above mentioned committee is often supported by sub-committees under supervision of undersecretary of state.

During crisis it is frequent practice to create issue specific committees (foreign affairs, information policy, legal, external security and other).

The work of committee and sub-committees are served by secretariats, situation centers and other normally existing departments and offices of government or non government related. These supporting bodies are a part of information collection and distribution systems.

¹⁴ Kitler W., Wybrane..., s. 79.

As a result we can talk about model of crisis management system on a central government level.

Decision making function during crisis situation, on a country level, is given to a number of specialists (of equal rights) from the government officials (of equal rights). The work of this committee, working on a continuous basis and with the same people both during peace and crisis, war times is supported by specialist committees. These specialists committees are coordinating activities and are responsible for "initial" analysis of data gathered by situation centers.

Situation Centre, defined differently in various countries¹⁵, are present on a daily basis near main governmental bodies, in particular near prime minister, minister etc.

Usually situation centers during normal times are classical on-duty operation services together with communication services, security sections and information circulation sections. Only when the first signs of crisis emerge center is enlarged to include civil and army specialists who work on analysis of currently available information, and responsible for creation of concepts for managing and servicing government committees.

During political-military crisis the role of minister of defense increases and he becomes, together with minister of external affairs, the most important member of Committee for Managing Crisis Situations.

When crisis situation of non-conflict type arises and has potential negative effect on the entire country the management on a central level is similar to conflict crisis situation. The role of coordinator is usually given to minister of internal affairs who receives authority to connect all activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations. This minister becomes the real manager of civil defense of the country.

Non conflict crisis usually start on local level. On this municipality level the national crisis management system really becomes "alive". This is under supervision that local level crisis situation is only an incident on a country level¹⁶.

The role of management bodies of upper level is to support and help when local authorities are unable to manager the problem themselves. The reaction in this type of situations has a character of chain reaction from municipality, through group of

municipality, through district, region and finally central level¹⁷.

Management in crisis situation therefore starts when political body announces the necessity to start special action. This happens when the situation is serious enough that it might endanger the interests and goals of the party endangered by crisis (in this case country, but this can also be on a local or district level when a natural disaster occurs, for instance).

Starting of crisis management means implementation (with modification or without) or accepting new plans of action that would include possible character of dangers, possible scenarios of reaction as well as missions and functions of plan executers.

Therefore, management in crisis situation aims at directing the actions to avoid the results of developing crisis situation, their softening and elimination of their causes and assuring the movement to natural state.

The results of numerous researches offer the conclusion that there is a rule of continuity and non changeability of authorities (their competences) and their responsibility for country security in all possible conditions¹⁸; during conflict caused crisis, where the main subject is country, the initiation of crisis management is based on decision of country political authorities, meaning government or its equivalent; during non-conflict crisis initiation comes from local level and when the country is endangered, central authorities take over the responsibility.

¹⁵ For instance in Denmark these are sections and departments in selected ministries; in France these are separate bodies responsible for crisis management.

¹⁶ Kitler W., *Wybrane...*, s. 88

¹⁷ Kitler W., *Wybrane...*, s. 89

¹⁸ See. Tarasiuk B., Carnecki A., Suwiński W., *Kierowanie obronnością państwa w czasie pokoju, kryzysu i wojny. Materiał studyjny*, Warszawa 1998, s. 14; Koziej St., *Między pokojem a wojną*. Polska Zbrojna nr 33, 22 sierpnia 1997, s. 21

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