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NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS: LEGAL REGULATION OF EIGHT DIFFERENT AREAS

| Abstract

- ▶ *Goal* – to present a stricter legal regulation and legal understanding of the National Security Conception's areas.
- ▶ *Research methodology* – general scientific logical methods were used, including the system analysis method, the definition method, and the argumentation theory methods. In addition, private, legal methods were used, comprising of the formal legal method and the comparative legal method.
- ▶ *Score/results* – the article reflects an understanding of the national security of the Republic of Belarus and threats to its sustainable development. The structure of national security currently includes 8 areas requiring the assurance of safety. In relation to each area of security, an analysis of the concept of this area, the main national interests in this area, and the pertinent internal threats have been researched. It was concluded that the section of the National Security Conception on the neutralization of threats to national security does not specify measures of neutralization.
- ▶ *Originality/value* – the work is done by the author independently. The links to citations and legislation in the article are presented. The article is a review report that presents the sphere and structure of National Security Conception in the Republic of Belarus. In the author's point of view, the goal is achieved.

| **Key words:** military security, political security, social security, economic security, scientific and technological security, demographic security, information security, ecology security.

1. Introduction

The topic of security is a very relevant and concerns every individual's safety, health, well-being, and family.

In general, national security is still understood in the traditional military-state context as ensuring the security of the state, but the range of national security areas is expanding due to the inclusion of special addendums in the term "national security" in relation to the obligation of ensuring security for human-beings, society, and the state.

National security strategy takes many forms around the world, and there are certain basic elements that are common in all national security strategies, without which the strategy is either incomplete or incoherent [DuMont, 2019].

As mentioned in literature, national security is a dynamic and multifaceted issue that requires a solid yet flexible approach¹.

The existing list of national security areas in the Republic of Belarus (military, political, social, economic) was supplemented by a number of new directions that meet the spirit of the times: scientific security, technological security, and demographic security. The latest areas to be included are information security and ecology security.

It has been proposed that the list of national security areas be expanded again, in particular, by adding energy security [Kamenkov, 2019]. Modern legislation of the Republic of Belarus operates not only the term "security" but also "safety" and it gave legal definition of the "safety of genetic engineering activities"², "road safety"³, "drug safety"⁴, etc.

¹ National Security Strategy: National Coordinator for Security and Counterterrorism, Ministry of Justice and Security of the Netherlands (the Hague), [electronic resource] <https://english.nctv.nl/documents/publications/2019/09/19/national-security-strategy> [date of access: 17.02.2020].

² On the safety of genetic engineering activities. Law of the Republic of Belarus, January 9, 2006, No. 96-Z, [electronic resource] [http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2006-9/2006-9\(032-091\).pdf&oldDocPage=24](http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2006-9/2006-9(032-091).pdf&oldDocPage=24) [date of access: 17.02.2020].

³ On measures to improve road safety, Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus, November 28, 2005, No. 551, [electronic resource] [http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2005-189/2005-189\(007-070\).pdf&oldDocPage=1](http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2005-189/2005-189(007-070).pdf&oldDocPage=1) [date of access: 17.02.2020].

⁴ On medicines. Law of the Republic of Belarus, July 20, 2006, No. 161-Z, [electronic resource] [http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2006-122/2006-122\(006-101\).pdf&oldDocPage=29](http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=2012&oldDoc=2006-122/2006-122(006-101).pdf&oldDocPage=29) [date of access: 17.02.2020].

Opportunities for expanding the areas for ensuring national security in the Republic of Belarus are legally fixed and reflected in paragraphs two and three of article 4 of the National Security Conception (hereinafter – NSC), approved by Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus, where the term “national security” is broadly defined as the *state of protection* of the national interests of the Republic of Belarus *from internal and external threats*. The NSC specifies modern national security interests that must be protected, as well as how these interests are currently under threat and how we can minimize these risks and threats.

The term “national interest” is also defined broadly as a complex of state requirements to implement balanced interests of the individual, society, and the state, which will provide constitutional rights, freedoms, citizens’ life quality, independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and sustainable development of the Republic of Belarus.

The national interests of the Republic of Belarus are conceptual guidelines for Belarus’s long-term development. They are closely interconnected and cover all aspects of the life of an individual, society, and the state.

The strategic national interests are ensuring independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, the inviolability of the constitutional system, sustainable economic development, high competitiveness of the Belarusian economy, and achieving a high quality of citizens’ life.

The NSC determines that the *source of a threat to national security* should be understood as a factor or a combination of factors that can lead to a threat to national security. *Threats to national security* in the NSC are understood as the potential or actual possibility of harming the national interests of the Republic of Belarus.

NSC divides sources of threats into two groups: internal and external.

2. Military security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

“If war is hell, it is also a momentous demographic event. Deaths of combatants and civilians and flows of refugees can alter the size, age structure, and ethnic mix of population for years to come” [Cincotta, Engelman, Anastasion, 2003: 104].

In accordance with the NSC, the term “military security” is understood as the condition (state) of protection of the national interests of the Republic of Belarus from military threats.

According to article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Belarus of July 20, 2016 No. 412-Z “On the approval of the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Belarus”⁵ (hereinafter – Military Doctrine), “military policy” is defined as the state’s activity aimed at training the Armed Forces and determining the order and methods to ensure military security, including the prevention of military conflicts and the military defense of the Republic of Belarus.

The definition of the “military danger” is understood in the Military Doctrine as a state of the military-political situation characterized by the interests, intentions, capabilities, and actions of states (or coalitions of states), as well as non-state actors, including terrorist and extremist organizations, which under certain geopolitical, military-strategic, socio-political, and economic conditions can lead to military conflict.

“Military threat” is fixed in the Military Doctrine (article 4), and is defined as the highest level of military danger, in which the state of interstate or intrastate relations is characterized by the actions of another state (or coalition of states), as well as non-state actors, including terrorist and extremist organizations, indicating a real possibility of a military conflict.

The definition followed the norms of international law⁶: “military threat” includes the actions of another state (or states) or extremist, religious, and separatist movements, as well as organizations located in the territory of another state (or states), that indicate a real intention to use armed force against the Republic of Belarus.

According to article 15 of the NSC, *the main national interests in the military sphere* are:

1. strengthening a sense of patriotism and a readiness to protect the national interests of the Republic of Belarus in society,;
2. effective strategic deterrence, regional security, ensuring the maintenance of peace, and preventing the threat of military use against the Republic of Belarus;
3. ensuring the protection of independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty of the Republic in case of threat or use of military force against it;

⁵ On the approval of the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Belarus. Law of the Republic of Belarus, July 20, 2016, No. 412-Z, [electronic resource] <http://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H11600412> [date of access: 17.02.2020].

⁶ Definition of Aggression. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3314 (XXIX), 14 December 1974, [electronic resource] <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instreet/GAres3314.html> [date of access: 17.02.2020].

4. development of the military organization of the state and maintenance of the level of defense potential corresponding to the capabilities of the state so that it is sufficient enough to solve problems during peace and wartime;
5. strengthening international and regional mechanisms for ensuring military security, partnership, and trust;
6. consistent development and strengthening of military and military-technical cooperation with the Russian Federation;
7. increasing the effectiveness of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

In accordance with the NSC (article 35), *the main internal sources of military threats in the military sphere* are:

1. weakening society's sense of patriotism and the willingness of citizens to defend their independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and the constitutional order of the Republic of Belarus, the;
2. minimizing the ability of the Armed Forces to strategically deter aggression and solve other peacetime tasks, as well as reducing the armed defense of the country in the event of military operations against it.

The NSC (article 43) states that *the main external sources of military threats in the military sphere* are:

1. the desire of individual states (or coalitions of states) to resolve existing contradictions with the use of military force;
2. proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their components, as well as their production technologies;
3. the expansion or creation of military-political alliances in the European Region or the appropriation of global functions by them, and the strengthening of their shock and offensive capabilities, which can lead to the disruption of the existing balance of forces or a buildup of military infrastructure near the borders of the Republic of Belarus;
4. reduction in the potential and capability of military-political alliances of which the Republic of Belarus is part of to ensure collective security.

The Republic of Belarus provides its *military security* based on the principles of defense sufficiency and strategic deterrence of potential aggression, giving priority to non-military means. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus remain the guarantor of independence, territorial integrity, and state

sovereignty. Proclaiming the Military Doctrine, which is purely defensive in nature, the Republic of Belarus proceeds from the fact that not one of the states is an adversary for it.

Trends in the European region indicate that there is currently no military threat to the Republic of Belarus. At the same time, there is a military danger at the level of risks and challenges due to the presence of objectively existing sources of military threat. The Republic of Belarus condemns any military conflict as a means of implementing policy and adheres to the principle of peacefully settling disputes.

3. Political security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

In accordance with the NSC, the term “political security” is understood as the state of security and protection of the political system from external and internal threats, ensuring the realization of national interests in all areas of national security.

Under article 15 of the NSC, *the main national interests in the political sphere* are:

1. the observance of constitutional rights and freedoms;
2. the sustainable development of a democratic, legal, and socially responsible state;
3. ensuring the effective functioning of state institutions in the public interest;
4. achieving a balance of political interests of citizens, public associations, and the state, as well as a public consensus on key issues of the development of the Republic of Belarus;
5. development of civil society, taking into account national traditions and characteristics;
6. effective anti-corruption actions;
7. the formation of a multipolar world and a system of international relations based on the supremacy of international law and multilateral cooperation, ensuring Belarus’s participation in resolving issues affecting its interests;
8. improvement and strengthening of mechanisms for ensuring national and collective security with the participation of the Republic of Belarus at the global, regional, and bilateral levels, giving international security a comprehensive and integrated character;

9. pragmatic interaction with world centers of power based on effective multilateral and multi-vector diplomacy, strategic partnership and special relations with friendly states, equal cooperation and mutual consideration of interests;
10. positioning the Republic of Belarus abroad as a democratic legal state, a responsible and predictable partner, and a donor of international and regional security;
11. ensuring the protection of the rights and solidarity of compatriots and Belarussians all over the world for the sake of a strong, prosperous Belarus.

In accordance with the NSC (article 29), *the internal sources of threats to national security in the political sphere* are:

1. violation of constitutional rights and freedoms and a breach of the rule of law;
2. the use of political, economic, social, and other types of methods aimed at destabilizing the Republic of Belarus;
3. insufficient level of civil society development;
4. artificial aggravation, tension, and confrontation in society;
5. the formation and penetration of extremist, separatist, and nationalist ideology, as well as racial and religious intolerance, along with the emergence or illegal activity of organizations, groups, individuals adhering and disseminating such views;
6. bureaucratization of public administration.

According to article 37 of the NSC, *the main external sources of threats to national security in the political sphere* are:

1. the presence of significant contradictions between the main subjects of world politics that could complicate the security of the Republic of Belarus;
2. geopolitical conflicts of leading states (or groups of states) in the process of transition from a unipolar to a multipolar world order;
3. the use of pressure, including the economy, and resource advantages by individual states or groups of states to advance their interests;
4. interference in international processes of forces that are not recognized forms of international relations;
5. international terrorism, illegal trafficking of dual-use technologies and equipment, weapons, and ammunition, as well as radioactive, chemical, biological, or otherwise dangerous substances and materials;

6. weakening of integration structures and international organizations in which the Republic of Belarus takes part;
7. the activities of services, organizations, and individual representatives of foreign states, aimed at causing harm to the national interests of the Republic of Belarus.

In the political sphere, the neutralization of internal sources of threats to national security is ensured by taking measures to remove tension in society, and to address the mutual responsibility of the individual, society, and the state for ensuring national security.

4. Social security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

In accordance with the NSC, the term “social security” is understood as a state of security of life, health, and well-being of citizens, in addition to the protection of spiritual and moral values of society from internal and external threats.

According to article 12 of NSC, *the main national interests in the social sphere* are:

1. meeting basic social needs of citizens, minimizing the negative consequences of social differentiation and social tension in society;
2. ensuring public safety and life safety, reducing crime and criminalization of society;
3. ensuring employment of able-bodied citizens and a decent level of remuneration;
4. the development of the intellectual, spiritual, and moral potential of society, the preservation and enhancement of its cultural heritage, the strengthening of the spirit of patriotism;
5. ensuring the harmonious development of interethnic and interfaith relations.

The largest number of internal threats is foreseen for the social sphere. As claimed by the NSC (article 32), *the internal sources of threats to national security in the social sphere* are:

1. sharp social stratification and high differentiation of income levels of the population;
2. insufficient motivation of employees to do effective work and economic activity, the spread of sentiment of social dependency;

3. unjustified imbalances in the sphere of remuneration and pension provision;
4. vocational qualification and territorial imbalance of supply and demand of labor, low internal labor mobility of the population;
5. significant differences in the quality of life of the urban and rural population, as well as of the residents of large, medium, and small cities;
6. reduction in the working-age population;
7. affordable and quality housing insecurity, unresolved housing problems of citizens;
8. insufficient organizational and technological level of development of the social sphere;
9. the lag in the quality of education in a number of promising areas from the level of the best world educational centers, an insufficient number of modern, highly qualified, world-renowned specialists;
10. an increase in epidemic morbidity, an increase in the number of persons with disabilities;
11. changing the life values of the younger generation in the direction of weakening patriotism and traditional moral values;
12. the presence of criminal trends and manifestations in society;
13. low culture of life safety;
14. the functioning of sectarian and pseudo-religious groups.

Written in article 40 of the NSC, *the main external sources of threats to national security in the social sphere* are:

1. the weakening of the national and cultural identity of the Belarusian diaspora, a substantial violation of the legitimate rights and interests of compatriots;
2. the expansion of cross-border crime, the activities of transnational or foreign criminal organizations and groups associated with attacks on the life, health, freedom, and social rights of Belarusian citizens.

In the social sphere, the Republic of Belarus intends to become a top 50 country, known worldwide for its high level of human development by ensuring a high standard of living for the population, increasing income, improving the pension system, introducing targeted social assistance, and developing a system of state social standards.

Employment, disease prevention/treatment, and crime prevention programs, secondary and vocational education, and preservation of historical and cultural heritage, etc. play a significant role in ensuring security in the social sphere.

5. Economic security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

In accordance with the NSC, the term “economic security” is understood as a state of the economy in which the national interests of the Republic of Belarus are protected from internal and external threats (article 4).

According to the NSC, article 10 states that *the main national interests in the economic sphere* are:

1. economic growth and increasing the competitiveness of the Belarusian economy by means of restructuring, sustainable innovative development, investment in human capital, modernization of economic relations, reducing costs, import and material intensity of manufactured products;
2. maintaining the stability of the national financial and monetary systems;
3. ensuring non-discriminatory access to world markets for goods and services, raw materials, and energy resources;
4. achieving a level of energy security sufficient enough to neutralize the dependence on external energy carriers;
5. maintaining a guaranteed level of food security;
6. transfer of modern technologies to the country’s economy mainly due to direct foreign investment, the availability of foreign credit resources.

In obedience to article 30 of the NSC, *the internal sources of threats to national security in the economic sphere* are:

1. outdated technologies and fixed assets, causing high energy and material consumption, low quality of products;
2. lagging behind other countries, primarily adjacent ones, in terms of pace and quality of economic growth;
3. structural deformation of the economy, the predominance of material and energy-intensive industries, insufficient development of the service sector, the low proportion of high-tech science-intensive products and slow updating of products;
4. low self-sufficiency in raw materials and energy resources;
5. high administrative barriers to business development and entrepreneurial activity;
6. imbalance in economic development, expressed in the growth of total consumption over the real possibilities of the economy;
7. adverse conditions for attracting foreign investments and loans;

8. low diversification of exports and imports of the Republic of Belarus;
9. the growth of non-payments in the economy due to the deficit of working capital and the high proportion of unprofitable business entities.

As specified by article 38 of the NSC, *the main external sources of threats to national security in the economic sphere* are:

1. worsening conditions of foreign trade, attraction of credit and investment resources due to unfavorable conditions of world markets;
2. adoption of protectionist measures by foreign countries, barriers and discriminatory conditions for the implementation of export-import operations;
3. development of transit corridors, alternative energy transportation systems available in the Republic of Belarus, targeted limitation of the transit capabilities of the Republic of Belarus;
4. discrimination of the Republic of Belarus by international unions and formations.

The Republic of Belarus is implementing a model of a socially oriented market economy.

At the same time, the Belarusian economy remains affected by external factors of influence. A high dependence on energy supplies, significant wear out of industrial equipment and facilities, high cost of goods, and high import intensity of manufactured goods leads to a weak competitiveness of Belarusian goods in the domestic and foreign markets. Problems in the financial sector concern the financial condition for the real sector of the economy, accelerated growth of external state debt, insufficient gold and foreign exchange reserves and an increase bad bank loans.

6. Scientific and technological security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

In article 4 of the NSC, “scientific and technological security” is understood as the state of domestic scientific, technological, and educational potential, which ultimately help realize the national interests of the Republic of Belarus in the scientific and technological fields.

In accordance with the NSC (article 11), *the main national interests in the scientific and technological field* are:

1. the formation of a knowledge-based economy, ensuring the development of science and technology as a basis for sustainable innovative development of the Republic of Belarus;
2. creation of new industries and sectors of the economy, intensive technological updates of the basic sectors of the economy, and the introduction of advanced technologies in all spheres of society;
3. expanding the presence of Belarus in the world market of intellectual products, high-tech goods and services, mutually beneficial international scientific and technological cooperations, and attracting world-class technologies to the country's economy.

According to article 31 of the NSC, *the internal sources of threats to national security in the scientific and technological sphere* are:

1. when knowledge-intensive gross domestic product (GDP) is below the critical level necessary for the reproduction of scientific and technological potential;
2. low innovation activity of the Belarusian economy;
3. inefficiency of the national innovation system, including legislation, infrastructure for the transfer of technologies from science to production, the material and technical base of scientific institutions, the financing system, industry (company) science;
4. unfavorable age structure and insufficient level of training of scientific personnel.

As it mentioned in article 39 of the NSC, *the main external sources of threats to national security in the scientific and technological field* are:

1. restricting access of Belarusian researchers and business entities to the latest technologies, world-class research, and development results;
2. targeted policies of foreign states and companies, stimulating the emigration of highly qualified scientists and specialists from the Republic of Belarus.

The basic elements of a national innovation system in the scientific and technological fields have been already formed.

At the same time, the science-intensive GDP and the share of innovative products in the total volume of industrial production are still at a low level. We may say that an effective national innovation system has not been created,

innovative infrastructure has not been developed, and technological equipment has highly depreciated in value.

7. Demographic security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

Human potential has become a major factor in socio-economic development. Global demographic trends, especially the aging of the population in developed countries [Potton, 2012], the rapid population growth in many developing countries, and the increase in migration are increasingly affecting the political situation, economic status, and ethno-cultural landscape of many different countries and regions in the world.

In accordance with the NSC (article 4), “demographic security” is understood as the state of protection of society from demographic phenomena and trends, the socio-economic consequences of which have a negative impact on the sustainable development of the Republic of Belarus.

As maintained by article 13 of the NSC, *the main national interests in the demographic area* are:

1. a steady increase in the population of the Belarusian nation on the basis of a consistent increase in the birth rate and life expectancy, and a decrease in the mortality rate;
2. increasing the general level of public health and protecting the health of mothers and children;
3. strengthening the family as a social institution, the most favorable for fulfilling the needs of children and their upbringing;
4. optimization of internal and external migration flows, ensuring a positive balance of external migration of the economically active population.

As is mentioned in article 33 of the NSC, *the internal sources of threats to national security in the demographic sphere* are:

1. unfavorable gender and age structure of the population;
2. birth rate that does not provide a simple substitution of parental generations;
3. decrease in the degree of social needs fulfillment of children;
4. high mortality of citizens at the age most favorable for ensuring reproduction of the population;

5. negative transformations of the institution of the family (a high level of divorces, single-parent families with children, social orphanhood, etc.).

According to article 41 of the NSC, *the main external source of threats to national security in the demographic sphere* is: “1. an increase in flow of illegal migrants to Belarus or through its territory”.

In the demographic sphere, the main priority of state policy is increasing the birth rate, ensuring expanded reproduction of the population, increasing the prestige of a strong family, improving the support system for families with three or more children, reducing mortality, increasing the life expectancy of the population, protecting maternal and child health, maintaining reproductive and general public health, and combating illegal migration. The quality of life of Belarusian citizens in a number of different criteria is inferior to the leading countries.

The direction of demographic security may be subdivided into several directions, which is already happening in the modern world today. Scholars have said that “recent progress in political demography is so new that it is not a required part of university political science or IR degree programs, and [is] feature[d] in undergraduate and graduate coursework in only a few academic institutions” [Cincotta, Goldstone, Sciubba; Cincotta 2010].

8. Information security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

The information sphere is turning into a system-forming factor in the life of people, societies, and states. The practice of targeted information pressure is spreading, causing significant damage to national interests.

In accordance with the NSC (article 4), “information security” is understood as the state of protection of the balanced interests of the individual, society, and the state from external and internal threats in the information sphere.

Article 14 of the NSC states that *the main national interests in the information sphere* are:

1. the realization of the constitutional rights of citizens to receive, store, and disseminate complete, reliable, and timely information;
2. formation and progressive development of the information society;
3. equal participation of the Republic of Belarus in world information relations;

4. transformation of the information industry into an export-oriented sector of the economy;
5. effective public policy information support;
6. ensuring the stability of the operation of informatisation facilities.

As it is mentioned in article 34 of the NSC, *the internal sources of threats to national security in the information sphere* are:

1. the dissemination of false or intentionally distorted information that could cause harm to the national interests of the Republic of Belarus;
2. the dependence of the Republic of Belarus on the import of information technologies, means of informatisation, and information protection, their uncontrolled use in systems whose failure or destruction can cause damage to national security;
3. inconsistency of the quality of national content with the world level;
4. insufficient development of the state system for regulating the implementation and use of information technology;
5. increased crime using information and communication technologies;
6. lack of effectiveness of public policy information support;
7. imperfection of the security system for critical IT facilities.

In accordance with article 42 of the NSC, *the external sources of threats to national security in the information sphere* are:

1. openness and vulnerability of the information space of the Republic of Belarus to external influences;
2. dominance of leading foreign countries in the global information space, monopolization of key segments of information markets by foreign information structures;
3. informational activities of foreign states, international and other organizations, and individuals that are detrimental to the national interests of the Republic of Belarus, purposeful formation of informational reasons for its discredit;
4. the growth of information confrontation between leading world centres of power, the conduct of foreign countries during struggles in the information space;
5. development of information manipulation technologies;
6. preventing the spread of the national content of the Republic of Belarus abroad;

7. wide distribution in the world information space of mass culture values that contradict universal human and national spiritual and moral values;
8. attempts of unauthorized access from the outside to the information resources of the Republic of Belarus, leading to damage to its national interests.

In terms of informatisation, the Republic of Belarus lags behind the world's leading countries. The quality and popularity of the Belarusian national content remain insufficient.

Protection from external threats to national security in the information sphere is carried out through the participation of the Republic of Belarus in international treaties that regulate not only the global information exchange, but also the creation and use of international global information networks and systems.

9. Ecology security as a part of the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus

“Land degradation, freshwater availability, and population density and change are important factors that many scholars argue have both influenced the risk of conflict in the past and will be strongly influenced by climate change” [Clionadh, Urdal, 2008–2009: 27–33].

In accordance with the NSC (article 4), “ecological security” is understood as the state of environmental protection, life, and health of citizens from threats arising from anthropogenic impacts, as well as from factors, processes, and phenomena of a natural and technogenic nature.

As is mentioned in article 16 of the NSC, *the main national interests in the environmental sphere* are:

1. ensuring environmentally friendly living conditions for citizens;
2. overcoming the negative consequences of radioactive contamination of the country and other emergencies, rehabilitation of ecologically disturbed territories;
3. sustainable natural resource support for the socio-economic development of the country;
4. rational use of natural resource potential, preservation of biological and landscape diversity, ecological balance of natural systems;
5. promoting global and regional ecological balance.

According to article 36 of the NSC, *the internal sources of threats to national security in the ecological sphere* are:

1. high concentration of environmentally hazardous facilities in Belarus, as their location is near residential areas and life support systems;
2. radioactive contamination of the environment due to the Chernobyl accident;
3. the formation of large volumes of production and consumption waste with a low degree of their secondary use and high-tech processing, increased levels of emissions and discharges of pollutants;
4. insufficient development of legal and economic mechanisms for ensuring environmental safety, accounting for natural resources, and monitoring emergency situations and environmental quality.

Article 44 of the NSC states that *the external sources of threats to national security in the environmental sphere* are:

1. global changes in the environment associated with climate change, the destruction of the ozone layer, and the reduction of biodiversity;
2. cross-border transfer of pollutants to the territory of the Republic of Belarus by air and water flows, the penetration of invasive species of animals and plants from neighboring countries;
3. placement of large environmentally hazardous facilities near the borders of Belarus and nuclear waste repositories in adjacent territories.

In the ecological field, significant results have been achieved in overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. The degree of population and ecological protection from technological and natural influences in general is acceptable for the current stage of socio-economic development. At the same time, the anthropogenic load on the environmental sphere is growing, and measures to preserve biological and landscape diversity remain inadequate.

10. Conclusions

We may conclude that the National Security Conception of the Republic of Belarus is a quality, logical, important, and multipurpose document. It is well suited to protecting the nation's vital interests. At the same time, it should be noted that it was designed in 2010 (10 years ago). Though it has helped specify

the national security vision, new threats have appeared in the form of cyber-attacks, climate change threats, food security threats, drug security threats, etc. The government surely is interested in the stability of the Conception. But the Conception stability does not mean the automatic protection from threats. The Conception needs to be actualized.

The experience of foreign countries shows that it is possible to make cycled actualization of the Conception possible. For example, the strategic cycle of the National Security Strategy of the Netherlands repeats every three years and enables the Netherlands to continually protect itself against the development of threats and risks and intensify the national security approach in a future-proof manner⁷. Most of these kinds of national security documents are named “strategy” (Netherlands, USA, France, Germany, Russia, Japan, Spain, Poland, United Kingdom, etc.), “white paper” (Australia, Macedonia, Czech Republic, New Zealand, Serbia, South Korea, etc.), and most rarely “conception” (Azerbaijan, Estonia, Norway, Latvia, Georgia).

The modern National Security Concept provides for 8 areas (spheres) of national security. However, the analysis of national interests in each of the 8 areas shows that many of them duplicate the content of one other.

The section of the National Security Conception on the neutralization of threats to national security is not specific at all, set out without specifying measures to ensure neutralization.

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⁷ National Security Strategy..., op. cit.

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