

## African Relationships

### with the Military Industry of Bosnia and Herzegovina<sup>1</sup>

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#### Abstract:

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country in the Western Balkans that emerged in the 1990s, after the war in the former Yugoslavia. It is not a member of the European Union and has a population of just over 3 million. The main industries in the country are the production of iron, steel, coal, textile, tobacco, along with wood industry. Domestic producers of military equipment and weapons are factories that have inherited production facilities from the Yugoslav heavy and military industry and mainly export their products to foreign markets, thus making a profit. Several domestic companies engaged in the production of weapons and military equipment also produce for the African market. The main goal of this paper is to present modern technical solutions and achievements of the military industry of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to identify the types and quantities of these products that are exported to the African market. Also, the data on the number of peacekeepers on the African continent who are members of law enforcement agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be presented. According to the data of the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a few domestic companies from the military industry sector registered cooperation with African partners, requested and obtained a permit from the state authorities for the export of goods to certain African countries. These companies are as follows: Matra Group, Unis Group, Technical Overhaul Bratunac. Regarding relationships with Africa, it is important to mention the participation of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian police and military forces in UN peacekeeping missions in the Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, and Liberia.

#### Keywords:

Military industry; export; market; Bosnia and Herzegovina; peacekeepers; Africa.

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## Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BH) is a country on the Balkan Peninsula - a geographic area in Southeast Europe. This is an area of great powers' competitions and historically has never been fully respected as the country of its nations (Lampe, 2020; Mishkova, 2020; Balta, 2021). It is not a member state of the European Union and with several other countries formed on the divided territory of the former Yugoslavia belongs to the geopolitical space of the Western Balkans. Although recognized as a sovereign and independent state, even today, in addition to constitutional, parliamentary, and overall democratic procedures, it happens that the "national law" is passed by the Office of the High Representative - OHR<sup>3</sup> (see more: Erwan, 2016; European Parliament, 2019; Myl, 2020; Kecmanović, 2016; OHR, 1 September 2021). As a country in transition emerging from the war less than 30 years ago (see more: Madej, 2018), BH has been trying to strengthen existing and establish new economic ties worldwide (Krasniqi and Topxhiu, 2017; Halaba et al., 2017; Bakota, 2019; Krajisnik and Popović, 2019; Petkovski et al., 2020; FIPA, 2020). BH's most important foreign trade partner is the European Union (Ilgün & Coskun, 2009), with around 72.3 per cent of exports and the main partner countries being Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy. Hungary is the ninth most important trading partner in the total foreign trade of BH, with a share of 2.58 per cent. In addition, authors named the cooperation with the Islamic world, specifically Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, as a distinct foreign economic phenomenon in the region (see more: Kromják, 2021). Along with trading across Europe, BH exports to the African market, thus this article strives to obtain and process available data on economic ties between BH and African countries, especially to emphasize and present military industry export to Africa.

Moreover, Africa is the second largest continent on the Earth, covering 6 per cent of the Earth's total surface and as much as 20 per cent of its total land area. According to the data on number of inhabitants living in 54 independent states, Africa is on the second place by that criterion too (Waldman, 2021). Despite the largest number of independent states concentrated on one continent, emigration is constant and a relatively large number of people from Africa try to reach the European mainland on various routes (see more: Besenyo, 2016). However, the world's greatest and strongest states as well as regional powers do not hide their interest in the African market and raw materials (Besenyo, 2021; Vogel, 2018). Interests of a European country for an African market are usually based on exploitation of African raw materials. This article deals with the BH industrial offer that some African countries have been using and with the indirect contribution of BH to African security through peacekeeping missions in certain African countries (see more: Adebajo and Landsberg, 2007; Bove and Elia, 2018, Hunt, 2020; Besenyo, 2020). Although thousands of miles away from Africa, BH and its peoples are connected to Africa by an unenviable status on the world geopolitical and

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<sup>3</sup> The Office of the High Representative (OHR) is an *ad hoc* international institution responsible for overseeing implementation of civilian aspects of the Peace Agreement ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. See more: <http://www.ohr.int/about-ohr/general-information/> (Accessed: 19 September 2021).

economic scene, as well as with common presence in the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO missions (see more: Madej, 2018; Djukanovic, 2019; Myl, 2020). BH's industrial offer in recent history has been changing and in 1990s focus was given to the heavy and military industries (Musa and Šakić, 2019), which presently employ approximately 10000 workers (Bakota, 2019: 5). Nowadays, the most important export products are: iron, stainless steel, wood, charcoal products, furniture, lighting signs, prefabricated buildings, machinery, boilers, electronic and mechanical equipment, and footwear products (FTC of BH, 1 September 2021; Kromják, 2021: 157). Firstly, the paper presents the results of the analysis about the total value of all exported products from BH to countries on the African continent. In addition, the export in the category "Weapons, ammunition: their parts and accessories" was analyzed, and the analysis is based on the periods 2019, 2020, and the first half of 2021. The most significant African importers of weapons and military equipment from BH are Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, and Algeria. The examination identified domestic industrial manufactories from which weapons and equipment have been exported to Africa for at least three years. Furthermore, in accordance with the aim of the paper here, an overview is presented of the basic technical characteristics of the exported products and the manufactories in which they are produced. Finally, the paper contains data on the number of participants in peacekeeping missions on the African continent, who are members of the military or police structures in BH. In 2001, the first peacekeepers from BH have made a step on African ground.

### ***Relationships between the African market and the industry of Bosnia and Herzegovina***

Based on cooperation and exportation of products to the African countries, BH generates millions of USD income yearly. For the purpose of this article, analysis of the data of the Foreign Trade Chamber of BH (FTC BH) was performed. The largest value of the homeland industries' export to the countries in North Africa was reached during 2019, totaling approximately 74 million euros (146,838,371 BAM). It is followed by East African countries with a value of exported products worth approximately 8 million euros, and South African countries worth 1.4 million euros. About 1.3 million euros worth of products were exported to the west of the continent and 1.2 million euros to the central part of Africa. Egypt is the most important export target with a value of 55 million euros in products. On the second place is Morocco with a registered value of 8 million euros worth of exported products and the third place goes to Rwanda with 4.5 million euros. Finally, the stocks produced in BH's own industrial plants have been exported to Africa with a total value of approximately 86 million euros in 2019. This amount represents about 17 per cent of the total exported value from BH during 2019 (FTC BH, 21 July 2021).

The allocation of exports to the regions of Africa remained almost the same during 2020 (in comparison with 2019). The largest amount of industrial products was exported to Egypt with a value of about 38 million euros. After Egypt, the top African partners of BH was Algeria



with 4 million euros, and Tunisia with 3 million euros. The total export of BH to the countries of the African continent during 2020 amounted for approximately 59 million euros, or about 11 per cent of the total exported values worldwide (FTC BH, 21 July 2021).

During the first half of 2021, products totaling 40 million euros were exported to Africa, of which 36 million euros mainly to the North. The top three destinations were Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia (FTC BH, 18 August 2021).

African importers of weapons, ammunition, their parts and equipment, nuclear reactors, boilers, machines, and mechanical devices from BH are Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal. On the first place is Egypt, to which in 2019, BH delivered 1,426,347 kg of weapons and ammunition worth about 29 million euros. In 2020, this figure was 1,533,590 kg, for half a million euros less than in the previous year (FTC BH, 21 July 2021).

Destination Country	Amount of invoice (BAM currency)		
	2019	2020	½ 2021
Eritrea	5.635	3.914	0
Ethiopia	305.942	196.638	55.761
Kenya	6.357.548	15.837	141.876
Rwanda	8.915.454	218.876	242.144
Seychelles	7.965	0	35.302
Tanzania	249.317	27.382	93.880
Uganda	115.707	590.612	0
Cameroon	2.371.622	3.434.382	2.289.173
DR Congo	0	9.584	0
Congo	45.278	23.772	0
Algeria	7.366.912	7.936.260	13.015.218
Egypt	110.150.836	75.609.382	29.678.802
South Sudan	0	0	2.347
Libya	3.268.037	2.883.982	5.275.399
Morocco	16.779.826	3.127.845	6.557.410
Sudan	1.811.500	296.618	6.557.410
Tunisia	7.461.260	6.366.260	10.453.559
Angola	396.760	516.379	65.288
Botswana	74.692	0	0
Lesotho	2.758	0	0
Mauritius	57.319	113.078	341
Mozambique	81.449	94.158	49.795
Namibia	1.575.148	5.181.829	156.913
South African Republic	893.112	604.310	750.264
Swaziland	42.387	0	0
Zambia	0	0	1.594
Zimbabwe	0	4.694	0
Benin	1.819	32.102	0
Burkina Faso	97.339	46.769	1.207.799
Chad	0	46.225	0
Ivory Coast	138.676	776.772	312.873
Gambia	13.048	140.935	0
Ghana	500.442	398.432	996.007
Guinea	22.101	5.867	0

Liberia	0	0	44.738
Libya	132.969	126.919	141.4
Mauritania	929.398	1.649.523	1.036.320
Niger	24.046	101.488	0
Nigeria	384.329	1.992.496	1.025.491
Senegal	329.079	302.923	32.422
Sierra Leone	17.211	32.942	35.105
Togo	56.491	55.180	0

Table 1. Values<sup>4</sup> of exported products of BH industry to African countries during 2019, 2020, and in the first half of 2021 (Data from the Foreign Trade Chamber of BH; Table made by the author)

In the first half of 2021, the amount of 500,709 kg of weapons and ammunition delivered to Egypt reached a price of about 12 million euros. It was followed by Morocco with 186,648 kg of imported weapons and ammunition during 2019, worth about 4 million euros, then in 2020 in the quantity of 40,792 kg worth approximately 0.8 million euros. In the category “nuclear reactors, boilers, and machines” during 2019, exports to Algeria reached a quantity of 34,500 kg and a value of 1.2 million euros. During 2020, 103,012 kg of weapons and ammunition have been delivered to the same country, worth about 1.9 million euros. During 2019, Kenya got 40,427 kg of weapons and ammunition from BH, with a reported value of around 2.9 million euros. The largest African importer of nuclear reactors, boilers, and machinery from BH was Namibia with the quantity of 15,028 kg, or about 0.6 million euros during 2019. The same type of products were exchanged during 2020, in the quantity of 18,638 kg and in the value of 2 million euros (FTC BH, 21 July 2021).

Weapons and ammunition; their parts and accessories						
Period of time	2019		2020		½ 2021	
	Quantity in kg	Value in BAM	Quantity in kg	Value in BAM	Quantity in kg	Value in BAM
Egypt	1.426.347	57.694.573	1.533.590	56.950.520	500.709	24.373.905
Morocco	186.648	8.419.009	40.792	1.687.628	-	-
Kenya	40.427	5.871.791	-	-	-	-
Algeria	-	-	103.012	3.806.289	-	-

Table 2. The top African buyers of Bosnian weapons and ammunition during 2019, 2020, and in the first half of 2021 (Data from the FTC BH; Table made by the author)

During the analyzed period, there have not been a million transactions in trading weapons and ammunition with other African countries and the quantities (as well as values) of delivered products are marginal (when compared with the above).

<sup>4</sup> Values presented in BH convertible mark - BAM. 1,00 BAM ≈ 0.51 euros.

## ***Production of weapons, ammunition, and their parts and accessories in Bosnia and Herzegovina***

According to available data, few companies from BH reported export of weapons and ammunition, namely: *MATRA GROUP D.O.O., POBJEDA - TEHNOLOGY d.o.o. Goražde, UNIS "GINEX" d.d. Goražde, UNIS Promex d.o.o., UNIS-GROUP D.O.O., ZRAK OPTOELEKTRONIKA a.d., TECHNICAL OVERHAUL a.d. Bratunac*. Some of these companies do not sell their products to African countries. *Matra, Unis group and Technical Overhaul Bratunac* are African partners (FTC BH, 2 June 2021), and products of these factories will be presented in this article.

The company *Matra* specializes in the production of magazines (Matra, 1 July 2021), as follows:

- AK-47 Magazines, caliber 7.62x39 mm, made from steel, with 30 round capacity;
- AK-47 Magazines, caliber 7.62x39 mm, with 20 round capacity;
- AK-47 Magazines, caliber 7.62x39 mm, 10 round capacity;
- AK-47 Magazines, caliber 5.45x39 mm, 30 round capacity;
- Lee-Enfield Magazines, caliber 0.303 British, 10 round capacity.

Below, in the following table are presented other relevant data on all of *Matra's* magazines offer (Matra, 1 July 2021).

SPECIFICATION	Magazine AK 47 cal. 7.62x39 mm Steel 20 round	Magazine AK 47 cal. 7.62x39 mm Steel 10 round	Magazine AK 47 cal. 5.45 x39 mm Steel 30 round	Lee-Enfield cal 0.303 British Steel 10 round
Use	AK 47 AR, in all of its variants	AK 47 AR, in all of its variants	AK 47 AR, in all of its variants	Lee-Enfield
Material	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel
Surface protection	Blue oxide	Blue oxide	Blue oxide	Blue oxide
Salt chamber, hours until first rust spots	10	10	10	10
Dimensions A x B x C	172,24 x 83,94 x 26	113,9 x 83,94 x 26	198 x 78,50 x 26	89 x 84,1 x 27
Capacity Max. bullets/magazine	20	10	30	10
Weight of empty magazine, kg	0,295	0,250	0,325	0,160
Weight of loaded magazine, kg	0,665	0,435	0,646	0,410
Rate of fire, theory, rounds/minute	600	600	600	60
Rate of fire, practical, rounds/minute	100	50	150	30
Temperature range	-30 C to +50 C	-30 C to +50 C	-30 C to +50 C	-30 C to +50 C
Extreme functionality conditions	Exceptional	Exceptional	Exceptional	Exceptional

*Table 3. Offer of Matra factory*

The *Unis-group* is a company fully owned by the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a government authorized defense industry concern, the *Unis-group* is the leading exporter of weapons and military equipment in BH. The company's vision is to become the leading company in the defense industry in Southeast Europe and, as such, be recognized and acknowledged as a respectable business partner (Unis Group, 21 August 2021). Production and offer of the *Unis group* consist the following:

- Small arms ammunition;
- Weapons;
- Fuses and grenades;
- Modernization;
- Large caliber ammunition;
- Protective equipment; and
- Sighting devices.

For the production of small arms ammunition, *Unis Group* company has one factory based in town Konjic. The *Igman* factory produces all types of ammunition with various types of cartridges such as ball, tracer, armor piercing, armor piercing incendiary, armor piercing incendiary tracer, and other combinations of all types (Igman, 1 September 2021). This factory is completely oriented toward the export of various types and calibers of military and hunting ammunition for numerous customers in the world market. The *Igman* factory emphasizes ammunition production in accordance with contemporary standards (Unis Group, 2021). For the previous years, this factory reported export to over 50 countries worldwide, including the African continent. However, the most important market for them are New Zealand, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Portugal, Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, the United Kingdom, Ireland, the United States of America, and Canada. In the plant in Konjic, the ammunition production includes:

- Caliber 12.7 x 108 mm;
- Caliber 12.7 x 99 mm;
- Caliber. 5.56 x 45 mm;
- Caliber 7.62 x 39 mm;
- Caliber 7.62 x 39 mm Ignition Charge for Rifle Grenade;
- Caliber 7.62 x 51 mm;
- Caliber 7.62 x 54 R;
- Caliber 7.62 x 63 mm;
- Caliber 7.9 x 57 mm;
- Caliber 9 x 19 mm.

Regrading Blanks (Igman, Final Catalog, 2020), the offer includes the following:

- Caliber 12.7 x 99 mm BLANK M1A1;
- Caliber 5.56 x 45 mm BLANK M200;



- Caliber 5.56 x 45 mm BLANK M200A1;
- Caliber 7.62 x 39 mm BLANK M68;
- Caliber 7.62 x 51 mm BLANK M82;
- Caliber 7.62 x 63 mm BLANK M1999.

Special ball offer:

- Caliber 12.7 x 108 mm Sniper;
- Caliber 12.7 x 99 mm M33 Sniper, Solid Ball, API, AP;
- Caliber 7.62 x 51 mm Match M118;
- Caliber 7.62 x 54R Sniper (Igman, Final Catalog, 2020).

Within the *Unis group*, a join-stock company under the name of *BNT-TMiH* (Machine and Hydraulics factory) is specialized in manufacturing and upgrading complex artillery weapons and military equipment. Even though through the *Unis Group*, this sister company has registered export on the African market, its most important partners are Saudi Arabia, Austria, Croatia, Italy, Germany, Holland, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey. Its production program (Unis Group, 2021) includes the following:

- Guns and Howitzers;
- Mortars;
- Recoilless Guns;
- Rocket Launchers and
- Machine Guns.

Regarding conversions, it is noted that the factory made significant improvements of artillery weapons such as: “conversion of gun 130 mm M-46 into gun howitzer 155/46 and 52 calibers, modernizing of howitzer 105 mm, attaining extended range and efficiency on the target.” It is important to mention “transfer of technology for mortar 82 mm for Egypt, and also has designed build and put in operation factory for production of howitzer 122 mm D-30 in Iraq. This factory was capacitated for production of 200 pieces of howitzer 122 mm D-30 J per year” (Unis Group, Weapons, 2021).



BNT-TMiH products					
Guns	Production and Upgrade Howitzers	Production and Upgrade Machine gun	Mortars	Recoilless gun	Rocket launchers
23mm GŠ-23Y	122mm D30J How	40mm M-2003	60mm, 81mm, 82mm, 120mm	82mm M60A	128mm MLRS
76mm M48 B1A5,	105mm How	-	Standard and extended range	82mm M79	262mm MLRS
100mm TOPAZ	152mm Gun-How	-	-	-	-
125mm Tank Gun	-	-	-	-	-
130mm	-	-	-	-	-
155mm M46/96	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4. Offer of Matra factory

Another joint-stock company is *Binas*, located in the city of Bugojno, in the central part of BH. The main activity in this company includes production of all types of the fuses for caliber 60mm to 280mm: “fuses for artillery shells (mechanical, piezo-electric, proximity and time – pyrotechnic and electronic); fuses for mortar shells (mechanical, proximity); fuses for artillery rockets (mechanical, piezoelectric, electronic-time); fuses for anti-armor weapons (mechanical and piezoelectric)” (Unis Group, Fuses and Grenades, 2021). Also, all types of gun primers for artillery ammunition and for artillery rockets. Mine-explosives products are hand grenade, TNT demolition charges, and hand-operated devices for the initiation of electric primers. The most important export partners for Binas are the United States of America, Turkey, North Macedonia, Austria, and Egypt. Regarding Africa, alongside Egypt, products from this company reach Angola too.

For some future partners can be significant to picture some manufacturing technologies (Unis Group, Fuses and Grenades, 2021), such as:

- Mechanical treatment by cutting;
- Plastic deformation proceeding;
- Heat treatment of metal parts;
- Surface covering (zn-plating, ni-plating, electro-chemical plating, anodic oxidation using requested color, chroming, phosphating, varnishing);
- Machine tools production;
- Assembling of products from production program;
- Processing of explosives by pressing and casting;
- Static testing of products from production program;
- Quality control tests of products;
- Mechanical/metallographic testing;
- Testing of explosives;
- Testing of corrosion and anti-corrosion protection;

- Plastic material testing;
- Other laboratory tests.

BINAS products						
Fuzes For Mortar Ammunition	Fuzes for Artillery Ammunition	Fuzes for Rifle Grenades	Fuzes And Grenades – Cart.40mm – Low velocity	Fuzes And Grenades – Cart.40mm – High velocity	Hand Grenades	Gun Primers
UT M68 P1	UTIU M71	DI M60	HE M6	HE M9	BR M75	TK M1
UT M68	UTIU M72	UT M70 P1	HE M6P	TPT M9	BRV M75	TK M28 A2
UT M78	UTIU M85	-	HE M6P – SD	TP M9	-	TK M28 YA
-	UTIU M85 P1	-	TPT M6P	TPF M9	-	TK M40 A1
-	UT M88	-	TP M6	HE DP M9	-	TK M49 P1
-	AU 62	-	PT M6P	-	-	TK M71
-	-	-	-	-	-	KT-EU M84

Table 5. Offer of Binias factory

*Pretis*, also a *Unis group* joint-stock company, aims to provide a wide spectrum of defense products. The main products are various types of mortar ammunition, artillery ammunition, tank and anti-tank ammunition, rockets, rifle grenades, and air bombs. More precisely, the production program (*Unis Group, Large Caliber Ammunition, 2021*) includes:

- Mortar shell ammunition of all types and calibers;
- Tank ammunition 76 -125 mm caliber;
- Artillery ammunition 76 mm -155 mm caliber;
- Rockets – 122 mm, 128 mm and 262 mm caliber range from 1000 m to 100 km;
- Air bombs 100 and 250 kg;
- Infantry weapon ammunition: Grenade rifle (Anti-personnel, Anti-tank, ILL, Practice);
- Rocket 90mm HEAT.

Regarding export market in Africa, on the top of partners list is Botswana. In addition, the important markets of *Pretis* are in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, India, Malaysia, Iran, Georgia, Kuwait, Libya, Bangladesh, Pakistan, North Macedonia, and Saudi Arabia (*Unis Group, Large Caliber Ammunition, 2021*).

Protective equipment is manufactured in Hadžići, suburb of Sarajevo, and the program includes military vests, military helmets with visor, protective suits, and anti-riot shields. This joint-stock company named *Technical Overhaul Institute (TRZ)* in the last year reorganized one part of the manufactory for personal protective equipment against COVID-19 such as safety suits, masks, and visors (face shields) as well as disinfectants (*TRZ, 30 August 2021*).

Technical Overhaul Institute Hadžići (TRZ)		
Helmets and Visors	Protective and Undershirt Vest	Riot Shield
Military Helmet	Protective Vest (Blue)	Riot Shield
Police Helmet with Visor	Protective Vest (Dark Blue)	-
Self-Supporting Visor	PT M68	-

Table 6. Offer of Technical Overhaul Institute Hadžići

Beside these products, the factory also offers services for military as well as civilian sectors. The military offer is based on the overhauling of military vehicles, artillery and personal weapons, modernization of weapon, and military tech. The civilian offer includes general remounting and/or modifications of all types of hunting and sport weapon systems, machine vehicles (with rails, wheels and special purposes); building and mining equipment, additional vehicle parts like truck trails; machining engines and aggregates; medical equipment, and various types of machine and tools (TRZ, 1 September 2021).

Moreover, the special offer from *Technical Overhaul Institute Hadžići* are: Light hand grenade launcher RPG-7Mx2 40mm, and anti-shield weapon system for soldiers. They are dedicated for destroying tanks in close combat and shielded vehicles from the distance of 300 meters. They must be handled by two soldiers, one who aims it and his assistant, with a wide, 30 meters blast radius behind (TRZ, 1 September 2021).

Regarding sighting devices, the *Unis group* military concern offer (with the specialized factory *Zrak*) includes all types of the fuses from calibers 60mm to 280mm, all types of gun primers, mine-explosive products, HE 40 mm cartridge for grenade launchers, manufacturing of pyrotechnical compounds, and processing of explosives. The main activities of the joint-stock company for this manufacture wing cover areas of precise mechanics, optics, optoelectronics, electro-mechanics, laser techniques, and quality assurance. “Military production program includes fire control systems, observation and sighting devices for tanks and armored vehicles, mortar sighting devices, howitzer sighting devices, anti-aircraft guns sighting devices, hand rocket launcher sighting devices, compasses, observation-measuring devices, passive (night) devices, hand binoculars, sniper optical sights, etc.” (Unis Group, Sighting devices, 2021). As the most important market for sighting devices, the *Zrak* factory emphasizes the United States of America, Turkey, North Macedonia, Austria, and Egypt. According to the available data, the Egyptian army is in the top five buyers of equipment, and has undergone a modernization process with the help of the *Unis group* company. The modernization program consists of upgrading M18 76mm and T-55 Tanks as well as BRDM-2 Armored Amphibious Scout Cars (Unis Group, Modernizations, 2021).

Beside the *Unis group* stock companies in BH operates *Technical Overhaul Bratunac* (TRB), located in the town of Bratunac, Republic of Srpska. The main products of the Technical Overhaul are:

- Armored vehicle DESPOT,
- Pistol RS9 Vampir;

- System for humanitarian demining MH -17;
- Fuze;
- Ammunition line;
- Radar systems;
- Mobile security system (see more: TRB, Brosure RS9 Vampire, 2021; TRB, Demining Machine, 2021).

„DESPOT belongs to the category of state-of- the-art armored vehicles designed to carry out a vast range of missions from the domain and scope of the police and armed forces units.” It is an off-road 4x4 multi-purpose vehicle, highly protected and extremely durable. High levels of mobility in all terrain and weather conditions are extraordinary values of this vehicle. General data on the dimensions and mass are as follows: length – 6.05 m, height – 2.70 m, width – 2.56 m, wheelbase – 3.5 m and ground clearance – 0.48. Additionally, maximum vehicle weight is 14 t. Regarding performance, maximum speed is 120 km/h, vertical barrier 0,5 m, and water barrier 1.1 m (TRB, Katalog Despot, 2021). In the fuse line, manufactured types are artillery fuses, hand grenade fuses, aerial bomb fuses, landmine fuses and naval mine fuses. The offer of TBR includes engineering services with Know-how documentation, Equipment installation, Supervision over installation, Commissioning of production, Trial run, Equipment performance test, Maintenance after commissioning, Training, Turnkey solution, and Plant engineering (TRB, 9 October 2021).

#### *DESPOT<sup>5</sup>*



This company reported collaboration with African states, namely with Namibia and Egypt (TRB, 1 September 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Picture Available at: <https://trb.ba/en/portfolio/despot/> (Accessed: 1 September 2021).

## *Peacekeepers from Bosnia and Herzegovina in EU, UN and NATO missions in Africa*

In the period after the Cold War, peacekeeping missions became normal in conflict and post-conflict territories (Boutton and D'Orazio, 2019). During and after the war between 1991-1995, different international operations have been launched in BH (see more: Madej, 2018; Bove and Elia, 2018). BH has the experiences of a host country for numerous peacekeepers (Duclos and Jouhanneau, 2019), but also sent its own soldiers and police officers to contribute to the peace and stability of other countries. Police and military structures from BH have been participating in peacekeeping missions and peace support operations from 2000 onward (Ministry of Security of BH, 2019; Centre for Security Studies – BH, 2018). At first, members of the police structures joined the United Nations mission in East Timor. The first forces to Africa have been sent in 2001, who were members of the BH Armed Forces, as part of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Since then, members of the BH Ministry of Defense have participated in missions in the Republic of Mali, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Berdal, 2018; Rand and Madel, 2017). BH police forces have entered African mainland for the first time in 2004, as part of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). This mission aimed to maintain peace and strengthen the capacity of the local police force by providing police services to citizens with an emphasis on vulnerable populations. According to available data, 81 members of police structures from BH were in Liberia, and they were assigned to the positions of police advisors for criminal investigations, team leaders, and deputy regional commander. Regarding the gender structure of the BH mission staff, in this mission 11 women and 70 men have served (Centre for Security Studies – BH, 2018).

The next mission in which 19 police officers from BH have participated is UNMIS - United Nations Mission in Sudan -, and the mission's task was to build capacity, and to reform and reorganize the police (Hunt, 2020). Mission staff were engaged in the tasks of organizing various types of training for the local police. A number of 86 police officers from BH have been sent to the new UNMISS mission - United Nations Mission in South Sudan - since 2011. This mission is special because the largest number of women participated (see more: Berry and Rana, 2019; Mušić, 2019) among the mission staff, i.e. 16 female police officers from BH (Centre for Security Studies – BH, 2018).

## *Final remarks*

The total value of exported products of BH's industry to African countries in 2019 reached the value of 86 million euros, which is equal to 17 percent of the total export profit of BH in that year. In the following year, hindered by the COVID-19 blockade, goods worth only 59 million euros or 11 percent of the total export values of BH were exported to Africa. A similar trend continued in 2021, although with significant increases in the quantity and value of exported goods, and the value of products delivered to Africa in the first 6 months has reached 40



million euros. An integral part of the presented data are the products of the military industry delivered to several African countries. Standard African buyers of weapons, ammunition, their parts, and equipment are Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal. Egypt is the most represented buyer of military equipment in BH with multiple millions in value paid during the analyzed period. In 2019, the purchase was worth 29 million euros, and in 2020, almost the same, and for the first half of the current year, Egypt has bought equipment worth about 12 million euros. Egypt is followed by Morocco, Kenya, and Algeria, and BH's military equipment manufacturers list Namibia and Botswana as very important collaborators. The unavailability of data on the quantity of particular pieces of military equipment delivered to Africa is a main limitation of the paper.

The presented data indicate the justification of the analysis, but also the need for further scientific research on the links between BH and several African countries. Namibia and BH's internal entity, the Republic of Srpska, have been cooperating since 2016, and this cooperation will continue in the future (RTRS, 17 October 2018; ATV, 25 May 2016; Žurnal, 21 April 2018). The Technical Overhaul Bratunac has also emphasized partner relations with Namibia.

Furthermore, peacekeeping missions will not stop anytime soon, and the question of the specific contribution of the BH contingent in the building of stability in Africa is open for further scientific research.

### **Conflict of interest**

The author hereby declares that no competing financial interest exists for this manuscript.

### **Notes on contributor**

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