

# **SECURITY AND DEFENCE IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE**

**The ESCADA Report**

**2003**

## HARMONIE PAPER 16

### Security and Defence in South-Eastern Europe

The contributors to this work are David Greenwood and Peter Volten, as authors of the two Study Group Reports; and the members of those Study Groups (from the eight participating South-East European countries).

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The Centre for European Security Studies is an independent and non-profit foundation engaged in research, education and training on foreign policy and security affairs affecting the whole of Europe. A key mission is to promote democratic structures and decision-making procedures in this field, especially throughout Central and Eastern Europe where it works to support those organisations and individuals striving to establish civil societies under the rule of law. By facilitating a comprehensive process of learning, it aims to contribute to mutual understanding on all security matters, thus helping to build a stable all-European order.

## PREFACE

Over the turn of the year 2002-2003 the world's attention was focused on Iraq: would there or would there not be war there, and with what consequences (either way)? At the same time, in South-Eastern Europe, there were regional and local matters to occupy minds: some old, some new, some significant for the short term, some for the longer run.

These concerns made a lengthy list: the uncertain progress of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) towards reappearance as the state-union of Serbia and Montenegro, not to mention the issue of Kosovo's future; the tensions that might arise in the security politics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Macedonia under new governments, and in Albania and Croatia under existing ones; the implications for the area of NATO's November 2002 Prague Summit at which not only were invitations to accession extended to Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria but a potentially far-reaching 'transformation' of the Organisation itself was foreshadowed. Moreover, one could add to the list some worries – affecting every state of the neighbourhood – about the persistence of corruption and the pervasiveness of organised crime (or 'strategic' crime), and some problems still to be addressed – more or less everywhere – in the field of defence reform (or 'security-sector reform', if you prefer).

The Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) had anticipated that these might be interesting times in the Balkans – that this might indeed be a critical time – primarily, it has to be said, because of the keenly-awaited Prague Summit (and the near-simultaneous announcement by the European Union of its enlargement timetable). That it would be timely at end-2002 to look afresh at the future of security and defence in South-Eastern Europe was foreseeable, and was foreseen.

At the Groningen Centre the fruit of foresight was a decision to conduct during 2002 an examination of two major aspects of the region's security and defence: options and prospects for (a) *extending security co-operation* there and (b) reforming and harmonising *defence arrangements* in the neighbourhood. Reflecting this selection and terminology, we designated the inquiry the ESCADA project.

We were determined, though, that such an investigation, while a CESS initiative, should be undertaken as a research venture engaging security and defence specialists *from South-Eastern Europe itself*. Accordingly we recruited such specialists from Albania, BiH, Bulgaria, Croatia, the FRY, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia – over 30 in all – and set them to work during 2002 on the chosen themes.

This volume presents the results of that work. It comprises the final Reports of the two eight-country Study Groups we set up: on (A) Extending Security Co-operation (chaired by CESS Research Director David Greenwood) and (B) Defence Arrangements (chaired by our Director, Peter Volten). The *modus operandi* that yielded these Reports – written by the Chairs – is explained in a short opening 'Introduction to ESCADA' in the text.

The names of the South-East European specialists involved, and the material they contributed, are listed in two Appendices. These principals would, however, be the first to acknowledge that this substantial output could not have been produced without considerable support.

In this connection thanks are due, first, to the partner institutes in the eight participating countries who helped recruit our experts and arrange ESCADA events (and, in particular, to our points of contact in these organisations). The institutions and individuals are: in *Albania*, the Centre on Parliamentary Studies, Tirana (Sokol Berberi); in *BiH*, the Centre for Security Studies, Sarajevo (Bisera Turkovic and Denis Hadzovic); in *Bulgaria* the Institute for Security and International Studies, Sofia (Plamen Pantev); in *Croatia*, the Institute for International Relations, Zagreb (Mladen Stanicic); in the *FRY*, the Institute for European Studies, Belgrade (Dusan Nikolis); in *Macedonia*, the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, Skopje (Petar Atanasov); in *Romania*, the EURISC Foundation, Bucharest (Liviu Muresan and George Grama); and in *Slovenia*, the Atlantic Council, Ljubljana (Anton Bebler and his staff). We are grateful also to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands for the research grant which made the entire operation possible.

Finally, I wish to thank the members of my staff at Groningen who co-ordinated the work of the research teams, Sander Huisman (Study Group A) and Jos Boonstra (Study Group B), plus Sander Maathuis (for general assistance) and Joke Venema (who prepared this text for publication).

Margriet Drent  
Executive Director, CESS

Groningen  
21 February 2003

#### **Note**

All the 30-plus security and defence specialists who served on the ESCADA Study Groups did so in a personal capacity. The views they expressed, in written and oral contributions to the research, were their own and in the case of the public office-holders who took part in the undertaking – civilian and military – emphatically not those of their departments, services and governments.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Extending Security Co-operation

- South-Eastern Europe should reinforce those existing ventures in security and defence co-operation that have been successful (SEDM, MPF-SEE, BLACKSEAFOR, the Budget Transparency Initiative, the SECI centre on trans-border crime). It should either abandon or revitalise the rest. The SEECP forum (with SEDM) should chart the way forward and announce a prospectus for future endeavour.
- The SEECP's proposed prospectus should include commitments to endorsement of a 'General Regional Concept' on the treatment of minorities and to pursuit of civil service reform (as an 'enabling' prerequisite for any policy implementation). Co-operation in improving defence administration – in which Bulgaria and Romania could lead – is a possibility to be explored (see below). In the meantime the outside agencies supposedly assisting reform should be roundly chastised for their reluctance to be co-ordinated. This is a job for the Special Co-ordinator (*sic*) of the Stability Pact (SP), heads of organisations and donor governments.
- On Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), the SP's implementation plan requires redirection: it should aim at (a) establishing a pan-regional 'gun control' regime, and (b) supporting local effort at building trust in official community policing. The Pact's anti-corruption plan requires invigoration also; and here greater local commitment is imperative. In the security field governments should, among other things, (a) strengthen financial accountability and transparency, and (b) ensure that every national audit office is competent, independent and respected.
- Strategic crime is a regional security problem. To deal with it South-East European governments could proceed more determinedly and more co-operatively on several tracks (see Report A, p. 16). The SEECP forum should take this challenge on board. As regards 'outside' help, first, aid agencies and peacekeeping forces should ensure that their personnel are not complicit in criminality; and, secondly, consideration should be given to setting-up an apparatus to deal with strategic criminals as war criminals are dealt with (independent evidence gathering, Special Prosecutor, international tribunal).
- Through SEECP or SEDM or an *ad hoc* body, South-East European governments should take up – for project definition and feasibility study – the idea of establishing a Co-operative Crisis Management Capacity, managed from a fully-equipped and staffed Regional Crisis Management Centre. Such an exercise in practical collaboration would be a path-breaking enterprise, possibly foreshadowing others.

## B. Defence Arrangements

- Though it is up to South-East European governments to reform their own defences and defence organisations, they should continue to receive guidance such as the Membership Action Plan (MAP) procedure provides for about-to-be and hope-to-be NATO members. For ‘maybe sometime’ members who nevertheless face similar reform challenges, their governments should explore with NATO how they might access similar assistance.
- In effecting reform, attention to accountability and transparency in decision-making – and ‘democratic-style civil-military relations’ – are imperative. There should be explicit legislative provision for these, but what is mandated must be put into practice. Political elites bear a special responsibility for doing this, as well as for reshaping defence provision itself. It is they who decide whether challenges remain obstacles or become opportunities and whether the burdens of the past outweigh the promises of the future.
- There is much that South-East European countries can learn from others – in Central Europe and the neighbourhood itself – about reshaping defence provision within a ‘good governance’ framework. Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia should put their experience at the disposal of not only the region’s MAP states but also the ‘maybe sometime’ countries. (Bulgaria has much to offer on how to do integrated defence resources management, Romania on how to do executive-legislature relations, both know how to reduce, rationalise and restructure armed forces and give them an international rather than a heavily national orientation.)
- A well-organised defence ministry has its own separation of powers: unambiguous subordination of the General Staff to democratically accountable (civilian) political direction and policy guidance; and of the military’s priorities to the need for matching resources and commitments in transparent budgeting. Where there is any ambiguity about this, there should be clarification.
- Well-organised armed forces in today’s (and tomorrow’s) world must be ‘modern’. However, this is less a matter of the number and sophistication of the weapon systems they can display, much more a matter of the quality of their human capital. This applies across the board: personnel serving at international and national headquarters, combat troops, soldiers escorting monitors in Macedonia – or kids to kindergarten anywhere. Education and training systems need to reflect this. Where they do not, change is necessary – indeed already overdue.

*For more on these points, see pp. 72-79.*



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## INTRODUCTION to ESCADA

For many years now, and especially since the launching of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, organisations and governments, think tanks and individual analysts from *outside* the region have offered all sorts of prescriptions for treating the area's problems: for providing 'stability' (whatever that means), and for improving the sense of security and the prospect of prosperity of those who live in this neighbourhood.

The exercise reported on here was devised to provide a vehicle for knowledgeable individuals from *within* the region itself to put forward their ideas for security-building in the locality. It anticipated the notion of 'local ownership' of policy development and implementation that is now the height of fashion (and which the Special Co-ordinator for the Stability Pact, Erhard Busek, is committed to promoting).

Two specific fields were selected for attention, and to address each an eight-nation Study Group was formed, the countries represented being Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro (as the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is now called) and Slovenia. There were two people from each country in each Study Group.

One of the 16-strong teams was tasked to consider options and prospects for *extending security co-operation* (intra-regional) in 2003 and beyond. (It was designated Study Group A.) The second was tasked to look at regional experience in *defence arrangements*, reflecting on the many issues surrounding national reform efforts and identifying how 'arrangements' might evolve in future in an harmonious way. (Study Group B.) Use of the phrases 'Extending Security Cooperation' and 'Defence Arrangements' in these formulations made it inevitable that the acronymic short title of the venture should be the ESCADA project.

The 'teams' met for the first time early in 2002. At this gathering the research agenda of each Study Group was decided upon and initial writing assignments agreed. Thereafter the groups each held two working meetings (the second of them a joint meeting). At these, members' papers were received and discussed, but there was also an opportunity to hear what guest participants had to say about the topics under examination and to engage in general debate. Towards the end of 2002 participants met for final discussions at which they heard and approved 'preview' reports on their deliberations presented by the two Study Groups' independent Chairs and Rapporteurs.

Following these exchanges, the final Reports of the two teams were written – by the respective Chair/Rapporteur, but on the basis of members' contributed papers – and are now presented in this volume. They appear here separately, because they are stand-alone texts. Moreover, they differ in size and style. This is partly because of differences in the nature of the subject-matter with which the respective investigations had to deal

and partly because, reflecting this, the two groups of researchers took rather different approaches to their parallel inquiries.

The ‘security co-operation’ team decided on a precise division of labour from the outset. Each member wrote a substantial paper on his or her assigned topic; and the Chair/Rapporteur’s task was the relatively straightforward one of reporting the content of these contributions and linking them to a simple spinal column of argument. With a more open-ended remit, the ‘defence’ team chose to begin by identifying clusters of issues that would require or repay investigation. Members wrote papers or shorter notes related to these (in some cases more than one). The Chair/Rapporteur’s task was then two-fold. It was necessary, first, to devise and elaborate an appropriate, and necessarily complex, analytical construct for the topic; and, secondly, to synthesise a lot of disparate material within it.

However, although the pieces are thus independent and self-contained – and no attempt has been made to homogenise them – in editing the material for publication a number of cross-references have been introduced, and the individual Reports are followed by a short Conclusion which picks up strands of reasoning from both.

It will bear repeating that the perspectives on South-East European security and defence recorded here are South-East European perspectives. The ESCADA project was an ‘outside’ initiative, organised by a Dutch institution (with much local help, it must be said) and paid for by the Dutch government; and the Reports presented here were written in The Netherlands. However, the voices that speak from these pages are very much the voices of ‘insiders’ and worth particular attention for that reason. This applies especially to the policy-related observations and recommendations with which the work ends. That material appears in the Conclusion (p. 71) with appropriate reference to the supporting arguments in the Study Group Reports. (There is an Executive Summary of Policy Recommendations following the Contents page, on pages vi and vii above.).

The Nominal Roll of ESCADA Study Group Members is at Appendix A.

There is a *List of Contributed Papers* at Appendix B.

The Study Groups were also briefed by: James Appathurai, Andrew Hyde, Carlo Jean, Andrzej Karkoszka, Willem Matser, Philip Wilkinson and Panagiotis Roumeliotis.

**REPORT OF STUDY GROUP A**

**EXTENDING SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

by David Greenwood

Unless otherwise stated all citations in this Report relate to, and all direct quotations are from, the original research papers written for the ESCADA project by the Study Group members. Material is acknowledged in the text by a simple reference – ‘Ralitza Mateeva (Bulgaria)’ or ‘Iulian Fota (Romania)’, for example – and the full title of the author’s work appears in the appended *List of Contributed Papers*.

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## INTRODUCTION

'It was a game of two halves' say the soccer players and managers, and all football pundits, when commenting on a match whose balance and character changed after the teams had taken their interval oranges and their coaches' interval advice.

You could say the same about the post-Cold War security history of South-Eastern Europe. Until the mid-1990s the region was blighted by the bitterness and blood-letting of the Wars of the Yugoslav Succession. There was turmoil in Albania. There was tension in Bulgaria over relations with the country's minority 'of Turkish national consciousness' (as they say in Sofia) and in Romania over relations with the country's Magyars (and the Roma). Since the mid-1990s, though, things have changed.

To be sure, all is not sweetness and light in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), where state-building proceeds slowly and fitfully within the post-Dayton framework and – or perhaps it is because – the 'defensive mentalities' of the former belligerents continue to dominate politics. Nor has the new state-union of Serbia and Montenegro come into existence in the most auspicious circumstances, with neither 'entity' entirely comfortable about the arrangement and the matter of Kosovo's future status still awkwardly unresolved. Nor is Macedonia yet assuredly tranquil. The region is not, however, tearing itself apart over these issues; and where the danger of serious violence breaking out is greatest, NATO-led peacekeeping contingents are present to see that it doesn't. So there is space and opportunity for positive developments; and there have been many. The attention of governments is increasingly focused on repairing the damage done by past conflicts, a task involving physical, political and psychological reconstruction. The region is also less inward-looking, principally because 'joining the European mainstream' is an altogether more attractive proposition than 'remaining a Balkan backwater', for all the states in the neighbourhood. This aspiration offers a prospect of prosperity, however distant; and, what is especially important for present purposes, a sense of security similar to that which West European citizens have enjoyed for more than a generation.

Having said that, the countries of South-Eastern Europe realise that developing habits of co-operation and building regional security structures cannot, and should not, await eventual membership of the Euro-Atlantic organisations. Indeed, they recognised this some time ago: security co-operation was another feature of the 'second half' of the first post-Cold War decade. It is one reason why a February 2002 report from the US Institute of Peace could say 'the Balkans is in better shape than at any other time in the last 10 years'. It is one reason why a contributor to *NATO Review* could write at the end of 2002 that 'this year looks likely to be the first in more than a decade in which good news has eclipsed bad in Southeastern Europe' (Mihai Carp).

The question now is: what are the options and prospects for *extending* security co-operation within the region, in fields where it already happens and in new directions?

Important supplementary questions must be addressed as well. How will 'options and prospects' be affected by the imminent accession to NATO of Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia (and for how long will the region's other aspirants have to wait in line)? What are the implications of developments in the European Union (EU), meaning not only the enlargement timetable but also the Stabilisation and Accession Process (SAP) and, crucially for security, the evolution of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the Union's acquisition of a military personality and a catalogue of military capabilities? What is the likely impact on South-Eastern Europe of the growing differences between the United States and NATO-Europe (and the EU) that have emerged in 2002/3, over policy towards Iraq and the shift of emphasis in American strategy towards pre-emptive/preventive warfare? What, finally and fundamentally, do we mean by 'security' at the start of the twenty-first century: should co-operation not extend to fighting such diverse threats as endemic corruption, trans-border crime, international terrorism, natural disasters and technological catastrophes (from earthquakes to nuclear accidents)?

Our prime interest is in identifying where effort to extend security co-operation might *best* be applied. In such an endeavour you start from where you are. Where you are today is determined by how far you travelled yesterday from wherever you were the day before. As preparation for thinking about the application of effort in 2003 and beyond, there is no great merit in lengthy reflection on 'the day before' (that is to say, the period up to the mid-1990s). It is, however, instructive to look at 'yesterday' (or the record of intra-regional developments in recent years). This is necessary preparation for prescriptions for 'tomorrow'.

## **I. SECURITY CO-OPERATION TO 2002**

Recent developments were reviewed for this study with a specific dual purpose in mind: to discover what co-operative endeavours could be regarded as success stories and, on that account, worth persevering with; and to expose ventures that had failed to live up to expectations and should be either abandoned or, perhaps, purposefully revitalised. It seemed sensible to do this before considering what new institutional arrangements might be worthwhile (if any). (See papers by Ralitzia Mateeva (Bulgaria) and Adrian Pop (Romania).)

There *are* success stories. They include the locally-owned Southeast European Defence Ministerial (SEDM) consultation process – which Mateeva thinks has become 'the most important field [or forum] for South East European security co-operation' – and its tangible outcomes, especially the brigade-size Multinational Peace Force for South

Eastern Europe (MPF-SEE or, sometimes, SEEBRIG) and the newer Black Sea Naval Co-operation Task Force (BLACKSEAFOR). They include the South-east European Co-operation Initiative (SECI), best known for a number of modest but concrete development projects but notable in the security field for its Regional Center for Combatting Trans-border Crime in Bucharest. The states of the region derive value also from NATO's South East Europe Initiative (SEEI). This has yielded a useful South East Europe Common Assessment Paper on 'Regional Security Challenges and Opportunities' (SEECAP). Maybe more important, it has led to the creation of a South East Europe Security Co-operation Group (or SEEGROUP). This is concerned, among other things, with implementation of the SEECAP. The 'other things' include, incidentally, activities relevant to the matters being addressed by our Study Group B, such as the consideration of follow-up processes to regional security-sector reform plus an inquiry (SEESTUDY) to provide 'a unitary picture of different approaches to security' in the neighbourhood. (Pop's description.)

Among the several security-related 'initiatives' associated with the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (SP) there are a few modest successes and several serious disappointments. Under the first heading, a (Defence) Budget Transparency Initiative (BTI) has delivered what it was supposed to deliver. Launched in 2001, after preparatory work by Bulgaria and the United Kingdom, it has led to the production of a *Yearbook on South-East European Defence Spending* (first edition published in 2002, second edition to appear in 2003) and a complementary *Survey of South-East European Defence Budgeting Systems* (scheduled for publication in mid-2003). The *Yearbook* is a compilation of data based on countries' submissions to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) under the information-exchange arrangements that are part of the OSCE's regime of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs). Under these arrangements governments share material with other governments. The BTI publication places this information in the public domain. The companion *Survey* offers insights into budgetary procedures across the region, complementing the data on budget outcomes. All this represents a concrete contribution to fulfilment of core SP objectives: 'to increase the sense of security and trust' among South-East European countries by enhancing 'transparency and predictability in the military field' (as the Pact's website puts it).

Another concrete accomplishment for the SP is a programme for the resettlement of military personnel made redundant as a result of national force reduction, rationalisation and restructuring exercises. Bringing together NATO expertise and World Bank funding, this has produced encouraging results in Bulgaria and Romania and is to be replicated elsewhere. However, it is the 'serious disappointments' that command attention. The ambitious Stability Pact Anti-corruption Initiative (SPAI) has yet to live up to expectations. The same goes for an 'initiative' on Organized Crime (SPOC) and a

couple of others (on migration and asylum matters, and on refugee returns). Similarly, several SP 'Task Forces' have only modest achievements to record.

There are many reasons for these disappointments, but a key one – certainly applicable to the SPAI and SPOC endeavours and also to efforts to address the problems posed by the region's accumulated Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) – is the multiplicity of national and international programmes and players that are paying attention to these matters, producing 'lack of efficiency, duplication and no clear division of competences' (as Adrian Pop puts it). There is more on this issue later.

The register of 'disappointments' includes also activities other than these SP-sponsored examples, notably some military co-operation ventures. There are several instances in the recent history of South-Eastern Europe of announcements about bilateral and trilateral collaboration in the establishment of joint battalions of one kind or another for peace-support operations of one kind or another. In many cases the result has been the creation of 'virtual' formations rather than the production of real capabilities. Another disappointment of military-to-military contacts is the apparent lack of interest in the creation of units specially trained for civil-military co-operation (CIMIC) tasks and constabulary duties generally. (See Sasko Dimevski (Macedonia).)

One of the most pressing requirements at end-2002 is, therefore, for a tidying-up operation, to strip out deadwood and free resources for more productive endeavours. Unfortunately, there is no clear consensus in the region – and certainly not among the international 'players' – about the *how*, the *when* and the *where* of such an exercise, or about *to whom* it could be entrusted. The strongest candidate for the latter job is perhaps the South-East European Co-operation Process forum (SEECP). This is the institution that Special Co-ordinator Busek wants to use as the 'voice' of the region in SP affairs. On 'how' and 'when' the likeliest prospect is of a gradual rationalisation of some activities either under the aegis of the successful co-operative ventures that have been noted already or with the EU taking a more prominent role, but supporting local ownership rather than supplanting it.

On this reasoning, 'where' is not an issue; but the idea of launching rationalisation at a major regional conference – to take stock on a number of neighbourhood matters – has been canvassed in some quarters. There is no great enthusiasm for such an event in South-Eastern Europe, however, principally because of fears that a showpiece event would provide a platform for the region's extremists (of many sorts) and for international interventions that might set back patient security-building rather than advancing it. On the other hand, there might be some value in a relatively low-key gathering in 2003 – at Heads of State and Government level – primarily to elicit a reaffirmation of commitments to good neighbourliness, respect for minorities and suchlike, but perhaps to prompt resolution of some outstanding border disputes as well. Such a meeting might also set an agenda for 'tomorrow'. (See Branislav Lolic (BiH).)

## II. CO-OPERATION FROM 2003: TRAJECTORIES AND PREREQUISITES

Whether or not a grand or modest Balkan Convention commends itself, there are some matters on which common declarations by the region's leaders would have merit. The treatment of minorities is one. Future co-operation would be easier to manage, and security and stability would have a sounder foundation, if South-East European governments could find common ground on this issue. Endorsement of a *General Regional Concept* on the subject has been suggested by Robertino Chontev (Macedonia). Elements in it would be the following (in Chontev's own words).

- 'To encourage the states in the region to sign and respect relevant documents on national minorities' rights;
- Make the *strong* national affiliation more *relaxed*, by respecting regional harmonisation as a transitory step within the process of globalisation;
- Initiation of an almost simultaneous Regular Census of population, based on a common format and principles, into the states belonging to the region which will provide a real overview of the ethnic picture without any kind of bias;
- To support the education for minorities at least at basic level (primary school) or high school (secondary school) in their mother tongue (which does not exclude education in the official state language);
- To encourage the states in the region to respect the minorities' right to political engagement through their political parties and in this way [permit] participation in the process of decision making and more qualitative integration into the social life [of the country];
- Arrangement of possibility for preservation of cultural, ethnical or linguistic minorities' characteristics by broadcasting of radio and TV shows in their mother tongue, supported by expert and financial assistance from the state institutions (national TV or Radio);
- Explain the need for minorities' *loyalty* toward the state which they live in, its territorial integrity and political sovereignty, by expressing the danger for all people...of the alternative – "state disintegration" or "borders change" or "separation and unification with other state" – activities that will evidently produce [much] conflict and suffering.' (Chontev's text in the appended *List of Contributed Papers*.)

This is an ambitious contents list, but Chontev's instinct is sound and the truth of the message in his final clause is indisputable. Quite apart from its importance in relation to regional security, without acceptance of this condition there can be no question of the Balkan states fulfilling their European vocation. One of the clearest messages to come from the Euro-Atlantic institutions regarding their enlargement (and pre-enlargement) strategies is that membership is open to stable *states* and the phenomenon of the fully autonomous sub-state is anathema to Brussels.

Regarding the European vocation generally, one activity that must feature on South-East Europe's 2003 calendar is a serious stocktaking exercise to weigh the implications of (a) NATO's second wave of post-Cold War enlargement announced at the November 2002 Prague Summit and (b) the timetable for EU accessions, bearing in mind the Union's commitment to developing its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and equipping itself to field forces in support.

Two observations on consequent *trajectories* for future security co-operation are in order. First, it is obvious that in the likely speed of NATO's further enlargement there is the possibility of damage to regional developments. Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria may simply lose interest (or at least enthusiasm). Secondly, the likely path and pattern of EU expansion is potentially problematic too because South-Eastern Europe is manifestly not poised to coalesce quickly into a 'security community' of the kind that has evolved in Western Europe since the 1950s. Indeed it may not even progress in that direction if most states continue to be 'plagued with weak and unfunctioning institutions and with the threatening lack of the rule of law' and if one or two large countries – Bulgaria and Romania again – 'are gradually leaving the previously common scene' (Jovan Teokarevic (FRY)).

However, damage limitation should be possible. In the first place, NATO's newest members should be enjoined to preserve and even strengthen their immediate neighbourhood connections. The emergence of sharp new dividing lines will do nothing for regional security (nothing but harm, that is). Membership-related divisions must therefore be bridged or blurred, not least because the new threats on the security agenda pay no heed to boundaries. At the same time account must be taken of a warning note sounded by Jovan Teokarevic (FRY): that for all the good that might come from engaging Western Balkan states in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the EU's SAP arrangements 'status issues will project their own share of destabilisation throughout the region' (from Kosovo and Montenegro assuredly in 2004/5, maybe from BiH and Macedonia too if present state-building efforts falter). In managing these challenges a special responsibility lies with the EU, Union membership being the only goal that all of the South-East European countries 'share completely and without any reserve' (Jovan Teokarevic again).

It is not yet clear what this responsibility might eventually involve, but already several currents are running in this direction. On the one hand the EU has assumed or is about to assume key duties in the area – from the UN for police work in BiH, from NATO for *Task Force Fox* in Macedonia – and responsibility for the SFOR mission in BiH may eventually pass to the Union. On the other, one observes a rapidly-waning American interest in 'protectorate' tasks ('in together, out together' pledges notwithstanding). Indeed the 2002/3 transatlantic *contretemps* over policy toward Iraq has increased the likelihood of near-complete US disengagement. This may now be a matter of 'when' rather than 'whether'.

There are many other important pre-requisites for future co-operation and security community-building. Attention to improving the quality of public administration is one. This is easier said than done. Different reform ‘models’ have different merits; and in South-East European conditions local circumstances and constraints have to be taken into account. On this, two observations are in order. First, individual countries must devise and implement their own administrative reforms, as (for example) BiH has begun to do, not least because they will not otherwise be able to handle SAP obligations and, later, the formidable *acquis communautaire*, en route to EU membership (see Josip Brkic (BiH)). Secondly, there is nevertheless scope for some regional co-operation in developing competence in the area of defence administration. The facilities of the Regional Defence Resources Management Centre at Brasov in Romania could be utilised much more than they have been lately. Romania could also do more to disseminate information about how its innovative practice in executive-legislature relations was introduced and about the benefits that accrue. Similarly, Bulgaria could offer to explain to its contiguous and near-neighbours the value of its impressive new integrated defence resources management procedures. Both these countries might also have experience to share on the management of radical force reduction, stripping out obsolete inventories and disposing of redundant infrastructure. Their programmes for resettlement of military personnel would definitely be of wider interest. (See the Study Group B Report for more on this.) Whether the region’s other soon-to-be NATO member, Slovenia, has help to offer is less obvious. The country is, though, likely to be more willing to engage with the other ex-Yugoslav states than was the case in the 1990s. (See Viko Vegic (Slovenia).)

Perhaps the most pressing need in the matter of ‘prerequisites’ for future co-operation, however, is the tidying-up operation mentioned earlier, with respect to institutions, initiatives and external interventions – especially external interventions. There has been a ‘recalibration’ of the roles of international institutions in BiH lately, with beneficial consequences (according to most accounts). Similar exercises should be undertaken elsewhere. The lack of co-ordination among the numerous organisations that go under the banner of the ‘international community’ is shameful. Moreover, although the phenomenon has been highlighted in many studies – including a so-called ‘gaps’ analysis done for the SP recently – overlap, replication and competition persist; and new evidence of poor co-ordination comes to light daily.

The ‘gaps’ analysis notes that ‘there is a degree of competition among international actors, stemming from various reform models and approaches’; and then delivers its indictment:

‘different institutional priorities and the reluctance of individual organizations to be co-ordinated tends to prevent real progress towards more coherent and complementary international interventions.’ (*Security Sector Reform: Gaps Analysis*, York University (Canada) for the Stability Pact, 2002.)

‘Reluctance ... to be co-ordinated’ is a masterpiece of understatement. Some bodies show no interest in communicating with others whatsoever.

As for the continuing accumulation of new evidence, one example illustrates the point. In Albania, in the field of ‘parliamentary support’ – on the ‘good governance’ agenda – an SP-blessed but modestly-funded workshops programme for defence committees and staffs has been up and running since 2001 (in association with a reputable local NGO and as part of a seven-country operation) and the OSCE devised a more thorough-going three-year training venture in 2001/2002 (enlisting individual member-states to help in delivery). Yet in 2002 the UNDP unveiled a proposal for a near-identical project into which it plans to put USD1.5 million, also over three years. This is ridiculous. It is as though all the international ‘players’ want a piece of the ‘parliamentary support’ action; and if that means more overlap, replication and competition, so be it.

### III. CO-OPERATION FROM 2003: IMPERATIVES

In a few areas something more than ‘recalibration’ is called for if local regional co-operation (with external support) is to make serious headway.

One of these is the *Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)* field where not only are there many players but activities lack coherence. For example, some ‘initiatives’ focus on (a) the exchange of information to check trafficking, while others are concerned with (b) the more demanding business of collection and destruction. Yet success in (a) is of limited value if it does not lead to an actual reduction in the volume of lethal material around; and local achievements in (b) are of limited value if there is little or no counterpart effort elsewhere.

Thus everyone applauds the recent establishment of the UNDP-operated Regional Clearinghouse for Small Arms and Light Weapons opened in Belgrade in May 2002 with the aim of stemming the illicit flow of such ‘lethal material’. Likewise everyone recognises that a number of national collection and destruction programmes have been successful: ‘Weapons in Exchange for Development’ in Albania (financed by the US, Norway and Germany), ‘Goodbye to Weapons’ in Croatia, projects in the FRY (including Kosovo). Everyone approves also schemes to scrap the weapons for which shrinking armies have no further use (like the US-supported project in Bulgaria). However, while isolated accomplishments and aspirations are all well and good, ridding the region of its accumulated arms clearly calls for concerted action *at the regional level*.

This matter has been addressed, by the so-called Szeged Small Arms Process; and there is even an SP-sponsored ‘Regional Implementation Plan’ (approved November 2001). Greater authority should be vested in this effort, however, and much greater

urgency applied to the endeavour. Moreover, it needs to be better directed. Although the challenge in the South-East European setting is a daunting one, the long-term goal must be a comprehensive, region-wide ‘gun control’ regime based on strict licensing. The authorities in most countries have no idea how many weapons are held or by whom, and getting rid of illicit holdings is virtually impossible because law enforcement agencies have no law to enforce in many states. It is impossible to determine what arms are legitimately held and where possession is illegal. In such circumstances, sharing information on trafficking and isolated collection and destruction schemes simply do not get to the heart of the problem.

The SP-sponsored ‘gaps’ analysis just cited says ‘more could be done in many areas of regional or cross-border co-operation identified in the Regional Implementation Plan, including

- promotion and development of local, national and regional arrangements for co-operation in preventing illicit weapons trafficking;
- enhancing institutional capability to detect and interdict flows of arms across regional boundaries and borders;
- adoption of practical control measures at national and regional levels, such as strengthened police and customs co-operation;
- and
- development and implementation of regional public awareness and confidence-building programs related to SALW proliferation.’ (*Security Sector Reform: Gaps Analysis*, see above.)

All this looks unexceptionable, but it is classic international bureaucrats’ language, and it completely misses the point. Legislation, licensing and documentation are the only way to tackle this problem. This approach should, however, be coupled with local trust-building effort designed to give citizens sufficient confidence in official community policing that they are disinclined to take the law into their own hands, holding their own firearms. (On this, see Sotiraq Hroni (Albania), an essay noteworthy not only for an account of Albanian experience in trust-building but also for its plea for cross-border cooperation in this and other fields.)

The *Anti-Corruption* cause is another one poorly served by the present proliferation of national and international ‘initiatives’ and a lack of focus. The problem is clearly presented in an essay written for the present study by Mitja Mocnik (Slovenia), who also airs ideas for dealing with it (see Appendix). Mocnik acknowledges a difficulty: ‘anti-corruption’ is an ‘amorphous’ subject, he says, because besides ‘formal’ action to stop wrongdoing, there is an important role to be played by ‘good governance and transparency’ promotion. Still, he thinks the SPAI *Strategy and Action Plan for 2002 and beyond*, though a long time coming, represents a possible way forward. Here again, however, ‘authority’ and ‘urgency’ questions arise. The SP lacks the first and has never been very good at the second.

Perhaps this is an area where the SEECF forum – with the EU’s strong backing – should take a more prominent role, since success depends not only on local ownership but also on unambiguous local commitment. Too many national programmes have promised much and delivered little. Croatia and Romania are cases in point. In Croatia, ‘the staggering number of unsolved cases points to the artificiality of the process’, Adrian Pop tells us. In his own country, Romania, despite several ‘initiatives’ he observes that ‘not a single widely known big crook has been arrested and delivered to court and more often than not people who are most vocal ... are themselves corruption-prone if not corrupted altogether, being related more or less openly with dubious businessmen and underground networks’. There are ‘dubious businessmen’ and businesses elsewhere, of course: Bulgaria’s Multigroup (now MG Industries) springs readily to mind. As for ‘underground networks’ these are present – and powerful – throughout South-Eastern Europe.

#### **IV. CO-OPERATION FROM 2003: CRIME AND CRISES**

An assault on underground networks – the machinery of ‘strategic crime’ as Iulian Fota (Romania) calls it in the material he produced for the study – is one of two specific undertakings on which the countries of the region could, and should, collaborate intensively over the next few years. The other is development of a regional ‘co-operative crisis management capacity’ on which Todor Tagarev (Bulgaria) contributed a comprehensive briefing paper. At least these are the couple singled-out for detailed analysis here. They do not, obviously, exhaust the possibilities. For example, the ‘tidying-up operation’ advocated earlier with respect to military co-operation would present other options and prospects, some of which are noted in Ralitzia Mateeva’s paper already mentioned. Yet others have been identified in the preceding sections.

##### *Strategic crime*

The term *strategic crime* signals the nature of a security problem that demands urgent attention. The phrase captures neatly the connotations of other expressions – supercrime, transnational crime, organised systemic crime and so on – and points to the complex combination and convergence of organised crime, drugs trafficking (and other forms of illicit commerce) and terrorism. This nexus can ‘completely undermine a nation and spread tentacles of terror and evil worldwide’ (as a study from Washington’s Center for Strategic and International Studies puts it). Moreover, in the aftermath of the events of 11

September 2001 – not to mention Bali and Moscow in 2002 – the terrorist connection has acquired special salience. It is not a mythical link: criminality funds terrorist groups who in turn protect their source of revenue; states enfeebled by criminality (and corruption) – ‘weak states’ or ‘failed states’ in the favoured vocabulary – are havens, sanctuaries even, for such groups.

Strategic crime is widespread in South-East Europe, and bewildering in its diversity. Drug trafficking, money laundering, organised prostitution, vehicle theft, illicit arms dealing, smuggling of anything and everything (from cigarettes to nuclear material), art fraud, protection rackets (and others), extortion – you name it, South Eastern Europe has it. The reasons are straightforward: black markets and a grey economy characterised the communist years; the transition to capitalism produced *nomenklatura* privatisation (like ‘MG Industries’); the Wars of the Yugoslav Succession presented innumerable opportunities for profitable clandestine business (and the ‘protectorates’ are fertile ground too). In addition, ‘strategic connections’ have developed (with the Colombian drug cartels, the Chinese triads, and various Muslim networks). Iulian Fota’s analysis is summarised in the following paragraphs, using mainly his own words.

*Black Markets.* All the centralised economies sheltered developed black markets due to the incapacity of the official economy to ensure consumers’ basic needs. On this propitious ground different criminal groupings appeared; and, in the framework of political and economic liberalisation from the beginning of 1990, they held a great advantage. Being expressions of organised crime, they were organised. Administrations were not, because of an inefficient, disorganised and non-transparent bureaucracy, institutions of law enforcement disoriented by democratisation and daunted because of a very bad public image. Add to these the widespread and large-scale corruption of the communist administrative machinery, and criminal groups had conditions in which they could thrive. In particular, they could take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the processes of privatisation.

*Transition and privatisation.* Weakened state institutions were vulnerable to a series of internal threats and especially corruption. The bureaucracy gained a very big liberty of movement. Where this bureaucracy met the business world it developed what was called “bureaucratic capitalism” and did not hesitate to engage in illegal activities. Classical examples are violations of the embargo on trade with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on a massive scale, the fraudulent pyramid investment schemes in Albania, the spectacular misappropriation of funds for reconstruction in Bosnia, and the contraband with cigarettes in Montenegro. Recruitment of the beneficiaries of *nomenklatura* privatisation allowed the recycling of huge amounts of money, so Mafia-like groupings from the area came to acquire big possessions and play very important roles in the economy. So did individuals, like (the late) Zeljko Raznjatovic of Serbia, also known under the name of “Arkan”. Adding to this vicious circle, clean funds,

acquired from legal activities, were used to fund illicit activities, including some terrorist activities, with economic and geo-political ambitions being mingled.

*The Yugoslav Wars.* The breaking-up of the former Yugoslavia created numerous “war economy” opportunities. Due to the de-structuring of the normal economic processes in the conflict areas, the main actors involved in the unfolding of the military operations financed their fighting with funds from illicit activities, especially the drugs traffic. At first, conflict dislocated the drugs trade, but it was rapidly restored using a devious itinerary through Macedonia, Albania and Italy. Today, Albania reportedly controls 70 per cent of all the drugs that are sold in Germany and Switzerland. In other words criminal groupings adapt and, since serious hostilities ceased, have focused on obstructing the reconstruction processes – important amounts of money coming from Western assistance have been misappropriated – as well as on the development of peacetime criminal activities, especially the traffic in human beings and prostitution. Most disturbingly, according to a 2002 UNO-OSCE report, peacekeeping forces have become involved in such activities.

*Connections.* ‘Strategic crime’ is a strongly internationalised phenomenon. The last years have brought clear proofs about the involvement of the Colombian cartels and Chinese groups in Southeast Europe. Also involved are criminal groupings from Russia, Turkey and Iraq. Present in the area too is the Transdnestrian Mafia, a constant partner of international terrorist groupings.

So much for Fota’s diagnosis and (implicitly) pessimistic prognosis. Turning to prescription, clearly ‘strategic crime’ is a problem for which there is no easy solution and a phenomenon that, realistically, can perhaps be contained but probably cannot be eradicated.

Still, there should be more purposeful action to attack its roots and tentacles. Concerted anti-corruption measures, ‘zero tolerance’ of conniving public servants (including ‘protectorate’ troops and deviants on the payroll of international organisations), the ruthless weeding-out of implicated (or intimidated) individuals in the police and the judiciary – this is one axis along which the states of the region could, and should, proceed more determinedly and more co-operatively. This should be top of the agenda for ‘tomorrow’: and if the SEECP forum is to be taken seriously – and evolve as the voice of the region in dialogue with the SP, the EU and other ‘outside’ agencies – it should place it there, without delay and without prevarication.

Local initiative and local endeavour are crucial here, despite the towering difficulties, because the so-called ‘international community’ has much to say about the problem of strategic crime but precious little that is concrete to offer in the way of solutions. For example, at end-November 2002, just as final discussions on this Report were taking place in Bucharest, some 50-plus delegations – from EU countries, aspirant states as well as NATO, the OSCE, Europol and other agencies – gathered in London for a major conference on the subject (under Prime Minister Blair’s chairmanship). The

participants heard that ‘organised crime in Southeast Europe represents a serious and growing threat for the neighbouring countries, but also for the rest of Europe’; and that ‘the Balkans have become the gateway to Europe for organised criminals’. They had to listen to much else in that vein. Their conclusion was that action to combat the ‘cancer’ was imperative. (Quotations from Iulian Fota’s remarks on the meeting in his contributed paper, see Appendix.)

Europe’s statesmen ought to be able to do better than this; and for South-Eastern Europe fewer platitudes and more help could be forthcoming from ‘outside’ agencies. At one level they could be more diligent in ensuring that they are not part of the problem. The plethora of aid organisations and the several peacekeeping forces in the Balkans are all allegedly contaminated by criminality to some degree. Local managers and higher direction, local commanders and top brass could surely take greater care than they do with personnel selection, enforce more rigorous internal discipline and punish offenders more heavily *pour encourager les autres* (or, rather, to discourage them).

On a quite different plane, serious consideration should be given to a bold contribution to the solution. One option here would be to treat ‘strategic criminals’ as war criminals are treated. That is to say, make them the object of inquiries by independent international investigators, well paid and well equipped (the evidence gatherers). Make them subject to indictment by a Special Prosecutor and liable to arrest anywhere and anytime (without the nonsense of immunities for elected representatives and other public office-holders). Have them called to stand trial before a specially-constituted international tribunal that is beyond complicity (and coercion), for which the court in The Hague now trying those accused of Yugoslav war crimes represents a model. If this seems extreme, it is worth remembering that ridding a body of cancer sometimes requires serious surgery. This may be an idea whose time has come.

### *Co-operative Crisis Management*

It is obvious that even containing strategic crime in South-Eastern Europe is going to require much co-operatively applied energy and ingenuity, with little prospect of assured early returns. Indeed, the benefits of even the most robust measures may not be discernible until a virtuous circle is in operation, involving the arrival of ‘honest government’, establishment of the rule of law, improved prospects of prosperity by legitimate endeavour, and much else. There are, though, opportunities for early pay-offs from entirely manageable and locally-owned extensions of security co-operation in other fields. One possibility is discussed here. There are almost certainly others, but that chosen for detailed exploration is one of particular promise which, if realised, might be a precursor for other exercises in concrete collaboration.

The selected proposition – the brain-child of Todor Tagarev (Bulgaria) – is that the neighbourhood could benefit from development of, in the originator’s words, a ‘sustainable regional *Co-operative Crisis Management Capacity* (CCMC), seen as a set of co-operative crisis management capabilities’ to deal with the most probable calamitous eventualities that could afflict South-Eastern Europe. The innovation would entail ‘co-ordinating’ and ‘streamlining’ ongoing efforts (and not replicating them). Its distinctive feature would be creation of a well-equipped *Regional Crisis Management Centre* (RCMC) for which the premises of the SEEBRIG HQ in Plovdiv, Bulgaria – to be vacated in 2003 when the headquarters moves to Constanta, Romania – would be both suitable and available. (All the quoted words and phrases in this paragraph are from Todor Tagarev’s paper, see Appendix.)

Suppressing the thought that our colleague might have had a modest job creation scheme for Plovdiv in mind, or at least a better use of the Headquarters than some others that have been suggested, the notion has a great deal to commend it. Essentially, there would be a ‘catalogue’ of South-East European crisis response capabilities, maintained at the RCMC, that could be called to action at short notice to deal with a variety of contingencies. In this connection the Tagarev paper lists natural disasters (earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, massive forest fires and so on), ‘technological disasters’ (industrial accidents, hazardous material spillage and pollution), transport system accidents (aircraft crashes, railway pile-ups, shipwrecks), and human catastrophes (leading to massive refugee flows). At the same time it notes the possible value of catalogued capabilities for other purposes, including some of what the EU calls ‘Petersberg tasks’ (e.g. humanitarian assistance). In that respect the declared capabilities might find a place somewhere in Javier Solana’s Force Catalogue for the CSDP, created in 2000 and since improved, which already incorporates partners’ offerings in a special supplement.

There is a sound rationale for creation of a well-organised regional ‘capacity’ with proper communications and other technical assets. Experience shows that the co-operative implementation of means for crisis management is often hindered by lack of adequate organisation and appropriate technology. To take a pertinent South-East European example, announcement of the full operational readiness of the MPF-SEE/SEEBRIG has been unduly delayed for lack of common field communications and information systems among the subscribing states. As a result, Tagarev points out, ‘a solid political and military effort hangs on a technology need to provide interoperability among national forces’; and this means ‘a lack, or very limited efficiency, of capability to employ operationally an otherwise excellent tool’ – in fact one that in all other respects counts as one of the success stories of South-East European security co-operation.

Central to the CCMC concept is its originator’s definition of precisely what constitutes a ‘capability’:

- the *availability* of national and/or multinational assets (which means organised people and formations with all the equipment and infrastructure required to handle crisis and emergency management, plus the necessary command and control facilities and infrastructure);  
all with
- the *ability* to prevent, counter and manage the consequences of a crisis (which means arrangements are in-place, thoroughly-prepared contingency plans are available, procedures are known and have been tested in realistic conditions, while individuals and units and formations are trained).

In other words what is envisaged is not some random collection of notionally available and nominally able units that might possibly be mustered to meet some eventuality if the conditions were right, but a real capacity to act. It is emphatically not a cosmetic construction (and if it had been it would not have been worth the space here).

Nor does the proposal simply entail re-presentation of ideas under discussion or development in other contexts. There is an SP Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative (DPPI) which has produced a framework document that provides a strategy outline for common action in several designated areas. For the benefit of the cynic who thinks that sounds like typical SP-speak, it should be added that a joint civil-military fire-fighting exercise has been held under the the DPPI's auspices (namely 'Taming the Dragon-Dalmatia 2002', held in Croatia, 22-24 May 2002). So this effort is not all froth or foam. There is also a Civil-Military Emergency Planning (CMEP) Council for South-East Europe. This body is intended to co-ordinate efforts in all phases of disaster management and has identified a number of areas of co-operation. It also has conducted an exercise, based on an earthquake scenario, using distributed simulation technologies.

The CCMC would go much further than either of these, however. In his presentation of it for the present inquiry, Tagarev makes this point very clearly.

'Compared to existing initiatives, this proposal adds in scope and level of co-ordination and co-operation among SEE countries. First, it covers emergency management, disaster preparedness and prevention, expanding the scope to bridge 'civilian emergency management' to the Petersberg tasks and to link more closely civilian structures and the military. It also has the potential to co-ordinate emergency management to particular aspects of law enforcement. Secondly, while existing initiatives aim to improve planning and preparedness to use existing national resources, we envision co-ordinated – and, later, joint – development of crisis management capabilities. That shall include co-ordinated organisational development, joint procurement of the necessary technology and co-ordinated or joint development of the supporting information infrastructure. Ultimately, it may lead to joint (regional) ownership of crisis management infrastructure and other assets.'

This is more comprehensive than anything that has been proposed thus far, for South-Eastern Europe or maybe any other neighbourhood. It appeals also because the reference to infrastructure and assets foreshadows taking ‘local ownership’ – generally applied hitherto to ideas for policy development and implementation – to a new dimension: bricks and mortar, hardware and software, signal masts and satellite dishes.

There is another reason why the proposal is attractive. It would be a litmus test for pan-regional security co-operation of a practical kind. It would answer the question: can South-Eastern Europe establish and manage an in-region collective organisational capacity for civil and military contingency operations? Success here would augur well for enhanced security co-operation generally.

Not that this is in any sense an easy option for extending co-operation. Implementation would require a clear understanding of objectives and a cohesive regional strategy. It would be necessary to achieve:

- *Compatibility of conceptualisation and normative regulation of crisis management.* Based on thinking about the subject in Bulgaria, experience shows that even in a single country it is not easy to delineate, and define in strict legislative terms, ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ security threats and, respectively, responsibilities of various ministries and state agencies. This component is essential, however, to provide commonality of terminology and procedures, standardisation of reporting methods, and overall interoperability of crisis management assets.
- *Agreement on procedures for crisis management.* Existing agreements on using the MPF-SEE, as well as the progress made with the DPPI and the CMEP initiative, provide a sound basis for elaboration of more general procedures for crisis management. But refinement would be necessary.
- *Joint or, at least, coordinated procurement.* It is central to the proposal that equipment, systems for command and control, infrastructure and so on should be developed jointly in a well-coordinated manner to provide for: (1) interoperability or, ideally, commonality of equipment, and (2) efficient use of resources both for acquisition (up-front costs) and for life-cycle support. (As a side benefit, joint procurement initiatives might facilitate technical and industrial cooperation in the region.)
- *Functioning organisational arrangements.* Essential is the establishment of a permanent regional organisation, the proposed RCMC, tasked to coordinate development and implementation of cooperative crisis management capabilities. As noted earlier, this Centre could be established on the premises of the SEEBRIG HQ in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, once that HQ transfers to Constanta, Romania, in the autumn of 2003. The RCMC should have a permanently assigned staff representing the participating countries to enable it to serve as a focal point for work coordination and to provide readily available support to decision-makers

during crises. The staff would have to monitor developments in South-Eastern Europe and fulfil an early warning function. They would maintain crisis management plans and other information related to the status of assets, capability development plans (programmes) and projects, development and support for implementation of crisis management training and exercises, and so on. From a technical point of view, one obvious role for the Centre would be to serve as developer and holder of the Joint Technical Architecture for the CCMC.

Not an easy option, indeed: but a worthwhile endeavour certainly. Its feasibility should definitely be explored: and in a purposeful way, not through the medium of yet another 'framework document that provides a strategy outline for common action'. That work has been done here – or, rather, in Tagarev's contributed paper – and it should be possible to move on to feasibility study, even project definition, with early *substantive* action in mind.

## SUMMARY

The Study Group's retrospective *review of co-operation to 2002* yielded an unsurprising conclusion. The record shows successes and disappointments. The important thing now is that South-Eastern European countries should reinforce success and, elsewhere, either cut their losses and abandon 'initiatives' that have come to nothing or revitalise institutions that are languishing.

Looking ahead, it has been argued that there are some key *prerequisites* for successful intra-regional collaboration in future. One is endorsement of something like Robertino Chontev's 'General Regional Concept' on treatment of minorities. Another is general attention to civil service reform (an 'enabling' prerequisite for any future co-operation). Yet another is action to achieve better orchestrated international interventions in furthering security-sector reform. The self-styled 'international community' should in fact be chastised for its stubborn reluctance to be co-ordinated.

Turning to *imperatives*, there is a clear need for action in at least two areas. The various programmes addressing the region's Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) problem are all praiseworthy. However, they are poorly co-ordinated and ill-directed. Focus on the goal of a region-wide 'gun control' regime is necessary, together with region-wide effort to build trust in official community policing. In the Anti-Corruption area the pressing needs are for (again) more effective action by international bodies but, most important, stronger local commitment. Attention to accountability and transparency in the conduct of official business plus strengthening the region's national audit bureaux

would go a long way towards creating the unfriendly environment for wrongdoing that must somehow be created in South-Eastern Europe.

The region also needs to address *Strategic Crime* more energetically. External intervention has to play a prominent role here: too many domestic bureaucracies and law enforcement agencies are contaminated. International bodies must, first, ensure that their employees – civilian and military – are not part of the problem. Statesmen must then put their heads together to find effective counters to criminality, like machinery similar to that used to deal with war criminals. One tough Prosecutor would do more for the problem than a plethora of platitudes.

Where local effort could be usefully applied, making relatively few calls on outside help, is in creation of a *Co-operative Crisis Management Capacity* for dealing with a variety of civil and (lower-level) military contingencies (Petersberg-like tasks). Collaboration on this would be a testbed for intra-regional co-operation in the security field.

**REPORT OF STUDY GROUP B**

**HARMONISING AND REFORMING DEFENCE**

By Peter Volten

**Note:**

There is a nominal roll of the Study Group and a *list of contributed papers* at the end of this volume. In addition the author wishes to thank his colleague Jos Boonstra who prepared the first draft for Section III.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Study Group approached its task by looking at issues rather than by investigating South-East European defence arrangements on a country-by-country basis.<sup>1</sup> It did not, however, forgo comparative perspectives. In general, studies on transition, including the defence sector, show that the *nature* of the problems reveals many similarities, or at least comparable challenges. Extreme financial restraints, immature and inexperienced democratic institutions and the new demands of security for the professional soldiers are a few examples. Yet the *intensity* and *magnitude* of these challenges in reforming and harmonising defence vary significantly.

Countries that were at war until recently and/or still host peacekeeping forces are obviously in a different position from newly independent states where no war – or short and less intensive fighting – has occurred. In the former case, resentment may be subdued, but it is alive and likely to remain intense for the time being, complicating the task of state and nation building. Also, how long countries have been allowed to work under conditions conducive to reform varies, from over one decade for Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia, to seven years for Croatia, to a few years for Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, since February 2003 baptised as Serbia and Montenegro). In two ‘weak states’ – Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Macedonia – political division and societal turmoil still stand in the way of a beginning of genuine reform of the security sector.

As to the magnitude of the challenges, there are also marked differences to note. Some countries had to start from scratch in defence planning, but at the same time enjoyed the advantage of a ‘fresh start’ (like Slovenia). Others had to quickly mobilise for ‘a people’s war’ and then demobilise (like Croatia and BiH). Still others had to overcome the burden of Soviet-style mass armies and faced the problems of downsizing before reform could start (like Bulgaria and Romania and to some extent the FRY). Furthermore, the size of the armed forces in the region varied significantly, posing again distinct questions in political, societal and organisational terms. Finally, the benefits from focused foreign guidance and assistance, in particular from NATO’s Partnership-for-Peace (PfP) and Membership Action Plan (MAP) programmes, have been lacking in some countries. Only five states in the region – Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia – have experienced PfP and MAP assistance in full and only three of these

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<sup>1</sup> The contributions of the participants were organised around five clusters of topics each presented in a section of this Report. Even though the leading authors on particular issues primarily based their findings on the experiences in their own country – if only for the practical reason of being most familiar with them – the other participants added their views to provide a comparative perspective. As a consequence, none of the sections can be attributed to one member. The present text is written on the basis of the collective work of the group that emerged from both the presented papers and the discussion.

were sufficiently prepared to pass the test for NATO membership at the Prague summit in November 2002.

The first observation, therefore, is that differentiation between South-East European states as to the phase and the peculiarities of the individual countries must be taken into account. Yet the latter are a matter of intensity and order of magnitude in the challenge of transition rather than the nature of the problem of moving to ‘modernity’, or whatever catchword for the goal of catching up with Western-style democracy and market economy one prefers. This is not to say that Western practices and institutions are there simply to copy; nor has Central Europe provided a blueprint for optimal defence reform that would justify copying what countries there have done. Nonetheless, Central Europe is of special interest because the *issues* do present similarities and comparable challenges to those facing South-Eastern Europe and these should inform effort to reform and harmonise the defence institutions.

Thus the ‘lessons learned’ in Central and Eastern Europe – including here Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia – are invaluable for other countries aspiring to NATO membership and partnership in the European security community. This conclusion pervades the work of the Study Group. The South-East Europeans seek co-operation with and integration in Western security structures. Despite national, historic and other characteristics, therefore, *Security Sector Reform* (SSR, on which more later) requires many measures already tried out before. By the same token, the MAP process merits serious consideration. It immensely helped the seven countries who received NATO-accession invitations in Prague to focus on the most salient and pressing issues in their membership preparations. It showed, and can show again, the way to transform. Albania, Macedonia and since 2002 Croatia have already accepted the challenge, while others are either pursuing (Serbia and Montenegro) or considering (BiH) a PfP relationship.

One thing is sure. The MAP discipline forced the Prague invitees to get down to serious reform and realistic planning after many years of indecision and inertia. Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia illustrate this. After years of struggling and bickering among the various players of the defence sector, trying in vain to establish a sort of mimicked civil-military relations and democratic control over the armed forces, the determination of the political leadership pushed these countries under MAP pressure into the next stage of transition and defence reform, namely that of establishing politically directed and institutionalised planning. The years wasted in these states should be a strong reminder for both political and military leaders in South-Eastern Europe that genuine reform of the security sector presupposes an unequivocal settlement of the division of roles and responsibilities plus commitment to a force structure that is useful and thus *appropriate*, can be paid for and thus is *affordable*, and can rely on political and societal support and thus is *acceptable*. The lesson is: without political clarity and guidance, no reform; and without reform, no sustainable defence effort.

Prague was noteworthy not only for the enlargement choices but also for a 'NATO transformation' debate. This is not the place for details. Suffice it to say that there was no unanimity on this, just as there was none in the post-Prague exchanges over how to deal with Saddam's Iraq; and this must enter South-East European calculations. Strategic unity in the Alliance has gone. Europe is now divided into an 'old' and a 'new' part according to United States Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Yet still NATO represents the best, if not only, perspective for the long-term planning of national defences. The problem is that its soul-searching makes it a moving target for the recently invited and aspirant states. Moreover, choosing sides in the transatlantic dispute is an awkward thing politically, and is likely to confuse efforts to reform militarily. The overall defence output of the South-East Europeans is modest by NATO standards, even in the case of the bigger armed forces of Bulgaria and Romania, but the specific choices to be made are complicated by a divided NATO and by the contested strategic direction. In these circumstances regional co-operation and co-ordination should commend itself. Thus, there is (1) no alternative to harmonising defence efforts, while (2) regional co-operation is a prerequisite for that. At the same time, the region can only mark its presence *for* NATO and make a difference *in* NATO by acting *collectively*, and this requires harmonised defence organisations.

This is a tall order, especially for countries with 'long memories and short fuses'. It puts a tremendous responsibility on the shoulders of South-East European governments and political elites. Their objectives are – and can only be – genuine defence reform domestically; and, to the utmost, harmonising defences regionally. That perspective underlies the whole of this Report which is dedicated to both improving understanding of the challenge and examining how it might be addressed.

The starting point is consideration of *security concepts* in the light of South-East Europe's recent security history and present-day priorities (Section I). There follows an analysis of the notion of *security sector reform* of which defence reform is one part (Section II). In any study of defence organisation and armed forces nowadays, the wider connotations of security must be taken into account. Attention then turns to the domestic context: the *political, legal and social aspects* of transition and their impact on the security and defence business. Key questions here include whether the mechanisms of political oversight are in place and the state of civil-military relations in general (Section III). Next, the investigation takes up directly issues relating to *the organisation of defence* and the armed forces proper. Here 'lessons learned' in countries well advanced in transition are presented (Section IV). An issue of paramount importance in this respect concerns *investment in human capital* and thus receives special attention (Section V). Before weapon systems and their interoperability become preoccupations, we argue, the security and defence actors should be of one mind and speak the same language. Education and human 'interoperability' are crucial. Debate on capabilities embodying

state-of-the-art technology is currently fashionable. Yet, without attention to human capital and its development, investment in material capital may be a waste of money.

The last observation reflects ‘lessons learned’ in both the former East *and* West. ‘Defence arrangements’ are about human beings, their interaction and how together they manage military means. The final theme for consideration then is: how to do this so as to make *defence provision* that is – to repeat an earlier formulation – affordable for the state, acceptable to the people and appropriate in the strategic circumstances (Section VI). This is what all South-East European governments have to do: the three soon-to-be NATO members; the three aspirants still on the path to that organisation’s ‘open door’; and the two former Yugoslav states not (or not yet) in line, but none the less exercised about how to safeguard their security in 2003 and beyond.

## **I. SECURITY CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIC CULTURE**

After the Cold War, euphoria dominated Central and Eastern Europe and led many people to believe two things: (1) at home the politics of the past was over and done with and (2) the West was willing to assist in supposedly smooth and quick transformation. The two beliefs soon proved to be false. The past took its toll and the West offered only limited development assistance. It is like that now in South-Eastern Europe (hereafter SEE). Expectations are running ahead of reality at home and with regard to the role and responsibility of the West.

### *History and the hurdles of transition*

As to domestic developments, political transformation was slower than expected, in large part due to the inability of political elites to behave in a new, democratic style and the lack of a vibrant civil society. Moreover, SEE became a scene of bloody violence that caused huge economic dislocation and damage and increased disparities between the most and the least prosperous areas. In 2001 GNP per capita was \$ 16,000 in Slovenia and less than \$2,000 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such disparities across borders in the same region feed social instability and political unrest particularly if magnified by modern mass media and exploited by ruthless politicians. The traumatic history of the region anyhow encourages mobilisation behind nationalist, religious and xenophobic slogans. At end-2002 unresolved disputes remain and tensions are not a thing of the past.

Such conditions are not conducive to reform anywhere, and there are special problems in particular states, notably Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, now Serbia and Montenegro). In BiH these

include the post-Dayton political structure, the ‘defensive mentalities’ that prevail and the weakness of state-level institutions. In Croatia and the old FRY the departure of the charismatic political leaders – Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milosevic – has left either a void of identity or a conflict of allegiance in the military and society at large. Also the triangular relations among these states complicate matters. In each the disposition is towards ‘defence arrangements’ that are intensely nationalistic, favouring the ‘people’s army’ and fostering imbalanced civil-military relations and a politicised military. In each the memory of recent – human and financial – loss looms large. Thus, for its war of national liberation Croatia mounted an army of some 400,000 men and spent about 32 per cent of the state budget or 5 per cent of GDP which was less than \$20 billion at the time. Evidently, ‘normalisation’ of the budget, administration and professionalisation of the army now pose tremendous problems. Further, none is readily inclined to reduce armed forces seen as a hedge against unforeseen events in a volatile environment. Downsizing is also hampered by the social costs involved. At the same time, it requires a huge effort to re-educate the available professional soldiers rather than recruit afresh for the new missions at hand. Finally, and related to the latter point, the trio do not (yet?) see each other as guarantors of each other’s security which is nonetheless an underlying assumption of integration in the European security community.

In fact, the opposite is the case. Whereas territorial defence in Western Europe is no longer a pressing security issue, and sits on the backburner in the pan-European context, this is not the case in the thinking of defence planners in these countries. A German, Belgian or Dutch planner may be able to see the big picture in Europe and be hardly, if at all, concerned with territorial defence; this is not the case here. The incredible numbers of army and home defence reserves in BiH, Croatia and the former FRY clearly attest to this. According to the *Military balance 2002-2003* the numbers are: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – 150,000; Republika Srpska – 80,000; Croatia – 140,000; FRY – 400,000. Territorial defence is still a cherished mission for contingency planning – those troops might have to be mobilised – because a threat to the borders remains the most feared contingency. As such it is an eventuality for which the present generation of top military leaders cannot appear unprepared. Neither their self-image nor popular sentiment allow this. (In Croatia, for example, these are the leaders of the ‘liberation war’ and nobody is allowed to forget that.) One consequence is that security is still very much defined as a narrow, military problem. Security and defence are almost synonyms and military-operational considerations are a matter of ‘state’ concern, tempting the political leaders to ‘think the military way’. This is out of step with wider European thinking. In spite of the declared aim of integration, the question as to “What are our armed forces for?” is a vexed one.

No doubt, the political elites bear great responsibilities in overcoming the divisions in society and in the armed forces. They are supposed to draw their populations out of the mire of tensions and backwardness. This will take a lot of patience and courage

plus co-operation between people who were active in the ethnic-religious conflicts and others who stood at the sidelines. In SEE there is an uncomfortable mix of leaders as was the case in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989: left-over party members reincarnated as 'democrats', and outsiders with some democratic knowledge and inspiration. Moreover, the latter got or took their chance *only* after international intervention had ended hostilities and *only* after the continuation of violence for political ends was halted by the threat of new interventions and sanctions, if not exclusion from the international community. Still, the first and foremost responsibility cannot be other than to mobilise support for change, institutionalise good governance, and banish violence from the regional agenda. It should be noted, however, that the SEE elites, involved in political struggle and party rivalries, have not always displayed full awareness of this responsibility and top priority. Like territorial defence, local geo-political calculations are still uppermost in some minds.

Nor have all top politicians established their democratic credentials, so that it is pertinent to ask whether one can discern development of a democratic culture in the neighbourhood. The jury is out on this. One hears statements like: "We have a civilian Minister of Defence and *thus* have solved the requirement of civilian control and the principle of civil-military relations in a democracy." One hears "The President is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, thus the Prime-Minister and the cabinet will conduct a defence policy according to his views and the armed forces will implement it." All this is formally settled. In fact, the quality of the decisions of the president or minister, and the relations between them and elected representatives (and others), are the essence of democracy. Informed, accountable and transparent decisions ultimately define the consolidation of fledgling democracies. This is why the subjects of Session III are so important for the business of harmonising and reforming defence. Without democratisation it is difficult to conceive 'good governance' of the state or any of its institutions. Harmonising defence and security arrangements in SEE is certainly dependent on the success of democratisation and the extent to which democratic style and practice are internalised by the elites in particular.

This is easy to say but difficult to deliver, if elites actually widen the ethnic or religious gaps by antagonistic behaviour or personal and party power games. This leads to what the Dutch political scientist, Arend Lijphart, has called 'centrifugal democracies'. In contrast, in a 'consociational democracy' elites recognise the cleavages and uphold them in front of their electorate, but are nonetheless willing to find common solutions among themselves. This is of paramount importance in the relations between majority and minority groups and in countries where no clear majority exists and coalition governments are the only option. Obviously, consociationalism imposes a burden on a majority which must accept that its own views must be compromised for the sake of maintaining the state. In the case of a coalition, respect for minority views and rights are equally important. The players have to understand that they must avoid zero-sum game

situations and make clear to their followers that there are no winners or losers. The elites must be able to win the support of their voters yet convince them that majoritarian politics are a recipe for disruption.

Consociational democracy is not part of the elites' mentality in SEE. The rise to democratic maturity as regards the respect for arguments and counter-arguments for finding a common solution *is* extremely difficult. But reform and rationalisation of the system, including the defence sector, presuppose some majority-minority reconciliation and mutual consultation on the basis of political discourse. In this, elites play the quintessential role. Unfortunately, few members of the political elite in SEE are aware of their special responsibility in cementing a civil society and, in the case of security policy, evoking a commitment to rationalise and reform the defence sector.

### *The region in the international context*

At end-2002 there are few tangible extra-regional military threats to SEE. On the other hand, future conflicts outside the region – in the Caucasus, around the Caspian Sea and in the Near East – might well indirectly affect Balkan security. Furthermore, the level of non-military threats from within and outside the region has gone up dramatically. In this respect, strategic crime is a particular concern. Corrupt authorities of the past, including police, have not been brought under control, much less held accountable for their actions. Trans-border illegal trafficking has made the region a danger for itself as well as for the West, but the immediate consequence for societal stability and confidence is disastrous. The 'Wild West' *dirty-money* economy rather than a *free market* economy limits opportunities for advancement by legitimate endeavour and forces ordinary people to seek the income necessary to survive in criminal activities as well. The system as a whole becomes polluted and corruption enters its bones. The political system does not merely suffer from crime and corruption, but political corruption becomes a normal way of life. There is much more on this in the Report of ESCADA Study Group A. Suffice it to say here that any attempt to reform and harmonise defence arrangements is seriously compromised by corruption and strategic crime. Indeed defence organisations themselves do not have clean hands.

The 'cult of crime and corruption' cannot be eradicated from the outside, but Western policy towards SEE governments must – and gradually, it seems, will – include pressures to discipline them, including the security institutions and the military. Political conditionality and the expectations and requirements of the EU and NATO have worked in the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, but only in those instances where the political leadership and the electorate were determined to 'enter the European mainstream'. More generally, SEE cannot expect external agencies to solve its problems for it. Governments should, though, be able to count on 'help for self-help'. They should also be able to count

on continuation – for as long as it takes – of the stabilising presence of NATO or EU led forces (military and civil) in those places where the probability of renewed conflict, while currently low, has not yet fallen to zero.

This is not absolutely assured because, while strengthening an all-European security regime concerns all member states of NATO and the EU, views on how to do this differ widely. The view through NATO ‘lenses’ is not the same as the EU perspective. Strategic approaches in Washington differ from those in European capitals, and so on. The consideration of ‘exit strategies’ is a regular exercise everywhere.

For the time being, however, help and stabilising presences are available to SEE, and it is incumbent upon regional governments to embark on reform of their defence arrangements while they still are. They will not be successful in fulfilling their European vocation if they do not do so. This is certainly true for would-be NATO members. It also applies, however, to those states that may prefer to look to the EU as their main Euro-Atlantic target or settle for a loose NATO connection through the PfP programme.

There are lessons to be learned from the first and second rounds of post-Cold war NATO enlargement in this respect. The first one was largely based on political considerations and the three invited states were considered to be politically and economically promising and stable candidates. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were never pushed very hard to deliver a reformed defence and sustainable military contribution. As a consequence, their efforts to embark on harmonising and reforming the national defence organisation were half-hearted, haphazard and inappropriate. The MAP exercise turned out to be a useful preparatory discipline for later aspirants. The seven countries invited in Prague were actively helped to get ready, but they had to pass a more demanding entrance examination. As a result the seven were better prepared in November 2002 than the three were at the moment of their invitation in 1997 *and* when they actually acceded in 1999. Arguably, the comparable legacy states – Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia – are in better shape now than at least two of their predecessors. All this has not escaped the attention of the directorates for security policy in Brussels and NATO capitals. Enlargement remains a political choice, but the dimension of reform and harmonisation of the defence arrangements of aspirant countries has assumed crucial importance in the decision-making process.

### *The primacy of domestic politics*

Thus for future aspirants to NATO membership (and EU accession hopefuls) the principal efforts must come from the individual countries themselves; and they must set realistic priorities according to national capacities. When speaking about *change*, it is necessary to distinguish the levels on which change has to occur. Basically, the levels concern state and society and their interaction. The first level refers to the change of the

system of common values within institutions. State bodies should promote, implement and advocate societal values, not their own sectional interests. The consensus regarding democratic values is a precondition for cohesion, because only common values lead to common goals. They integrate different parts of society, providing a basis for social unity. This first level of necessary change is elaborated on in Section III.

The second level refers to the problem of communication. In other words it is about *transparency* in the service of *accountability*. Among other things this presupposes clearly divided roles and responsibilities among actors in the defence decision-making process and an understanding of the executive's obligations and the legislature's responsibilities. Put differently, the authorities must make provision for the legitimisation of the exercise of power, by the elected representatives of society-at-large; and for acknowledgement of the primacy of politics, by the armed forces. Section IV deals with the necessary changes in organising defence for those purposes

Finally, operational and technical changes, although important, are neither decisive for membership in international organisations nor a prerequisite for harmonising and reforming defence arrangements. Weapons and infrastructure are important. But these assets count for little if human capital is neglected. This is true in the case of the individual pilot who lacks the appropriate number of flying hours as well as for the organisation as a whole that lacks the personnel interoperability, internally and externally, appropriate to present-day strategic and operational requirements. In short, the military of SEE's countries in transition should focus on a change of strategic culture before becoming preoccupied with operational and technical modernisation. This crucial choice in harmonising defence is explained in Section V on investment in human capital.

## **II. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM**

### *The concept*

The concept of *Security Sector Reform* (SSR) has its origins in the late 1990s when defence and development assistance experts tried to define the appropriate aim for effort to reduce less developed countries' spending for military and other security purposes, the favoured goal with them having been to bring such expenditures down to an arbitrarily chosen defence/GDP proportion (all higher appropriations being labelled 'excessive' and an unwarranted diversion of resources from development objectives.). For the aid community this was an overdue recognition that not all security-related spending is 'wasted' money; and that, rather than boldly demanding the elimination of crudely-calculated 'excessive' expenditure, it might be better to help recipient states make wiser

use of resources allocated to such provision through reform (of the military, other ‘armed structures of the state’, police forces, intelligence agencies, even the juridical and penal services). Once in use within this fraternity the expression was soon picked up and adopted by people concerned with effecting change in transition states like those of Central and Eastern Europe, including SEE, for whom it had similar appeal. When it then found favour with people exploring alternative concepts of security to the traditional one – national, and largely military, security – its place in the lexicon was assured.

In the developed world the term is used nowadays principally with the connotations it acquired from its association with defining *security* itself more broadly. From the standpoint of the present study, defence arrangements are just one facet of the many-sided surface of a states’ security responsibilities and activities, just one part of a *sector* of government activities (but one in which there are also non-governmental organisations and even private security companies). In particular security policy is not simply the business of a Ministry of Defence (MoD) responsible for organising and managing the military for national – and mainly territorial – protection, as was clearly the case during the Cold War years. Then, the MoD was the focus of national security decision-making. In Central and Eastern Europe other ministries were marginally involved, subjected to the dominant role of the military, or for that matter to the view of Moscow. Moreover, social, economic or industrial policy were subordinated to security concerns (narrowly defined). Foreign ministries followed rather than guided defence policy. As a matter of fact, defence policy was security policy; documents like *Military Doctrine* and *Defence Strategy* defined security policy rather than the other way around.

Today, this has fundamentally changed. The concept of security no longer focuses on just military power; nor does it exclusively address the security of the *state*. Today, the notion – according to Richard Ullmann, for example – applies when there arises an action or sequence of events that (1) threatens drastically and over a brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state, or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to the government of a state or to private, nongovernmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within a state.

The concept has thus been widened to encompass political, social and economic stability, while violence and threats to physical security – the core business of armed forces – no longer concern (almost) exclusively the protection of national territory. Nor does the origin of threats to state, group or individual security stem exclusively from other forces and the physical application of force. Violence may originate in ‘failed states’, societal cleavages or economic hardship and inequalities. Peacekeeping activities clearly reflect the widened notion of defence activities in practice. Ethnic strife, intra-state conflict and distant deployment represent new tasks for many defence organisations.

These tasks fall only in part on the shoulders of soldiers. The *sector* does not simply consist of MoD assets. Others ministries and agencies have roles: departments of Interior, dealing with intelligence; of Justice, bringing in police units; and of

Development Assistance, taking care of recovery and nation-building in devastated areas; plus Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other bodies. In fact, the sector needs directing and co-ordinating. Ideally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as principal agency for foreign and security policy, and the Office of the Prime Minister, as the focal point of governmental co-ordination, should lead policy making and priority-setting.

The relevance of all this for the present inquiry is obvious. Although defence policy has never been a matter of merely deploying forces, it is today far more evident than in the past that defence ‘arrangements’ must serve security, broadly defined. Policy must cover objectives and missions defined *in co-operation with* other state agencies and come *under strict political guidance*. This is not only a matter for executive offices like the presidency or council of ministers but also, perhaps first and foremost, a responsibility of parliament and its committees. The changed and enlarged practice of security policy has complicated their work and decision-making has become more complex.

The word *Reform* in SSR implies greater complexity as well: a far more ambitious undertaking than restructuring existing defence forces. It requires the establishment of a new design of the forces according to the new missions that have emerged. The fundamentally different strategic goals and military objectives prompt a complete overhaul of the means and organisation in many respects like education, training and professionalisation. This is not simply fulfilled by the introduction of an all-volunteer force; nor is ‘democratic-style’ control introduced, let alone guaranteed, by formal regulations. The challenge of reform requires a whole range of new institutional arrangements and, above all, a new mind-set of all domestic players. Most important, restructuring is not the same as reform; nor does downsizing necessarily mean change in the composition of a force to suit newly defined missions. Reform means rethinking both operational concepts and organisation.

What is also new concerns the impact of international developments on politico-military relations and the requirements of professionalism. In Europe today’s professional soldier faces a very demanding environment. He also faces changed purposes and loyalties in his work, serving in an international setting for an internationally defined purpose, often under international command. For the military, professional loyalty has increasingly shifted from national to international duties and missions. Peace support activities in the name of an *ad hoc* international coalition or on behalf of organisations like the UN and the OSCE – and, since 11 September 2001, the fight against international terrorism – are now all part of the business of the professional soldier. The military *métier* has changed. Constabulary work in a remote village in Kosovo or BiH requires officers and soldiers of a different type than commanders and units in regular warfare. The curricula for training and education should reflect this.

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*International challenges of security reform*

That said, exactly what SEE governments will want forces *for* – and hence how precisely SSR should proceed in the region – is not self-evident. Essentially this is because their points of reference are a transforming NATO, but with what emphasis nobody yet knows for sure; and an EU whose Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and catalogue forces are evolving, but en route to a still unknown destination.

The bottom-line here is that ‘most probable’ missions should determine capabilities which need not cover all *possible* contingencies or the ambitious missions implied by the new American national strategy. Lessons learned during the past decade point to a categorisation like the following.

1. Neighbourhood conflict prevention and crisis response (perhaps involving peace enforcement);
2. Neighbourhood peacekeeping and ‘stabilisation’ (to stop peace-breaking); and a contribution to
3. Further Afield response and compliance missions, like in Afghanistan in 2001;
4. Further Afield assistance and reconstruction work, like in Afghanistan after the ousting of the Taliban government.

This is in line with contemporary, and likely future, European thinking. Traditional national security concerns are put on the backburner. Of course, history has shown that security priorities oscillate between political and military realities on a continuum of situations of war and peace. The present reality in Europe tends towards the peaceful side, though the existence of another view across the Atlantic Ocean is confusing that reality politically, and complicating decision-making in military matters as well.

### **III. THE LEGAL, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

Besides tackling questions of mission priorities and capability choices in the SSR context, most countries in SEE have work to do in putting the democratic management of their defence efforts on a sound footing. Before 1989 all the SEE countries had national armed forces that were nominally under civilian control. The Communist Party was run by civilians who made the strategic choices for national security and defence. Although ‘the people’ were theoretically in charge, in practice the citizens had no influence whatsoever on the security sector. With the introduction of Western democratic values – long delayed in Albania and most of the former Yugoslav republics – the legal, political and social environment of the defence organisation fundamentally changed. From a *legal* perspective, new constitutions put the armed forces under democratic control.

Furthermore, other documents were issued to specify this control in greater detail. In a *political* sense, ‘the people’ are represented by parliament overseeing the executive while organisational realignments in the working relations between the civilian-headed MoD and the armed forces were also introduced. Also in *social* terms, changes were set in motion. A civil society consisting of NGOs, think tanks, universities and independent media began to fulfil extra-parliamentary oversight in the roles of adviser and ‘watchdog’. Democratic systems of sorts have slowly emerged. However, not all SEE states have got it ‘right’ yet.

### *Constitutions*

All eight ESCADA countries have constitutions in which democratic control over the armed forces is mentioned, but it is spelled out in different degrees. Some leave room for different interpretations. The Albanian, Macedonian and Romanian constitutions may serve as illustrations of national provisions and the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina as one imposed by foreign powers.

The Albanian constitution squarely states that ‘The armed forces maintain neutrality in political questions and are subject to civilian control’ (art. 12.2). Looking further, however, it appears that this provision is rather limited. Article 80 reads: ‘The Prime Minister and any other member of the Council of Ministers are obligated to answer interpellations and questions of the deputies within three weeks’. There is no obligation on the part of the Minister of Defence to answer in person and directly in the Committee on Defence. The minister will appear in due time which presents in theory a weakness in democratic control. After all, the democratic requirement is that the executive serves the legislature, not *vice versa*.

In Macedonia the constitution is also meagre on democratic control. Only two articles make direct reference to this subject: ‘The government and each of its members are accountable to the Assembly’ (art. 92.1) and ‘The bodies of state administration in the fields of defence and the police are to be headed by civilians who have been civilians for at least three years before their election to these offices’ (art. 97). There is no explicit reference to the right of standing committees to summon defence officials or the Minister of Defence.

In Romania articles 110 and 117 of the constitution are the basis for accountability. The first says the following: ‘The Government and other agencies of Public Administration shall, within the Parliamentary control over their activity, be bound to present any information and documents requested by the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate, or Parliamentary Committees, through their respective Presidents. In case a legislative initiative involves amendment of provisions of the State Budget or the State social security budget, the request for information shall be compulsory. Members of the

Government are entitled to attend the proceedings of Parliament. If they are requested to be present, participation shall be compulsory’ (art. 110.1, 2). The second says: ‘The armed forces shall be exclusively subordinated to the will of the people, to guarantee the sovereignty, independence, and unity of the State, the Country's territorial integrity, and Constitutional democracy’ (art. 117.1). This is better. The Minister of Defence can be summoned to Parliament and control of the army ultimately rests with the people. In most SEE constitutions this is not so clearly stipulated.

The only provision in relation to defence in the constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) *at the state level* is article 5.5 which says

‘(i) Each member of the Presidency shall, by virtue of the office, have civilian command authority over armed forces. Neither Entity shall threaten or use (armed forces) against the other Entity, and under no circumstances shall any armed forces of either Entity enter into or stay within the territory of the other Entity without the consent of the government of the latter and of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. All armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina shall operate consistently with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and

(ii) The Members of the Presidency shall select a Standing Committee on Military Matters to co-ordinate the activities of armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The members of the Presidency shall be members of the Standing Committee’.

This article is of little practical value, however, since the execution of power in BiH lies with the Entities who run their own armies.

### *Laws and other texts*

A clearly defined legal framework should also comprise supplementary laws and strategic, doctrinal and planning documents related to security and defence including international agreements and obligations. A central document in the domestic framework is (typically) the Law on Defence in which the main responsibilities of Parliament, President, Prime-minister, Government, and the Minister of Defence are outlined. Often, in addition to this, there is a statute that serves as an organisational charter for the MoD in offering definitions of structures for decision making and the distribution of responsibilities. In addition to these laws there should be policy statements, the Annual Defence Budget and ideally an Annual Report on the Status of Defence and the Armed Forces that make the defence and security establishment transparent. Also there may be domestic legislation embodying international and bilateral agreements of various sorts.

Bulgaria has such a robust framework for its security sector. It consists of the Constitution (1991), a Law on Defence and the Armed Forces (1995), an organic statute on the MoD (1999) and a Law on the Civil Service (2000); the National Security Concept

(1998), the Military Doctrine (1999) and the White Paper on Defence (2002); and annual reports plus the Defence Budget. Unfortunately not every SEE country makes such comprehensive provisions; most, though, have basic legislation and an agreed National Security Concept (or equivalent).

Lacking too in most states are formal arrangements for participation of civil society in defence discourse. Views may nevertheless be sought, but this usually happens outside the formal framework of policy-making and planning. This is the case in Croatia, for example. Legislation, regulations and basic documents are the product of the machinery of government, as the accompanying tabulation shows. Civil society watches from the wings.

### Who does what in Croatia.

Type of documents	Parliament	President	Government	National Security System
laws	- pass	- proclaim	- propose	- participate in making proposals
bye-law regulations	- pass - supervision - oversight	- pass - consent	- pass - consent	- propose - pass
strategic documents	- pass - discuss	- pass	- participate in making proposals	- participate in making proposals
doctrine documents	- oversight	- consent	- consent	- pass
planning documents	- discuss - consent	- consent	- pass - consent	- participate in making proposals - pass

Of course such closed systems come in for criticism. Thus Croatian analysts think that (i) every institution and organisation of the national security system should participate in preparing strategic documents; (ii) in the preparation phase Parliament should develop basic principles and directions and pass the documents in the form of a declaration which should be respected in the final version; (iii) after drafts of texts have been prepared by the executive branch, Parliament should open discussion and gives its opinion; and (iv) eventually the President, as the Chairman of the National Security Council, gives his assent to the strategic documents. Here the Head of State has the last word. Some would say that should be the elected representatives' prerogative, not least because it is in or through the legislature that the views of civil society can be expressed.

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*Civil-military relations and the executive and legislative powers*

Notwithstanding the executive and legislative powers there are considerable gaps between theory and practice and little effective legislative oversight of the executive in SEE. Enhancement of the rules for accountability and transparency is obviously crucial for the development of good governance.

The administration should be held responsible for what it does (policy accountability) and for what it spends (financial accountability). Maybe even more important is the need for transparency: members of parliament (and the public at large) should be able to see what is going on in the government. Unfortunately the twin concepts are often misunderstood by the security elite and even regarded as empty shells of democratic vocabulary.

There are different ways for the executive – in this case the MoD – to be open and transparent. One way would be for the ministry to publish on a regular basis performance reports, departmental statements on policy, procurement plans and so on. Another would be to engage the legislature more intensively in the process of policy formulation, as Romania now does. Regarding the practice of parliaments, there is also ample room for improvement, in particular in the role defence committees play and the professional staff support they get. The knowledge and expertise of the parliamentarians themselves is typically limited in SEE and they are not particularly well served by independent institutes. Nor do all have the assistance of a competent, independent and respected audit office.

On the other hand efforts are underway to improve matters. The OSCE has ‘parliamentary support’ programmes running in several countries. Individual states are also seeking to improve transparency and accountability. Macedonia is a case in point. The country is reforming its specialist committee structure, much as neighbouring Bulgaria did recently, and other improvements are expected in the availability of defence-related information (in the post-Ohrid spirit of inclusive politics).

Reform in this field is, however, an uphill struggle in SEE, nowhere more so than in BiH where the post-Dayton political structure and the ‘defensive mentalities’ of politicians greatly complicate matters.

Still, it is important that effort continues everywhere, primarily because accountability and domestic transparency in the conduct of defence affairs are essential to democratic governance, but also because international transparency is necessary within SEE as a confidence- and security-building practice. (The report of Study Group A has things to say about this.)

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*Civil-military relations and civil society*

No less important is that SSR – and defence reform especially – should be well understood by, and broadly acceptable to, society-at-large. In particular the armed forces must believe and realise that their position is not a separate one from other citizens. If anything makes the military different it is not privileges but duties and responsibilities. In SEE the military must acquire a new status and regain prestige in society. In practical terms, this means that civil-military relations need to be built with appropriate consideration to their *political, economic* and *cultural* aspects.

With regard to the *political* segment, problems arise from the fact that the armed forces need to be powerful enough to defend society from outside danger, but at the same time they must not present a threat to the society they are protecting. Also, while being the instrument of the state and the nation as a whole, measures have to be introduced and exercised to prevent the armed forces from becoming the instrument of a political party. So far as the *economy* is concerned, there is the issue of financing the armed forces through the state budget and ensuring that they are not an intolerable financial burden on the state and the society. Regarding the *cultural* aspect, the relationship between the armed forces and the society should be enhanced by (for instance) raising the level of understanding among citizens of the security environment and defence arrangements generally.

The relationship between citizens and MoD has been characterised as one where the taxpayers are the MoD's stockholders who are also the consumers of the product: security. Stockholders and consumers should therefore have an interest in defence and should be well-informed. As voices of society at large, NGOs, universities and research institutes should be encouraged by the MoD to participate in security and defence studies, possibly in technical and economic areas and, if appropriate, even in the business of industrial development and acquisition. Bulgaria, for example, has established joint committees of MoD personnel and staff of several academic institutions, but there is also co-operation between these academic institutions and the defence industry. The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, moreover, has founded the Center for National Security and Defence Research in order to co-ordinate reform efforts and promote co-operation with Parliament, the President's office, the Government, the defence industry and academic institutions. Finally, the MoD works closely with NGOs in organising programmes on security sector reform, including re-integration of military personnel into the civilian economy.

Attention also needs to be given to the relation between the armed forces and the media. Journalists need to be well informed to give an objective view. The MoD can play a role in providing material and offering training programmes for journalists. Unfortunately, in SEE there are only a few knowledgeable journalists working in the field of security and defence. The defence organisations are often reluctant to aid them. In

Serbia and Montenegro, for example, neither the MoD nor the General Staff seems willing to do this. In fact, the attitude is counterproductive. Ignorance creates distrust in the security sector and even leads to conspiracy theories. There are only a few 'serious' newspapers that report on civil-military relations, but 'tabloids' abound. The latter love scandals and stories about political personalities and politico-military problems and tensions. With the MoD aloof, there is no counter-weight. There are a few academics, experts and commentators who can contribute to a debate, but one finds them primarily addressing international audiences. The domestic setting does not inspire them. Although Serbia and Montenegro is probably the most extreme example in SEE – since the process of democratisation has only recently started after the fall of Milosevic – these observations are also applicable to Albania, BiH, Croatia and Macedonia. The SEE states with a much longer exposure to democratisation and transition in general – Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia – have on the other hand built up a more vibrant civil society able to play a constructive role in the security debate and, occasionally, in furthering SSR.

#### *Relations between the MoD and other ministries*

Sector reform presupposes improved co-operation among several ministries and other elements of the state security system. Recent developments have underlined the importance of this: most vividly in countering international terrorism, but such tasks as countering organised crime, trafficking of people and environmental hazards have put governments to the test as well. The MoD is just one of the players in this respect and it has to liaise closely with the Ministry of Interior (intelligence services and border controls), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice to name just the most crucial departments.

Inter-departmental consultation is required not only to respond to new threats on the security agenda. It is necessary for security policy-making generally. It has been advanced in SEE's NATO aspirant states by the quest for membership. The Slovenian example is instructive. In the 1990s a working group ensured the mutual exchange of information between various state departments and institutions that co-operated with NATO through the PfP programme. From 2000 it was reshaped on the basis of several subgroups that directly relate to the MAP. These address political and economic issues, defence and military issues, legal issues and monitor public opinion. Although the MoD has played the most visible role in reforming the security sector in order to enter NATO – and will continue to do so pre-accession – membership preparation has been a learning exercise in that non-military expertise must be incorporated and non-military priorities carry great weight in the decision-making process.

*Summing-up*

Reform of defence arrangements takes place in a legal, political and social *milieu*; and change in that environment is itself part of the reform agenda. How this relationship works out differs from country to country. There is no SEE state in which some change would not be beneficial; and there are several in which change is imperative. Considering *legal* arrangements, it is crucial for SSR to have a complete and regularly updated set of documents. In the *political* area accountability and transparency need to be enhanced, and better relations between the executive and the legislature cultivated. Also the improvement of knowledge on security issues among politicians needs attention. This directly reflects on the *social* dimension. Civil-society institutions should and can play a more active role in assisting the MoD and parliament by contributing to the formulation of policy; and in fulfilling the ‘watchdog’ function and holding governments to account (together with the legislature). Last but certainly not least, NGOs, research institutes and the media need to enter the debate on, and inform the public at large about, security sector reform itself, including the all-important business of organising defence. That is the matter – central to this inquiry – to which attention now turns.

**IV. ORGANISING DEFENCE**

Three South-East European countries – Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia – are to be NATO members soon. Three others – Albania, Croatia and Macedonia – want to be, and hope an invitation to accede will come in a year or two (or five). They are following the Membership Action Plan (MAP) process to this end. In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) however, while there is talk of eventual NATO membership in some quarters, it is not a realistic short- or medium-term prospect. The same is true of Serbia and Montenegro. In these two countries, though, the challenge of SSR, and especially defence reform, is essentially the same as in the soon-to-be NATO states – where there is still some unfinished business in this regard – and in the would-be member-states. In Sarajevo and Belgrade (and Podgorica) they also have to think about how to fashion appropriate, affordable and acceptable defences and about how to put in place sound arrangements for future provision that passes these tests. In other words, important differences notwithstanding, there is a *similarity of circumstances* about all eight SEE countries that justifies a synoptic analysis of the ‘organising defence’ issue rather than microscopic examinations of individual nations’ needs. That is the approach followed here.

*Easy on paper...*

In practical terms ‘organising defence’ means organising the defence ministry and organising the armed forces themselves. On paper this does not seem too problematical. Others have been here before. Analysis of successful SSR efforts and defence reform in Central and Eastern Europe suggests the following.

- Study practice in NATO countries of long standing and assess particularly the experience of countries that have acceded recently.
- Prepare the documents and the apparatus, plus plans and procedures, to implement this model.
- Analyse how the template has been adapted to varying historical, political and economic circumstances, and strategic cultures.
- and finally,
- Translate this assessment into a refinement of the national programme for implementation.

Broadly speaking this is how Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia proceeded in their preparation for Prague (November 2002) – paying particular attention to Czech, Hungarian and Polish experience – and on the face of it there is sound practical guidance here for MAP-states and others.

For example, Romania has designed a clear-cut and sophisticated organisational chart for the defence ministry. The main departments include Euro-Atlantic Integration and Defence Policy; Armaments; Relations with the Parliament, Legislative Harmonisation and Public Relations; the General Secretary, the General Director for Defence Intelligence and the General Staff. All functions are under the direct control of the Minister, his civilian deputies (state secretaries) and the General Secretary (also civilian). Plans and policy are the exclusive responsibility of political appointees and members of government. In contrast, the operational command and control of the armed forces is assigned to the Chief of the General Staff. He is subordinated to the minister and state secretaries. On the one hand, as the highest and most prominent professional officer, he advises the political leaders, while, on the other, he dutifully implements political decisions once they have been taken. A General Inspector assesses whether defence resources have been used correctly and efficiently, and reports back to the minister about the state of the armed forces. The State Secretary for Relations with the Parliament, Legislative Harmonisation and Public Relations ensures a constant flow of information to and from parliament, thus ensuring effective legislative oversight. An exemplary model, indeed.

So, on paper the task seems easy. In practice, it is very difficult and requires hard work and determination, even after the establishment of a workable structure like in the case of Romania. Rule number one of paramount importance is setting *the division of roles and responsibilities* of the players. Military expertise must be fully recognised in

defence planning, but policy-making – including the matching of financial resources and military commitments – must be the exclusive domain of the political leadership. Responsibility and accountability must also be fully recognised in the political part of overall decision-making, thus enhancing transparency *vis-à-vis* the legislature and society. The Romanian experience shows how difficult it is to establish this ‘model’ of organising defence, since a decade passed before the organisational structure was imposed on an unwilling General Staff. In the 1990s very little had happened in reforming defence and in 2000 the new government and Defence Minister Ioan Pascu had only two years left before Prague to show a better and more serious performance than hitherto. Time pressure and the MAP process helped Pascu considerably in asserting his determination and leadership to reform the ministry and to steadfastly enforce improved rules and procedures. (The same can be said about Slovakia that also got realistic at the last minute and proceeded rapidly under the strong leadership of Minister Stank and his deputies.)

Even under those favourable circumstances – the right moment, the right persons, the right foreign assistance – it is very difficult to prescribe steps to be taken in general. Still, there is a lot of evidence available that some measures apply to all the successful reforms, while others demonstrably have not worked. There is no science, but the experience of the past can help develop the art of the possible and reveal lessons of “what to do” and “what not to do”.

*..but organising the defence ministry is a tough nut to crack in practice.*

Some of the problems have to do with universal characteristics of civil-military relations. These relations require not only recognition of the primacy of politics and military professionalism, but also a balance between these two elements. The establishment of this balance is a core problem of civil-military relations and to a large extent determines the degree of professionalism that can be achieved. Professionalism is not confined to the expertise, status or sense of corporateness – the *esprit de corps* – of the military institution, but strongly depends on the extent to which the individual soldier is allowed and enabled to be a professional. The inherently conflicting relations between the political and the military leaders rests on their basically different primary considerations: namely the political and the military responsibilities and, in a broader sense, the ideational and material aspects of security and defence policy. The military imperative is a relatively clear-cut requirement focusing on preparation for conflict in the face of a definable threat. The political imperative highlights security from ideas and views on social organisation, human interactions and the surrounding world, subjects that are less clear-cut and give rise to contestation.

Tensions between policy-makers and the professional military are minimised in a polity and society that are characterised by conservatism, basically sympathetic to the military's national and power-oriented ethic. In contrast, a liberal society and political leadership are resistant to that military ethic and represent the ideas of progress versus conservation, a cosmopolitan rather than an anarchic or antagonistic order in international relations, and economic wealth in preference to military power. Military power is a necessary evil and should not be cultivated as a symbol of the nation's guaranteed survival and international influence.

In many countries in SEE the characteristics of a conservative relationship between the polity and society, on the one hand, and the military, on the other, prevail, not in the least because of national(istic) sentiments. Security is still very much conceived of within the narrow bounds of traditions of the past. At the same time, democratisation and the transition towards partnership in a Euro-Atlantic security community in which much room exists for an international, liberal-oriented approach, are likely to undermine the casual conservative-bound relationship, possibly leading to tensions as regards prioritisation of resources and the status and institutional role of the military in national politics. Last but not least, frustration and resentment among the military is widespread due to the new, democratic-style civil-military relations.

In addition to these more or less universal problems in civil-military relations, other tensions are related to the past and the communist method and style of organising and running defence, which are likely to aggravate the inherent stresses mentioned and give cause to specific, culture-driven quarrels. Defence is traditionally and by inclination a closed organisation, but was very closed in the days of the Warsaw Pact and the old Yugoslav federation. In the West, too, a veil of secrecy lay over the organisation. In the East the business of security was impenetrable for anyone outside (the higher levels in) the Communist Party and the armed forces. The Party-military relationship was quite different from the political-military relations in the West.

The party-officer relations were highly politicised and one of the first actions taken in ex-Warsaw Pact states after 1989 was to de-politicise the armed forces. Politicisation of the armed forces affects the functioning of a political system in a number of negative ways. It implies that co-operation of the military and the civilian authorities is not based on clearly defined responsibilities, but rather on (imposed) political "unity". A politicised army, the ruling party's client, will be more inclined to perform its tasks in a way that contradicts professionalism. It may actually serve as a tool in domestic political struggles and conflicts as in communist Czechoslovakia.

For the Wars of the Yugoslav Succession, the new, independent states willy-nilly created 'people's armies' or an 'armed people'. After the hostilities, the politicised army of highly motivated patriots had not only to be reduced dramatically – from 400,000 men in Croatia, for example – but also to be integrated as a 'normal', regular army in society. In order to achieve an optimal social integration of the armed forces it was necessary to

develop from scratch a balanced civil-military relationship. The goal is to reach the highest possible level of integration of society and the impoverished armed forces; and to create mutual understanding of the problems each side is facing in the process of normalisation. On the one hand, civilians should develop mechanisms and tools for understanding the way the military personnel and military structures function. On the other, soldiers should develop tools for understanding of the problems present in the civil society and polity. That is a huge demand in the circumstances in which the civilian and military leadership have to work in, say, contemporary Macedonia or BiH, where objectively speaking both sides are struggling to get it 'right' in their own areas of responsibility.

It is not much easier in other places where the conditions may seem somewhat more conducive to a normalisation of civil-military relations. In Croatia, for example, changes in society are reflected in the armed forces now, but the turbulent time the Croatian society has gone through has left its marks on the military. During the war, along with its defence duties, the Croatian army took on numerous other tasks, including care for soldiers' families, assistance for refugees, providing employment for many people who would otherwise end up on the lists of the Unemployment Office, tending the wounded, disabled war veterans and retired officers, arranging housing, and building a new infrastructure. The number in the Croatian Army during the War made it the biggest "employer" in Croatia, and judging by its real estate and property, the Ministry of Defence was the best resourced state institution. Simultaneously with development of a privileged elite, the remaining part of the military shared the destiny of pauperisation of society. It was a logical development of the situation and relations in society when individuals and small groups of members of the armed forces got involved in various criminal activities. Anti-intellectualism was on the rise, as was unwillingness to work, (almost enforced) lack of invention and creativity and the fear of new technologies. All this contributed to the decline of the technical component of the armed forces. The social functions that the armed forces took over – care for the demobilised soldiers, disabled war veterans and retired personnel – were harder and harder to perform due to continuous cuts in the military and state budgets. Nor did demobilisation have only social consequences, it left also a deep imprint on perceptions of regional security.

These defects put a question mark over realisation of the tasks stipulated by the new laws and basic strategic documents. It was first necessary to start with the process of social integration of the armed forces. Then the structure of the military had to be harmonised with the social structure: to reproduce the ethnic, regional and social make-up of the country, as well as the general philosophical and religious orientation. The military must accept the democratic principles and values of the society. Only then will civilian leaders and the society at large perceive the army as a guarantee of their own safety and be motivated to support it financially. But the reality in which the military has to perform – rather than the formal responsibilities and authorisation on paper – must be

recognised by the political leadership. A military under siege tends to become politicised at the expense of its professionalism.

### *The Ministry of Defence and the General Staff*

Ministers of Defence are not just managers of the MoD, but also members of the cabinet responsible for the country's development as a whole. In impoverished and torn societies they face tremendous pressure on their budgets and they must make sure that defence efforts are acceptable for the population, taking into account the overall socio-economic circumstances. The political leaders and government are caught in a dilemma: on the one hand, they must set priorities in response to the overriding concerns of state and society; on the other, they are called upon to satisfy the professional requests of the military. In finding the right balance, they face the political reality that the day-to-day worries of the state and society take preference when there is no imminent threat but, rather, inflated military concerns. Defence budgets have fallen everywhere, but especially in the countries in transition. The struggle of individuals and families to survive relentlessly puts the state concerns for defence under pressure: in the eyes of the public, these represent a rather moot security issue.

That leads to a predictable struggle between the defence minister and the General Staff and the services. Resource allocation is an issue everywhere. But the ministers in Central and Eastern Europe and SEE encounter even fiercer opposition from the General Staff given the inherited status and monopoly of knowledge and expertise of 'the brain of the army' as the General Staff was called in the former Soviet system. The military, politicised in a very different way at that time, simply claimed priority treatment in state policy as the guardian and owner of exclusive knowledge and expertise in the field of security. The party connection did not interfere with their interests; on the contrary, the politico-social paranoia of the party leaders contributed to the freedom of action of the top brass and their extensive network of colleagues in other ministries involved in defence matters. The military represented a powerful network in the polity in their own right and dominated the decision-making process in defence policy, which, as noted earlier, was elevated to the status of the security policy of the state.

The transformation of the organisation of defence in Central and Eastern Europe, therefore, has been a long and intense struggle between the privileged military and its bulwark, the General Staff (GS), and the (civilian) minister and his nominal power house, the MoD-in-being. The personnel of this fledgling organisation was vastly outnumbered by the officers in the GS and could muster few (civilian) experts to counter the overwhelmingly military-operational orientation in policy-making and the idiosyncratic and vested interests of the services. Moreover, the process of drastic downsizing of the forces led to an institutional resistance, in particular among high-ranking officers. These

officers either do not want to or cannot leave the armed forces because of the difficulties in finding employment elsewhere. As a consequence, huge numbers of generals, colonels and majors are in surplus creating an inverse personnel pyramid and blocking the career perspectives of younger officers. Moreover, too many chiefs and too few Indians inevitably leads to 'hollow' forces, even more so in light of the deep-rooted habit of preserving the nominal order of battle.

### *The Modernisation and Acquisition 'Trap'*

As argued before, the question should be: 'What do we want armed forces for, and what military means do we need, for a reasonable price, to enable them to do those things?' Engaging in capability planning for the sake of capabilities and only then paying attention to likely missions is unaffordable, unacceptable and inappropriate, as the experience of Western defence organisations shows. Countries of SEE should not even think about it, given their limited financial resources. They should not be lured into spending more, neither on advanced weapon systems, nor for all possible missions on the wish list. Needless to say foreign governments and arms industry lobbies as well as the national services will push governments to invest large sums in new acquisitions. Statesmen must think twice, however, before embarking on an acquisition-driven course of rebuilding the armed forces. Defence modernisation should serve foreign policy; and defence ministers should prioritise in light of what is needed in the international context and what really contributes to allied capacities. They should certainly not prioritise in an exclusively national context.

A simple reality check shows that trying to cover all the needs for multiple missions is simply out of the question. It is unattainable for the member states of NATO, save the US, let alone for the SEE countries. The departing point for the soon-to-be and would-be NATO members should be that they only invest in modernisation after fully taking into account the current and planned inventory of weapon systems in NATO as a whole. In particular NATO-Europe should be a point of reference together with the EU's 'catalogue' of forces. That, incidentally, means that this argument applies also to the SEE states who have yet to decide whether NATO membership is for them. Union membership is a goal that *all* SEE countries share completely and without any reserve. (See Study Group A's Report, s. II.)

To illustrate where this reasoning leads, for Romania a modern Host Nation Support system for allied combat aircraft is affordable, appropriate for likely missions and regional security, and acceptable to the public. In contrast, the acquisition of modern fighters is unaffordable, inappropriate in view of NATO's inventory and probably unacceptable for the (informed) public, no matter how much these fighters are desired and argued for by the Chief of the Air Force. Modern aircraft like the Joint Strike Fighter

cost somewhere in the range of \$75-100 million a piece. The Romanians with the largest defence expenditure in the region could thus buy some 10-13 aircraft for their total annual defence budget. Even if acquisition were spread over five years at 2-3 aircraft per year, the outlay would still amount to 20 per cent of the annual budget and little, if anything, would be left for other investments. The Czech experience comes to mind. Prague has indeed invested a sum equivalent to a total annual budget in subsonic aircraft that have never been required by NATO and still have not appeared in the Czech/NATO Force Goals. In this case there was strong pressure for procurement from the arms industry, but the need for the aircraft was never expressed in the planning documents of the MoD. There is a Polish tale to tell too. Recently, the Polish air force got its way – this time helped by the American government and arms industry – when the Warsaw government agreed to buy F-16 fighter aircraft with a price tag of \$2.5 billion, merely adding unnecessary combat power to the abundantly equipped air forces of NATO and forgoing other, more pressing, options.

Of course it is not quite so simple as this. It is argued in SEE that many governments cannot yet choose on that sort of international basis because their NATO and EU membership prospects are uncertain. In the circumstances, should they then continue to plan for strictly national defence purposes? Or, should they anticipate membership and dispose of costly assets like fighter aircraft? For example, should Croatia maintain its two dozen MiG fighters and eventually pay for updating them within a defence budget of some \$500 million, or invest in other areas like personnel? What should Serbia and Montenegro do with its 100 or so ex-FRY combat aircraft, given a slightly higher defence budget around \$600 million? These are real dilemmas at this moment (2002/3). Yet in the recent past similar predicaments have afflicted countries that were not sure either about whether or when an invitation from NATO would come. Still, *they made choices!* For example, Romania decided to refrain from updating its fighters and focus on Host Nation Support. In Slovakia, the government deliberately accepted “well-reasoned risks in the current environment of relative peace and stability in order to fund and build the *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*, a thoroughly professional and modern force for the future,” as the 2001 White Paper stated in arguing against, among other things, the burden of too many ‘paper units’. Moreover, in this country a fundamental choice was made as regards the emphasis to be placed on investment in human capacity-building compared to spending on matériel and infrastructure. This was a brave decision in face of fierce opposition at home but one that made sense within the constraints of a defence budget of some \$400 million.

The choices to be made by a defence minister about the allocation of resources *within* defence may nevertheless be the least of his (or her) worries. The allocation of resources *to* defence – how much for defence as opposed to other things – is a tough call as well. The minister must take into account the broad national interest including the financial, industrial or social policies of the government. That is why there must be non-

military expertise in the ministry that plays a major role in a comprehensive and integrated defence planning system. In the past the MoD was a ‘state within a state’ and military considerations completely dominated defence policy. However, security policy is not the same as defence policy or simply concerned with deploying armed forces. The present range of missions of the armed forces as well as the multiple areas of the security sector require a ‘normal’ ministry that is as much subject to the criteria of good governance as any other. Armed forces must be built and equipped in the public eye and under strict civilian control – the political aspect of defence policy; and with the participation of many civilians and other, non-military agencies – the planning and managerial aspect. Good governance equally depends, however, on the competence of the organisation of the MoD itself.

### *Reforming the Ministry of Defence*

Within the defence organisation there are two main areas where civilian and military experts meet and have to work out joint solutions: the planning system and the daily labour of the MoD as part of the government. Defence planning is that activity by which the volume, structure and manner of allotting (natural, human, material and financial) resources are established according to the fundamental objectives and interests of national security and defence. The main documents on which a well-run planning system is based are first of all governmental, such as a National Security Strategy and often a general policy statement which may be called the national White Paper on Defence. On the basis of these documents, the MoD issues the Military Strategy or similarly-named text containing the major military policy objectives and options of the state. Only then can Defence Planning Guidance be given by the minister and his state secretaries to the various departments in the ministry. This civilian-directed management is essential for good governance in the security sector and requires both military and non-military expertise in the organisation.

Such “civilianisation” of the MoD has forced the countries in transition to review the role of the military, to define the role of civilians and to build new balances in decision-making and resource management to assure transparency within the MoD itself. Before addressing what this involves, some preliminary observations as to the ‘power’ of a functioning bureaucracy are in order. Such a bureaucracy is desirable from the point of view of good governance, which requires the ability to govern. Modern, highly developed nations, however, have to deal with the existence of such a powerful bureaucracy that it elicits the criticism of being too independent and acting as an independent element under the constitution, a *fourth* power in the *trias politica*. In section III we have seen the need for parliamentary oversight of the executive from the view of the overall political order. The argument for firm direction and control, transparency and accountability can be

turned around: it is to the benefit of the defence establishment itself if it demonstrates transparent and accountable decision-making.

Many decisions are taken behind closed doors in any bureaucracy and outside control is necessary; but the output of the bureaucracy itself is also better with an inside-outside process of decision-making. There are a number of arguments for self-discipline within the MoD. In the absence of informed debate and criticism the generally small group of decision-makers could be making bad decisions and no-one would ever know, even within the ministry. Money could easily be wasted, another disadvantage for the ministry itself. Alternatives are not easily presented up to the highest level, but external reviews may well encourage internal debate on alternative views. It is only one step further to argue that the tendency to 'do business as usual' will be countered by external oversight. The services are, indeed, known for replacing existing weapon systems with new weapon systems of the same kind, if not for maintaining current tactics and operational procedures beyond their sell-by date. Furthermore, public scrutiny encourages the decision-makers to seek public support and to avoid unwelcome leaks and unintended damage to the institution's confidence among the public. Finally, the bureaucracy can use transparency and accountability against the influence of the vested interests of arms producers or foreign governments and thus avoid the danger of favouritism or bias in decision-making. In brief, the MoD itself should value the benefits of democratic oversight and informed public debate on defence arrangements. Of course, this is not universally recognised and parochial considerations often prevail. Yet, these 'clean' arguments for openness for the sake of the working of the MoD itself as a normal governmental institution should become part of its culture and way of thinking.

There are no universal solutions and it is impossible to change the culture of a closed security sector overnight. Transparency is the most important tool and it can be achieved only through broad and genuine participation of more civilians and the division of responsibilities for policy making and implementation. This is an enormous challenge for civilians who have been excluded from security affairs for decades. They enter a very complex enterprise and do need professional education and training.

There is a pressing need throughout SEE for the development of a knowledgeable civilian defence community. In some countries, like Romania and Croatia, efforts to attract university students are boosted by the introduction of internships within the Ministry of Defence. Once the „pool” of experts on security issues – graduated from specialised institutions at home or abroad – is consolidated, the wise personnel department will create a long-term plan for career management and retention of these individuals. Careful selection for training courses offered by NATO member states will play an important role and will be followed up by a system of supervision of the graduates' career. Without guarantees and stability for civilians, comparable to that of the uniformed professionals, it will be impossible to build trust and form 'joint' teams. On top of this, governments, included the MoD, should do much more to establish a network

of institutes and NGOs able to participate in defence debates and, eventually, to provide expertise and qualified personnel. As noted before, civil society in the defence area, including the leading opinion-makers in the media, is poorly developed and has not received much attention from SEE governments.

Enlarging the 'pool' of expertise in both civilian and military areas is one thing; to retain the experts is quite another. In general, opportunities in the civil economy offer much better salaries. They also present an attractive alternative for serving military officers, in particular for the younger ones. At stake are not exclusively material considerations. The younger officers who stay on in the armed forces have a difficult time in getting promotion when higher ranking officers are sitting on their positions. The inverse personnel pyramid takes its toll. So it happens that colonels can be found in functions normally fulfilled by captains or even lieutenants. This unfavourable situation is difficult to change, because the decisions about career planning and promotion rest with the higher ranking officers themselves. They all have greater problems to find jobs in the civilian sector after many years in the military and thus share a common interest in the *status quo*. By the same token, the preservation of the *status quo* also favours the established but outdated expertise and management, fuelling the estrangement between the old guard and the eager and modern-schooled younger generation. Better-educated young officers often find themselves assigned to a position – by political and civilian superiors – in which they have to take issue with senior officers. A promising lieutenant or captain in, say, policy planning may have a hard and uncomfortable time defending the preferences of his political/civilian masters in front of senior colleagues of the General Staff. In addition to all this, career planning and promotion are a cherished prerogative of the military and this also may lead to frictions between senior and junior levels. Military professional competence may well be compromised by personal and peer group self-interests in these situations which, in turn, adds to irritation on the part of the civilian staff and directorates in the MoD.

At the same time, irritation also exists on the side of the military when they encounter the arrogant behaviour of 'those civilians who think they know it all and have taken over the power to decide'. Many civilians still have a lot to learn when they join a defence ministry. Given the frequency of election or mid-term replacements, military planners are too often unpleasantly surprised by yet another new political master who changes course and who brings with him a bunch of buddies as (top-level) advisers and civil servants. Animosity aroused by this kind of practice is bad for business-like management, including retention and career policy, and runs the risk of degrading the professionalism of both the civilians and the military.

Of course, the people in uniform should retain the central role as *military* professionals, but as professionals with the attitude of a servant who respects *defence and security* policy decisions. Only then are they a trusted source of advice in building robust armed forces. This requirement does not stop at the doorsteps of the ministry, though.

Indeed, the military should take part in informing society and encouraging public awareness of military issues. In return for the expected and warranted respect for professionalism, the military have, in fact, an obligation to share their knowledge and experience with civilian experts and society at large. In a democratic order, defence cannot be a 'state in a state'; nor can the military community remain closed in an open society. Officers should not wait until retirement before participating in public – but not party-political – discourse. No doubt, this requires a different mind-set compared to the one prevailing and the pretty much uncontested attitudes of the past.

In SEE as elsewhere, without such a change transparent and rational decision-making are in doubt, not only *vis-à-vis* the political leadership and parliament, but also within the military itself. There are instances to cite that while parliamentary committees, their staff or NGOs dispatched ample information on defence issues, the military establishment refrained from decent communication between leaders and subordinates. It may then occur that rank-and-file soldiers first learn about ideas and decisions from the media rather than through military channels. Thus a survey taken in 2000 in Romania among personnel at all levels found at the top of the list of grievances the lack of coherence and the absence of co-ordination between the different parts of the defence organisation as a whole. Department heads found themselves not consulted and the bureaucracy was bedevilling every layer down to the platoon leader by requesting reports and actions of 'dubious usefulness'. In order to repair such insult and damaged pride breeding low morale, Defence Minister Pascu introduced the position of a state secretary with responsibility not only for parliamentary and public relations but also internal communication. Hierarchical relations in an organisation should not impede communication. On the contrary, communication underscores the legitimacy of hierarchy and fosters support in the line organisation.

### *International Pressures*

The preceding argument puts getting the defence organisation in good shape ahead of kitting-out the armed forces with the most modern weapons. It contains a sting in the tail for the three SEE countries actively preparing for an invitation to NATO membership (and a cautionary word for the three Prague invitees as they deal with 'unfinished business' in their pre-accession period). It also contains a message for others (in SEE and elsewhere). Nobody is fooled by nice charts and hollow forces, however impressive in number. Political and economic development of countries in transition remains important, but relative maturity in those general indicators should also be reflected in defence arrangements for directing, planning and managing military provision.

In the NATO context, when it was decided at Madrid in 1997 to invite Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to join, political criteria were predominant rather than

military. No doubt, political considerations played an important role in evaluating the readiness of later aspirant countries. Certainly, all seven states invited in November 2002 passed the *political* test in Prague. However, in that decision, military criteria played a crucial role, in particular preparedness for membership in organisational terms. Here, the success story of MAP comes to the fore. Whatever the original motivation of launching the process in 1999, *military* readiness was put on the table and became fully part of the enlargement process in the run-up to Prague..

As a result in 2002, it can be said that three aspirant *legacy states* – Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia – were better prepared militarily than the three roughly comparable states invited in 1997. The first enlargement suffered from a lack of both incentives to embark on realistic planning and organising the armed forces and the very useful, ensuing communication with NATO in this field. One should add that the MAP experience was confined to a very short time – a mere three years – and that some countries started to tackle defence restructuring, reducing and rationalising in earnest only after the 1999 summit. This is a remarkable success of international co-operation and deliberate leadership in these three countries, and one that should be noted in the aspirant states in SEE.

In shaping a realistic defence capacity, the trio took into account – and were encouraged to do so – the question of a credible sustainability of the defence effort. Here, we are talking about the fact that by the time of Prague they could demonstrate a proven capacity to organise defence satisfying the criteria of *affordability* in the light of likely economic performance in the short- and medium-term, *appropriateness* to the military-strategic circumstances, and *acceptability* to the population. Here again, the invited states made impressive progress. Huge holdings of equipment and material have been cut back, the problems of ‘hollow’ forces and an incredible excess of senior officers have been addressed. Acquisition of (unaffordable) modern systems has been postponed and, instead, the crucial need for investment in human capital has been recognised. Public campaigns have been launched to broaden and strengthen support in the societies. What is crucial, though, is that Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia went to Prague having demonstrated that they had learned a lot about the business of organising defence. Priorities had finally been recognised in the three capitals and appreciated in Brussels. This is a promising and even compelling perspective for those in SEE who are willing to follow their example.

## V. INVESTMENT IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The recipe for Bulgarian, Romanian and Slovenian success in Prague had one vital ingredient: recognition of the importance of human capital. People matter.

A Dutch Minister of Defence once got so angry about the recurring objections against his ideas on grounds of vested institutional interests that he took a piece of paper on which he wrote in huge capitals: “There are no problems, there are just human beings making problems.” Good leaders, managers and staff officers constitute the key to success in any organisation. Investment in human capital is therefore a key priority. High-tech materiel is itself a product of human ingenuity and skills. The effective use of technology’s impressive products is a derivative from, again, qualitative human capacities, individually and collectively applied. Organisation of human resources is the road to power and critical to the realisation of military power also.

### *Impediments of old thinking*

Countries in transition have to catch up in *qualitative* respect before effective communication and, on the technical level, interoperability between their forces and other defence organisations will be possible. This catching-up problem ranges from acquiring English language skills to mastering the mysteries of NATO’s and Western Europe’s strategic culture. It is not just a qualitative discrepancy that has to be overcome, though. In SEE, 80-90 percent of defence expenditure is spent on personnel costs, leaving a negligible amount for running costs and training and virtually nothing for materiel investments. Surplus personnel, particularly in the top ranks, and the unaffordable costs, are the primary concern in day-to-day operations of many defence ministries. Thus, the human factor in the reorganisation of defence represents an important concern in a *quantitative* sense as well.

Perhaps the most important conclusion that the Centre for European Security Studies reached in 2001 in its study on *Organising National Defences for NATO Membership* was that some countries – including Bulgaria and Romania – had finally recognised this fact and seriously taken it into account in the rationalisation of their planning. Up to a decade had gone by of unrealistic planning, maintaining huge (albeit hollow) forces, keeping thousands of senior officers on the payroll, and of senseless reorganisation of the last reorganisation. Once more Romania provides the telling illustration. When taking office in 2000 Minister Ioan Pascu found an astonishing surplus of about 450 generals, 1700 colonels, 3800 lieutenant-colonels and 5000 majors in the Romanian armed forces. But figures from Bulgaria tell a strange story too. At that time, Bulgaria’s major equipment included 1,425 main battle tanks, 1,725 artillery pieces of 100mm and higher calibre, and 1,800 armed combat vehicles. Similar distorted structures, reflecting unrealistic planning and management, could be quoted from elsewhere. Rationalisation, restructuring and reduction of the armed forces had been postponed and meanwhile money had been wasted on the wrong assets. The (scarce) human capital available was not used, much less invested in. Quantity was substituted for

quality under the Soviet-army adage 'More is better'. Defence was neither planned nor managed. Financial constraints notwithstanding, the problems were not caused by material shortage, but by human and organisational short-sightedness. They would never have gone away without revamping personnel policy and investments in personnel.

At least one can say at end-2002 that, in some states, they have gone – or are going – away. Thousands of officers in surplus have left the armed forces in Romania and, assisted by a resettlement programme, have found a civilian job. Thousands of pieces of Bulgarian equipment are scrapped, while acquisition of new equipment has been postponed. In Slovakia, as mentioned, the policy is that some risks in the physical defence capability are accepted in order to enable investment in a sound planning and management capacity, with the emphasis on human capital.

In the new international environment political, social and business establishments face, together with the military, many challenges that affect the national strategic culture. These require fundamental change in ways of thinking, such as a re-evaluation of the traditional view of armed forces as the sole guardian of the nation, and the reformulation of old and creation of new military professional values. Perhaps the most difficult task is to find an appropriate balance between the long-standing national strategic culture and that emerging in the light of the new roles and missions of armed forces.

### *Strategic culture*

Strategic culture has always played a crucial role in the effectiveness of military institutions and their activities. It is now the determining factor in defence reform and the emergence of a new defence establishment capable of new thinking. The transformation of inherited culture concerns changes in *the way we think* about armed conflicts, national defence and the role of armed forces, in the *military mentality* as well as in the *style of performing*. Education and training in SEE should address these key issues of reform consistent with the strategic culture, or rather cultures, of prospective allies. There is broad agreement about the example set by the education and training in NATO member-states as a general yardstick, but there is still a long way to go before one can rightly speak about 'cultural interoperability'. Many of the difficulties of political transition, we have seen in section III, relate to the need for change and reform in the human spirit and habits. If a democratic mind-set and democratic-style conduct do not touch a responsive chord and are not 'the only show in town', then the chances of genuine reform are small and the legal and formal expressions remain an exercise on paper. Similarly, organising defence as described in section IV presupposes a human effort that goes beyond the well-intended charts of re-organisation. People have to identify themselves with certain values and ideas and create an inter-subjective culture through interaction. Only then can we exchange individuals or groups without disrupting the shared identity and culture and

claim to have achieved a certain degree of cultural interoperability. In terms of the common understanding in NATO of ‘technical interoperability’, the diverse weapon systems or communication systems are compatible and can operate together; their parts may even be interchangeable. Cultural interoperability would elevate that concept up to the level of interaction between people and the defence organisations in the former East and West.

Both political and military leaders have been slow in recognising the need to adjust the strategic culture to new circumstances, also in the West. NATO has also experienced a learning curve from the 1990/91 Gulf crisis and conflict and UNPROFOR/IFOR/SFOR operations in BiH onwards. The new international duties of the military were bound to affect perceptions of professional status and to change judgements of military performance. Professionalism, consisting of expertise, social responsibilities and international corporateness, must follow suit. *Expertise* today includes new skills like peacekeeping, policing, playing the role of a diplomat and international legal authority, even nation-building. *Social responsibilities* today include providing security in regions where neither affinity with the territory nor sharing values and identity with the locals is self-evident, to put it mildly. An *international esprit de corps* today requires a fundamentally reviewed system of education, career planning, promotion and internalisation of group culture. The military has to take into account the changes arising from emerging social forces, ideologies and institutions that transcend borders. As international organisations and missions change, the role of the military is bound to evolve with these changes.

All the same, we are to a large extent stuck with strategic thinking dominant during the Cold War years (again in East and West). The educational institutions train young officers for largely out-dated or less urgent and even improbable missions. They are reluctant to acknowledge roles and missions that do not represent the ‘real stuff’ that history has imposed on them for centuries. Here again, choices must be made. For example, if it is said that “The military are not trained for peace support, but they are the only ones who can do it”, then we have to act and either change the military and their training or find others to do the job. In practice NATO’s and other nations’ forces have been learning on the job in BiH, Cambodia, Cyprus, East Timor, Lebanon, Sierra Leone and most recently Afghanistan. They were not well-prepared to take the new missions, partly because the political leadership – government and parliament – had not developed strategic guidance, partly because the military leadership had not thought through operational developments. New conflicts, whether ethnic cleansing, civil war or asymmetrical warfare, were responded to: they were not prepared for. Too often, it was left to the military professionals to improvise, while hanging on to their current assets and their guarded approach to the polity and society for whom they were acting (see section II).

Political and institutional influence on ‘the military way’ is a fact of life and, in the long run, of overriding importance for politico-military relations. The point is that it should be made explicit, in particular the changed nature of the political imperative. Today, that imperative has increasingly become internationally defined. As a consequence, military professionalism can no longer be strictly understood in terms of *national* security. The concepts of threat, national security or the balance of military power have receded into the background. The international socio-political imperative – embodied in an admittedly vague notion of ‘the international community’ – requires a wide range of capabilities that go beyond traditional needs. The post-Cold War military man or woman has become diplomat, civil servant and social worker as much as operational officer in regular forces; responsibilities extend to protecting ‘strangers’ and helping to establish democratic values and the rule of law; his or her distinct corporateness has to be shared with foreign officers, civilians, international agencies and NGOs in the field. De-coupling military professionalism from this new international political imperative is not only unwelcome, but in the end senseless. It will undermine military professionalism and lead to a waste of resources, while eroding public support in the long run.

To illustrate the foregoing, the experience of a Bulgarian officer will suffice. He concluded after a peacekeeping mission:

“You cannot gain the initiative or maintain the momentum essential for the successful pursuit of your mission if you are out of touch with the nuances, the customs, the messages being passed around you. You will be punished for it by the belligerent parties. Running a war is easy. What is difficult is dealing with the complexities and ambiguities of multinational peace operations.”

Many officers have experienced the lack of knowledge and understanding of the ‘other’ culture as their greatest deficiency in fulfilling their duties. This deficiency was also noticeable in the relations with other peacekeeping forces and international organisations. Cultural interoperability has been taken to another level. As said before, the member states of NATO were ill-prepared for the new missions in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. But they have learned and adapted their forces, training and education to the new circumstances, even though this process was slow and sometimes very painful (as in Srebrenica for the Dutch battalion).

Officers from SEE countries who were trained for large-scale manoeuvre operations or territorial defence during the Cold War years have had perhaps even greater difficulty in grasping the political, strategic and operational dimensions that have transformed the purpose and exercise of military force. Many officers were (and are) simply not comfortable in the new environment. Today, the strategic, operational and tactical levels are enmeshed in and often subordinated to diplomatic, economic, humanitarian and cultural agendas. Soldiers must realise that the effects of a tactical decision may have strategic and political ramifications. Their new missions have produced a ‘strategic

corporal', requiring initiative and decisiveness as well as full awareness of rules of engagement and the consequences of action. All this leads to new demands regarding the character of the army as a whole and the need of developing a different type of leadership.

*The 'warrior' and the 'diplomat'*

For sure, operational and tactical commanders must be able to fight well and obey orders resolutely as in the past. However, fighting is not the only and often not even the primary task assigned. Rather, the rationale for applying military force is often the prevention and the cessation of violence, not military victory. A challenging requirement for today's officers is thus the need to develop a military ethos that retains the concept of the soldier as a 'warrior', but is complemented by a view of the soldier as a 'diplomat and scholar'. The different skills should be reflected in the curriculum of the military in two respects, training and education. Given the traditional training and education system, this requirement will not be easy to meet.

The difference between operational training for the 'warrior' and intellectual education for the 'diplomat and scholar' should not lead to two separate parts of the military curriculum, but to an integrated package in delivering which existing institutions complement each other's strengths and primary experience in the respective areas. Academic and theoretical education is the *metier* of universities and the expertise needed must be sought there rather than designing new courses at the military academies. Operational, doctrinal and troop management training of the military is, in contrast, the prerogative of these academies and other centres for higher vocational training within the defence organisation and should remain their primary responsibility. An integrated approach evidently prescribes co-ordination between the two elements of the curriculum, but the supervision of each should be based on a clear division of labour and responsibilities. Civilian and, more generally, scholarly education would then fall under the auspices of civilian institutions while military training proper would remain the realm of the MoD, in particular the General Staff. In that way, the defence organisation would also explicitly recognise the necessary differentiation between planning and policy on the one hand, implementation on the other. This is not to say that the two aspects of education and training concern separate activities; rather that they are distinct and separable parts of the complex whole.

Reform of the system is demanding and will encounter fierce resistance. Military education is traditionally regarded as a sacred domain of the professional soldier, a crucial instrument to build *esprit de corps* and to establish a professional group identity and culture. Moreover, while all professional military are temperamentally inclined to emphasise operational and technical training, in the former Soviet bloc armies and others

like them, an overwhelming emphasis has traditionally been put on doctrinal, tactical and combat management. Political studies, international relations, civil-military relations or security studies, including strategy, get little attention. Students find virtually nothing worthy on these subjects in the academies' libraries, while instructors who could teach these subjects are rarely employed at the academies and are difficult to find in the military organisation to begin with. This has to change. As to military training proper, the aim should be to maintain and strengthen the capacity to fight, to develop leadership qualities, and to focus on teamwork in combat. The former strictly hierarchical and rigid top-down command style must be replaced by one based on respected and legitimised leadership, making full use of – badly needed – NCOs as the 'oil in running combat units'. Instruction needs to reflect that.

### *Civil-military interface in education and training*

A modern military education system should also provide for acquiring complementary civilian and military expertise. It should design programmes that are recognised by the civilian institutions. Due consideration should be given to the fact that the military profession and military career must become attractive and offer opportunities for service personnel to find employment after retirement. The increase in the level of military competence demanded will also imply a wider number of activities and requirements. This must take place gradually and only after each individual has been trained and prepared for the new level of duties.

Certain requirements are clear. This is evident from a (contributed) perspective for Croatia, which can be incorporated in the present argument.

Those who decide to join the armed forces after they have graduated from a university should be obliged to attend a training course at the Officers' College of at least six months duration. During this time they will acquire basic military knowledge and complete the process of integration of their civil education with the military system. University students who decide during the course of their studies that upon graduation they might commence a military career should have the possibility to choose one of the military courses at the faculties that provide education for skills demanded by the armed forces. These courses would be optional after the second year of studies. If attracted by uniformed service, following their graduation, they should also attend a short, maybe three months, course at an Officers' College.

The Faculty of Defence Studies of the University in Zagreb is an example of the type of institution that can fill this role. The goal of this faculty should be to provide education in the field of defence to citizens who should be able to use that knowledge and to participate in the defence system activities in various ways. One

can think of experts needed by the Croatian Armed Forces, such as civil servants who will be employed by the Ministry of Defence, the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia or Defence Departments; or civil experts for production and maintenance of arms and military equipment; or experts who will work in R&D institutes that deal with defence or in defence-related industry; or journalists and defence correspondents, advisers in state administration bodies, government institutions and so on. The Faculty and military teachers must coordinate military-oriented courses at the various educational institutions for the seamless integration of the civilian and military professionals and also offer the possibility to switch from one profession to the other (i.e. through the three-month course at an Officers' College).

For young people who already choose a military career after graduation from high school, defence can provide accommodation and appropriate scholarships. The armed forces should enable them to participate in some professional activities so that they can already during their studies acquire the kind of knowledge provided by the shorter course at the Officers' College. Once they get their university degree, they can immediately be commissioned in the active forces and get their first appointment in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia.

In addition to these facilities for students, an inter-university multidisciplinary centre for national security study could be established to provide education and training for the highest-ranking positions in the management and commanding structure. The programme of the study, its structure and quality should be compatible with other university studies. In due time, one-year education in national security should be mandatory for the highest military and civil functions in the national security system. The programme should be organised to open possibilities for acquiring scientific degrees. Additionally, courses and seminars lasting from 10-15 days to 3 months should be organised within the study programme, in particular to stimulate political officials to attend and acquire the necessary knowledge for functioning in the national security system. These courses should also be open for public workers, journalists, military commentators and the like. Through organised and systematic training they should develop skills for efficient monitoring and understanding of security issues crucial for the entire society.

Civilian management in the framework of 'civilianisation' should also be developed in defence ministries themselves. Romania, for example, has made progress in this respect by employing an increasing number of civil servants, up to about 600 people by the end of 2001 or one-third of the ministry's personnel, including in key positions. Meanwhile, a new approach to expert formation has been made, focusing on joint civil-military education, in an endeavour to enhance co-operation and common understanding. At the beginning of 2002 a process of evaluation and drawing up a civilians' career management

scheme was launched, due to the necessity to manage both military and civil careers within the system. The main principles of this concept, currently under development (2002/3), will be similar to those of the Military Career Guide implemented from 2001, providing for a cadres promotion system according to experience, competence, and performance, and based on the principles of transparency and equal chances. In parallel, a number of measures have been taken to harmonise the training of civilian personnel with that of other ministries, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Exchange of experts between the two ministries was also introduced aiming at a coherent development of defence diplomacy and an efficient co-ordination of foreign and defence policy.

The changing requirements of the modern professional military must also be closely monitored and elaborated. In that respect, the Chief of the General Staff could be charged to propose periodically to the Minister of Defence a list of requirements that are in high demand or emerging. This need should not be met by excessive workload being imposed on existing personnel, but rather by recruiting people who have appropriate qualifications from available sources in accordance with the criteria and to the levels deemed necessary. This could be anticipated some years ahead in order to adjust training programmes in time. Personnel who face discontinuation, reorganisation of their units or promotion can attend these training programmes as well. They should be organised in such a manner that participants are trained for one primary speciality and at least another secondary one. Furthermore, candidates for promotion to the rank of general and for highest appointments must follow a civilian education programme and get at least a masters degree. In cases when all other mandatory criteria for promotion and appointment are met more or less equally, this should put the holder at an advantage over other candidates. The goal should be that all in high positions have an academic degree.

The “struggle for human resources” is the essence of today’s national security and defence establishments’ quest for excellence; and “how to build *untraditional* leaders?” is the core question of strategic significance. It is not easy in practice, though. The system of military education has to cope with the problem of force reductions and its impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the military. How can one counter disillusion about the status of a once deeply respected profession and the general problem of retaining the best professionals? Some think that attempts to preserve a system of highly specialised education at the reduced force levels are doomed to failure. Among the reasons for such a grim forecast are changing personnel characteristics and the lack of incentives to retain highly qualified trainers. The impact of downsizing is further aggravated by the severe financial limitations not only for combat training but also in the everyday functioning of armed forces. This has a detrimental effect all round and leads to the undermining of *esprit de corps*. The ‘survivors’ of downsizing may feel that they have been abandoned by society, that society no longer values the quality of the military and the readiness to lay down life, and denies job security and status. Such changes in attitudes may result in a

widening of the gap between the military institution and the society it serves. The military sociologists talk of *alienation*.

Furthermore, transformations in society's value system change the expectations of young candidates for the military academies. Many expect to receive high-quality education that will guarantee not only a successful military career but also will prepare them for a smooth transition into civilian life after they leave the military. Decision-making and policy performance in defence matters however remain based on a system of traditions, impressions, a rigid culture of management plus belief in modern info-tech skills as a solution for problems that are political rather than technical – all representing in many respects the strategic culture of the past.

#### *Making use of the facilities in place*

There are successful attempts to counter these negative perspectives on education and training. For example, Bulgaria's "G. S. Rakovski" Defence College in Sofia established in 2000 the National Security and Defence Faculty in order to develop a suitable environment for education, research and communication. The Faculty offers senior level courses on *National Defence, Strategy and Forces Management*. The aim of the education is to introduce the members into the complex of conditions and factors that define the strategic environment of security and defence today. The new education has to provide the leaders with knowledge of modern methods and techniques for analysis, estimations and decision-making. It should prepare them for solving contemporary issues that concern leadership of the armed forces in response to the strategic requirements mentioned before.

The ideal result would be that participants receive knowledge and skills to perform the roles of *strategic leaders, strategic practitioners* and *strategic conceptualists*. Probably the most important innovation is the development of abilities to think critically. The difference with the past should be consciously strategic thinking, and acting on the national level but with a high degree of cultural interoperability in the Euro-Atlantic and international context. Participants are senior and flag officers, key executives from the central government administration, representatives of local government bodies responsible for civil protection and crisis response preparation, influential journalists from the free media who have specialised on international and security related issues, members of the Parliament and expert staff of parliamentary committees, representatives of the national business community dealing with defence procurement and services. The course is also open for senior ranks from the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council member countries.

Here is the place to mention also the National Defence College in Bucharest which has a decade's experience in providing the military expertise needed for civilians

dealing with national defence issues. This institution performs also another important task. As one-third of the students are active-duty senior officers (colonels, generals) it allows a direct contact of the military with civilians including high-ranking civil servants from different ministries and parliamentarians and members of their staff. This way the Romanian defence community has been strengthened over the years. At the same time, the experience with the College shows that it requires constant attention from the highest level to preserve the original idea and objective of the courses. Both the curriculum designed for a high-level audience and the right mix of the target audience should be closely guarded. The important meeting ground for both civilian and military expertise and for exposure of the one to the other must be maintained.

Another Romanian institution merits mentions also. Recognising that human resources represent the basis for the accomplishment of reform objectives, the country has established, with American support, a Defence Resources Management Centre in Brasov. This offers an inter-agency course, based on a high-level module, bringing together representatives from the Romanian intelligence services, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of National Defence. Actually the official name of this facility is *Regional Defence Resources Management Centre*, since the intention was that it should not serve an exclusively national function. In the event the demand for trained personnel in Romania itself – plus the desire to test and evaluate programmes on the domestic clientele – has delayed the provision of instruction to participants from other SEE countries. The centre should now do that (as, incidentally, Study Group A also suggests).

Other regional centres might appear in due course. The hope must be that they will complement and not replicate what establishments like Brasov can do. In this connection news emerged in late 2002 of a NATO (and possible NATO-EU) scheme to develop Macedonia as a centre for regional security co-operation, and in particular to develop the Krivolak military training facility as a centre for joint exercises among NATO members and, especially, the SEE candidate countries (Albania, Croatia and Macedonia itself). No details were available at the time of writing, but the notion has obvious appeal.

What SEE cannot get enough of is English language training; and major effort here would pay high dividends. Further co-operation with NATO (and the EU) – whether membership is a near or distant prospect – requires mastering the *lingua franca*. Strategic interoperability of human capital cannot be established otherwise.

### *The domestic-international interface*

There is no doubt that successful interoperability depends very much on the relations between civil and military decision-making actors and the degree to which *consensus* can be reached among them. The essence of this is the consensus on national aims as to both

foreign and domestic policy. It means stability of the defence system, confidence to the governing staff, motivation of officers, and application of military professionalism – all of which must be on the agenda of human capital development.

The rapidly evolving international developments complicate national consensus-building everywhere, in particular after the terrorist assaults in the US on 11 September 2001 and the subsequent “war” against terrorism. In fact, interoperability is not any more just a NATO (or EU) affair; it affects the political and military decision makers in every country and requires again a fresh look at civil-military relations in the now further expanded area of SSR.

The “new global war” against terrorism has changed the strategic context of the interoperability issue on the NATO agenda since the Prague summit, whether one likes it or not. It has also impinged on thinking about the evolution of the EUs CSDP and about what Javier Solana’s ‘catalogue’ of forces should contain. Terrorist activity, whether carried out through spectacular attacks or tactics aimed at disrupting normal life, and whether use of mass casualty and mass destruction weapons is imminent or not, is now a most serious concern in all the capitals of the world. No country can consider itself immune from terrorist intervention, no matter whether or not one fully agrees with the determined military-strategic approach of the US with its emphasis on prevention and pre-emption as and when decisive action seems required. In any case, one must maintain the integrity of strategy.

At present, the existing members of NATO and the invited, aspirant and would-be associated states alike must revisit the requirements of strategy; and the conception of a common strategy is perhaps their most urgent task. With the twentieth century as the age of extremes and destruction and forty years of Cold War behind us, it is nonetheless wrong to forgo the central and eternal significance of a strategy for security policy. Like history, strategy is a process, a constant shifting of conditions full of uncertainties and ambiguities. Political and military considerations come together in strategy, no matter how paradoxical and conflictual the respective logics of the politician and the military specialists are. The intellectual challenge of strategy dwarfs the nitty-gritty concerns of organising defence or the acquisition of weapon systems. If anything requires human resources investment and education, it is strategic thinking and conduct. Whatever military-operational means will be necessary to *do the job*, only cogently and persistently developed human capital can *define and direct the work*.

## **VI. DEFENCE PROVISION**

Following the previous analysis and lengthy deliberations, and taking into account the criteria for a rational planning of national defence efforts – *affordability* for the state,

*acceptability* to the people and *appropriateness* in the strategic circumstances – some concluding observations and recommendations can be presented.

Putting defence arrangements on a proper footing is not simply a matter of reducing and restructuring inherited large forces; nor can this be done in those countries that had to start from scratch by repeating the traditional, Cold War-era logic of planning. In the twenty-first century in Europe, Security Sector Reform requires new thinking and in many respects radical changes in defence provision. Europe is an enlarged and enlarging zone of security and three countries of South Eastern Europe (SEE) will be part of it in 2004 through NATO membership while Slovenia is likely to enter the EU around that time. All countries of SEE intend to follow the EU path in due course, preferably sooner than later. In the case of NATO, there are would-be members (following the MAP process) and ‘maybe sometime’ members (whose horizon is for now limited to possible PfP participation).

For maintaining and strengthening the state of relative stability and security in restive parts of the region, NATO and the EU bear special responsibilities, the latter’s increasing as time goes by. More generally, a sort of division of labour between NATO-led and EU-led military forces seems a likely outcome of (a) continuing trans-atlantic deliberation after NATO’s Prague summit in 2002 and (b) intra-European thinking about the evolution of the Union’s CSDP – and its ‘catalogue’ forces –of which more will be heard at 2003’s Thessaloniki and Rome Summits. For missions in the European neighbourhood, likely to be of a ‘Petersberg tasks’ kind or involving post-conflict or post-crisis reconstruction, the EU may be the preferred instrument. For missions further afield, crisis responses almost certainly involving armed intervention and maybe also agreed pre-emptive action, it is likely that NATO-led coalitions of the willing will be formed.

How all this works out matters to SEE. However, what matters even more is that there should be serious indigenous effort and domestic determination to strengthen regional security and reform defence dispositions. These are the conditions *sine qua non* for political, economic and social stability and well being. Security and prosperity cannot be ‘exported’, but must grow on prepared and potentially fertile ground. What the EU and NATO and Western countries can and will do (and have done) is communicate clear expectations and requirements to new members and allies. Such conditionality has worked and must emphatically be used in the domestic political debates within aspirant states. Rogue politicians or those who might have power-driven, even geo-political, ambitions should be held strictly accountable for backsliding and postponement of progress towards democracy and security. That is possible: witness the marginalisation of Meciar in Slovakia’s 2002 election. For sure, though, it is not easy in areas recently ravaged by violence where state- and nation-building has only just begun.

Defence reform – or for that matter any other – cannot bear fruit without the essential political, social and legal provisions. In SEE they are basically in place, but

vulnerabilities of the fledgling state structures and fragile economies remain. The defence organisation and the armed forces should aspire to ‘good governance’ like any other state institution and do away with secrecy and the remnants of communist-style closed decision-making. Openness and transparency towards parliament and society-at-large are the only way to win support for defence policy and respect for the professional military. Defence expenditures are seen everywhere as a burden; and only support and respect for visible professionalism and efficiency can alleviate the omnipresent pressure on budgets, the more so in circumstances of extreme austerity. Sacrifice must not be perceived as overburdening populations in need of so many things.

Whatever is affordable and acceptable for defence needs, none of the countries can build an independent force capable of mounting an impregnable home defence *and* carrying out a range of tasks in the international arena. Apart from financial restraints and popular objection, none of the countries should consider such ambitions on conceptual and geo-political grounds. The latter point is abundantly clear: there is no external threat to the national territories in the region. A defence organisation that would continue to emphasise territorial defence is putting the horse behind the cart. It looks only backwards and hence is blind to the prospect of participation in an inclusive European security community. In areas where a local threat to territory still lingers, its elimination must be found in the domestic sphere and local trust-building; and it is precisely in those areas that foreign forces, including troops from neighbours, are present – and are likely to remain – to control the situation and help prevent disruption, and provide scope and time for healing processes to work.

Territorial defence of the SEE region must be seen in the context of defence of the ‘European space’ as, incidentally, is very slowly being recognised in Western countries. Yet thousands of pieces of equipment dedicated for traditional territorial defence are still held in stock. The SEE countries should not retain, let alone rebuild, such a capacity but should instead, where opportune, reduce those holdings significantly, in most categories to a minimum or even zero. The countries should anticipate becoming part of defence of the ‘European space’ and, as the Romanians claimed before the invitation to NATO in Prague was even sure, say: “We are *de facto* member and conduct a security policy accordingly. Planning both for home defence and for integration in NATO is madness and utterly unaffordable”. The risks of anticipating integration are worth running, not least because SEE has been all but co-opted to the ‘European space’. The Stability Pact, the EU’s Stabilisation and Association Process, NATO’s South East Europe Initiative (with its offspring SEEGROUP, the SEECAP and SEESTUDY) – not to mention those stabilising presences – all testify to this. Tangible benefits accrue. To give just one illustration: expensive air defence can only be considered a multinational mission; and it can be more or less fully assigned to (prospective) allies by countries with a defence budget that runs in the millions rather than in billions of dollars. In any case, the countries in the region must rebalance their forces in concert and assume certain missions together:

multilaterally, as in the MPF-SEE/SEEBRIG formation and the BLACKSEAFOR flotilla; bilaterally, as Bulgaria and Romania do in the area of border protection. Division of labour is feasible, and inevitable.

In addition, new missions of the armed forces have in recent years proved to be far more urgent and in high demand. The by now familiar missions of peacekeeping and peace-enforcing (and policing) require the greatest effort within armed forces currently; and future new demands are likely to emerge as decisions are made on how to tackle terrorism. High-intensity warfare far away from the homeland – and related post-war assistance – may also appear on the agenda of SEE countries as NATO members under pressure from a pro-active American-sponsored strategy. These missions require different concepts, new military training and a division of roles and responsibilities among the state-actors involved.

A major impediment to change in military affairs has been the legacy of the past, particularly in the countries that were subordinated to Soviet tutelage. The capitals in Central and Eastern Europe were not involved in real planning, but followed Moscow in maintaining mass armies for large-scale warfare. (In different circumstances, Ljubljana, Sarajevo, Skopje and Zagreb had no independent voice for decades: Belgrade called the shots.) Expertise was limited to the military and the General Staff dominated the decision-making process. Today, strategic thinking is required for the political and military leadership under very different circumstances with many uncertainties. The priorities are no longer so evident as in the Cold War era and political guidance is mandatory. Of paramount importance is the clear attribution of functions among the players. Military expertise is fully recognised in defence planning, but security policy-making – including the supervision of matching resources and commitments – is the domain of the political leadership. Responsibility and accountability are clearly political, thus enhancing transparency *vis-à-vis* the legislature and society, a prerequisite in times when policy decisions must be explained and defence provision is no longer seen as an inevitable necessity.

Education and training are radically different for the new type soldier and for the new way of co-operation between civilians and military officers. Those in uniform face totally new environments requiring new skills and expertise. Academies cannot train them as in the past. There are many non-military tasks involved and a new strategic culture – nationally and internationally – is emerging and should be reflected in what and how the academies teach. The interface between civil and military servants urges the establishment of courses that both groups attend, to familiarise themselves with each other's fields of competence. Ideally, this should not be done in each country separately. Existing regional institutions should be used more, and the creation of others should be considered. Without shared and common training and education, 'human interoperability' will be unattainable and people will never 'speak the same language' in the figurative sense.

For too long ministries, and armed forces in particular, have focused on equipment and formations, the visible thing, and neglected investment in human capital, the vision thing. The countries in SEE should not make the same mistake. The management of violence is not a technical and material matter. One may take some risks by postponing acquisition of weapons and have too few or of lesser quality. That can be compensated by human performance, though. But the development of human capital can never be put at risk, for equipment is not going to compensate for wrong decisions and preparation for the wrong scenarios.

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## CONCLUSION to ESCADA

In 1912 Baron d'Estournelles thought that Ottoman-ruled Albania and Macedonia were 'more widely separated from Europe than Europe from America'. Eighty-five years later the Bulgarian historian Maria Todorova published her book *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) in which she said that for the West, and for Central Europe also, the region represented – in the unfortunate academic jargon – the 'constituting other' in contrast to which one defines oneself: the pole of disorder, fragmentation, endless quarrels. In between, the Balkans were long labelled 'the powder keg of Europe' and famously described by Winston Churchill as weighed down by 'more history than they can bear'. On top of that the word 'Balkans' acquired a bag of pejorative connotations: conspirative and revengeful, backward and uncivilised, incurably provincial and chronically poor, unreliable and intolerant.

In 1999, however, while the unfolding Kosovo crisis and conflict made 'powder keg' seem right still, at NATO's fiftieth anniversary summit it was resolved that the region should be encouraged and helped to 'join the European mainstream': with a view, presumably, to being regarded by other Europeans as 'one of us' in the not-too-distant-future. To mark this gesture the word 'Balkans' – with all those 'backwater' connotations – was banned from the policy vocabulary. The area was *South-Eastern Europe*. (The old term is no longer taboo, but that is another story).

A few months after this NATO event, the German Presidency of the European Union launched the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe with a 'mission statement' that spoke, among many other things, of increasing 'the sense of security and trust' in the neighbourhood, of enhancing 'transparency and predictability in the military field' and of 'creating a new security culture' in the region. Ambitious.

NATO was as good as its word. It devised a Membership Action Plan (MAP) procedure to help would-be members in the Balkans and elsewhere to prepare for accession. This was soon up and running. The Stability Pact began badly. It showed urgency only in setting-out its office furniture: a Regional Table, Working Tables and sub-tables, all with co-Chairs. Operationally, though, it was slow off the mark: its 'quick start' package was a joke.

Nevertheless by mid-2001 there were enough good things happening for the EU's External Affairs Commissioner, Chris Patten, to say that, while it was far too early to talk about Mission Accomplished in the region, it was already clear that this was not Mission Impossible either. Towards the end of 2001, Albania's Ambassador to the United States said the same thing, more eloquently if less succinctly. Addressing an audience at America's prestigious Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, he said that for South-Eastern Europe 'the burden of the past is not heavier than the promises of the future and ..... the challenges faced by all countries in the Balkans are not obstacles but

opportunities'. The nations, he went on, 'face innumerable creative possibilities for renewal and progress'. (Fatos Tarifa, *The Balkans*, The Hague: Smiet, 2002.)

## **ESCADA**

This is the time at which the ESCADA project was launched; and this is the spirit in which it was embarked upon; and the eight-country research teams of security and defence specialists who took part in it during 2002 had creative possibilities very much in mind. In fact, as has been explained, they were tasked to seek out opportunities for *extending security co-operation* in the neighbourhood and for harmonising and reforming *defence arrangements* (though not, it should be said, ignoring obstacles to progress). In particular, they were asked to consider what might be done in 2003 and beyond – what promises for the future there might be – in these two areas of interest.

The ESCADA Study Groups did what they were invited to do. This is clear from the foregoing reports on their contributions and deliberations, on which it is appropriate now to offer concluding observations plus *the key policy recommendations* that arise therefrom.

### **Extending Security Co-operation**

There was a logical sequence to the research agenda adopted by the 'security co-operation' team. First, past experience of regional co-operation was reviewed. Second, possible trajectories and necessary prerequisites for future co-operation were examined. Third, areas in which improved co-operation seemed imperative were identified. Fourth, the team looked in detail at a couple of specific opportunities (or creative possibilities) for institutional innovation.

Lessons of experience. The review of recent co-operation revealed success stories and disappointments. Under the first heading it is interesting that efforts characterised by local ownership predominate: the SEDM forum, the MPF-SEE/SEEBRIG formation and the BLACKSEAFOR flotilla; and the regional Budget Transparency Initiative plus some other examples of functional collaboration. Under the second heading fall many other Stability Pact (SP) 'initiatives' and some instances of military-to-military co-operation that have failed to come up to expectations. In moving forward the preferred strategy should be to reinforce success and, elsewhere, either cut losses (i.e. abandon) or purposefully revitalise. A tidying-up operation is called for. This is a task for the South-

East European Co-operation Process (SEECP) – the nominated ‘voice’ of the region in dealing with the SP (and others) – perhaps in consultation with SEDM. It should be on the SEECP agenda for 2003. Opinions differ as to whether a showpiece Balkan Convention would be a suitable occasion for announcing the outcome of such an exercise and presenting a blueprint for future security co-operation. A lower-profile gathering might be a better option.

*South-Eastern Europe should reinforce those existing ventures in security and defence that have been successful (SEDM, MPF-SEE, BLACKSEAFOR, the Budget Transparency Initiative, the SECI Centre on Trans-border Crime). It should either abandon or revitalise the rest. The SEECP forum (with SEDM) should chart the way forward and regional leaders should formally announce a prospectus for future endeavour.*

Trajectories and Prerequisites. Whether the new prospectus should envisage South-East European renewal and progress in security and defence with NATO or the EU as principal point of reference is a tricky question. On *security matters*, though, it must be borne in mind that EU membership is the only goal that all of the South-East European countries share totally and unreservedly. Whatever the choice on this ‘trajectory’ issue, however, certain prerequisites for successful collaboration are obvious. One is an accord on the treatment of minorities. Endorsement of a ‘General Regional Concept’ has been suggested. Another is attention to the quality of public administration in the region. Basically this must be a national matter, but regional co-operation in improving competence in defence administration ought to be possible (see next section). Yet another is the ‘tidying-up operation’ referred to earlier, with particular reference to the role of international actors. There is incontestable evidence that overlap, replication and competition stand in the way of coherent and complementary external interventions. They represent obstacles that must be reduced even if they cannot be eliminated altogether.

*The SEECP’s proposed prospectus should include commitments to endorsement of a ‘General Regional Concept’ on the treatment of minorities and to pursuit of civil service reform (as an ‘enabling’ prerequisite for any policy implementation). Co-operation in improving defence administration – in which Bulgaria and Romania could lead – is a creative possibility to be explored (see below). In the meantime the civilian agencies of the so-called ‘international community’ should be roundly chastised for their reluctance to be co-ordinated. This is a job for the SP Special Co-ordinator (sic), heads of organisations and donor governments.*

Imperatives. Two areas in which future security co-operation *must* be enhanced – with better-managed external support – are tackling the region’s Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) problem and invigorating Anti-Corruption efforts. On the SALW issue, existing activities lack coherence and the SP-sponsored *Regional Implementation Plan* requires revitalisation and redirection. In order to ‘make a difference’ in this field

two things are necessary. The first is commitment to a pan-regional ‘gun control’ regime based on adequate registration, licensing and documentation: this is the only way to regulate the arms that individuals must have or feel they must have. The second is greater effort at the grass-roots level to build trust in official community policing: this is the only way to reduce the felt need to hold personal weapons. On the Anti-Corruption question, the SP’s *Strategy and Action Plan for 2002 and Beyond* similarly requires invigoration plus greater local commitment, especially in the defence field where the scope for wrongdoing is immense. There are many reasons why governments are ineffectual. There is no excuse, though, for not doing obvious things, like seeing that legislative oversight of the public finances is effective and that the country has a competent, independent and respected audit bureau. (See also next section).

*On Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), the SP’s implementation plan requires redirection: it should aim at (a) establishing a pan-regional ‘gun control’ regime, and (b) supporting local effort at trust-building in official community policing. The Pact’s anti-corruption plan requires invigoration also; but here greater local commitment is imperative. In the security field governments should, among other things, (a) strengthen financial accountability and transparency, and (b) ensure that every national audit office is competent, independent and respected.*

Priorities: (1) Strategic Crime. Widespread in South-Eastern Europe and bewildering in its diversity, strategic crime is a *security* problem that requires urgent attention. Yet even at a high-level late-2002 convention what Europe’s statesmen had to say was long on platitudes and short on proposals for concrete action. Regional governments could do more to act in concert on this; but the region also needs ‘outside’ help in addressing the challenge. Here two ideas suggest themselves. First, external organisations could do more to ensure that they are not themselves part of the problem: by dealing more rigorously with those in their own ranks contaminated by criminality. Secondly, a bold contribution to the solution should be considered, viz. treating ‘strategic criminals’ in a similar way to that in which war criminals are treated – with a machinery that includes independent (non-local) professional investigators, a high-profile Special Prosecutor, and a specially-constituted tribunal.

*Strategic crime is a regional security problem. To deal with it South-East European governments could proceed more determinedly and more co-operatively on several tracks (see Report A, p.16). The SEECP-forum should take this challenge on board. As regards ‘outside’ help, first, aid agencies and peacekeeping forces should ensure that their personnel are not complicit in criminality; and, secondly, consideration should be given to setting-up an apparatus to deal with strategic criminals as war criminals are dealt with (independent evidence gathering, Special Prosecutor, international tribunal).*

Priorities (2) Co-operative Crisis Management. Strategic crime is an area where decisive action probably depends on taking the initiative out of local hands, because the evidence suggests that the machinery of government has been criminally ‘penetrated’ to some degree just about everywhere. A field where there could be worthwhile collaborative effort more or less exclusively in local hands, however, is the establishment of a regional Co-operative Crisis Management Capacity to deal with a variety of civil and low-level military contingencies (like most of what the EU calls ‘Petersberg tasks’). There is a solid rationale for orchestrating and developing South-East European capabilities through such a medium and for establishing a permanent regional centre to do this, with the necessary technical facilities. A concept has been worked out in considerable detail. So this is an institutional innovation that now awaits only the blessing of governments. Involving as it might joint procurement of equipment for jointly-held inventory, collaboration on such a concrete undertaking would go beyond local ownership of a project and its implementation to regional ownership of physical assets. This would be something of a breakthrough in Balkan terms, so that success here would augur well for other co-operative ventures.

*Through SEECP or SEDM or an ad hoc body, South-East European governments should take up – for project definition and feasibility study – the idea of establishing a Co-operative Crisis Management Capacity, managed from a fully-equipped and staffed Regional Crisis Management Centre. Such an exercise in practical collaboration would be a path-breaking enterprise, possibly foreshadowing others.*

Unfortunately the ESCADA ‘security co-operation’ team were not able to review and evaluate the idea – originating at NATO HQ apparently – that Macedonia should be developed as a centre for Regional Security Co-operation (whatever that means) and that something called a Regional Security Co-operation Institute might be established in the country. From the vague references to these notions in the late-2002 International Crisis Group essay on Macedonia, linked to the suggestion that the Krivolak military training facility might be developed as a centre for joint exercises (by NATO member-states and aspirants), it would appear that their originators ascribe to ‘security co-operation’ a narrower, military-oriented meaning than that adopted in this inquiry. No doubt more will be heard about the subject in due course.

## **Defence Arrangements**

Deciding what to highlight from the wide-ranging work of the ESCADA ‘defence’ team is a problem; and the problem is an embarrassment of riches. There is space here to show only the tip of an iceberg of insights. Moreover, it has to be remembered that while the

eight countries' *similarity of circumstances* regarding the need for defence reform (and security sector reform) made a synoptic analysis appropriate, formulating generalized policy prescriptions is less straightforward because *diversity of recent experience and immediate aspirations* should enter the reckoning. There are, though, a number of concluding observations of broad applicability, and they have policy implications.

Domestic Politics/External Guidance. Harmonising and reforming defence is the primary responsibility of the countries of South-Eastern Europe (hereafter SEE). Too many people expect too much in too many areas that a solution can be delivered to the region by NATO or the EU, or prescribed down to the last detail before membership of these organisations. However, the Western institutions can and should give assistance in the form of advice as to particular reforms in the security and defence area. The Membership Action Plan process does this for NATO aspirants. It is naïve, though, to think that there will be a cogent, comprehensive approach of the Western community as a whole. For one thing, the West is not of one mind, *vide* the present profound differences between the US and European states in their strategic approach to security even after the more or less conciliatory Prague summit. For another, the knowledge about SEE in the West, not to mention public awareness of and interest in the problems of transition, is not impressive. *Though it is up to SEE governments to reform their own defences and defence organisations, they should continue to receive guidance such as the Membership Action Plan (MAP) procedure provides for about-to-be and hope-to-be NATO members. For 'maybe sometime' NATO members who nevertheless face similar reform challenges, their governments should explore how they might access similar assistance.*

Dimensions of Reform. Elites bear a special responsibility in times of change. In the SEE countries, the day-to-day struggle to survive and find employment is the ordinary citizen's priority: on other matters his (or her) emotions prevail over reasoned judgement. The political elites should recognize the difficulties and cleavages in society but, while representing their constituencies, at the same time strive to overcome antagonism and obstacles to finding reasoned policy solutions for the good of the community as a whole. They should certainly not fuel disputes by political games for short-term and selfish purposes. Pointing fingers is courting disaster. For creating a politics of inclusion, as Macedonia is striving to do, formal constitutional and legal arrangements are necessary, but not sufficient. These are only a first and relatively simple step. The democratic style of decision-making is an absolute and more difficult requirement. Without both mental and institutional change, genuine reform or transition will not succeed. Nor is reform the same as reshuffling responsibilities and roles: not in any area, and certainly not in the security sector generally and the defence sector particularly. Reform depends on the development and internalization of new concepts and their wise introduction into the specific, historically and culturally defined, circumstances of the state.

*In effecting reform, attention to accountability and transparency in decision-making – and ‘democratic-style civil-military relations’ – are imperative. There should be legislative provision for these, but what is mandated must be put into practice. Political elites bear a special responsibility for doing this, as well as for reshaping defence provision itself. It is they who decide whether challenges remain obstacles or become opportunities and whether the burdens of the past outweigh the promises of the future.*

Orientation and tempo of reform. If SEE countries wish to fulfil their European vocation there is no alternative to an international orientation for policy and planning. No single country can afford to plan and structure its defences to serve exclusively national security – or regime security – priorities much less follow that course at the same time as preparing co-operation and integration with NATO and/or the EU. Hard choices have to be made on continuation of the traditional priority of impregnable territorial defence. In this connection and others, lessons learned in Central Europe and also in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia can guide SEE countries in transition. Even though there is no general blueprint for defence reform, the nature of the reform requirements and processes are similar. Moreover, SEE countries should skip a complete ‘epoch’ of change with respect to the formal, democratic requirements of defence governance, and immediately be engaged in the quest for efficiency under political – civilian – leadership. One lesson learned is that it took the latest invitees to NATO too long before entering that stage.

*There is much that SEE countries can learn from others – in Central Europe and the neighbourhood itself – about reshaping defence provision within a ‘good governance’ framework. Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia should put their experience at the disposal of not only the region’s MAP states but also the ‘maybe sometime’ countries. (Bulgaria has much to offer on how to do integrated defence resources management, Romania on how to do executive-legislature relations, both know a lot about how to reduce, rationalize and restructure armed forces and give them an international rather than a heavily national orientation.)*

Defence Ministries. These are matters of organisation. Within defence ministries experience indicates that policy-making and strategic planning on the one hand, implementation and execution of plans on the other, should be strictly separated. This is *the* lesson, not only from the experience in Central Europe, but also from proven practice in the West. The professional, corporate interests of the armed forces and individual services, accumulated in an almighty General Staff – particularly in the tradition of the communist system – must be contained, even countered by the establishment of clear political direction and policy guidance plus recognition of resource constraints. The Chief of the General Staff is *adviser*, not decision-maker, and he implements political plans rather than promoting the military’s institutional priorities (or protecting the present national order of battle at all costs).

*A well-organised defence ministry has its own separation of powers: unambiguous subordination of the General Staff to democratically accountable (civilian) political direction and policy guidance; and of the military's priorities to the need for matching resources and commitments in transparent budgeting. Where there is any ambiguity about this, clarification is a 'must'.*

Armed Forces: human capital. Failure to get this 'right' can lead to distorted priorities, often to preoccupation with the nominal order of battle and the platforms count (warships, armour and artillery pieces, combat aircraft) or the bases count (naval facilities, cantonments and airfields). For countries reshaping their defences in distressed economies this is madness. Priority number one is or should be investment in human capital. For too long defence ministries and the armed forces in particular have focused on equipment and formations, the visible thing, and neglected investment in human capital, the vision thing. The SEE countries should not make the same mistake. One can take some risks by postponing acquisition of high-tech weapons and fielding fewer first-rate combat units. That can be compensated for by quality personnel in the slimline force. Human performance and the development of human capital can never be put at risk, however, and can never be compensated. Matters of war and peace are a human activity and also the full responsibility of military professionals, not tanks and missiles. Equipment and formations, however nice on parade, cannot compensate for wrong decisions and preparation for the wrong war, peacekeeping or peace-enforcing mission. The quality of human capital is a function of education and training. The contemporary requirements here are demanding. In the first place parochial, national and tactical thinking cannot be tolerated in command and staff posts in the new 'European space'. Training for the 'warrior' must be left to the uniformed military and specialist schools, but education must take place in the broader context of Security Sector Reform and use as many academic capacities as are available. Nor can education of line troops be narrowly technical. We live in an era of the 'strategic corporal' whose decisions may have enormous consequences. It is time to tell the top brass of the army that education cannot remain the sacred domain of the military academies. The importance of education and training cannot be overestimated, even if funding for it comes at the expense of equipment modernisation. This is because human interoperability is far more important than technical interoperability. The key success of NATO was and is integrated military planning as a concept and the structures and habits of co-operation developed over fifty years. If SEE states want their forces to be capable of functioning alongside NATO forces (or EU forces for that matter) they will have to be able to 'fit in' with others.

*Well-organised armed forces in today's (and tomorrow's) world must be 'modern'. However, this is less a matter of the number and sophistication of the weapon systems they can display, much more a matter of the quality of their human capital. This applies across the board: from personnel serving at international and national headquarters to*

*soldiers escorting monitors in Macedonia or kids to kindergarten anywhere. Education and training systems need to reflect this. Where they do not, change is necessary – indeed already overdue.*

## **CONCLUDING ESCADA**

These observations and recommendations differ in style and substance just as the Reports from which they emerged differ. Focused as its remit and deliberations were on options and prospects for new departures – or at least new emphases – in the institutional framework of intra-regional collaboration, the ‘security co-operation’ team has some firm ideas on *what* might be done and *by whom*. Given its wider terms of reference and the obligation to explore issues relating to reform of security and defence sector ‘arrangements’ in South-Eastern Europe, the ‘defence’ team has some no less firm ideas on *how* things should be done and *why*. Both perspectives have their place in prescriptions for security and defence in the neighbourhood.

In particular, both carry the stamp of ‘local ownership’ because they result from an exercise in which the material from which they come was contributed by South-East European specialists. Moreover, they demonstrate that Ambassador Fatos Tarifa was probably right when he said that ‘the challenges faced by all countries in the Balkans are not obstacles but opportunities’ and that there are ‘creative possibilities’. However, it is perhaps wise to add another reference. It is the title of a song which was once a universal hit in Greece: ‘This is the Balkans, this is not child’s play.’



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**APPENDIX A: STUDY GROUP MEMBERS**
**Study Group A**

Chair:

Co-ordinator:

Members:

**Extending Security Co-operation**

David Greenwood, United Kingdom

Sander Huisman, The Netherlands

Alfred Moisiu, Albania

Lublin Dilja, Albania

Branislav Lolic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Josip Brkic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ralitza Mateeva, Bulgaria

Todor Tagarev, Bulgaria

Mladen Andric, Croatia

Damir Grubisa, Croatia

Robertino Contev, Macedonia

Sasko Dimevski, Macedonia

Iulian Fota, Romania

Adrian Pop, Romania

Vladimir Veres, Serbia and Montenegro

Jovan Teokarevic, Serbia and Montenegro

Mitja Mocnik, Slovenia

Vinko Vegic, Slovenia

Guest:

Nicolae Chirtoaca, Moldova

**Study Group B**

Chair:

Co-ordinator:

Members:

**Defence Arrangements**

Peter Volten, The Netherlands

Jos Boonstra, The Netherlands

Zija Bahja, Albania

Arian Starova, Albania

Slavisa Sucur, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Enes Zukanovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Velizar Shalamanov, Bulgaria

Valeri Ratchev, Bulgaria

Zvonimir Mahecic, Croatia

Vlatko Cvrtila, Croatia

Zoran Ivanovski, Macedonia

Vladimir Gjoreski, Macedonia

Corneliu Dobritoiu, Romania

George Vlad Niculescu, Romania

Guests:

- Cornel Codita, Romania
- Zoran Jeftic, Serbia and Montenegro
- Miroslav Filipovic, Serbia and Montenegro
- Primož Šavc, Slovenia
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