

DCAF REGIONAL  
PROGRAMMES

**CIVILIANISATION  
OF THE DEFENCE  
MINISTRY**

A Functional Approach  
to a Modern Defence  
Institution

Valeri Ratchev



The Geneva Centre for  
the Democratic Control  
of Armed Forces

# **Civilianisation of the Defence Ministry**

**A Functional Approach to a Modern  
Defence Institution**

Valeri Ratchev

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control  
of Armed Forces  
(DCAF)  
[www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch)

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces is one of the world's leading institutions in the areas of security sector reform (SSR) and security sector governance (SSG).

DCAF provides in-country advisory support and practical assistance programmes, develops and promotes appropriate democratic norms at the international and national levels, advocates good practices and makes policy recommendations to ensure effective democratic governance of the security sector.

DCAF's partners include governments, parliaments, civil society, international organisations and the range of security sector actors such as police, judiciary, intelligence agencies, border security services and the military.

# **Civilianisation of the Defence Ministry**

**A Functional Approach to a Modern  
Defence Institution**

Valeri Ratchev

Geneva, 2011

Valeri Ratchev, *Civilianisation of the Defence Ministry: A Functional Approach to a Modern Defence Institution*, DCAF Regional Programmes Series # 7 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2011).

**DCAF Regional Programmes Series no. 7**

© Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2011

Executive publisher: Procon Ltd., <[www.procon.bg](http://www.procon.bg)>

Cover design: Angel Nedelchev

ISBN 978-92-9222-162-1

# PREFACE

I would like to congratulate Ambassador Ratchev on his lucid paper on civilian management of defence ministries. Civilian management structures, under a civilian minister of defence, are commonly accepted in democracies. Provided that civilians in defence ministries are not chosen from one caste or other interest group only, the civilian management structures will—along with functioning parliamentary, judicial and public oversight arrangements—not only contribute to an increased sense of accountability and transparency, but also to keeping the military within their constitutional role, while developing and managing the military as an effective national security tool designed to produce and provide a public good: defence. While managing important aspects of defence production professionally and at competitive prices, they also constitute an interface between the military and the public that makes things military not only palatable but also understandable to the taxpayer and voter and thus the provider of the defence budget. In many transition states in which DCAF works we do have to address not only the demilitarisation but also the civilianisation of defence governance as too often the military (and sometimes other security providing agencies) were given the right and leeway to develop their own commercial and even political interests within their societies, but without oversight by those societies.

Ambassador Ratchev has been a friend of DCAF for many years, and has almost always found the time and energy to advise and cooperate, in spite of a very busy work programme of his own. We are profoundly grateful for such dedication and friendship.

Philipp Fluri, Ph.D.  
Deputy Director DCAF

Geneva, January 2011



# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
Thesis .....	4
Functional Approach to Defence Institution Building.....	8
Why Civilianisation?.....	13
Basic Aspects of Civilian Control .....	18
Civilianisation as a Feature of Democratisation .....	24
Lean (Minimal) and Rich (Optimal) Forms of Civilianisation.....	27
'Two Cultures?' .....	30
Trade Unions .....	33
Civilianisation in Times of War .....	36
Types of Civilian Defence and Security Providers and Services.....	39
Lessons Learned .....	41
Conclusion .....	52
Further Reading .....	54
About the Author.....	55



## Introduction

There are different reasons for reforming defence institutions – mature democracies apply reforms mainly in order to adapt the defence assets to future conditions or to improve the performance of the defence system. Reforming a defence institution is also called ‘transformation’ or ‘optimisation,’ depending on the scope and depth of the measures.

Countries which follow political reforms in order to achieve democracy usually implement reorganisation measures in their defence sector. Security sector reform and defence institution building are among the most significant procedures for a democratic transformation and for achieving a sustainable progress. Security and defence, armed forces, secret services, civil-military relations and effective democratic control are all intertwined in a complex way. During that period, most people judge the advantages of democracy on the basis of their own democratic experience. It is obvious that their disappointment with the status quo will affect their trust in the democratic system itself. So, when defence reform and institution building are discussed as components of democratisation, their most important aspect is the perception about the irreversibility of that process. Former totalitarian states have been reluctant to discuss anything related to security, secrecy and public violence. These topics are among the most important ones in the security sector reform and defence institution building within the democratisation process.

Despite the undeniable importance of this issue, there are no well known comprehensive studies on defence ministries reform and their impact on the consolidation of democracy.<sup>1</sup> Most of the studies are focused on civil-military relations and reform of the armed forces. The defence institution is a complicated system, with specific organisational and behavioural traditions. Usually the ‘input’ and ‘output’ of this system are completely different from those of other ministries. The Ministry of Defence is by and large one of the most resource-consuming ministries within the Government of a transitional country. Through the defence budget a significant portion of the public revenue returns back to society for hardware and operations or goes abroad as a payment for imports. So, the analyses should start with recognising that citizens are eager to know where their children serve, where their money goes, and what kind of ‘security product’ they receive from the national defence.

---

<sup>1</sup> There are good texts and data mostly on the U.S. Department of Defense history and current status, but while some of them are relevant, the countries from East Europe and Central Eurasia face very different type of problems related to depolitisation, depar-tysation, defence effectiveness, transparency, and civil control.

This article focuses on the aspect of liberal-democratic norms in defence institution building. Using a select few experiences from Central and Eastern European countries, this paper presumes that democracies share their respective norms with each other and simultaneously 'export' and 'import' their influences. In response to demands from its partner countries, NATO, at its Istanbul Summit (2004), launched an initiative called *The Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building* (PAP-DIB). The original NATO document says that PAP-DIB has been launched in order for "allies and partners to commit themselves to dialogue, exchange of experience, and practical co-operation in pursuing objectives that are considered fundamental to the development of effective and democratically responsible defence institutions."<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> The 'Ten Commandments' of the programme include:

5.1. Develop effective and transparent arrangements for the democratic control of defence activities, including appropriate legislation and co-ordination arrangements setting out the legal and operational role and responsibilities of key state institutions in the Legislative and Executive branches of Government.

5.2. Develop effective and transparent procedures to promote civilian participation in developing defence and security policy, including participation of civilians in governmental defence institutions, cooperation with non-governmental organisations and arrangements to ensure appropriate public access to information on defence and security issues.

5.3. Develop effective and transparent legislative and judicial oversight of the defence sector, including appropriate arrangements to conduct due legal process.

5.4. Develop effective and transparent arrangements and procedures to assess security risks and national defence requirements; develop and maintain affordable and interoperable capabilities corresponding to these requirements and international commitments, including those in the framework of PfP.

5.5. Develop effective and transparent measures to optimise the management of defence ministries and agencies with responsibility for defence matters, and associated force structures, including procedures to promote inter-agency co-operation.

5.6. Develop effective and transparent arrangements and practices to ensure compliance with internationally accepted norms and practices established in the defence sector, including export controls on defence technology and military equipment.

5.7. Develop effective and transparent personnel structures and practices in the defence forces, including training and education, promotion of knowledge of international humanitarian law, arrangements for transparent promotion and career development, and for protection of the civil rights and freedoms of members of the armed forces.

In terms of ongoing reforms in all partner countries, this programme is highly valuable, timely, and boundless. Its value comes from the fact that it is focused on a combination of improving the governmental managerial capacity, strengthening civil society, and transforming the defence system. The initiative is also appropriate because in many cases political and institutional transformations take too much time, creating a platform for pseudo-reforms, populist and supposedly democratic rhetoric, and criminality and corruption networks. It is also boundless because it provides opportunities for institutions like *The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces* (DCAF) and many others to substantially take part in this process with their unique expertise, comprehensive contacts and significant resources. *Defence Institution Building* is a collection of opportunities for joint efforts, sharing ideas, and transferring the precious *know-how* for building efficient defence ministries and armed forces, capable of meeting the public demands (requests) for a secure, stable, and prosperous democratic life.

This paper seeks to contribute to the informed and constructive discussion on how the civilianisation of the defence ministry—one of the aspects of defence institution building—could be conceptualised and managed within the framework of an overall defence transformation. It offers a methodological approach and a collection of ideas, approaches and lessons learned in most of the Central and East European countries (CEE). However, despite certain similarities between the different cases, one should take into account the specificities of each country in terms of its history and situational particularities.<sup>3</sup>

---

5.8. Develop effective and transparent financial, planning, and resource allocation procedures in the defence area.

5.9. Develop effective, transparent and economically viable management of defence spending, taking into account macro-economic affordability and sustainability; develop methods and policies in order to cope with the socio-economic consequences of defence restructuring.

5.10. Develop effective and transparent arrangements to ensure effective international co-operation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters.

The document is available at [www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b040607e.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/b040607e.htm).

<sup>3</sup> More on the comparative study on opportunities of democratic norms transfer in the area of civil-military relations in: Albert Legault and Joel Socolsky, eds., *The Soldier and the State in the Post Cold War Era* (A special issue of *Queen's Quarterly* (2002), Royal Military College of Canada).

## Thesis

The debate on democratic defence institution is twofold: The state is concerned with the way in which a defence organisation can be transformed into an effective one, while civil society is interested in how to create a positive defence organisation. The way the militaries perform their duties and the way they are perceived by their own societies are questions of particular importance and of permanent political and public concern. The job of not only the soldiering but also the entire defence political establishment, expert and technician civilian staff has never been as hard as it is today. Factors that have determined success in the past cannot serve as an example for the future. Typical military institutional hierarchies, the political and military dependency established in order to make the institution less transparent and more anarchic, information sharing are all coming to an end. They will be replaced by efficient defence institutions where transforming strategic leadership, business practices for effective resource management, innovative organisational solutions and behaviour will produce the best possible military capabilities. This in turn will result in a more stable democratic development at home as well as stability and security abroad.

The paradigm of democratic defence is based on the 'holy trinity' of the modern civil-military relations:

- Civil *control* performed by an elected civilian political leadership, an independent judiciary and civil society institutions;
- Military *effectiveness* in politically prescribed missions;
- Defence *efficiency* through resource management (the best possible defence within a socially acceptable level of allocated resources).

Realistically, the development of each of the above-mentioned dimensions is followed by tensions within the 'trinity.' Finding a balance in democratic civil-military relations is important because what really matters for any state organisation in a democracy is the perception of the public. An organisation perceived as legitimate will get public and political support. Legitimacy is derived both from how authority is structured (control) and from performance (effectiveness and efficiency).

The ultimate defence institution building involves *perpetual* innovation – i.e., it may seem like a contradiction, but institutionalising change, at least to the greatest extent possible, does lead to long-term competitive advantages. More particularly, by improving defence institution in a democratic/effectiveness-like way, the country not only reduces politico-military risks over time, but also improves its ability to use 'hard' power—i.e., violence or the threat of violence—if needed. Therefore, democratic defence institution building is not a temporary act. It should be a long-term

strategy of permanent development, monitoring and improvement in order to keep the national defence and the military adequate to both internal political, economic, and societal developments and the global security environment.

### On Democratic Defence Institution Building

The *basic aim* of democratic defence institution building is to avoid creating and/or deepening the gap between society and its armed forces. Reasons for such a gap could be differences in the functional or social imperatives that have emerged between a dynamically developing and relatively liberal society on the one hand and a conservative, status quo military on the other. From this point of view, defence institution building is both a nation-wide and institution-centric process of democratization, optimisation and modernisation.

As a *model*, the defence organisation in a democratic state and liberal society should be a balanced institution under full civilian supremacy with realistically defined roles, missions and appropriate programmes for development. There should be a political-military leadership based on a clear division of responsibilities, professionalism, transparency and accountability.

A *Defence institution building process* requires involvement and support from a variety of actors, military and non-military, governmental and non-governmental. Although the defence minister and the professional military should be regarded as the key driving forces behind the reform process, the

#### Credible defence institution:

- *Up-to-date security and defence strategies*, which have been publicly debated and approved by the national parliament
- *Modern organisational structures*, both within defence and more widely within government
- *Credible resource-based plans*, controlled by the parliament on what is done and how resources are used
- *Appropriate military structures*, sized, trained and equipped to meet national and international obligations and objectives
- *Appropriate legislative underpinning* to support national plans and international objectives
- *Trained* military and civilian personnel ready to face new tasks
- *Accountability* to national parliaments and the public, both in the narrow, financial sense and more generally for security and defence operations
- *Adequate security arrangements and access to intelligence* to facilitate exchange of classified information within government and internationally
- *Public access to information* to ensure both transparency of national policies and security forces and to respond to public and media concern

transformation should not be solely in their hands. First and foremost, the role of the political authorities is crucial when it comes to taking (sometimes unpopular) decisions and mobilising the necessary support for a potentially lengthy and painful process. Therefore, what is needed is a political leadership, firmly committed to reform and determined to drive it forward. In order to be able to pursue a coherent and unified approach, there needs to be a sense of common enterprise within the governments and administrations of reform countries and among the various departments and ministries. However, public support is essential, too. In this context, the role of parliaments (political parties and individual members of parliament), the media, think tanks and security experts as well as the non-governmental organisations all need to be considered. These actors also take part in the broader security debate and can thus, directly or indirectly, influence the institution building process. No reform course can be successful if it relies solely on military expertise, structures and decision-makers and neglects the important contribution made by civilian actors.

*The essence of the interaction* between these actors derives from the need for a strong political management, based on a common view between politicians, society and professionals on the major issues of the vision, strategy and policy of this transformation process. The consensus on the requirements, objectives, approaches and the expected end result of the national defence reform is crucial for its success.<sup>4</sup> The policy of reforms becomes efficient only after the three parties—politicians, professionals, and society—manage to understand that the new national security sector and defence institution should be based on: 1) realistic judgment on the role and tasks of the organisations in the changed international and regional environment, 2) letting go of the paradigms of the past and putting an end to the illusions for the future, and 3) strict argumentation of all resources allocated for security and defence of homeland and participation in international missions.

### **On Civilians in Defence**

In democracies, there are at least three main reasons for having civilians in defence<sup>5</sup>:

---

<sup>4</sup> More than seven years have been necessary in Bulgaria to reach such a consensus and to pass from mimicry of reforms to fast and radical transformation. Jeffrey Simon called this period 'lost years' in "Bulgaria and NATO: 7 Lost Years," *Strategic Forum Paper # 142* (Washington, INSS, National Defense University, May 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Todor Tagarev wrote in "Civilians in Defense Ministries" in *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* (Summer 2008), that "There are two principal drivers for having civilians working within a defense establishment. The first is to ensure democratic control over de-

- As democratic representatives, authorised by the people to take political decisions on defence on behalf of the majority;
- As bearers of specific expertise, necessary to have better argued and effectively implemented decisions on comprehensive defence policy;
- To make the defence sector of national security policy less expensive in terms of the cost of personnel labour.

In democratic political systems, *the people, acting through their elected representatives, must decide on questions of vital national interest*, including those of security, peace and war. Civilians need to direct their nation's military and decide on issues of national defence not because they are necessarily more competent than military professionals, but precisely because they are responsible for making these decisions and remaining accountable for them. Civilian officials rely upon the military for expert advice on these matters and for carrying out political decisions. However, only the elected civilian leadership should make ultimate policy decisions – which the military then implements in its sphere. Civilian engagement in de-

#### The civilians in defence are:

- Governing civilian *political* leadership
- Civilians with a *particular expertise* – country referents, policy planners, contract managers, acquisition managers, lawyers, etc.
- Civilians in *supporting functions*, such as administrative support, management information systems support, communications, accounting, library and documentation services, engineering, etc.

Todor Tagarev, "Civilians in Defense Ministries," *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 7:2 (Summer 2008): 110–117.

fence matters ensures that a country's values, institutions, and policies are the free choices of the people rather than of the military and guarantees that defence management and exploration do not compromise basic democratic and human values.

Defence policy is a complicated, multifaceted and highly expensive component of the overall governmental policy. Decisions which are intended to provide military security for the state usually go far beyond simple 'defence issue.' They have an impact on the country's level of development in the industrial and service sectors, on technology and infrastructure, science and education, labour and social policy, political cohesion, etc. In distinction from professional military, civilians in defence

---

fense and armed forces; the second aims to increase effectiveness in the use of limited resources, both human and financial."

ask a wide range of questions and openly raise concerns. Their engagement, when it is rightly established, produces interesting alternatives and requires a spiral way of decision-making instead of the typical traditional military decision-making process. In this way the interests of society as a whole are actually presented and defended, and decisions can be taken in a political rather than military way.

For ministries wishing to achieve 'rational defence,' it is very important to realise that their personnel represent the largest portion of defence expenditures. Providing more money for the modernisation and training of defence ministries without decreasing the social status of the militaries is therefore crucial. One of the fastest ways to achieve results without increasing the defence budget is the improvement of the roles of civilians in all possible areas of defence policy including the use of armed forces. However, it is important to point out that the cost of civilians is lower than that of the military only from the point of view of the defence budget, rather than for society as a whole. The defence institution has the opportunity to hire civilians with specific education, skills, and experience it did not pay for. The ministries of defence and armed forces could use a large number of services that can be provided by the private sector or civilian personnel on contract bases – any function that can be provided by the private sector should not come from the government. But the defence institution is obliged to pay equal salaries to the military and civilians for one and the same work, risks, and conditions. There are many examples where civilians have established themselves as an integral part of the ministries of defence force team. Civilians perform essential duties in virtually every functional area of policy planning and implementation, combat support, and civil protection while also supporting state agencies as well as humanitarian missions at home and abroad.

### **Functional Approach to Defence Institution Building**

There is no doubt that each national defence institution has its unique legislative basis and structural-functional platform. However, as Thomas Bruneau points out, "The very existence of a Ministry of Defence is an important basic indicator of the overall situation of civil-military relations in a country. Although some ministries are but hollow shells with no power whatsoever, others have assumed increasingly important roles as catalysts and platforms in consolidating democratic civil-military relations."<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Thomas C. Bruneau, "Ministries of Defense and Democratic Civil-Military Relations," Center for Civil-Military Relations, Occasional Paper # 11 (Monterey, CA: Naval Post-graduate School, August 2001), p. 1.

The defence ministry, if examined through *organisational theory*, can be defined as a large-scale organisation of a highly complex nature. Harold Leavitt describes such organisations as a “lively set of interrelated systems designed to perform complicated tasks.”<sup>7</sup> The appropriate method of studying and designing such organisations is the so-called *structural-functionalism*. It is a largely applicable method in many social, political, architectural, engineering, and other areas. In the 1970s, political scientists Gabriel Almond and Bingham Powell introduced a structural functionalism approach to compare political systems. They argued that in order to understand a political system, it was necessary to understand not only its institutions (or structures), but also their respective functions. When applied to institution building, and particularly to the defence ministry, structural functionalism must be based on the ministerial *purpose and functions*.

The basic purpose of having a defence ministry in a country with an emerging democracy is to strengthen the democratic governance of the national defence and armed forces through solid and systematic political commitments, provision and an appropriate allocation of relevant to the defence needs resources as well as accountability for all aspects of defence policy. It is above all about stabilising democracy. What matters is the strengthening of democracy through democratic legislation, efficient governance and civil control. Equally important is the power of the emerging civil society through transparency and direct engagement of people and their elected representatives concerning crucial issues of war and peace, freedom and security, defence and armed forces. Nevertheless, current data on this topic shows that the functional approach has not been used as a *starting point* for the creation or transformation of ministries of defence in the entire CEE. In most cases, functionalism was implemented a long time after the initial defence reforms started. It only became a core theoretical background once countries started leaving their totalitarian past behind in order to build a modern democratic and effective society with defence and armed forces capable of meeting the security challenges of the new century. Defence policy is a complicated and highly expensive component of the overall governmental policy. It is important because its purpose is to defend national interest. ‘Military security’ for the state and the nation are terms often used to justify certain actions that go beyond ‘defence issues.’ These decisions have an impact on the development of the political sector and civil society, the industrial and service sectors, technology and infrastructure, science and education, labour and social policy. As a result, defence policy and defence

---

<sup>7</sup> Harold J. Leavitt, *Managerial Psychology* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1972), chapter 24.

decision-makers are the object of formal and informal influences from different political ideas, interest groups, and other national and international social influences.

The modern defence ministry should be capable of operating effectively within both state and international political systems, as well as co-ordinating national defence policy issues within the national security community, while producing adequate outcomes (armed forces, national defence preparations, war time deliberation and emergency plans, etc.) through all its activities in order to contribute to strengthening liberal democracy and civil society.

Following these requirements, it could be concluded that in a country with an emerging democracy, the defence ministry should be a balanced institution under full civilian supremacy, with realistically defined functions, a political-military leadership based on a clear division of responsibilities and mutual respect, civilian and military professionalism, real transparency and effective accountability. Depending on the political system of the country and its governmental formula ('council of ministers' or 'cabinet'), defence bureaucratic institution could be organised as 'Ministry of Defence' or 'Department of Defence.' Both of them have their strengths and weaknesses, usually rooted in the presidential or parliamentary democratic political systems and the relevant national military chain of command.

Combining the best features of each system, a hypothetical, 'ideal' defence institution' formula could be put forward. Such an organisation could include a powerful central staff; a planning, programming, and budgeting system with functional categories for specific service tasks; a human resource management system; a long-term force planning system; and—most importantly—a permanent organisation of civilian staff in the sectors of direction, expertise and technique.

If established under such a model, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) could be organised to perform five main functions: political, legal, administrative, managerial and leadership. Despite the fact that they would be analysed separately and in their own particularities, they would be conceptually integrated by their social and political nature.

In terms of the *political function*, it is important that the Ministry of Defence frames the relationship between democratically elected representatives of a society and the national military establishment. In this context, the defence ministry encompasses all aspects of relations between armed forces (as a political, so-

#### **Excellence in defence policy:**

- *Under civilian political directing and control*, and legislative and civilian oversight
- *Result oriented*, performance-based, effective and efficient
- *Accountable* on a governmental, ministerial and command level
- *Transparent* within a legally determined framework

cial, and economic institution) and society (as a political, economic, social, ethnic composition) to which they belong. The political function and position of the military—that is to say, their relationship with the institutions and patterns of political power in the concerned society—constitutes the heart of the civil-military relations of a country.<sup>8</sup>

The *executive* function of the Ministry of Defence entails policy-making in the government. The ministry advises the government on security and defence issues – it is first and foremost a department of the state through which the elected government issues instructions to the armed forces of the nation. Likewise, the armed forces must express their requirements for funds, legislation, and so forth, through this department.<sup>9</sup> It also ensures that the armed forces are transparent and accountable to the parliament and civil society.

The *legal function* of the defence ministry covers a variety of areas on national, international, organisational, functional, and operational levels in peacetime and wartime. It provides a legal basis for all national defence and armed forces development as well as military operations. The legal function should make sure that the defence institutions are in accordance with the democratic principles and regulations and, at the same time, provide maximum effectiveness in protecting national security with the help of military assets. Moreover, it should regulate both the limitations of citizens' rights and freedoms of uniformed and civilian people in defence institutions and their privileges that reflect the specifics of the professions in the defence sector.

The ministry is also determined to provide the armed forces with a *legitimation* of their activities through systematic work with the national parliament, the media and other civil institutions. It is necessary for the people in defence that their operations reflect the public demands in order for them to be confident.

---

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Cottey, Tim Edmunds, and Anthony Forster, *Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Central and Eastern Europe: A Framework for Understanding Civil-Military Relations in Post-Communist Europe*, Working Paper 1/99, delivered by a research project in the Economic and Social Research Council's "One Europe or Several?" Programme, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Michael D. Hobkirk, *The Politics of Defence Budgeting: A Study of Organizations and Resource Allocation in the United Kingdom and the United States* (Basingstoke: Macmillan/Royal United Services Institute, 1984), p. 117-120.

The *administrative function* of the defence ministry is oriented towards both the national administrative system and the armed forces. The ministry is the administrative headquarters for all issues related to the national mobilisation system and other war time preparations as well as for the military and civilian personnel. The institutional administrative system should be designed to implement the political decisions taken by the minister, government, and parliament or by the head of state in charge of the national defence and armed forces.

The aim of the *managerial function* is to optimize the effectiveness in the use of financial, human, and material resources provided for defence and to increase the value for money by making improvements in the efficiency of the key processes for delivering military capability. Introducing elements of business management in the defence system is a completely new process for CEE countries. Transparent business practices need to be put into place, especially ones relating to budget, human resources, infrastructure, and acquisition. This includes means of oversight and audit, which are acceptable to all concerned parties – armed forces, government, parliament, and society. Firstly, it is important to understand that using business skills could significantly improve the effectiveness when using defence resources. Secondly, it is crucial to identify which precise areas of defence are appropriate for which types of management. Thirdly, the right people and working environment for effective management need to be prepared.

The aim of the *leadership function* is mainly to guarantee to society but also to potential enemies, that the country has an effective institution capable of successfully managing preparatory, preventive, pre-emptive, and rapid response defence activities and military operations. The successful identification, development,

#### Four pillars of defence institution:

- *Governance of defence* connects defence institution with the government, society and the international community and at the same time provides defence institution with political guidance, planning assumptions, and performs civil control and political leadership.
- *Management in defence* is mainly focused on resource management and institutional administrative performance but it also connects the defence institution with private equipment and service providers.
- *Command and control* at this level is addressed to the overall national military chain of command.
- *Strategic leadership* is aimed at motivating both the civilian and military staff to perform their duties in the best way possible in order to meet the public and international demands from the country's defence policy.

and deployment of senior strategic leaders are essential to addressing the aims of defence transformation and strategic development.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, the implementation of the functional approach and the modernisation of a defence ministry is not an easy task. Firstly, it requires an understanding on the national level about the way in which the state administration should run. Secondly, implementation will require a critical evaluation of its own experience – there are many examples of controversial reforms as well as rational solutions. Thirdly, the institutional intellectuals should identify scientific and practical approaches, methodologies and techniques which will help find the best solutions in accordance with specific circumstances of the national defence reform – because of course there are no ‘ready-to-use’ models or coherent theories in the area of defence reform.

### **Why Civilianisation?**

It is obvious that the implementation of all above-mentioned functions requires a combination of civilian, military, political, administrative, leadership and business expertise. In a mature democratic country, the militaries alone cannot be prepared for each ministerial duty. It would be too expensive to prepare uniformed people and provide them with specific career opportunities for every non-combat related ministerial occupation. The development of a modern defence ministry requires a significant number of well-prepared and highly motivated civilian staff, on political, senior administrative and expert levels. Therefore, the ‘civilianisation’ of defence institution is not just a temporary trend. It is a precondition and should constitute an environment for creating an effective defence policy and an optimal resource management, as well as strengthening civil control.

However, it should be emphasised that the employment of civilians by the CEE military has not been widespread. In contrast, the use of civilians for national defence has been common in the history of American defence. The huge amount of civilians serving for the U.S. military in Afghanistan and Iraq is a continuation of this trend.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Loren E. Appelbaum and Matthew J. Paese, “What Senior Leaders Do: The Nine Roles of Strategic Leadership,” White Paper (Pittsburg: Development Dimensions International, Inc.); [www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/white-papers/WhatSeniorLeadersDoTheNineRoles\\_wp\\_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.ddiworld.com/DDIWorld/media/white-papers/WhatSeniorLeadersDoTheNineRoles_wp_ddi.pdf?ext=.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Ryan D. Kelty, “Military Outsourcing: A Case Study of the Effects of Civilianization on Sailors’ Retention Intentions,” Paper presented to the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces & Society Biennial meeting, Chicago, October 21-23, 2005 (United

The use of civilians is best understood as a continuous variable that ebbs and flows with the socio-political changes within and among states. Indeed, the context for the current qualitative and quantitative shift in employing civilians by the CEE military was set by the convergence of major forces that appeared simultaneously in the early 1990s. The end of the Cold war, the dissolution of the communist political system and the Warsaw Pact were followed by a ubiquitous striving for democracy. These events were accompanied by a decrease in interest for the military profession, a rapid downsizing of defence expenditures and an important change in modern combat, including the participation of civilians in hostilities, armed civilians and human shields, counterterrorism, computer network attacks, and so on. As these trends are universal, every government in the CEE is increasingly civilianising its defence sector as a workforce management strategy.

By definition, 'civilianisation' in the defence sector<sup>12</sup> means a transfer of control and/or a selected number and type of working positions from military to civilian personnel. The presumption is that the authorities that control the national military and the positions in defence organisation were initially aimed at uniformed staff only. Respectively, the national defence decision making system, the set of laws related to the defence and military (or only one 'defence law'), the social and labour systems have been designed to serve predominantly the

#### **Examples of functions carried out by the defence ministry:**

- Strategic analysis, research and development of documents
- Development of long-term policy including future strategic concepts and doctrines, and capabilities
- Perspective armaments policy planning and R&D
- Planning, programming, and budgeting and their implementation
- Policy planning and management at a strategic level
- Emergency planning and crisis management at a strategic level
- Defence co-operation with allied and partner countries and arms control
- Human resources management
- Public relations and civil-military operations
- Legal and organisational development
- Internal assesment and audit
- Administration

---

States Military Academy, Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership, 2005), p.5.

<sup>12</sup> The same term is in use also to describe similar processes in police and in more general context – about the governmental service.

military personnel. Therefore, civilianisation should not simply mean substituting a military man with a civilian for the same job position. It should be understood as an extremely large and complicated process of creating or transforming former military organisations into civilian-military institutions. The transformed institution should contribute to strengthening national security and national social cohesion, and to bettering the governance of the country by increasing the flexibility, effectiveness, and efficiency of the defence institution. The aim of this contribution is streamlining the uniformed professionals to focus on their core mission and functions.

The term 'demilitarisation' is also used in the context of civil-military relations but it is only correct when a country is in transition from a military dictatorship, martial law-based governance, or from a constitutionally prescribed military dominance. A classical example is the development of civil-military relations in Greece and Turkey. The two countries shared similar characteristics until the mid-1970s. However, their path of civil-military relations diverged considerably as soon as Greece's EU membership prospect became tangible. While in the Greek case, 'civilianisation' took place, Turkey had witnessed a mere 'demilitarisation' of its regime.<sup>13</sup>

However, the questions 'Why civilianisation?' or 'What can civilians do better than militaries?' are still legitimate. The possible set of answers could be found in the areas of political expedience, skills and knowledge relevance, cost-effectiveness, and social-psychological outcomes.

*Political expedience.* The political leadership of the defence institution is crucial for the democratic civil-military relations. The image of the minister of defence and his political appointees represents the connection between the security of society and its expectations in terms of defence on the one hand and the view of the military establishment on the other. In a policy context, the political leadership of defence is working simultaneously with the government and the senior military staff in order to:

- define the aims in the military aspect of security in accordance with the governmental political programme and set of priorities
- select a necessary strategy (or strategies) to accomplish those aims
- establish the necessary defence organisation, capable of implementing the chosen strategy

---

<sup>13</sup> Özkan Duman and Dimitris Tsarouhas, "'Civilianization' in Greece versus 'Demilitarization' in Turkey: A Comparative Study of Civil-Military Relations and the Impact of the European Union," *Armed Forces & Society* 32:3 (2006): 405–423.

- provide the relevant amount of resources needed to sustain the entire system.

The innovative and responsible (i.e. non-formal) performance of such a job requires three basic qualities for the political leadership of the defence ministry: a strong political authority within the government, the leading political party and throughout society; personal qualities to win the confidence of the military; the capacity to manage effectively the entire defence institution. Furthermore, politicians in defence have to obtain a visionary capacity, based on understanding national interests, a country's strategic environment, defence capabilities and public expectations.

There are a very few positive examples of former military people who became good political leaders of defence, but usually this occurs after ongoing wars or long-lasting crises when nations need radical decision-makers. Military people very rarely have a political and policy related education and usually lack practical experience. Normally, during their career, they have not been involved in politics nor have they directly engaged in social affairs. It could be too risky to count on a military man, even one with a distinguished career and a large public prestige, to run complicated defence politics in a liberal political and shaky international environment.

*Skills and knowledge relevance.* Contemporary defence ministerial work on expert level requires a lot of new and complicated skills and knowledge. Policy plan-

### Why civilians in defence:

- **Political directing and control**
  - Keep the military within its constitutional role
  - Save the military from politicization and partisanisation
  - Help the military become an effective national security tool
  - Provide the best military within reasonable resources
  - Improve the military ethos and morale while keeping societal integrity
  - Meet the political and public demands of transparency
  - Improve the legitimacy of the military service and civil-military relations
- **Civilian expertise and mentality in defence management**
  - Add newly emerging expertise to traditional military practices
  - Raise difficult questions
  - Introduce social, political, humanitarian, and resource aspects
  - 'Soften' the effect of hierarchy and subordination
  - Expand the positive sides of military ethos
  - Improve military-society relations
- **Save money from costly military positions**

ning and implementation is a mixture of office management capacity, political orientation, knowledge of how the government works, communication, public relations, computer networking skills, writing capacity, etc.

The permanently enhancing international engagements of modern military require knowledge on international relations, organisations and law, as well as the capacity to negotiate in different and frequently difficult formats with complicated judicial, financial, and public context. Additionally, language skills are an important asset.

Personnel policy, 'weapon systems life cycle' supervision, materiel and services supply, real property and military installations running and financial and budgeting processes requires specific academic education, unique practice in real institutional, social and market environment, and so on—generally speaking—a large number of management capacities.

Modern institutions, especially defence ministries, could not survive without effective and attractive public relations organised and performed by skilful experts with relevant education and practice. In many cases, their work also includes the running of the military television, newspapers, and radio programmes, including for contingents abroad.

These knowledge and skills are not subject to military education and training. Indeed, there are options to educate, for example, a uniformed officer on financial management in a civilian university. However, this will neither make him 'a modern financier' nor will it solve the problem with the financial management in defence ministry and armed forces. An overall problem with people with a specific knowledge is that the ministry should not only educate or hire them educated but also offer them a specific career path, an equal set of opportunities and privileges like those of combat commanders. It is correct to think that the defence ministry needs a concrete number of uniformed personnel with 'civilian' knowledge and skills (medical doctors, some lawyers, and financiers), but their positions and role should be carefully designed and well argued.

*Cost-effectiveness.* The most cited benefit in using civilians in jobs formerly held by military personnel is cost-effectiveness. Actually, most of the analyses of the civilianisation of defence have been focused predominantly on economic outcomes and have failed to confirm or refute its effectiveness as a management strategy. Usually, in the beginning of the process of civilianisation, the initial difference between the cost of civilian and uniformed persons occupying the same positions is very visible and this creates wrong impressions. In a long term frame, the principle of 'equal payment for equal job' (including equality of social privileges and benefits) makes the difference virtually insignificant.

Obviously, the cost-effectiveness of civilianisation should be found in a more global context of defence institution building – in civilianisation of sectors, privatisation of functions, and outsourcing of services. Having particular positions civilianised will not significantly change the character of defence expenditures. Nevertheless, rethinking the way the overall system of defence institution functions could produce deep and long lasting effects. Those who design defence transformation should look at civilianisation in two basic forms – civilian state servants in defence institution and civilian contractors to defence institution or its particular functions, missions and operations. However, in any case the armed forces, its ministerial headquarters included, should be designed as a ‘one army’ (in U.S., it is named ‘total force’).

It is also important to highlight that this aspect of civilianisation cannot produce effectiveness if the society and the market sector of economy are not developed enough to provide services and stocks on a competitive principle. Strategically designed defence transformation can play a significant role in creating new national economic sectors or niches.

*Socio-psychological outcomes.* When evaluating the effects of military civilianisation, one must take into consideration its socio-psychological outcomes. Virtually any defence organisation could be described as an ‘institutional iceberg.’ Its visible component consists of military units, combat hardware, logistic and infrastructure, as well as military management procedures (force generation model and enlisted service system included). The invisible parts are the so-called intellectual and social capital of the national defence.<sup>14</sup> Those are the elements of national defence capabilities that represent the impact of the core competencies, skills and experience as well as reputation, identity, civilian-military relationship, organisational climate, strategic (civilian and military) leadership, psychological comfortability. The introduction of civilians in a defence ‘iceberg’ helps strengthening its stability and productivity. The separation of defence policy, defence administration and defence management from the command and control and the military administration of armed forces demands sets up of a new profession – ‘civilian in defence.’

## **Basic Aspects of Civilian Control**

The issue of civilian control of defence derives from the civil-military relations theory and the basic division of labour between society and its military: society has decided to grant the armed forces with the monopoly on the use of a large range of

---

<sup>14</sup> Nick Jans and David Schmidtchen, *The Real C-Cubed: Culture, Careers and Climate and How They Affect Military Capability* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 2002).

lethal weapons in order to protect the interests of that society and to provide a “safety environment” for social life. The problem that could arise is that this monopoly on force endows the armed forces with at least the potential—though not necessarily the inclination—to dominate the other public institutions. Dominating does not necessarily mean implementing a military dictatorship inconsistent with the notion of liberal democracy. However, being dominant could also mean having undue influence in domestic, economic, and international state and public affairs. As Samuel Huntington pointed out, when democratisation and defence reforms in East Europe begun, civil-military relations presented “a dramatic exception to the lacklustre performance of [new] democracies in so many other areas.” For example, he states that in countries where the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is over \$1,000, coup attempts are not successful. In countries where the GDP is over \$3,000, they do not even occur.<sup>15</sup>

In countries where domestic political issues were decided in ‘a particular manner’ because of the influence of the military, it could be concluded that it exercised inappropriate influence in that society.<sup>16</sup> However, motives need to be looked at carefully. The potential for ‘soft’ military intervention does not necessarily derive from a hunger for power. Instead, it can be attributed to some of the highest ideals inherent in the military profession like providing stability where political institutions are weak or immature, saving a nation from itself, overcoming political deadlock, preventing chaos, continuing provision of essential services in the face of social disruption, etc.

Tangible civilian control of defence and armed forces in CEE countries today is a part of the transformational civil-military process. There cannot be an effective civilian control if security sector organisations are inefficient or lack political support.<sup>17</sup> Lay-offs in themselves do not make an organisation more efficient. The experience of transitional countries in the last dozen years confirms that missing strategies and programmes for modernisation and re-equipment, improvement of

---

<sup>15</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “Reforming Civil-Military Relations,” *Journal of Democracy* 6:4 (October 1995), p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> Interested readers could look at Hans Born, Philipp Fluri, and Andreas Johnsson, eds., *Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms, and Practices* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2003); and Valeri Ratchev, Chapter 5 in *Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control of the Security Sector*, ed. Plamen Pantev (Sofia: Rakovski Defense and Staff College, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Observation made in 1995 by Christopher Donnelly, then a Special adviser to NATO Secretary General for East European Affairs.

social status, education, and health could be explained with many regrets but these explanations provide neither national security and military professionalism, nor civil society confidence.

The basic aspects of the civilian control of the military could be analysed on four levels. The first reflects the political aspect of the control in its parliamentary, governmental and societal forms. The second focuses on the legitimisation and institutionalisation of civilian control, and includes the laws, ordinances, and regulatory acts adopted in the areas of defence and the armed forces, together with the organisational structures and control mechanisms. The third is socio-cultural, and is determined mostly by the political culture of the three elements of civil-military relations: the political elite, the military profession, and the citizenry.<sup>18</sup> The fourth is about the functional control of the ministry and includes the decision making process on the most important military activities.

The essence of the *political aspect* of the civilian control is the capacity of the democratic institutions (1) to effectively direct, develop and command (on the strategic level) the Armed forces<sup>19</sup> while (2) completely excluding military interference in the political processes (without neglecting military expertise). The roots of the political aspect of the civilian control derive from one of the basic tenets of representative democracy: the politicians who exercise political power are accountable to those who have elected them, and in whose name they formulate and implement policies. Only a democratically elected civilian authority can legitimately make policies, including a defence policy. The civilian executive authority has the power and the obligation to determine the size, type and composition of the armed forces; they must define concepts, present programmes, propose budgets, etc., for which they need a confirmation by the legislature. For this reason, in his book *Civilian Control of the Military*, Claude Welch argues that “the best measure of the strength and extent of civilian control of the military is governmental ability to alter the armed forces’ responsibilities.”<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Valeri Ratchev and Velichka Milina, “Civil-Military Relations and the Construction of Consolidated Democracy: The Case of Bulgaria,” *Connections: The Quarterly Journal*, 1:2 (April 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Simon Lunn in *The Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Principle and Practice* (Geneva: DCAF, 2003) expresses the thesis in the following way: “In looking at the role and responsibilities of the executive, there are three broad areas where political and military interaction is of particular interest: the question of command; the use of civilians; and the dividing line between military and political competence and responsibility.”

<sup>20</sup> Claude E. Welch, Jr., ed., *Civilian Control of the Military: Theory and Cases from Developing Countries* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976), pp. 313–27.

*Legitimation and institutionalisation* are a set of measures aimed at providing the national defence and armed forces with a normative and structural environment as well as instruments in order to operate effectively in a democratic, transparent, and accountable manner. It is a fact that well-established democracies and the institutions that they dominate (including NATO, EU, OSCE, OECD, and the World Bank) have been focusing less on elaborating norms of democratic control for themselves than on transitional, post-conflict and developing countries that they assist and support. Emerging democracies often lack the leverage, legitimacy, and institutional capacity to force the armed forces to accept effective civilian control. According to Owen Greene's observations, transitional countries usually derive them from the well established principles of democratic governance and democratic defence ministries among the OSCE, EU, Council of Europe, NATO and other important institutions and organisations. According to Greene, "there are some international agreements that include substantial norms and standards relating to democratic oversight and control of the security sector. These agreements are politically binding rather than legal treaties, but are nonetheless key reference points for OSCE countries."<sup>21</sup> Prominent amongst these is the OSCE *Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security* ('The Code'). It offers a framework approach, composed of five main substantial elements:

- The primacy of constitutional civilian power over military power
- The exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the personnel of armed forces
- The subjection of armed forces to international humanitarian law
- Transparency, publicity and restraint in defence and military expenditures
- The democratic use of armed forces in the performance of internal security missions.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> Owen Greene, "International Standards and Obligations: Norms and Criteria for Democratic Control in EU, OSCE and OECD" in *Towards Security Sector Reform in Post Cold War Europe: A Framework for Assessment*, ed. Wilhelm N. Germann and Timothy Edmunds (BICC-DCAF Series on Security Sector Governance and Conversion: Geneva, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> For a detailed analysis of the Code's standards on civilian control on defence see Victor-Yves Ghebali: *The Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security (3 December 1994). A Paragraph-by-paragraph Commentary on Sections VII and VIII (Democratic Control and use of Armed Forces)* (Geneva: DCAF, 2003).

### Operationalization of control aspects:

- **Legislative control and oversight**

- The Parliament decides about the declaration of war and peace
- The Parliament controls the Government, defence minister and the military through laws, budget and removes them from power, and exercises oversight through hearings and public debates
- Civil society institutions oversee defence policy

- **Political leadership**

- Civilian ministry of defence – subjective control
- The Government formulates defence policy
- Civilians take the most important military decisions

- **Resource control**

- The allocation of resources of all kinds is decided by the civilians
- The allocation follows public and transparent procedures
- All involved parties are responsible for the use of resources

- **Functional control**

- No military activities without political sanction
- Civilians determine the rules of engagement
- Civilians control the personnel policy
- They decide about the deployment of forces, garrisons, and missions abroad.

NATO on the other hand has also established a set of *standards*, rather than norms on civilian control in defence. In the 1995 'Study on NATO Enlargement' it says: "The Partnership for Peace (PfP) Program will assist partners to undertake the necessary defence management reforms, such as transparent national defence planning, resource allocation and budgeting, appropriate legislation and parliamentary and public accountability."<sup>23</sup>

The *socio-cultural aspect* of civilian control determines the level of effectiveness in implementing general principles of civil-military relations in each particular nation. The existence of modern laws and democratic institutions, however, is only a prerequisite for effective civilian control. If such control is to be achieved, it depends on the maturity of the political culture of the nation. *The political culture*

<sup>23</sup> *Study on NATO Enlargement* (NATO, September 1995), [www.nato.int/docu/basicxtxt/enl-9502.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxtxt/enl-9502.htm).

characterises the qualitative level at which political relations function. It includes political knowledge and values as well as ongoing patterns of political behaviour. One of the 'objective laws' to which its action is subjected to, is called 'inertial cultural effect.' This law suggests that each political generation inherits from the preceding one a certain amount of knowledge, values, and behavioural patterns. A period of transition will tend to see the endurance of values and behaviour patterns in civil-military relations that are typically totalitarian: the mono-logical nature of communication, the persistence of ideological fears, the tendency to place group (social, corporate, or political) interests above the national ones, etc. It is no accident that the specialised literature of the last several years emphasises on the pervasive cultural dimensions of the problems of democratic transition. It becomes increasingly obvious that the use of law, the process of adapting institutions and applying civil-military relations' practices from countries with enduring democratic cultures does not lead to an *automatic* restructuring in values, psychological attitudes, and political behaviour in post-totalitarian societies. The reason why this is so often the case lies in the specific features of the prevailing political culture in question and in the conditions which have an impact on its functioning.

The paradigm of the *functional aspect* of control is the following: no military activities should be carried out without political approval. It determines the level of operationalization of civil control and is very important especially in terms of the approval of rules of engagement during military operations (including in international missions), decisions about closing and opening military facilities (which usually has serious social and political impacts), personnel policy as a set of aims and principles and especially on the promotion of senior ranks, and the allocation of resources. A very important aspect of functional control is that the civilian minister determines the decision making process in the defence institution based on the fact that he is the subject of executive power in the ministry. It could influence the process in such a way that fits his personal experience and type of leadership.

Finding equilibrium in democratic civil-military relations is important for the effectiveness of civil control because the bottom-line for state organisations in a democracy is the public perception. If an organisation is perceived as legitimate, this translates into public/political support. Legitimacy is derived both from how authority is structured (control) and how performance is measured (effectiveness and efficiency). However, the exercise of civilian control of the military is particularly important in explaining and assessing the country's success or failure in democratisation.

## Civilianisation as a Feature of Democratisation

One of the most difficult challenges which new democracies are confronted with is that of reforming the defence sector in terms of democratisation. Societies with a totalitarian past were usually supervised in their daily lives. For them, 'democratisation' of the security sector often means less security on the national, state, and communal levels. Democracy requires openness of security- and defence-related information, transparency of defence planning, publicity of military operations in peacetime and discussion on all issues that affect the public life from the security point of view, while security and defence institutions prefer to work in secrecy or at least filtered transparency. The democratisation of former totalitarian societies must address also the more difficult task of transforming defence bureaucracies that once served dictatorial regimes. The establishment of a defence institution capable to do its work in the midst of a generally open political culture is a challenge for any democracy.<sup>24</sup>

From the point of view of a civil-military relation, democracy means that (1) citizens determine the purpose for which the military will be used, (2) the military are accountable to civilian authorities in exercising their assigned roles and missions, and (3) the military operate under the rule of law, determined by the democratically elected parliament.

From a structural point of view, the civilianisation of the defence institution is a central component of the two basic sub-sections of democratisation: (1) the transition towards democracy, and (2) the consolidation of democracy. As Maria Santos points out in a study of Brazilian transition, the literature on democratisation frequently relates different modes of transition to different perspectives for democratic consolidation. The cases of Bulgaria, the three Baltic states, the Czech Republic, Hungary, as well as many other countries represent a case of transition by a transfer of power from the former communist regime to the new democratic forces *through negotiation*. This kind of transition, initiated and controlled by the incumbent elites under the pressure of the masses, has contradictory consequences as far as the perspectives for democratic consolidation are concerned. On the one hand, it allows for a relatively peaceful process of democratic transition through compromises and negotiations. On the other hand, transition by negotiation offers different opportunities to break with the authoritarian legacies. This is because the authoritarian elites are in control of the situation and thus are able to include the

---

<sup>24</sup> Steven C. Boraz and Thomas C. Bruneau, "Democracy and Effectiveness," *Journal of Democracy* 17:3 (July 2006): 28–42.

issues of their old agenda in the transition negotiations.<sup>25</sup> One of the impacts of this characteristics is that the period of defence reforms in CEE countries took too long. The military lost its former role of the 'only saviour' of the nation (led by one ideology and political party) and this transformation consumed a lot of political and social energy.

The principal problems of civil-military relations during the transitional phase are the following: defining the competencies of the various elements within the civil-military relationship; setting out the context for their interdependence; creating conditions that will ensure political leadership of defence and the inability of the military to intervene in national politics. As the experience of many transition countries illustrates, during this period any action should be based around the depoliticisation of the military, the establishment of a political governing body capable of taking responsibilities for the key defence planning and policy decisions. It is equally important to introduce a new social status for the military which is adequate to both the specificity of their labour and the principles of building a democratic society. The aim is to completely replace the totalitarian political control of the military exercised by the party/state with sustainable principles and mechanisms that lead to democratic objective control of the armed forces. The desired result is the domination of the civil and political spheres over the former, largely autonomous and highly politicised professional military.

The consolidation of democracy is the point where the democratically elected political authorities and professional civilian servants take full responsibility for (defence) policy planning and implementation. It requires a set of security and defence related laws and regulations that determine the civilian, political and administrative supremacy and their responsibilities in providing transparency in defence plans and policy, reformed security sector and, particularly, defence institutions. These are necessary in order to be adequate to the security environment and national rational needs, to the establishment of a civilian service in defence, to the professionalisation of military and to the redefinition of their code of conduct and ethos.

During both sub-periods of the political transition, tensions of different type appear between the military and civilians of the rapidly democratising society. As Narcis Serra summarises, firstly, the military can act collectively to defend their social and professional privileges and interests. Secondly, they will define their importance for the nation and the resulting functional autonomy from the public pol-

---

<sup>25</sup> Maria Helena De Castro Santos, "Adapting to Democratic Politics: The Military in Post-Transition Brazil" (preliminary version) (Recife: 2000), p.2; <http://crab.rutgers.edu/~goertzel/brazmil.doc>.

icy. Thirdly, the values that determine clear military behaviour vary from the new set of civil society values and interests.<sup>26</sup> The popular consent is that the *defence organisation in a democratic state and liberal society* should be a balanced institution under full civilian supremacy with realistically defined roles, missions and appropriate programmes for development, with a political-military leadership based on a clear division of responsibilities, professionalism, transparency and accountability.

The introduction of civilians in a defence institution is a powerful instrument to eliminate possible tensions, to speed up the consolidation of the defence organisation, and to strengthen a country's civil society. In democracies, there are at least three main reasons for having civilians in defence:

- As democratic representatives, authorised by the people to take political decisions on defence on behalf of the majority;
- As managers of large organisations, including experts with specific knowledge and skills, who represent society and at the same time regulate violence,
- As representatives of specific values, ethos and mentalities aimed at influencing the traditional military psychological and behavioural patterns.

In a democratic political system, people, acting through their elected representatives, must decide on questions of important national interest, including those of security, peace and war. 'Civilians' must guide their nation's military and decide on issues concerning national defence. This is not because they are necessarily wiser than military professionals, but precisely because they are charged with the responsibility for making these decisions and remaining accountable for them.<sup>27</sup> Civilian officials rely upon the military for expert advice on these matters and for carrying out political decisions. Only the elected civilian leadership should make final policy decisions – which the military then implements in its sphere of competencies.

<sup>26</sup> Narcís Serra, "Controlling the Armed Forces in Democratic Transitions: Cases from Latin America," *Creating Community in the Americas*, No. 10 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, December 2002); [www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/CreatingCommunity10-Serra.pdf](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/CreatingCommunity10-Serra.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> By '*Civilians*' it should be understood the representatives of the *Civis*, the State, which the military owes to. The military are one of a number of instruments of the State, they have a duty of loyalty to the State, which employs them on behalf of the citizen and the taxpayer. In this context 'civil (society, state) control' is more correct term than 'civilian control' as well 'democratic control' could be very different from 'civilian control.'

Civilian engagement in defence matters guarantees that a country's values, institutions, and policies are the free choices of the citizens rather than the military and that defence management and exploration do not compromise basic democratic and human values.

Defence policy is a complicated, multi-faceted, and highly expensive component of governmental policy. Decisions with the aim to provide military security for the state and nation are usually expanded far beyond the borders of a concrete 'defence issue.' They have an impact on the country's level of development in the industrial and service sectors, technology and infrastructure, science and education, labour and social policy, political cohesion, etc. Civilian involvement in specific professional expertise, mentality, and culture in the defence decision-making and implementation process drives its content behind the visible 'purely military' considerations. Unlike the professional military, the civilians in defence ask questions and voice their concerns. Their engagement, when it is rightly established, produces alternatives and requires a spiral way of decision-making instead of the typical military way. In this way, the interests of society as a whole are actually represented and defended and the decisions are of political nature.

### **Lean (Minimal) and Rich (Optimal) Forms of Civilianisation**

The rationale for civilianisation derives not only from the democratisation paradigm but also from the effectiveness of the defence institution. In the United States, the process started with the Department of Defence Directive 1100.4 as of 1954, which encourages the defence ministry to use the minimum number of personnel to meet national security objectives and *to use civil service personnel whenever possible*.<sup>28</sup> Ever since, the common understanding is that the basic form of civilianisation in the defence institution is one in which civilians replace or displace military personnel. The presumption based on a 'cost-effectiveness' estimate is that the civilian staff is always less expensive than the military personnel and can occupy former military positions without decreasing the efficiency of the defence system.

It is obvious that the minimum level of civilianisation of the defence ministry includes a civilian politician as a defence minister and his cabinet of political appointees. The minister is responsible for keeping the militaries within their constitutional role, developing and conducting the military as an effective national security tool, providing the best military within the reasonable resources the society could de-

---

<sup>28</sup> Susan M. Gates and Albert A. Robbert, *Comparing the Costs of DoD Military and Civil Service Personnel*, RAND Monograph Report (RAND Corporation, 1998); [www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph\\_reports/2009/MR980.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2009/MR980.pdf).

liver, improving the legitimacy of the military service, strengthening the civil-military relations in order to keep them adequate to the democratic maturity of the society, and finally offering politicians and the public transparency on defence preparations and activities. Performing such a mission requires support which can hardly be provided by the military personnel alone. In order to cope with his democratic responsibilities, the minister has two options: 1) establishing a large cabinet of civilian advisers and supporting staff or 2) introducing civilians on a comprehensive basis into the structures of the ministry.

The first option will establish the minimal level of civilianisation. This is a typical situation during transition towards democracy – usually defence reforms in former totalitarian countries start with such an approach. There are also cases where, based on the constitution, the military staffs have higher responsibilities than the defence ministry. Turkey is such an example: The Ministry of National Defence of Turkey executes policies and programs determined by the chief of the General Staff with respect to the provision of weapons and equipment, logistical needs, and other services such as health care, construction, infrastructure, finance and auditing. The ministry also compiles, coordinates, and steers the annual budget request through the National Assembly. It is composed of several military officers and a general who exercises the duty of an undersecretary.

The second option is the most popular, especially for countries in transition. As a point of reference, some experts and official studies from such countries refer to the ratios of civilians to military personnel in the defence ministries of advanced countries. For example, the ratio of civilian officials to uniformed personnel in the U.S. Department of Defence is approximately 84 percent, whereas the French example shows 70 percent. The Republic of Korea had a plan to reach 71 percent of all positions available in the Ministry of National Defence by the year 2009. The aim in Ukraine is to have 80 percent civilians. Just transformed into 'ministry,' the former Self-Defence Agency of Japan retained almost 100 percent civilians. In order to reach this level, two problems must be resolved: the establishment of a 'civilian in defence' profession and the organisation of adequate education and training for the civilians.<sup>29</sup>

With the establishment of the so-called 'integrated ministry,' there have been increased opportunities to introduce civil servants in the strategic planning headquarters. The value of the civilians comes from the programme management of force development, the complicated character of contemporary military engage-

---

<sup>29</sup> For example, the UK civilian positions in defence can be viewed at <https://www.civilianjobs.mod.uk/JobSearch.aspx>, and at Canadian department of defence at [www.dndjobs.forces.gc.ca/index-eng.asp](http://www.dndjobs.forces.gc.ca/index-eng.asp).

ments and the need of a large number specific, usually civilian expertise. This option will determine a level of civilianisation above average. Its realisation requires joint civilian-military education and implementation of a concept that could be called 'integrated army.'

A specific form of civilianisation is represented by civilian defence contractors. This form is an illustration of the so-called 'public-private partnership' in defence or the concept of outsourcing (privatisation or 'from the shelf'). *Outsourcing* involves the transfer of functions performed by either the military or the civil service personnel to the private sector. This practice is no longer applicable only to the non-combat functions of defence ministries, as had been the case earlier. According to the General Accounting Office (GAO), the US DoD deployed over 14,000 civil service and contractor employees to theatre during the First Gulf War.<sup>30</sup> Today, defence contractors with the US military in Iraq are over 100 000. They provide vital services for combat forces like logistics and guarding, building military facilities and installations within areas of operations, etc. More than 770 civilian contractors working for American companies have died in Iraq, and more than 7760 contract workers have been injured, according to the U.S. Department of Labour.<sup>31</sup>

#### Areas where civilians are best suited:

- Human resource management;
- Weapons systems lifecycle management, including R&D
- Materiel supply and service management
- Real property and military installations management
- Financial management
- Administration

Usually, at every level of civilianisation, there are also contractors for technical support and, on the lowest level, for administrative assistance.

While it is important to look for ways that could benefit particular types of countries, it is equally important that the internal system of the country should not be disrupted. It is crucial to remember that defence is a very particular area of state governance. The degree to which the military can civilianise and retain its distinctive organisational identity remains to be seen. Neither the defence ministry nor the civilian state servants or civilian contractors should interfere with the overall hierarchical structure, the unity of command and the total subordination characteristics of

<sup>30</sup> United States General Accounting Office, "DoD Force Mix Issues: Converting Some Support Officer Positions to Civilian Status Could Save Money," Report to Congressional Committees GAO/NSIAD-97-15 (Washington, D.C.: GAO, October 23, 1996); [www.gao.gov/archive/1997/ns97015.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/archive/1997/ns97015.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> Information published by *Chicago Tribune* on March 26, 2007.

defence institution. Civilian employees are central to the military's strategy for increasing efficiency and effectiveness and to the national strategy for strengthening democracy. The way civilians are integrated into, and used by, the armed forces may affect the extent to which both strategies are successful.<sup>32</sup>

### **'Two Cultures?'**

When considering the construction of a defence institution, it is essential to take into account the particular culture, interests and priorities of any given country depending on their history, personal agenda, etc.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, if someone in charge of 'building a defence institution' fails to see the people behind the institutional charts, their attempt will most certainly be unsuccessful.

From an organisational point of view, defence systems should be seen as rationally functioning systems. The professional military and societies as a whole usually believe this. The idea is that the nation has a well-established defence organisation, which is steered by the best professionals, equipped with powerful weaponry, with the necessary resources at their disposal. This perception is mainly aimed at linking the state and the military together in the communal sense of, and demands for, security. The people in the system, both military and civilian, are expected to be rational actors that perform their duty efficiently.<sup>34</sup> In fact, as mentioned above, defence institutions operate in a large and complicated system. They could be summarised into two groups: an international social system and a national social system. The influence from that environment and the impact on defence-related decisions is quite significant; therefore it is unlikely that the defence institution could operate in a completely rational way.

It is much more realistic to believe that the defence institution operates rationally in a limited manner because of (1) its restricted capacity to assimilate so many inputs from the complicated environment and (2) because of the organisational interest (personal, institutional and 'state') of the people working in defence. Following Herbert Simon's explanation, defence institution could only come close to a

---

<sup>32</sup> Ryan D. Kelty, *Civilianization of the Military: Social-Psychological Effects of Integrating Civilians and Military Personnel*, Dissertation (Maryland, MD: College Park, University of Maryland, 2005).

<sup>33</sup> Thomas C. Bruneau, *Ministries of Defense and Democratic Civil-Military Relations*, Faculty Research Papers (Monterey, CA: Center for Civil-Military Relations, Naval Postgraduate School, August 2001).

<sup>34</sup> W. Richard Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems*, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1992); Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).

'bounded rationality.'<sup>35</sup> The psychological background of this reality is deeply rooted in the cultural attributes of the military and civilian personnel. "The profession of soldiering puts unique moral demands on military personnel. No other group in society is given as much freedom to define its own standards of conduct and talks so frequently and openly about the core values that define it."<sup>36</sup> Despite the differences from nation to nation, the basic military character includes loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honour, integrity and personal courage. The militaries, in general, are traditionally 'institutionalists.' Their behaviour is driven mainly by the 'institutional considerations' – they believe that the well-being of defence institution is the main source of their personal well-being. The best institution is the one they serve in. It should not be criticised, especially from outsiders and inside-civilians, and any radical innovations are not advised, especially those that have been initiated by outsiders and inside-civilians.

Civilians in a democratic and market driven economy are more loyal towards the person who pays their salary, than to the government who is performing controversial social-development policies; they work 'from-nine-to-five' because generations have fought for their labour rights; they are ready to question every authority, including those of the heroes from deadly missions; their sense of honour is strictly personalised and is not related to the institution; they are individualists because they do not believe in collective, but rather in personal success; personal courage is not an important attribute of their character. The civilians in defence, in general, are 'pragmatists.' They believe that the system can always be improved and managed in a better way because 'better' means more personal well-being, promotion, and prosperity. The best defence institution is one that is based on their ideas and managed according to their views.

Based on these considerations, certain stereotypes about the military and civilian cultures exist. They are more or less common throughout the Euro-Atlantic community.

The 'two cultures' matter also because a civilian-led defence ministry is significantly different from the past, when the military dominated ministries of defence. Such a civilian-controlled institution is expected to become more expertise-oriented because of the longer duration of stay of civilians in the ministry, more flexible and more acceptable of political advice than the military-led, thereby making the defence ministry more professional in policy-making and implementing policy. On the

---

<sup>35</sup> Herbert Alexander Simon, *Models of Man, Social, and Rational* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957). See also [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bounded\\_rationality](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bounded_rationality).

<sup>36</sup> Martin L. Cook, "Moral Foundations of Military Service," *Parameters* 30:1 (Spring 2000): 117-29.

	<b>Positive Stereotype</b>	<b>Negative Stereotype</b>
<b>Civilian culture</b>	Generous Creative Enterprising Innovative	Materialist Corrupt Self-indulgent Individualist
<b>Military culture</b>	Honest Hard-working Disciplined Loyal Intolerant Collectivist	Rigid Overly-cautious Suspicious Haughty Conservative Touchy

Source: Adopted from Paul Gronke, Peter D. Feaver, "Uncertain Confidence: Civilian and Military Attitudes about Civil-Military Relations" (Paper prepared for the Triangle Institute for Security Studies *Project on the Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society*), Table 6.

other hand, civilianisation can in some cases disrupt the defence policy-making process. This can happen when militaries are disappointed, end up leaving the defence institution and are then replaced by unprepared civilians, under weak regulations and guidance.

Within this brief explanation of an extremely complicated and comprehensive issue of the 'two cultures,' there is a fact that provides better understanding of the problem – in contrast to the national cultures, the organisational culture is not an issue of common values. National defence institutions do not operate according to typical national values. Rather, they tend to follow values received by their 'fathers' (political leaders, flag officers, and parliaments) and follow them in their roles and mission statement, legislation, organisation, and operational procedures. Civilian and military values are transferred into practice by the civilian and military leadership. In a successful defence institution, political and military leaders establish practices, which build bridges between civilians and the military. They do not wait until the maturity of the civil society erases the differences between the typical attributes of the civilian and military characters. It is quite the contrary – by building bridges through optimal structures and procedures, they manage to get the best results from the intellectual and moral aspects of both. As Geert Hofstede under-

lines, "differences in values should be understood, differences in practices should be resolved."<sup>37</sup>

## Trade Unions

In democratic societies, the state's social/political environment predetermines the potential for a 'unionisation' of all professions. The case of the Ministry of Defence is specific because both the military and the civilian professions do not have a clear status in comparison to others. This fact makes their eventual 'unionisation' debatable. However, 'unionisation' is deeply rooted in the basic forms of democratic civilian control of the military: objective or subjective control.

According to Art.11, part 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights "Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests." Part 2 of the same Article gives the state the right to establish "... restrictions on the exercise of these rights by members of the armed forces, of the police or of the administration of the state" without focusing on the equality between uniformed and civilian personnel.<sup>38</sup> The paradigm of this statement is that the people working for the national security should not be isolated from democratic society and must take part in bringing to reality those democratic values which they are protecting. However, the establishment of labour syndicates by military servants and civilian defence staff is still limited.

Samuel Huntington's 'objective civilian control' achieves its dominance by professionalising the military and making it a tool of the state.<sup>39</sup> The aim of this process is to politically 'sterilise' the military and maximize civilian control. The military is therefore viewed as distinct and separate not only from all other political power groups in society but also from other social groups. For that reason, in countries where the model of 'objective control' is implemented, a support for military unionisation is not likely to be found. Those who oppose unionisation of the military personnel once they recognise the existence of serious morale and labour problems within the armed services, assert that unionisation is not the proper device for achieving reform. Instead, they point out the activist role played by various military associations, many of them being quite powerful in pressurising responsible offi-

---

<sup>37</sup> Geert Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind: Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996), p. XX.

<sup>38</sup> *The European Convention on Human Rights* as it is presented at [www.hri.org/docs/ECHR50.html](http://www.hri.org/docs/ECHR50.html).

<sup>39</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State. The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1981).

cials. Such associations can speak for military personnel without operating as trade unions and thereby undermining the military chain of command, which is seen as basic to any well-organised and well functioning military force. They usually use the words 'union' and 'strike' interchangeably.

Morris Janowitz emphasizes that the 'subjective control' achieves its end by civilianising the military and thereby making the defence institution "a mirror of the state."<sup>40</sup> Subjective control of the military is common in liberal democracies and its proponents do not view behaviour in line with society at large and politicisation (but not partysation) of the military as a detrimental by-product. Due to the political nature of subjective control, military 'unionisation' for political purposes is certainly within the realm of possible outcomes. In this case, the military personnel are seen as government employees rather than as a separate, special category of service. This is especially true in a volunteer environment and military advertising that fosters the impression that the working conditions and benefits of military life are similar to those in civilian life. It is believed that increasing military unrest and discipline problems are becoming more frequent as a result of different factors such as limitations on pay, challenges to retirement pay, cutbacks in medical programs, reductions-in-force, etc.

Proponents of military unions particularly point to the European experience. Military unions are widespread and well developed in a number of European countries, especially in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, and Sweden. These countries have more than 60 soldier associations among them, with nearly 100 percent organisation in Scandinavia. The Swedish groups have full collective bargaining and the right to strike. Some European associations are even seeking occupational safety and health guidelines.<sup>41</sup>

Charles Moskos links the concepts of objective and subjective control to the belief that the military is being transformed from a 'profession' to an 'occupation.'<sup>42</sup> This evolution results from the decline of objective control and a move towards more subjective control of the military. The 'professional model' recognises the legitimacy of institutional values, and in the case of the military, requires raising the interests of the institution above that of the individual. The professional model rejects unionisation. The 'occupational model' gives priority to self-interests rather

---

<sup>40</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: Free Press, 1971).

<sup>41</sup> William T. Poole, "Unionization of the Military" (S.274 – S.997) *Issue Bulletin #12* (The Heritage Foundation, June 1977), p.3.

<sup>42</sup> Charles C. Moskos, "From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization," *Armed Forces and Society* 4:1 (June 1977): 41–50.

than organisation. Occupational motivations are accepted in the civilian sector and would apply to a subjectively controlled military.<sup>43</sup> The occupational model accepts unionisation as a means to achieve this end. In modern armies, the balance is somewhere between the two models – those formations that are focused on combat in peacetime are closer to the ‘professional model,’ the others from the logistic sector are considered more ‘occupational.’<sup>44</sup>

As mentioned in the previous chapter, civilians in defence institutions are mostly governed by market considerations. “They are paid by the hour and must be paid overtime for work beyond the eight-hour day or forty-hour week. Many civilians are unionised, which means that at least some of their work conditions are defined in union contracts monitored by union stewards.”<sup>45</sup> In most of the country-cases where civilian servants’ trade unions are established within defence institution, they have the power to negotiate directly with the Ministry of Labour or the relevant governmental administration on matters relating to pay and conditions for all government employees.

Secondly, the government employees’ organisations negotiate with the Ministry of Defence concerning additional salaries, working hours, work environment and health conditions, social security issues, extra duty obligations, which apply especially to the civilian personnel in the defence sector. According to a basic agreement for government employees, the civilian government employees’ organisations and their representatives have a right to make their voices heard and to exert influence in a range of matters which are important to personnel service. Usually the

---

<sup>43</sup> Tom Stites, *Military Unions: A Signpost on the Path of Subjective Control and Occupationalization of the Armed Forces* (Washington, D.C.: The Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, 1993), pp. 4-6.

<sup>44</sup> For example, in Sweden, the military union is directly involved in negotiating salary ranges for each rank, but individual salaries up to major are negotiated within those ranges at the local level by the individual and his/her commanding officer based on job requirements, personal qualifications and performance evaluations. Even separation allowances are negotiated, as are the number of trips home to see family. Personal salaries are renegotiated each year. For officers of a higher rank, negotiations are conducted with the Chief of Personnel at Armed Forces Headquarters (or his designated representative). The Supreme Commander decides the salaries of colonels and brigadiers, while the Government sets the salaries of general officers together with those of senior civil servants.

<sup>45</sup> Donald R. Baucom, *The Professional Soldier and the Warrior Spirit*, Student Thesis (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air War College, 1985); [www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/au-24/baucom.pdf](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/au-24/baucom.pdf).

civilian personnel organisations in the defence institution are subject to the same labour legislation that applies to other activities in the public sector and elsewhere.

However, in many cases there are exemptions for those civilian personnel that are engaged in maintaining combat readiness of the forces – prohibition of strikes, obligations to extra duty time in cases of training, emergency, or combat activities, etc. Consultative bodies are established between the political leadership of defence institution and trade unions (or syndicates). These are aimed at finding common agreements on restrictions and social benefits which enable the unionisation of civilian personnel. The result of their work is usually a collective labour agreement concluded between the principal of a defence ministry and the syndicate leadership. It is valid usually for a particular period and is renegotiated after a specified period.

Clearly, most managers involved in the transformation of the defence institution are faced with an emerging contradiction between the support of trade unionists for equal privileges and the benefits for the civilian personnel *vis-à-vis* the military. However, there are still some significant differences between the traditional military profession and the emerging 'civilian in defence' profession. A very impressive example is provided by the Canadian author David Pugliese. He published information on a national defence simulation exercise conducted within "Scenario 10 – Defence of North America Cyber Attack Variant." The scenario argues that "it is entirely plausible that a smaller, deliberate attack by a Defence Department employee, such as corrupting data through various means, might take place during labour negotiations."<sup>46</sup>

## **Civilianisation in Times of War**

Under the classical understanding of the term 'in times of war,' the civilianisation of a defence system is a comprehensive and complicated problem. Different nations have various solutions determined by a large list of factors: the peace time/war time personnel ratio, the size, and model of the 'total force,' the type of reserve and mobilisation components, the character of the national defence industry, etc. The driving concern is to provide more combat-trained personnel for the active forces while engaging civilians in supporting functions.

The basic problem is how to respond to the critical side of the civilianisation in times of war – civilians are at far greater risk of direct involvement in deadly conflict. Richard L. Dunn provides an essential overview of the problem from a legal,

---

<sup>46</sup> *The Ottawa Citizen*, 29 May 2005.

operational, and administrative point of view.<sup>47</sup> Dunn underlines that international law, specifically the Law of Armed Conflict (Law of War), and the Geneva Conventions dealing with prisoners of war (Geneva, III) and civilians on the battlefield (Geneva, IV) have profound implications for civilian personnel and contractors serving in defence system and near the conflict region. The Geneva Conventions deal primarily with international conflicts between nation states. However, some of their provisions deal with internal conflicts as well. This is a distinction worth noting, given the nature of 21<sup>st</sup> century warfare and especially with the recent experience in Iraq and Afghanistan where international conflicts evolved into insurgencies.

According to Dunn, properly identified civilians and contractors are non-combatants who may accompany military personnel in hostile situations but do not 'take up arms' (engage in combat). A civil servant or private contractor who engages in a combat without authorization becomes an illegal combatant. Their acts even constitute crimes (murder, assault, destruction of property, etc.) recognized in national and international courts. If captured, they are not entitled to the status of 'prisoner of war' and may be tried as criminals in the courts of the country capturing them. Civilians accompanying the force have traditionally been viewed as non-combatants subject to the provision that they may not 'take up arms.' This complicates the situation. Carrying a sidearm exclusively for the purposes of self-defence is allowed. However, the use of this weapon in an unauthorised manner, rather than its mere possession, becomes an act of illegality.

Another drawback is the proximity of civilian personnel to military personnel in combat situations. Actually, civilians who accompany military forces into operations lawfully may do so, but are likely to be considered as combatants by enemy – and thus could be subjected to an attack or a capture.

The post Cold War world has resulted in new problems and also new opportunities. The altercations of the Cold War and its massive military establishments have been winding down; instead, the world was preoccupied by 'small' wars, frozen conflicts, and weak states. The term 'in times of war' received a completely new content and context.

On the one hand, many of these states need outside help to maintain internal security. A total of 80% of the world's 20 poorest countries have suffered a major war in the past 15 years, and the human cost continues long after. 9 of the 10 countries with the world's highest child mortality rates have suffered from conflict in

---

<sup>47</sup> Richard L. Dunn, *Contractors in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century "Combat Zone"* (Center for Public Policy and Private Enterprise at the University of Maryland and The Naval Postgraduate School, April 2005). The paper has been prepared for presentation at the Second Annual Acquisition Research Symposium, Monterey, California, 18–19 May 2005.

recent years.<sup>48</sup> Clearly there is a permanently increasing need for intervention by the international community.

On the other hand, in developed countries, the private sector is becoming increasingly involved in a wide range of military activities at home and abroad. Governments and international organisations are turning to the private sector as a cost effective and politically safe way of procuring services which would once have been the exclusive area of the military. It is common for British, U.S., Russian, and Australian governments to outsource certain tasks that were previously undertaken by the armed forces. Reflecting this same line of thought, US *Training and Doctrine Pamphlet 525-53, Combat Service Support*, states that

Civilians in support of military operations: Department of Defense (DOD) civilian personnel, personnel from non-DOD organizations; civilian contractors such as those associated with the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP); and elements of host nation, allied, and coalition support organizations will provide an ever-increasing number of capabilities in support of future Army operations. Use of these support personnel will require their integration into the battle command environment and into the CSS framework, as well as mission training for the civilians involved.<sup>49</sup>

Corporate mercenaries are known by a variety of terms – private military companies, private security companies, military contractors or simply mercenaries. In many cases, there is a visible continuity between ‘military’ and ‘security’ functions of such businesses but there are some differences. Most of the ‘military’ organisations could perform some ‘security’ functions, but those that have been constructed as primarily ‘security’ organisations can provide more ‘military’ advice, consultancy, or service. Consequently, the preferred terms should be private military companies, or civilian defence contractors.

Over the last ten years, these companies have moved from the periphery of international politics into the corporate scenery, becoming a ‘normal’ part of the military sector. According to the U.S. Quadrennial Defense Review (2006) “Contractors and Civilians are critical to the 21<sup>st</sup> century war fighting capabilities.” They provide combat support, including training and intelligence provision, operational support, strategic planning and consultancy, technical assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and a wide range of security provision.

---

<sup>48</sup> UNDP, *International Cooperation at a Crossroads: Aid, Trade and Security in an Unequal World*, UNDP Human Development Report (New York: UNDP, 2005), Chapter 5.

<sup>49</sup> *Operational Concept, Combat Service Support*, TRADOC Pamphlet 525-53 (Fort Monroe, VA: Department of the Army, April 1997), Art. 2-2, p. C; [www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/p525-53.doc](http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/pams/p525-53.doc). CSS – Combat Service Support.

## Types of Civilian Defence and Security Providers and Services

	Types of providers		
	Private military companies		Private security companies
	Combat services	Defence and military support services	
<i>Types of services</i>	Deliberate and contingency planning Military training Military intelligence Offensive combat Combat conveying Combat traffic control	Overall defence consultancy Defence and military logistics and supply Military risk consulting Humanitarian aid protection Military sites and installations protection and defence Mine clearance as demining operations Recruiting volunteers Mentoring cadets Hardware and installations maintenance Combat area food and other life-services	Industrial/commercial site protection Embassy/mission protection VIP/close protection Surveillance and investigation Security risk assessment and analysis Prison interrogators

Source: Adapted from Anna Richards and Henry Smith, "Addressing the Role of Private Security Companies within Security Sector Reform Programmes," *Journal of Security Sector Management* 5:1 (May 2007): 34–48; [www.sronline.org/jofssm/issues/jofssm\\_0501\\_richards&smith.pdf?CFID=2427381&CFTOKEN=29465494](http://www.sronline.org/jofssm/issues/jofssm_0501_richards&smith.pdf?CFID=2427381&CFTOKEN=29465494).

The growing literature on civilian defence contractors presents a complex picture of this aspect of defence civilianisation (or privatisation). On the one hand, they help governments facing the challenge of international security by being more flexible and adaptable to different missions in a variety of environments as opposed to classical armed forces. Their capacity to hire people with a military back-

ground and with experience in different countries helps to provide the best possible combination of knowledge, skills, and experience. Contracts they operate upon could be much more flexible and adaptable than the intergovernmental agreements and mandates provided by authorised international organisations.

On the other hand, the rapid spread of such an approach to civilianisation/ privatisation of the former monopoly of state over the 'instruments of violence' raises serious issues that require a decisive international effort to put these emerging private armies under control. As Fred Schreier and Marina Caparini conclude "Some of the most contentious issues that arise from privatising the military and security sector concern the implications of their use for the battle space, contractual problems and dilemmas, their ambiguous legal status, their impact on civil-military relations, accountability, transparency, and human rights problems, issues of economic exploitation, vested interests in conflicts, and their use as proxies for governments."<sup>50</sup>

Although a private defence sector which is accountable can help speed up the transformation of armed forces, there are doubts about the fairness and legal conduct by private staff. Several research studies found that there had been a lag in updating policy and doctrine based on lessons learned and that on occasion a 'business as usual' approach has decreased the efficiency of contracted support and legal problems. Anna Richards and Henry Smith argue that "these problems are particularly apparent in countries where the rule of law and democratic governance is weak or where there is widespread armed violence."

Some of the traditional concerns with 'contractors on the battlefield' include the domestic and international legal status of civilian contractors in proximity to combat; the control of contractor operations and the discipline of contractor personnel; contractor security and force protection; and, the impact and cost effectiveness of contract support on combat operations.<sup>51</sup> The *International Committee of the Red Cross* has taken the position that even if contractors meet three of the four criteria for a legal combatant under the *Third Geneva Convention*, they fail to meet the requirement to be under a 'responsible command.'<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> Fred Schreier and Marina Caparini, *Privatising Security: Law, Practice and Governance of Private Military and Security Companies*, Occasional Paper #6 (Geneva: DCAF, March 2005), p.i.

<sup>51</sup> Richard L. Dunn, *Contractors Supporting Military Operations* (Maryland, MD: Center for Public Policy and Private Enterprise, University of Maryland, September 2006); [www.acquisitionresearch.org/\\_files/FY2006/UMD-CM-06-039.pdf](http://www.acquisitionresearch.org/_files/FY2006/UMD-CM-06-039.pdf).

<sup>52</sup> A privileged combatant is a person who takes a direct part in the hostilities of an armed conflict within the law of war and is someone who upon capture qualifies as a prisoner

The introduction of (national and international) private military companies in the defence planning, as well as in policy and military operations in times of crises and war seems to be a general trend among the armed forces of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The tendency towards ending the state's monopoly over the use of force is more or less mutually recognised. Opening the market for civilian military companies provokes serious legislative challenges. The problems outlined above highlight the considerable challenges raised by the use of private military companies, and the consequent need for practitioners to develop a comprehensive system aimed at establishing effective regulation and oversight. Otherwise, where the 'market' is left unregulated, the 'privatisation of war' may hinder rather than help defence transformation and particularly the issue of civilianisation of defence 'in times of war.'

## Lessons Learned

During the last two decades, Central and East European military have continually encountered a wide variety of civilians – a trend that will only increase during the ongoing 'Defence transformation' and 'Defence institution building.'<sup>53</sup> Civilians

---

of war under the Third Geneva Convention. An unlawful combatant is a civilian, such as a mercenary, who takes a direct part in the hostilities but who upon capture does not qualify for prisoner of war status.

To qualify for prisoner of war status persons waging war must have the following characteristics to be protected by the laws of war:

- (1) Members of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict,
- (2) or members of militias not under the command of the armed forces
  - that of being commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates;
  - that of having a fixed distinctive sign recognizable at a distance;
  - that of carrying arms openly;
  - that of conducting their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war,
- (3) or are members of regular armed forces who profess allegiance to a government or an authority not recognized by the Detaining Power,
- (4) or inhabitants of a non-occupied territory, who on the approach of the enemy spontaneously take up arms to resist the invading forces, without having had time to form themselves into regular armed units, provided they carry arms openly and respect the laws and customs of war.

<sup>53</sup> Daniel N. Nelson, "Civilians, The Military and Defense Planning in South East Europe: An Analysis of the Stability Pact Self-Assessment Studies," Chapter 9 in *Defense and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe Self-Assessment Studies: Regional Perspectives*, ed. Eden Cole, Timothy Donais and Philipp H. Fluri (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, November 2004), 125–35; available at [www.dcaf.ch/publications/epublications/Defense\\_SSG\\_SSE/D\\_18.pdf](http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/epublications/Defense_SSG_SSE/D_18.pdf).

have established themselves as an integral and vital part of the 'total force.' With distinction, they perform critical duties in virtually every functional area of policy planning and implementation, strategic planning, and even in combat support both at home and abroad.

The practice of civilianisation in East European countries is difficult to be evaluated because of the relatively short period of implementation and, unfortunately, a serious lack of systematic monitoring and analyses. However, some basic lessons could be learned from the transfer of functions performed by the military personnel to civil service personnel. These lessons can be useful for the design and implementation of the civilianisation process.

*A clear vision about the core functions of defence institution will provide a solid ground for functional justification, legalization, organization, and leadership*

In order to achieve a democratic regime, it is primordial to control issues of war and peace and the development of the military. This should be done by the democratically elected representatives; the realisation of the governmental defence policy to happen in an environment of democratic civil-military relations; the completion of control should lead toward both strengthening the civil society and defence capabilities. During the discussions on the evaluation criteria to estimate the status of civil-military relations in a country in a transition from totalitarian toward a democratic political regime, a set of common denominators has been used (it was called the Simon-Carnovale test, named after Jeffrey Simon and Marco Carnovale who examined the issue during the 90s):

- A constitutional—and legislative—regulation of the national military chain of command with clearly defined responsibilities and lines of communications;
- A clearly determined division of labour between the civilian and the military sphere within an integrated military staff in the Ministry of Defence and the unquestioned key role of a civilian defence minister;
- Systematic and detailed parliamentary oversight and control over defence budget, programmes and decisions to use military force in combat, peacekeeping or antiterrorist operations;
- Regulated but sufficient transparency of the defence policy and especially of reform plans, and major operations;
- Opportunities for civilians to receive a military-related education and to apply for jobs in the defence system, and for the military to obtain a civilian

knowledge and participate in educated and informed public debates on security, defence, and armed forces.

### *Introduction of a civilian defence minister*

The role of a civilian minister of defence and his cabinet is crucial for the democratisation concept of civilianisation of defence. The basic content of political control, performed by the governing civilian political leadership includes:

- Keeping the militaries within their constitutional role in case of a crisis and conflict, and avoiding any direct and indirect military manipulation of the political decision-making process;
- Preserving career militaries from politicalisation and partisanation, by focusing them on their professional duty;
- Developing and conducting the military as an effective national security tool, providing the best military within reasonable resources the society can deliver;
- Perfecting the military ethos and morale, keeping the societal integrity of the nation;
- Guaranteeing that the political and public demands of transparency on defence preparations and activities will be achieved (including secret files of former military intelligence and counter-intelligence services);
- Systematically improving the legitimacy of the military service and civil-military relations in order to keep them adequate to the democratic maturity of the society.

The best practice is if the governing civilian political leadership—the defence minister, his deputies and office advisers (called ‘political appointees’)—is organised in a political cabinet. Their primary role is to support the minister during the defence policy decision-making cycle and communicate defence policy to society and abroad. Between them the minister of defence should receive parliamentary approval while the deputy-ministers appointments require sanction by the prime minister.<sup>54</sup> Within the cabinet, different experts and advisers could work – but only

---

<sup>54</sup> For example in the U.S DoD Political Appointed Senate Confirmed Positions are: Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defence, Service Secretaries, Under Secretaries of Defence – 5, Deputy Under Secretaries of Defence – 4, Director Defence Research & Engineering, Assistant Secretaries of Defence, General Counsel of the Department of Defence, Inspector General of the Department of Defence, Director, Operational Test & Evaluation, Under Secretary of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Assistant

civilians and they should not perform any control or directing functions. However, the introduction of 'political appointees' requires precise legislative regulation.

In a few countries, there are political appointees within the administrative structure of the Ministry of Defence. Usually these are directors or chiefs of department of a critical importance for the formulation and implementation of defence policy. Normally their positions are explicitly mentioned in a normative document. This is necessary to avoid any eventual attempt for the politicisation of defence administration. In some cases, the legal norm states the number of employees who may be promoted on a political principle. A need of applying a flexible approach has been identified by different governments. Particular areas are those of NATO and EU relations, international military co-operation, programming, resource management, etc.

*All should properly understand the value of introducing civilian experts*

The largest numbers of civilians in defence institution are experts with a particular education and specific expertise. The key to achieving the greatest success from the transfer of functions performed by military to civilian personnel is if they are invited to work on appropriate positions in both defence policy departments (the Ministry of Defence) and strategic military staff (the General Staff or the Joint Staff). Civilians are helpful in the defence institution because they possess a specific mentality, different individual value systems and can add newly emerging expertise to the traditional military package of knowledge and skills. Depending on their cultural attitudes, they may introduce social, political, humanitarian, and resource considerations within both the policy planning and the strategic and operational design. While working on different levels and areas of defence, they can soften the negative effect of a strong hierarchy and subordination, introducing more alternative approaches and solutions. Very important for the vitality of the military system is that well educated civilians with a strong communal experience can have a positive influence on keeping the sensitive military ethos adequate to the morale of the nation. In this way, if the roles of the civilian experts are well described and organised, they can accomplish significant improvement of the military-society relations, such as improving the effectiveness of the defence institution.

---

Service Secretaries and General Counsels of the Services, Assistant to the Secretary on Nuclear and Chemical and Biological Defence Programs. (See U.S. code Title 10 – Armed Forces at [www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode10/usc\\_sup\\_01\\_10.html](http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/html/uscode10/usc_sup_01_10.html)).

There are different approaches to identifying those military positions that should/could be transferred to civilians. The Romanian Ministry of Defence applies the following criteria:<sup>55</sup>

- a) If the position requires military knowledge and experience, then a military will be nominated;
- b) If the position requires the fulfilment of some operational tasks, then a military will always be nominated;
- c) If the position requires fulfilment of some representational task, then a military will usually be nominated;
- d) If the position requires military expertise, but its attributes do not include any operational tasks, then a civilian with previous military experience might be nominated;
- e) A civilian can fill in the position if none of the criteria from the letters a)–d) apply.

Actually, the largest group of civilians in defence institution is one who works in administration, management information systems support, communications, accounting, library and documentation services, repair, transportation, storing, guarding, etc. Indeed, they have a very important role from both the cost-effectiveness point of view and for keeping the prestige of the people in uniforms.

*Any conflict between the civilian political appointees and the civilian permanent staff should be avoided*

Civilians in the defence ministry vary greatly. Since the original civil-military relations literature was concerned with one simple situation—elected civilian politicians vs. military hierarchies—there has been a tendency to overlook the very large number of different types of civilians involved in defence policy planning and implementation.

The fundamental distinction is between the elected political leadership and their personal advisers (who are also temporary political appointees), on the one hand, and the permanent cadre of civilian experts, on the other. As David Shutler notes, “There are, of course, many subtleties which complicate this dichotomy, including the use of contractual staff for policy advice, and different practices in the division

---

<sup>55</sup> As they were presented by Major Aurel Cobianu at a Seminar on the Civilianisation of the Ministry of Defence and Amending the Law on Defence of Armenia, Co-organised by George C. Marshall Center and the Ministry of Defence of Armenia (5–7 February 2007, Yerevan, Armenia).

of jobs between career officials and political appointees. But in essence, the difference is between those jobs which are dependent on the workings of the political process, including elections and changes of government, and those which follow the logic of a permanent administrative structure.”<sup>56</sup>

It is important to remember that the role, mission, functions, and motivation of the political appointees and civilian experts vary considerably. So far, the use of the generalising term ‘civilians in defence’ is correct only to distinguish all of them from the uniformed personnel. However, in the perception of the public mind, they form a coherent body. Society expects both civilian groups to work together in order to provide leadership and control over the national military. Therefore, this practice is necessary for the defence institution if any serious public frictions between the political leadership and the civilian staff are to be avoided.

### *Civilianisation is not a panacea for money saving*

From a cost-effectiveness point of view, the interest of civilianising defence institution stems from a fundamental assumption that civil service workers are less expensive than their military counterparts. Actually, civilianisation could produce cost savings in many cases, but not in all areas. The functional approach should lead any decision on transferring military positions to the civilian staff. As a rule, the separation of the civilian from the military expertise requires additional investments to train civilians on a variety of knowledge and skills. Moreover, experts from experienced countries warn that the budget-motivated civilianisation that saves short-term dollars is rarely without cost in the long-term, and ‘false economies’ are most often recognisable in retrospect.<sup>57</sup> A RAND research on the issues finds that policies designed to maximise cost savings can have a negative impact on military readiness and career-progression opportunities in both the military and civil service workforces.<sup>58</sup> As a general lesson, it could be argued that the civil service position assignments should be predicated on three considerations:

- Defence policy and armed forces requirements;
- Cost effectiveness within ‘life-cycle’ context (life-long education, compensations, insurances, and etc);
- ‘Civilians in defence’ professional career opportunities.

---

<sup>56</sup> David Chuter, “Understanding Security Sector Reform,” *Journal of Security Sector Management* 4:2 (April 2006): 1–21; [www.ssronline.org/jofssm/issues/jofssm\\_0402\\_chuter.pdf?CFID=2427381&CFTOKEN=29465494](http://www.ssronline.org/jofssm/issues/jofssm_0402_chuter.pdf?CFID=2427381&CFTOKEN=29465494).

<sup>57</sup> Suzanne Roberts, *Civilianizing Fleet Support* (CSC, 1991).

<sup>58</sup> Gates and Robbert, *Comparing the Costs of DoD Military and Civil Service Personnel*.

*Civilianisation should not be a source of friction between militaries and civilians*

Any socio-psychological outcomes must be considered when evaluating the effects of military civilianisation. As Ryan Kelty argues "Combining military personnel with civilians creates a bifurcated work setting resulting in differential structural and environmental job characteristic between service members and civilians."<sup>59</sup> The most negative attitudes the military people express when they work with, or are replaced by young, just graduated 'experts,' is the absence of real knowledge on how the defence system functions. From the civilian side, frictions appear from the psychological provocation against the traditional military conservatism and the resistance to innovations. However, the most important source of tensions derives from different payment for equal work. At the expert level, civilians usually receive much lower salary than their military counterparts, while at a senior level, the opposite case can occur.

Actually, such tensions are unavoidable. A psychological reaction of doubt and even mistrust by the military people is natural and should be expected. As mentioned above, it could be based on clashing values and professional honour, as well as more rational issues like fear of decreasing positions for the military, the transfer of most attractive positions to civilians, etc.

The objective thing to do should be to avoid possible frictions due to imprecise decisions on civilianising functions and positions. There are no essential arguments, for example, to have a completely civilian defence ministry or civilian directorates. Any artificial separation will produce long lasting doubts within the military even if civilianisation is for the good of the army and the country. In order to achieve a successful modern defence institution building, it is crucial to achieve an active cooperation between the army and the civilians. The ideal outcome is a synergy effect resulting from the functional approach which in turn will facilitate civilianisation. The principal approach to limit possible difficulties is a preliminary intensive training of the civilian personnel. Usually, any country that undertakes defence reforms lacks prepared civilian personnel. The best practice is to use international support to train civilians on how to run a defence system in democracy (general knowledge) and nationally based training (supported by foreign experts) on how to perform particular duties.

---

<sup>59</sup> Kelty, *Civilianization of the Military: Social-Psychological Effects of Integrating Civilians and Military Personnel*.

*Civilianisation is probably the best (and maybe the only) alternative to unacceptable reductions in armed forces operational capabilities*

One of the principal characteristics of the modern trends in force building is downsizing the personnel while strengthening the part of combat capabilities that comes from high-tech weaponry. Within the frame of this trend, the planners should consider the alternative to cut (usually) the supporting units (this way cutting functions) or to save the functions through civilianisation and outsourcing. The most powerful and active forces are applying such an approach. Actually, it is reasonable and applicable only with at least two preconditions that will provide cost-effective civilianisation: the country should have a well-developed service-market and the forces should be intensively engaged in a variety of operations.

*The civilian payment system should be integrated into the military system and both should be based on performance*

Equal payment and social benefits for the same job is one of the compulsory basic principles of civilianisation. Civilian service in defence should be governed by the same system of merit principles as the military – fairness, integrity, equal opportunity, protection against favouritism and be performance-based. One of the important lessons is that many regulations and procedures, designed to provide equality and motivation for the civilian staff make the human resource management system difficult to manage and slow to change. The negative impact in most cases is that the system does not make a difference between outstanding and poor civilian performers and the latter are not held accountable. Often the system is unresponsive and this leads to serious difficulties in the cases of restructuring the departmental units with mixed personnel arise. Surprisingly, a lesson learned is that changing the work assignments of the civilian staff is more difficult than for the military.

*The civilian personnel management system should provide the defence ministry with the best experts*

Despite the large and growing list of requirements (education, qualification, additional skills, practical experience, etc.) the personnel management system of the defence ministry should be 'fast' and flexible enough (instead of being complicated and slow) in order not to lose competent potential applicants. The defence ministry in terms of hiring civilian personnel is a labour market player. The process of civilianisation and the personnel management system should allow the ministry to be a more competitive and progressive employer in order to attract and select people from the national labour market with the necessary skills. It should be noted that

the mission and functions of the defence ministry are primordial. Past experience indicates that the guiding principles for establishing such a system should include at least:

- Focus on individual qualities, needs, and rights and identifying which protection should be guaranteed by law
- Respect people that are committed to the public service and national defence
- Performance-based pay and career development system
- Flexibility and clarity of personnel policy procedures
- Ensured accountability for the results of civilianisation and performance from civil servants
- Balanced system for civilian and military personnel, including for formations with special missions
- Competitive and cost effective system with national labour market criteria.

*Establishing permanent educational opportunities and requirements for both civilian and military personnel*

One of the most important obstacles which affect security sector reforms is the reluctance of professionals. This was to be expected and is completely natural. However, the professional elite should start applying lessons learned from the 'real world.' For example: the professional staff should create a new strategic culture, simultaneously with a new political culture for politicians, and a new democratic one for society. If one of them is missing, it will hinder the successful completion of successful reforms. In order to achieve this aim, a focused joint education and training is essential. Security and defence-related education should be among the first reforms. In addition to this, education is a vital part of the career path for both the military and civilians and therefore represents a significant and long-term investment of time and money. Finally, joint forms of training (on threat assessment, force planning, crisis management, arms control, etc.) for the civilian staff, uniformed personnel and the independent experts are also absolutely necessary.

*The introduction of business practices in the defence management is the best way to explore the capacity of civilians in defence*

The introduction of business practices in the defence sector is a very civilian-oriented issue. Without such a development, the fact of having civilians will probably not be worthwhile. Basically, there are two ways for bettering the results of defence policy:

- Through organising all the work in the defence ministry as a 'defence management.' In this case 'defence management' is an overall concept aimed at connecting the 'defence policy aims' with implementation 'outcomes.' This method was used when people believed that a defence institution could be managed like a 'business holding.' However, later on this approach proved to decrease the roles of the political and military leadership, while creating an unhealthy competition between the services for resources and the skilful 'CEO' of services, replacing the ministerial rational list of priorities with their own (usually based on specific organisational interests). Now, as an overall system, it exists in the Canadian Department of National Defence (Defence Management System) and in the Netherlands – as a philosophy.
- Through the introduction of business practices in the governance of the defence institution, many conceptualists and practitioners share the understanding that functionally the defence system should be based on four pillars: political visioning and directing, strategic command, strategic leadership and management. All of the defence organisation, legislation and regulations, education and training, and daily practices, as well as the civil society and parliamentary oversight should reflect them. In this case, 'management' is an application of business practices to specific functional areas of defence, for example in the following sectors: human resources management, financial management, real estate and military installations, weapon system life cycle management, material supply and services management, documentation and administrative procedures.

*Unionisation is necessary but its implementation should reflect the national traditions and the wisdom of civil society*

Actually, the unionisation of the civilian personnel should not be questioned – at least for those civilians that serve in the ministry's administrative and supporting structures. In many countries for those servants there is even more than one professional union (even if such a profession does not always exist) which is authorised by agreement to work within the defence ministry system. There are examples of non-restrictions, but also others where, for example, the right of labour strikes is forbidden for the civilian personnel in instances where the national security could be threatened by the union's activities.

It gets more complicated in the case where civilians are deployed within departments or units together with militaries. In such a case, the functionality of the unit will be determined by both the civilians and the military and any distinction

between them in terms of union rights could compromise the ability of the unit to fulfil its mission.

For example, there is one union for all Swedish military officers and two unions for the employees of the civilian defence. All military officers belong to the union and pay dues regardless of their rank, but actual involvement in union activities is less frequent among the high ranked personnel. The three unions play a significant role in the development of personnel policies, conditions of employment and pay, and they are regularly consulted on various issues. For example, the defence budget proposals are discussed with the unions before they are presented to the Government. On most personnel issues, the Supreme Commander and his subordinate commanders must negotiate and reach an agreement with the unions, while on other matters such as defence policy, unions play a consultative role only.

*The use of defence services 'from the shelf' should be introduced only after the national market has reached maturity*

One of the most widely practiced aspects of civilianisation of defence is through providing services 'from the shelf' of the public market. The experiences of most of the countries illustrate that the outsourcing approach could be effectively applied, only if there is a well-developed private sector. Outsourcing could be effective only if it is provided through real market contention. In the case of a lack of true choice, usually defence ministries pay higher prices to private companies than when the services are provided by a specialised military organisation. When several new NATO members began to host international military exercises, especially in US military bases and NATO headquarters, the competition on outsourcing military services became international. This raises the requirement to the national providers and helps to introduce NATO and other international standards of quality.

*Working with national and international private military companies should not be rushed*

There have been considerable comments by politicians, human rights organisations and parliamentary oversight bodies, much of them critical, concerning the cost of combat support contracting in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and elsewhere. The 'cost-effectiveness' criteria is important but not universal. The state monopoly over the 'instruments of violence' (at home AND abroad) is a common democratic feature. The 'civilianisation of combat' in practice means the 'privatisation of war.' From the point of view of democratic civil-military relations, 'delegation of combat responsibilities' to private firms really does raise issues of state author-

ity. This 'privatisation of authority' is a complicated approach with consequences, which are far from being clear.

One of the possible solutions to the problem on how to provide more combat services with less military personnel is a more flexible and innovative use of armed forces. The concept of 'one army' (or 'total force'), if modernised with adaptable public/private partnership solutions, could provide wider support capabilities for the entire spectrum in peacetime, wartime and armed forces missions.

## **Conclusion**

This paper aims to examine the experience and identify some good practices and lessons from the defence reforms in Central and East European countries. Its approach is based on understanding that despite the particularities of each country, national defence in a democratic political system is based on the 'holy trinity' of the modern civil-military relations:

- Military effectiveness in politically prescribed missions
- Civil control performed by elected civilian political leadership, independent judiciary and civil society's institutions
- Defence efficiency through resource management ('the best possible defence within a socially acceptable level of allocated resources').

Civilianisation of defence institution is not a modernism or a wish to simply introduce reforms. It is an essential contribution to improvement in each of these dimensions. Finding the equilibrium in democratic civil-military relations is important, especially for emerging democracies, because large and stable public support could be obtained only through legitimacy, decisive performance (effectiveness and efficiency), transparency and accountability. On all of these issues, carefully designed civilian engagement in defence can contribute successfully.

At the same time, combining military personnel and civilians creates a split work setting and results in different structural and environmental job characteristics between service members and civilians. The thinking behind this process is primarily focused on economic and democratisation outcomes and has failed to confirm or contest its effectiveness as a defence and force management strategy. There are also important socio-psychological outcomes that must be considered in evaluating the effects of military civilianisation.

If the country leadership is decisive in the process of implementing gradual reforms both in the civil-military relations and defence management concept, a series of questions arise as to the civilianisation process:

- What are the reasons for introducing civilians in defence?

- What are the expected results for the defence institution and society as a whole?
- What is the mid-term objective for the ideology of the defence institution? What are the basic roles and core functions of the defence institution?
- What type of supreme military headquarters is expected (General staff, Joint staff) and how will the relationship between minister and senior military be determined?
- Why should civilians be invited? In what sectors should they be employed?
- What types of civilians are expected – political appointees, experts, technicians?
- How should the civilian staff be selected? When, how and where should a specific education and training be provided?
- What role should the retired military personnel have?
- What should be done in order to establish coherent civilian-military teams in every department with varied personnel?
- Could a 'defence civilian' profession be envisaged?
- What kind of new legislation is needed?
- How can an equal salary be ensured between the military and civilian sectors in case they both have the same job?
- What motivation will be provided to civilians for serving in defence? What about their salary compared to other ministries?
- What about the duration of this process?

This paper will conclude by answering only the last question. Civilianisation and democratic defence institution building are *perpetual* innovations. There should be a strategy of permanent development through (1) a comprehensive programme, (2) systematic monitoring, and (3) live feedback in order to keep the national defence and the military satisfactory to both internal political, economic, and societal developments and the global, regional, and national security environment.

## Further Reading

Plamen Pantev, Valeri Ratchev, Todor Tagarev, and Viara Zaprianova, *Civil-Military Relations and Democratic Control of the Security Sector* (Sofia: G.S. Rakovsky Defense and Staff College, 2005)

<http://rdsc.md.government.bg/BG/Activities/Publication/Images/CMRHandbook.pdf>

Hans Born, Philipp Fluri, and Anders B. Johnsson, eds., *Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices*, Handbook for Parliamentarians No.5 (Geneva, Belgrade: IPU/DCAF, 2003)

[dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=25289](http://dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=25289).

Hari Bucur-Marcu, Philipp Fluri, and Todor Tagarev, eds., *Defence Management: An Introduction* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2009)

[www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=105077](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=105077)

Todor Tagarev, ed., *Building Integrity and Reducing Corruption in Defence: A Compendium of Best Practices* (Geneva: NATO/DCAF, 2010)

[www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=113983](http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Publication-Detail?lng=en&id=113983)

## About the Author

**VALERI RATCHEV** is currently Chief of the Political cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and he also serves as the Ambassador of Bulgaria to the Republic of Iraq.



Prior to assuming his diplomatic duties in 2005, Valeri Ratchev was a career officer. A retired Army Colonel, Valeri Ratchev has more than thirty years of operational, academic, and management experience. Upon retirement from active duty, he has served as Deputy Commandant of G.S. *Rakovsky* Defence and Staff College and Dean of National Security and Defence Faculty. Among his previous assignments, Valeri Ratchev was Deputy Director for Defence planning at the Ministry of Defence, Deputy Director of the National Security Studies Centre, editor-in-chief of the professional bi-monthly *Military Journal* and has served on variety positions as a commanding and staff officer in the Bulgarian armed forces.

His areas of expertise include international (South-East Europe, Black sea, Persian Gulf, trans-Atlantic) and national security (security sector reform, defence institution building) studies, civil-military relations analyses, crisis management methodology and techniques, use of scenario method in security studies and defence planning. On those issues he has published variety of books, articles and research reports and lectured in Bulgaria and abroad. He has also participated in a large number of international research projects, as well as training and advising programmes in Albania, Armenia, Indonesia, Macedonia, Moldova, Nepal, Pacific Islands and Ukraine.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be produced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces.

This publication is circulated subject to the condition that it shall not by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, sold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent publisher.

Valeri Ratchev, *Civilianisation of the Defence Ministry: A Functional Approach to a Modern Defence Institution*, DCAF Regional Programmes Series # 7 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2011).

DCAF Regional Programmes Series no. 7

Original version: English, Geneva, 2011

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces  
< [www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch) >  
P.O.Box 1360, CH-1211 Geneva 1, Switzerland

Cover Design: Angel Nedelchev

Format: 6.25 x 9

**ISBN 978-92-9222-162-1**



## **The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)**

DCAF was established in 2000 by the Swiss government. DCAF is an international foundation with 53 member states and the Canton of Geneva. DCAF's main divisions are Research, Operations and Special Programmes. The staff numbers over 70 employees from more than 30 countries. DCAF's head office is located in Geneva, Switzerland. The Centre also has permanent offices in Brussels, Ljubljana, Ramallah and Beirut.

The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces is one of the world's leading institutions in the areas of security sector reform and security sector governance. DCAF provides in-country advisory support and practical assistance programmes, develops and promotes appropriate democratic norms at the international and national levels, advocates good practices and conducts policy-related research to make recommendations to ensure effective democratic governance of the security sector.

DCAF's partners include governments, parliaments, civil society, international organisations and the range of security sector actors such as police, judiciary, intelligence agencies, border security services and the military.

**[www.dcaf.ch](http://www.dcaf.ch)**

ISBN 978-92-9222-162-1



9 789292 221621

**DCAF Regional Programmes Series no. 7**