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PhD Dissertation (co-tutelle)

**Transforming Defence: Examining NATO's Role in  
Institutional Changes of South Caucasus Countries**

**(A comparative Study of Armenia and Georgia)**

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Dissertation présentée en vue d'obtenir le titre de docteur en sciences politiques  
et sociales

Sous la direction du professeur Aude Merlin

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Année académique 2015-2016



## Aknowledgments

In this very moment of reaching the “final destination” I look back over the years spent with writing the doctoral thesis, and realize, how many individuals had played crucial role in supporting my research endeavor. Without saying much, the first portion of my gratitude goes to my supervisor Aude Merlin, who decisively shaped my initial view on the structure of the research project and greatly contributed to my attempts to distill key concepts that would guide me throughout the study. I would like to thank to Andreas Vasilache, my second supervisor in University of Bielefeld, for steady and meticulous support, which substantially eased the writing process and provided much more strength to key messages of the work. I thank Christian Olsson, a member of my jury, for providing targeted comments and suggestions. Big thanks go to Chiara Pierobon, Frederik Ponjart and Johan Robberecht for their inexhaustible capacity to listen, collect and deal with my requests, calls and questions related both to peculiarities of academic administration and that of local accommodation. A special word of gratitude is reserved for my friends and colleagues from ULB, Camille Kelbel, Marie - Catherine Wavreille and Elwin Reimink, who managed to turn every my stay in Brussels to an event full of fantastic memories. Finally, I thank my wife Tamuna for her infinite sense of support, endurance and encouragement that gave me additional strength and secured the completion of the work.

Bielefeld      04/09/2015

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# List of Acronyms

ACO	Allied Command Operations	MTEF	Medium/Mid Term Expenditure Forecast
AF	Armed Forces	NAC	North Atlantic Council
C3	Command Control and Communication	NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
CC	Conditionality Compliance	NDU	National Defence University
CS	Combat Support	NGC	NATO – Georgia Commission
CSS	Combat Service Support	NLO	NATO Liaison Office
CTF	Combined Task Force	NMS	National Military Strategy
DCAF	Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces	NPAR	NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report
DEEP	Defence Education Enhancement Program	NRF	NATO Response Force
DPPD	Defence Policy and Planning Division/Department	NSC	National Security Council
EAPC	Euro Atlantic Partnership Council	NSS	National Security Strategy
ENP	European Neighborhood Policy	OCC	Operational Capabilities Concept
EUCOM	European Command	OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
FMF	Foreign Military Financing	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
GAF	Georgian Armed Forces	PAP-DIB	Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building
GAO	Government Accountability Office	PASP	Political Affairs and Security Policy Division
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade	PDP	Professional Development Program
GNIC	Geo - NATO Interparl. Council	PG	Partnership Goal
GS	General Staff	PK brigade	Peace Keeping brigade
GTEP	Georgian Train and Equip Program	PPBS	Planning Programing and Budgeting System
HNS	Host Nation Support	RCI	Rational Choice Institutionalism
HRM	Human Resource Management	RRCF	Rapid Reaction Collective Force
ICG	International Crisis Group	SG	Secretary General
ID	Intensified Dialogue	SC	South Caucasus
IMET	International Military Education and Training	SDR	Strategic Defence Review
IMS	International Military Staff	SI	Sociological Institutionalism
IR	International Relations	SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
II	Intenrational Institution	SSR	Security Sector Reform
INSS	Institute for National Strategic Studies	SSG	Security Sector Governance
IO	International Organization	SSOP	Sustainment and Stability Operations Program
IS	International Staff	STANAG	Standardization Agreement
ISAB	International Security Advisory Board	TI	Transparency International
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force	UNM	United National Movement
KFOR	Kosovo Force	USAID	United State Agency for International Development
LL	Lessons Learned	WIF	Warsaw Initiative Fund
LCC	Life Cycle Cost/Calculation	WTO	World Trade Organization
MD	Military Doctrine		
MO	Multilateral Organization		
MOD	Ministry of Defence		



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# Chapter I: Introduction

## 1.1 The Puzzle

*“The Americans have given us their best shot...that will address our security needs...being one that does not provide security guarantees, no hard promises on NATO but a complex of programs and assistance wherein the hope is that the whole will appear to exceed the sum of the parts and convey the impression of security.”<sup>1</sup>*

Words of the former Latvian ambassador to the U.S. Ojans Kalnins are very illustrative and exemplify an intense struggle of motives, factors and considerations of those countries that decided to embark on the road of NATO – membership. The message became even more vivid, as Georgia became an enthusiastic aspirant to join the Alliance, and the events of the brief Russo - Georgian war in August 2008 once again heated up the debate about the role the Alliance could play for potential candidate countries internally and strategically. But it also questioned the effectiveness of defence reforms performed in Georgia under the NATO – mentorship, since neither the mode of action of the Georgian leadership nor the quality of combat performance of Georgian units against invading Russian force were regarded in the West as satisfactory.<sup>2</sup> Armenia did not have to go through the similar events full of violence, yet its relations to the West proved to be not less turbulent. It refused to sign the well – advanced Association Agreement with the European Union (EU) at Vilnius Summit (28 - 29 November 2013) and joined the Russian designed Customs Union in September short before the EU – Summit.<sup>3</sup> However, against all expectations, it did not abandon any existing mechanisms of cooperation with NATO. In contrary, despite its membership in the Russian

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<sup>1</sup> Ronald D. Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 162.

<sup>2</sup> For extensive picture of events surrounding the Russo – Georgian war see : Ronald D. Asmus, *A Little War That Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West* (Macmillan, 2010); Svante E Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia* (Routledge, 2014); Mikhail Barabanov, Vyacheslav Tseluiko, and Anton Lavrov, *Tanks of August*, Ruslan Pukhov (Ed.) (Moscow: Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, 2010), available at <http://www.cast.ru/eng/?id=386>; Heidi Tagliavini, “Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia,” September 2009, [http://echr.coe.int/Documents/HUDOC\\_38263\\_08\\_Annexes\\_ENG.pdf](http://echr.coe.int/Documents/HUDOC_38263_08_Annexes_ENG.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Socor, “European Union's Eastern Partnership Unwanted by Armenia, Inadequate to Azerbaijan,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume*, December 9, 2013, available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=41737&no\\_cache=1#.VcYN0fmqqko](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41737&no_cache=1#.VcYN0fmqqko).

led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) it continued to expand its ties to the Alliance and to its prominent members bilaterally. In both cases, the way countries designed and executed their policies towards the Alliance generated a generic question of NATO – relevance, which naturally asked for the motives of national behavior and the effectiveness of existing cooperation mechanisms, i.e. benefits expected and gained.

The strategic importance of NATO for neighboring countries has never been doubted. However, only after the radical change of the strategic environment in the early 1990s, did it truly assume its global importance, open the debate over the enlargement process and thus, become able to influence or define the policy objectives of countries embarked on close cooperation with the Alliance. Not long after the collapse of the Soviet Union all South Caucasus (SC) republics adopted a cooperative framework with the Alliance, with Armenia joining the IPAP (Individual Partnership Action Plan) in 2005 as the last.<sup>1</sup> Georgia was among the first nations to join the Partnership For Peace framework (PFP) in 1994, switched then to IPAP in 2004 and managed to receive the Intensified Dialogue (ID) in 2006.<sup>2</sup> Despite the failure to obtain the Membership Action Plan (MAP) at Bucharest Summit in 2008, Georgia has been the only country after Baltic States systematically pursuing its declared objective to become a full member of the alliance and adopted the Annual National Program (ANP) in 2008.<sup>3</sup> The intensity and density of the relationship between NATO and the defence institutions in Armenia and Georgia led to the creation of a complex set of similar issue - areas, where the national/domestic constituencies had been exposed to various modes of external institutional influence, and processes of integrative adaptation unfolded. Hence, the overview of the period stretching back to early millennium (from 2004 - to 2012) inevitably invites us to investigate the motives and benefits of national cooperative policy approaches, and formulate the basic question of, whether the results produced within the established defence cooperation frameworks indeed can be translated as effects of NATO's transformative (enforcing) power.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Iskanderyan, "NATO and Armenia: A Long Game of Complementarism," *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no. 5 (April 2009): 17; Nigel Chamberlain and Ian Davis, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Closer to War than Peace?," Briefing Paper (NATO Watch, September 11, 2012), 3, available at [http://www.natowatch.org/sites/default/files/briefing\\_paper\\_no.25\\_-\\_nato\\_in\\_the\\_south\\_caucasus.pdf](http://www.natowatch.org/sites/default/files/briefing_paper_no.25_-_nato_in_the_south_caucasus.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Jim Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications," CRS Report for Congress, RS22829 (Washington D.C., March 7, 2008), 1–2, available at <http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/103692.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Archil Gegeshidze, "Post-War Georgia: Resetting Euro-Atlantic Aspirations?," *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no. 5 (April 16, 2009): 7.

There is little doubt about NATO's ability to exert global influence, without which the international security architecture would be hard to imagine. Its capacity to influence ranges from the very material dimension of military power, to the elusive and intangible effects of functional professionalization. Its unifying power was recognized long before the fall of the Berlin Wall, motivating Karl Deutsch to assign to it the quality of the *Community* in the North-Atlantic area<sup>1</sup>. The paradigm of the Cold War heavily influenced the way academic scholarship reviewed the Alliance. Despite numerous and valuable attempts, the majority of academic contributions remained policy - driven. The discussion was subsumed by broader regional security studies and international relations (IR) that repeatedly raised the question of the Alliance's organizational purpose and durability, leaving other not less relevant questions unattended<sup>2</sup>. In this study we attempt to alleviate the existing scholarly deficit by focusing on a particular aspect of the NATO-analysis - the Alliance's capacity to influence its partner countries' policy-making (formulation and implementation) in the defence area and, by doing so, to ensure compliance with NATO's commonly agreed norms and standards. The cases of Georgia and Armenia serve here as the best examples of countries that share the general context of strong historical and societal similarity, are exposed to NATO-cooperation processes, yet starkly differ in political orientations, strategic actions and policy outcomes.

## 1.2 The Scholarly Debate and Existing Cleavages

NATO scholarship had been largely dominated by the classical divide between the *realist* and *constructivist* stands. Various theoretical approaches have been adopted to test the validity of NATO - related claims from both mainstream perspectives (Realist: Hyde-Price 2007; Running, 2005; Ratti, 2006; Duffield, 1995 and Constructivist: Schimmelfennig, 1998, 2003, 2005; Gheciu, 2005, Ciuta, 2002).<sup>3</sup> The key element of realist thought, the struggle for power and dominance as the rationale for state survival, had been seriously challenged after the collapse of the major communist foe – the Soviet Union. Realist authors regarded the

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<sup>1</sup> Karl W. et al. Deutsch, "Political Community and the North Atlantic Area," in *The European Union, Readings on the Theory and Practice of European Integration*, Third ed. by Brent F. Nelsen and Alexander Stubb (Boulder London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> Mark Webber and Adrian Hyde-Price, "Theorizing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization," in *Joint Sessions of Workshops* (Lisbon, 2009), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Mark Webber, "Theorizing NATO - More than a Defence Alliance?" (NATO at 60: Reflecting on the Past – Anticipating the Future Wednesday, Copenhagen, 2009), available at [http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Events/2009/M.\\_Webber\\_NATO\\_at\\_60\\_DIIS.pdf](http://subweb.diiis.dk/graphics/Events/2009/M._Webber_NATO_at_60_DIIS.pdf); Webber and Hyde-Price, "Theorizing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

government's action as a rational choice in the strategic environment of international politics.<sup>1</sup> Thus they questioned the durability and the very purpose of the preservation of key western military alliance - NATO, based on the assumption of diverging interests of the member-states in post Cold War era.<sup>2</sup> Joseph Grieco offered the *amended prisoners' dilemma* as the alternative view with a more penetrating analysis of the limitations of international cooperation while preserving the realist underpinning of state-behavior. He accurately depicts the complex relationship between the rank ordering of relative pay offs (gains) and the defined set of *sensitivity* factors, which leads him to conclude that states will refuse, limit or abandon cooperative commitments if they expect their relative gains to be disproportionately low.<sup>3</sup> Gradually the sociological foundation of global power politics and cooperation, so vehemently rejected before, found its cautious recognition within rationalist authors' claims. Though the principle of interest-based behavior remained unchanged, it appeared to be fully plausible now that while forming alliances, great powers would seek likeminded partners regardless their relative power, or cooperate and advance shared interests based on internal regime similarity.<sup>4</sup>

The proponents of another rationalist school that of *neoliberal institutionalism*, stressed the huge relevance of domestic constituencies, incentives and cost calculations while deciding for the particular mode of international behavior: compliance or defection. Correctly labeled by Michael McFaul as the "forgotten dimension", the international factors of domestic change became essential to establish causal linkages between domestic actors and external agents.<sup>5</sup> However, the focus on effects caused domestically by an external actor (institution/organization) and, conversely, the domestic sources of international behavior, enjoyed less attention in liberal scholarship, once applied to international security institutions and NATO in particular. The realm of economic cooperation had been intensively studied by neo-liberal scholars and generated brilliant analysis on conditionality and compliance on

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<sup>1</sup> Robert G. Kaufman, Review of 'Statecraft, Domestic Politics, and Foreign Policy Making: The El Chamizal Dispute' by Alan C. Lamborn and Stephen P. Mumme," *The Journal of Politics* 51, no. 3 (August 1989): 791.

<sup>2</sup> Mearsheimer 1990, Waltz 1993, Walt 1999, Kagan 2002. See more in Erik Voeten, "Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance," *The Journal of Politics* 66, no. 3 (August 2004): 733.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph M. Grieco, "Realist Theory and the Problem of International Cooperation: Analysis with an Amended Prisoner's Dilemma Model," *The Journal of Politics* 50, no. 3 (August 1988): 601-603.

<sup>4</sup> Kevin Sweeney and Paul Fritz, "Jumping on the Bandwagon: An Interest-Based Explanation for Great Power Alliances," *The Journal of Politics* 66, no. 2 (May 2004): 429-440.

<sup>5</sup> Michael McFaul, Amichai Magen, and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions: Concept Paper" (Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University., 2007), 6,7, available at [http://www.bangalured.net/world/Evaluating\\_International\\_Influences\\_-\\_Transitions\\_-\\_Concept\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.bangalured.net/world/Evaluating_International_Influences_-_Transitions_-_Concept_Paper.pdf).

examples of state cooperation within the GATT, WTO, and the EU. They rendered exceptionally good general propositions worthy of application in other functional areas. For instance, Andrew Moravcsik holds national governments exposed to the influence of domestic interest - groups and committed to respond to their demands via various mechanisms of representation (democratic, social etc.).<sup>1</sup> This aspect, among others, is also provided by Robert Putnam in his more developed system of the international political interplay (negotiations - two levels game), in which national executives are intensively involved to reach an international agreement. Born within this model, the conflict between internal and external (international) agendas poses a serious issue of political concern, deserving much more attention both theoretically and practically.

Unfortunately, literature on NATO and other security organizations lacks such devotion and the same degree of interest to domestic sources of state - behavior, largely keeping the main focus on the problems of intra - institutional coordination, institutional adaptation, and the durability of the Alliance.<sup>2</sup> Still, we are able to discern a common approach of institutionalist scholarship to security and military alliances. They are designed in a purposeful way “in part to regulate internal political dynamics”, but most importantly, they represent and serve as regimes, reflecting behavioral norms and expectations.<sup>3</sup> The neoliberal view encompassed by Robert Keohane (1984, 1988) and Oran Young (1986) regards nation-states as purposeful actors aimed at utility maximization that enter shared commitments to benefit in the long-term (incentive based).<sup>4</sup> The institutional approach became a valuable source of analysis due to the complexity of research questions that prerequisite the multidimensional nature of the research.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, we need the valuable insights of different scholarly mainstreams to discover perhaps, single arguments, categories or some analytical concepts that once applied in a coherent manner would result in a convincing explanation of a particular social and political phenomenon. To do so, we need to identify additional areas of the academic

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously: A Liberal Theory of International Politics,” *International Organization* 51, no. 04 (1997): 518.

<sup>2</sup> Celeste A. Wallander, “Institutional Assets and Adaptability: NATO after the Cold War,” *International Organization* 54, no. 4 (2000): 705–35; *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space*, Helga Haftendorn, Robert O. Keohane and Celeste A. Wallander (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Alexander Siedschlag, *NATO Meets the Post-Strategic Condition: Political Vicissitudes and Theoretical Puzzles in the Alliance’s First Wave of Adaptation, 1990-1997* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Andrew G. Long, Timothy Nordstrom, and Baek Kyeonghi, “Allying for Peace: Treaty Obligations and Conflict between Allies,” *The Journal of Politics* 69, no. 4 (November 2007): 103–104.

<sup>4</sup> *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, Powel W. Walter and Paul J. DiMaggio (Eds.) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 6–7, available at [www.stanford.edu/~woody/papers/dimaggioandpowell\\_intro.pdf](http://www.stanford.edu/~woody/papers/dimaggioandpowell_intro.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

literature, where a major correlation of similar factors (external influence and effects on national policy formation/implementation) can be observed, and valuable findings can be borrowed.

### **1.3 NATO – Enlargement: Identifying Linkages to Democratization Literature**

The notion of domestic constituencies, local interests and incentives as well as the very theoretical notion of “relative gains” (pay - offs) so familiar to neoliberal and rationalist mainstreams represent pretty much the core of the discussion in the democratization literature. The international dimension of cooperation is another pillar of the mentioned scholarship. As Robert Putnam aptly puts it, international commitments require domestic ratification, and this may be limited due to the democratic nature of the country and the need of the governments to secure electoral support.<sup>1</sup> In other words, as he continues, if international commitments and promises have been given without the proper consideration of preferences shared by domestic players, a significant backlash can be expected in a country enjoying the sufficient freedom of democracy. As clearly manifested here, a strong link between the notion of conditionality and compliance is the pivotal element of democratization studies, in particular in the EU-enlargement context. We don’t intend to list the universe of authors and their contributions to the topic. Yet we will briefly sketch out the general results of their studies relevant to defence and security sector to enhance the common understanding of processes that are integral to the policy of conditionality and to the focus of our study.

As the collapse of Soviet Union radically diminished the threat of a direct military confrontation with major foe, the importance of defence transformation and of the consolidation of other government institutions became a key precondition within the enlargement policy of the Alliance. The debate over enlarging the Alliance had from its very beginning the basic assumptions that new members could join the “club” and that a new conceptual foundation needed to be adopted.<sup>2</sup> The latter was desperately needed to justify the former and had covered many aspects of the Alliance’s performance: from the global ability to project and provide security and democratic stability to the narrow questions of military

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<sup>1</sup> Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (Summer 1988): 36–37.

<sup>2</sup> *Enlarging NATO: The National Debates*, Mattox A. Gale and Arthur R. Rachwald (eds.) (Boulder Colorado, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2001), 1.

effectiveness and combat interoperability with future member-state forces. Symptomatically, the low importance of military considerations behind the enlargement decision and the dominant role of the building a democratic community as the key mission among several driving rationales of enlargement gained growing momentum.<sup>1</sup> The concept would be based on a simple principle of basic reciprocity: on one hand NATO promises to take new members on board contingent on the implementation of reforms that would be relatively easy to verify via various inspections.<sup>2</sup> These arguments are very much in line with institutionalists' claim that international organizations in particular can be effective in spreading (democratic) norms and changing national preferences. The *Perry Principles* developed in 1995 by the U.S. administration epitomize the essence of the consensus reached already by the early nineties among allied nations, highlighting the critical importance of the civilian control of defence and security sectors as means to encourage candidate nation to democratic reforms.<sup>3</sup> A strong affinity to the claims of the democratic peace concept can't be overseen here. Furthermore, the supposed benefits of democratization turned to become an important "public justification of NATO enlargement".<sup>4</sup> An impressive number of authors advocated the principles of protecting democracies as the major justification for the NATO - expansion.<sup>5</sup> For that reason, interlocking extended cooperation processes to various democratization mechanisms became the key pillar of policy development towards potential members. Given this tendency, three basic "Goods" formulated by the German foreign minister Frank Walter Steinmeier in his Spiegel article (April 2, 2009) to determine the membership chance (good for candidate, good for the alliance and good for pan-European security) were often less relevant in light of the new role of NATO as the promoter of democratic values with the "the stringiest criteria" for membership, and democratic and military reform in particular.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from the heavy democratic pillar of the alliance, the transformation process of the country itself represents a unique framework for the theoretical analysis as well as for practical testing in terms of compliance with NATO requirements. The literature provides two

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<sup>1</sup> Sean Key, "NATO Enlargement: Policy, Process, and Implications," in *America's New Allies: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic in NATO*, Andrew A. Michta (ed.) (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 153.

<sup>2</sup> Dan Reiter, "Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy," *International Security* 25, no. 4 (Spring 2001): 52.

<sup>3</sup> Asmus, *Opening NATO's Door: How the Alliance Remade Itself for a New Era*, 147.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>5</sup> See the complete list in Jon C. Pevehouse, *Democracy from Above: Regional Organizations and Democratization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Wright, "Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (2009): 22, doi:10.1215/10474552-2009-012.



general directions of the debate on democratic transformation: the first is occupied with basic characteristics of democracy in transitional states, and the second with the question of practical arrangements that have been met in order to meet the set requirements. A brief familiarization with this subject leads to the observation that despite great efforts spent in defining factors key to transitioning to effective democracy, few findings are provided for the greater insight on the mechanisms of compliance, implicit to the notion of the democratic transition. A wide range of structural factors has been analyzed by Jurgen Moeller and Svend - Erik Skaaning to formulate the thickness and thinness of democracy.<sup>1</sup> Final charts containing the modernization indicators (BTI components), though very illustrative, proved to be less informative in terms of quality of democratic accomplishments.<sup>2</sup> A non-standard view on the prospects of the democratic change in post-communist countries had been presented by Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, in which the O'Donnell - Schmitter' idea of the pact-based democracy is rejected due to the low chance of producing stable democratic regimes through revolutionary changes.<sup>3</sup> The volume avoids going into depth in the realm of institution building and the mechanisms of compliance to democratic requirements. However, it renders very illustrative findings that underscore the key importance of the generic will to implement the democratic agenda by the dominant political force during the democratic transition.<sup>4</sup>

The democratization literature often tries to attribute failures and successes in different countries to various structural or political factors. Some authors required more flexibility (credible threats of removal) while pointing at deficits of the argument that:

*During Cold War democratic reform aid was not effective because the donors could not credibly commit to withdrawing their aid from strategically important recipients even when reform was not forthcoming.*<sup>5</sup>

Some authors reinforce this claim by bringing in the notion of *competitive authoritarianism* responsible for limitations in existing leverage-mechanisms.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Joel Lazarus claims

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<sup>1</sup> Jurgen Moeller and Svend-Erik Skaaning, *Requisites of Democracy: Conceptualization, Measurement and Explanation*, Democratization Studies (New York: Routledge Chapman & Hall, 2011), 104–105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>3</sup> *After the Collapse of Communism: Comparative Lessons of Transition*, McFaul Michael and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss (Eds.) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>5</sup> Moeller and Skaaning, *Requisites of Democracy: Conceptualization, Measurement and Explanation*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> For more description of the concept see Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 2010).

that western support actually reinforced the authoritarian system and increased political instability, for instance, in Georgia.<sup>1</sup> This country being a top recipient of foreign funding and assistance (second in the US assistance in the wider Europe) always managed in a miraculous way to secure its democratic credibility in the eyes of western donors despite the frequent government changes.<sup>2</sup> The ruling regimes were always trusted in the West and never had to perform the announced reforms fully, since the true reform-implementation would endanger their own chances of political power and survival.<sup>3</sup> An additional impetus to the mentioned tendency has been often provided by the “subjective logic” of organizations’ policy that like the USAID (United States Agency for International Development) continued justifying greater spending and lacked proper messaging to identify critical deficiencies and priority measures.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.4 What do We Miss in the Relevant Literature

All aspects mentioned above are relevant insofar as they link the issue of defence transformation in Armenia and Georgia to the overall process of the democratic transition and prerequisite a high political dependence of the NATO’s influence on domestic political developments. There is a common tendency that the expectations and measuring bar for Georgia are higher and the margins of errors smaller than in Armenia.<sup>5</sup> Available studies of both countries did not use any specific language on details of national compliance, to say nothing of concrete issues in the realm of defence and security.<sup>6</sup> In light of the growing expectations from the democratic transformation of both countries a clear description of

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<sup>1</sup> Joel Lazarus, “Neo-Liberal State Building and Western ‘Democracy Promotion’: The Case of Georgia,” SGIR 7th Pan-European Conference (Stockholm: St. Anthony’s College University of Oxford, September 9, 2010), 1, available at

<http://www.stockholm.sgir.eu/uploads/Neo-liberal%20state%20building%20and%20democracy%20promotion%20in%20Georgia.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> “Georgia’s Security Challenges and Policy Recommendations,” Policy Brief N1, US-Georgia Forum (Washington D.C.: CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), July 2012), 1; Lazarus, “Neo-Liberal State Building and Western ‘Democracy Promotion,’” 6.

<sup>3</sup> Lazarus, “Neo-Liberal State Building and Western ‘Democracy Promotion,’” 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Bowyer C., *Democratization in the Caucasus: Elections in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Helsinki Commission, 2012), available at

[http://www.csce.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContentRecords.ViewTranscript&ContentRecord\\_id=526&Content Type=H,B&ContentRecordType=B](http://www.csce.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContentRecords.ViewTranscript&ContentRecord_id=526&Content Type=H,B&ContentRecordType=B).

<sup>6</sup> “Part 3: Case Studies of Local Democracy in the South Caucasus,” in *Democracy at the Local Level - a Guide for the South Caucasus* (Yerevan: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2003), 36.

mechanisms of achieving the expected results in particular areas must be provided.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, as is often the case, the debate is limited to attempts of a general assessment of the government's capacity or the vague explanations of failure of institutional reforms due to limited checks and data available on executive authority.<sup>2</sup>

As stipulated in NATO Strategic Concept 1991, a transition to full fledged democracy implies the need to foster "the growth of democratic institutions".<sup>3</sup> Its nurturing effect implied a process of intensive contacts with traditional western democracies that would bring about the desired change. However, the existing literature is less able to explain key factors of domestic compliance that presumably are more specific, even subtle and cannot be roughly attributed to the general notion of democratic transition nor to the formal terms of good governance. Since our focus is narrowed down to the process of the defence transformation, the quest gets even more complicated due to the widespread tradition of its nominal reduction to the issue of civilian control over military that, obviously, is highly unsatisfying. Introducing the principles of democratic governance is a long and difficult process. But understanding and adopting the particular mechanisms of democratic governance in defence, that additionally ensure the national compliance to commitments made externally, proves to be a serious challenge and remains beyond the scope of academic debate on Armenia and Georgia.<sup>4</sup>

Reforming defence and security sectors was considered as one of pivotal objectives in post-communist countries and an integral part of the democratic transformation.<sup>5</sup> There is no understanding of security without the military dimension, which necessitates the effective governance in defence if the successful democratic transformation is needed. Conversely, a developed democracy whose security forces are dysfunctional runs the risk of "dedemocratisation".<sup>6</sup> The vast amount of the literature on Security Sector Reform (SSR) provides a pretty developed explanation of defence reform objectives, though predominantly distributed under the subjects of parliamentary control and the civilian supremacy over military in political decision-making. Yet the specifics of the defence sector require a separate

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<sup>1</sup> Lazarus, "Neo-Liberal State Building and Western 'Democracy Promotion,'" 1–3.

<sup>2</sup> Michael D. Mihalka and Mark R. Wilcox, "Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus," *Joint Force Quarterly*, 2nd quarter 2010, 26.

<sup>3</sup> David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed: The Alliance's New Roles in International Security* (United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998), 164.

<sup>4</sup> "Part 3: Case Studies of Local Democracy in the South Caucasus," 48.

<sup>5</sup> "Security Sector Governance and Reform," DCAF Backgrounder (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), May 2009), available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Security-Sector-Governance-and-Reform>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

and coherent approach to the topic of defence transformation with explicit objective of highlighting its critical features. Thus the need of clear and sound codification measures for defence transformation and its practical achievements remains high on demand. The Geneva Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) continues to play a lead role in defining the multiplicity of defence related problem-factors. Yet in light of the scale of transformative effectiveness the measurement indicators still pose an important area, where significant deficits can be identified. The deficits can't be permanently enlarged by introducing the variety of contextual criteria such as political, normative, psychological etc. (seven in total) as offered by Nicole Ball.<sup>1</sup> Nor it can be fully covered by the in - depth analysis of the parliamentary oversight functions, as provided by a hundred page strong DCAF-volume issued in 2003, in which resource and budgetary aspects of accountability are reviewed.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, we arrive at the point, where we share Ursula C. Schroeder's conclusion that "...there are no specific indexes that measure the accountability regimes and civilian control of security sectors around the world" and more general indicators are frequently very confusing.<sup>3</sup>

Translating the whole debate into the South Caucasus - reality the academic literature is less able to bring up the question on the generic objectives of defence reforms pursued in Armenia and Georgia and the causes of varying approaches and outcomes within the respective cooperation processes with NATO. This is as much relevant, as it correlates the strategic interests of a particular country with internal institutional objectives and the imperatives of the domestic political agenda. Without having a well defined strategic relevance for NATO as a whole region, the importance of each country had to be determined out of the cooperation process itself. Georgia got kind of a missionary assignment, serving as a success story of democratic transition worth emulating by neighboring countries.<sup>4</sup> As for Armenia, the Russian trails of the country's moderate stance towards NATO can't be overseen. Despite the obvious

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<sup>1</sup> Nicole Ball, "Dilemmas of Security Sector Reform: Response to Security Sector Reform in Developing and Transitional Countries" (Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, August 2004), 4, [http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue\\_Chapters/dialogue2\\_ball.pdf](http://www.berghof-foundation.org/fileadmin/redaktion/Publications/Handbook/Dialogue_Chapters/dialogue2_ball.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Philipp Fluri, Hans Born, and Anders B. Johnsson, *Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices*, Philipp Fluri and Anders B. Johnsson (Eds.) (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, DCAF, 2003), available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Parliamentary-Oversight-of-the-Security-Sector>.

<sup>3</sup> Ursula C. Schroeder, *Measuring Security Sector Governance: A Guide to Relevant Indicators*, Occasional Paper 20 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), 28, available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Measuring-Security-Sector-Governance>.

<sup>4</sup> "Georgia's Security Challenges and Policy Recommendations," 1.

differences, the demand to both countries to pursue the course of democratic, institutional and military reforms has not been lessened at all.<sup>1</sup> This additionally strengthens the common argument in the literature that rejects any other factor than the state of democracy under which the regional or a particular national policy toward NATO can be considered.<sup>2</sup> Georgia's objective envisages an ultimate accession in the Alliance. However, it is not evident and remains questionable that the democratic transformation and defence reforms in particular would have been ever conducted without the NATO accession prospects.<sup>3</sup> Here we agree to Dan Reiter's claim, that problems with measuring those reforms and validating practical achievements in defence render the validity of any general assessment quite questionable.<sup>4</sup>

NATO as well as the pool of U.S. - official documents provide a relatively good indication on the area - spectrum, where defence transformation processes can be evaluated.<sup>5</sup> The area - and result based measurement toolset seems to be a promising approach able to provide much clarity on principles, why some nations succeed in their defence transformation and some are close to failure or make hasty superficial reforms without public debate and proper understanding of the final outcome.<sup>6</sup> Clearly, the identification of particular assessment tools is of critical importance in order to produce the objective assessment of NATO's capacity to influence and the national motives to comply. In some cases the application of specific criteria will be unavoidable. For instance the military decision-making process is on its own already an issue of huge relevance for the practical outcomes of various defence policies implemented. It requires its own portion of analysis, spread among various functional areas, where its effects could be best studied and the general puzzle of driving factors for defence transformation best illuminated. Further, the ineffective command structures, illicit personal communication lines or the political purpose of ministerial appointments, all these factors could greatly contribute to the illustration of causal lines of success or failure from the local contextual angle.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain and Davis, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Closer to War than Peace?," 2.

<sup>2</sup> Emmanuel Karagiannis, *Energy and Security in the Caucasus* (London: Routledge, 2002), 178.

<sup>3</sup> Kříž Zdeněk and Zinaida Shevchuk, "Georgian Readiness for NATO Membership after Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 44, no. 1 (March 2011): 89.

<sup>4</sup> Reiter, "Why NATO Enlargement Does Not Spread Democracy," 52.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications," March 7, 2008; Jim Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," CRS Report for Congress (Congressional Research Service, March 11, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Wright, "Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict," 2009, 22–23.

<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey Wright, "Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict," *Mediterranean Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (Summer 2009): 38, doi:10.1215/10474552-2009-012; Mihalka and Wilcox, "Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus," 26.

A clear identification of NATO's objectives towards the SC - region and countries in particular should be also noted due to its policy implications on the strategic and local (domestic) levels and the high risk of miscommunication and failures caused by the divergence of interests. Thus, knowing the clarity and the degree of convergence of strategic agendas between NATO and Armenia and Georgia turns out to be an important element to be studied thoroughly. The current academic debate lacks the mentioned aspect, albeit the clarity of strategic messaging greatly benefits the logic of national policy-making and minimizes the chances of the different interpretation of policy results and expectations. It should be also noted that whatever cooperation format a country accepts towards NATO, the notion of common standards immediately becomes omnipresent and relates to both dimensions of cooperation: political and military. Adopting those standards should by no means collide with conflicting domestic objectives or the "hidden" agenda, according to Geoffrey Wright. This brings up the issue of the purpose of applying NATO - standards and of credibility (honesty) of the national commitments to achieve the declared objectives by a partner - country.

## **1.5 Basic Research Questions**

Summarizing the review of the relevant literature we can identify a distinct deficit and the inability of the existing scholarship to provide a clear assessment toolset of the national compliance in the defence area while undergoing a transformation process under the auspices of the NATO - cooperation framework. Additionally, no efforts had been made to link the strategic interest of a country cooperating with NATO with the internal (domestic) objectives that would illustrate the balance or imbalance of external and internal agenda imperatives. Understandably, it can be attributed to the specific scope and the nominal ownership by the Security Sector Reform (SSR) with its basics heavily rooted in the analysis of a country's political structure. Nonetheless, once the academic deficits are recognized and correlated to the dynamics of political processes between NATO and our case - countries, the following major research questions can be formulated to be investigated in our study:

- To what degree NATO can utilize its policy of conditionality to enforce policy change of respective defence institutions?

- How are national state - and institutional policies towards the Alliance shaped and what factors were decisive for policy - formation and implementation, in particular?
- How do internal mechanisms of NATO institutional cooperation support the process of adopting common policies, norms and standards by national authorities?

By responding to the formulated questions we attempt to provide valuable insights of the processes of interplay between two key players of international relations – the state via its defence institution and the multilateral/international organization (MO/IO). Our case selection is justified by number of key arguments. Although many cases have been empirically reviewed, no coherent picture has been provided so far that would analyse and put two countries (Armenia and Georgia) into a serious comparison. Though Azerbaijan as a third country in the region, which similarly to Armenia and Georgia shares a common historico - political context, would be a logical addition to our study, the scope of research (countries with opposing political intentions) and significant limitations of open sources on Azerbaijan, led us at this stage to exclude it from the range of cases. Furthermore, the selected case - countries provide unique conditions to analyze the varying abilities of the Alliance to exert influence as an *Institution*, and to deepen the understanding of state - institution interdependence mechanisms, by providing powerful explanations of particular policies in Armenia and Georgia adopted towards NATO, and different outcomes, for which no coherent account has been taken so far. In particular, it evaluates whether the effects of such interplay can contribute both to IO's efficacy as a transformative and enforcing power, as well as to participating country's sectoral policy improvement in the framework of defence transformation. The time - span (2004 -2012) to review is sufficient to disregard the risk of early or premature statements that would be symptomatic to early stages of cooperation.

We designed our project in a way as to allow ourselves to narrow down the research theme to the critical issue of institutional influence in a certain period of time and within a strictly defined geographic area. Our goal was not to review the phenomenon of the NATO influence on all partner - countries to increase the degree of representativeness, as some would argue, but rather to specify and problematize particular aspects of the institutional interplay, i.e. the degree of national compliance at different levels of cross - country analysis, in order to provide valid answers to central questions of the research. As we tend to keep a certain degree

of the theoretical flexibility, the expected findings seem to be promising in elucidating the variety of issues relevant specifically to the neo - liberal institutionalist theory as well as other theoretical concepts embedded in democratization literature. Furthermore, we expect our study to highlight relevant aspects of the realist research agenda in relation to key determinants of state performance while transforming defence. Throughout the analysis we hope to discern major findings that would clarify the particular mode of the state's decision-making (rationalist strategic calculation vs. social context dependent) chosen to engage the institutional framework of the Alliance.

## **1.6 Structure of Paper**

Facing the fate of a quite challenging theoretical and empirical investigation we hope to respond to requirements of scientific rigor and of intellectual creativity, by developing the structure and form of the study in a way as to reflect best possible its key messages and findings. We also intend to enhance the research originality by designing and offering different perspectives of empirical cases, for which no coherent account has been taken so far. The study will first elucidate the depth of applicability of some theoretical mainstreams and offer an analytical concept, which largely predetermines the methodology and the methodological toolset to be applied. Then we will operationalize the concept of NATO-influence, i.e. conditionality and compliance and distinguish indicators relevant for evaluating ("measuring") the effects of NATO-influence in particular areas of defence. The case-countries will be scrutinized and evaluated in accordance with the conceptual structure developed before and, consequently, put in comparison across defence related sectors to localize outcome - disparities, similarities or the tendency-convergence. This way we will be able to sort out carefully the effects of conditionality (positive, partial or non-compliance) generated by NATO – cooperation frameworks from those potentially to be attributed to conflicting domestic interests and calculations. The findings will be ultimately summarized in the concluding chapter and put in respective formulations in an attempt to provide plausible answers to the research questions set in this chapter.



# Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

## 2.1 Introduction

Understanding the essence of institutions and their organizational patterns is the critical point of departure for our analytical undertaking. As clearly stated before, the major units of analysis are defence ministries and the armed forces of South Caucasus countries, and the contextual grid (cooperation) is provided by another institution – NATO. Whether successes or failures of institutional integration can be attributed to the mechanisms a country or defence ministry is exposed to within the institution, has still to be clarified. However, the fact is that we face an intensive interplay of institutions, effects of which are directly reflected in policy change, policy adoption or even at the very stage of policy initiation. Approving the institutional lens of inquiry is a logical necessity to meet the requirements of the theoretical rigor and to operationalize the respective analytical concept. We regard *Neo-Liberal Institutionalism* as the most promising avenue for the theoretical elucidation of our project. At this stage, however, we would suggest first to follow the logical sequence of theoretical contemplation and to look at epistemological basics of social science that are anchored in institutionalist theories. Thus we will look at the variety of definitions applied to institutional frameworks. Then we will tackle the functional weight assigned to institutions through different epistemological stands and the impact of the theoretical rivalry on understanding international institution as a cooperation enabler and independent agent. Finally, we will attempt to articulate the apparent benefits of theoretical complementarity, revealed through the adoption of the Neo-Liberal prism of institutionalism, and provide our vision of analytical model. It will allow us to apply a cross dimensional comparison throughout the study and generate deep insights of relevant factors critical to the major questions we have formulated before.

## 2.2 Institutional Prism of Analysis – Point of Departure for the Analytical Inquiry

By providing institutional patterns, within which “many burning issues can be explained”, institutions increasingly became a valuable source of analysis in political science and IR

respectively.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the merits of this approach, we are inevitably captured by the necessity to frame what the notion of *institution* implies. Scholars are featured by the inexhaustible capacity of providing the plenitude of relevant explanations, and, conversely, in their inability to stick to the most plausible and agreed definition. As Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio convincingly state, the ambiguity is common characteristics while defining *institution* that leads scholars to agree rather what *institution* is not, than what it is about.<sup>2</sup> The range of definitional attempts goes so far as to attach to every social act (action and activity) the meaning of institution that ranges “from handshakes to marriages to strategic-planning departments”.<sup>3</sup> From this sociological perspective, institutions are nearly everywhere. For the sake of common definitional utility we will apply the version offered by March and Olsen, who defined institution as a “relatively stable collection of practices and rules defining appropriate behavior for a specific group of actors in specific situations”.<sup>4</sup> This interpretation is fairly short and simple to keep in mind and to agree upon, yet it is still broad enough to allow further theoretical elaboration depending on the contextual underpinning.

It must be noted that the revival of the new institutional approach, different from the static and old purist-bureaucratic understanding of institutionalism, unfolded as a reaction to the behavioral revolution in late 1950s and developed two distinct epistemological standpoints to explain the role institutions play in forming various aspects of social and political life, that of Rational Choice (RCI) and Sociological Institutionalism (SI).<sup>5</sup> Institutions seemed to be very instrumental to offer explanations of various phenomena of contrasting nature and scale. Whether at micro or macro level, Rational Choice scholars applied institutional insights to solve the aggregation problem.<sup>6</sup> The principle of activity routinization, i.e. repeated actions between actors to solve collective dilemmas constitutes the core of rationalist standpoint. The need for collective goods and action also provided frameworks for the cooperative mode of

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<sup>1</sup> Christer Jönsson and Jonas Tallberg, “Institutional Theory in International Relations,” in *Debating Institutionalism*, Jon Pierre, B. Guy Peters & Gerry Stoker (eds.) (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2008), 2,

<http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=534142&fileId=625444>.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Balding and Daniel Wehrensennig, “An Organizational Theory of International Institutions,” *Journal of International Organizations Studies*, Theorizing International Organizations, 2, no. 1 (2011): 9.

<sup>5</sup> Lorenzo Kamel, “Rational Choice and New Institutionalism, a Critical Analysis,” *Eurostudium3w-University Rom*, March 2009, 76.

<sup>6</sup> Lise Rakner, “Rational Choice and the Problem of Institutions. A Discussion of Rational Choice Institutionalism and Its Application by Robert Bates,” *CMI Working Paper WP 1996:6* (1996): 6, available at <http://www.cmi.no/publications/publication/?1221=rational-choice-and-the-problem-of-institutions>.

interactions.<sup>1</sup> Since state is largely regarded as one of the major analytical units, the new institutionalism logically turned to the problem of state policy formation and policy effects by highlighting the significance of institutional forces at various junctures of decision making. According to Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, actors operating within the institution have well defined and hierarchical set of preferences and act based on strategic calculations to increase the expected benefits.<sup>2</sup> Utility maximization, the exogenous nature of the preferences that cannot be modified by the membership in institution and the strategic mode of interaction constitute basic original pillars of rationalist approach.<sup>3</sup> In fact, this makes us assume that in narrow sense the institutional framework, though capable of changing actors (state) behavior via incentives and sanctions, cannot prevent him from breaking rules and even from abandoning the cooperation. The empirical investigation of numerous institutional frameworks revealed, similarly, some apparent limitations of the rationalist theory utility related to the problem of *bounded rationality* and *free riding*. Consequently, rationalist scholars were increasingly preoccupied with broadening the narrow scope of the concept towards increased priority of collective goals and benefits, as in case of George Tsebelis (1990) and Jack Knight (1992), as well as by recognizing the relevance of the context, within which the political behavior is channeled and ultimately unfolds, as in case of Kenneth Shepsle.<sup>4</sup> Institutions were no longer regarded as exogenously given and the rules of the game provided by players themselves mirrored the common desire to follow a particular pattern of behavior, i.e. the norms and procedures. The notion of rationalism was reduced to the mode of behavior still largely based on strategic calculation and conditioned by “the expectations of how others react”.<sup>5</sup>

Not surprisingly, rationalist assumptions have been swiftly adopted by *realist*, *neo-realist* and to larger extent by *neo-liberal* mainstream authors focusing predominantly on functional explanations of institutional design and purpose, in which power relations and asymmetries defined the rules and mechanism of interaction. The distinction, benefits and the deficits of each theoretical school will be elaborated more nuanced way in the chapter to follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>2</sup> Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor, “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism\*,” *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 945.

<sup>3</sup> Ole Norgaard, “Democracy, Democratization and Institutional Theory,” *DEMSTAR Research Report 4* (December 2001): 23; Guy B. Peters, “Institutional Theory: Problems and Prospects,” *Reihe Politikwissenschaft* 69 (July 2000): 3–5.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth A. Shepsle, “Rational Choice Institutionalism,” in *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, R.A.W. Rodes, Sarah A. Binder and Bert A. Rockman (Eds.) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 2–3, available at <https://cpriufpe.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/oxford-hanfbok-of-political-institutions.pdf>; Norgaard, “Democracy, Democratization and Institutional Theory,” 27.

<sup>5</sup> Shepsle, “Rational Choice Institutionalism,” 3.

Nonetheless, the closer familiarization with seemingly conflicting epistemological positions (positivist vs. constructivist) will reveal the roots of our theoretical choice, its justification and the need for the limited theoretical complementarism. Not least, the ideas we disclose here will have a significant impact on the structure and objectives of our analytical concept, as well as influence the way of empirical data evaluation.

### **2.2.1 Rational Choice vs. Sociological Institutionalism**

Despite the notable transformation of RCI, it has been intensively criticized because of its internal drawbacks related to the concept of *bounded rationality* and the external ignorance to sociological context.<sup>1</sup> Constructivist approach established a new mode of social inquiry and posited itself as the major challenger to dominant positivist views. Works of Karl Deutsch (1953), Bruce Russett (1963) and Richard Merritt (1966) accomplished within the initiated research agenda, indicated the advent of the sociological dimension in international relations, where the cognitive elements such as identity formation, beliefs and social communications formed the central core of argumentation.<sup>2</sup>

Applying sociological insights to institutional research agenda, scholars contributed to the birth of *sociological institutionalism*. Here institutions are assigned different meaning and are given much more significance in terms of influence and policy shaping capacity of its members. The cooperative tendencies are explained by the virtues of script legitimacy, through which states acquire the meaning of interactions and their identity.<sup>3</sup> According to the very constructivist logic, which conforms pretty much to the institutional essence of nearly every social act, the huge importance of the cultural context and moral templates should not be underestimated and, in contrary, must be put forth. Forerunners of sociological institutionalism John Meyer and Brian Rowan would readily go further and argue that even simple bureaucratic practices have to be explained from this perspective.<sup>4</sup> The logic of policy formation and influence within the institution would therefore imply, that the process of

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<sup>1</sup> Kamel, "Rational Choice and New Institutionalism, a Critical Analysis," 74.

<sup>2</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner, "International Organization and the Study of World Politics," *International Organization*, International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics, 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998): 654.

<sup>3</sup> Jönsson and Tallberg, "Institutional Theory in International Relations," 14; Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 387, doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.369.

<sup>4</sup> John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 2 (September 1977): 340–63.

internalization of norms, rules and standards ultimately leads to the creation of a commonly shared cognitive platform. Thus, naturally, the very structure of actor's preferences and its identity could not remain unaffected<sup>1</sup>.

Driving force of successful cooperation within the institutional framework is, clearly, the readiness of actor, i.e. state to accept common procedures and policies that might well be constructed outside the institution yet constitute the *logic of appropriateness* related to the individual behavior. For instance, in the field of democratization studies the principle of adherence to democratic standards and norms is given huge importance. The process of democratic transition that involves an institution, which is still infected by rules conflicting with the new requirements, often results in a continuous adaptation to context and learning mechanisms, through which better results can be achieved.<sup>2</sup> Being paradigmatic, but somehow less explicit, the cultural aspect of institutional influence has been further elaborated. As Walter Powel and Paul DiMaggio put it, the institutional integration is a basic social phenomenon that is largely based on the structure of common values and cultural patterns "with the internalized need disposition structure of constituent personality."<sup>3</sup> Similar to Powel and DiMaggio, who regard the success of institutional integration largely in terms of the conformity with common value system, Kathleen Thelen, though taking a historical approach to Katzenstein's findings, arrives to the same conclusions on the issue of Japan's security policy evolution.<sup>4</sup> Paradoxically, the very concept of rationality was identified by Richard Scott as a cultural system providing guidelines for the social behavior and templates for designing the organization's structure. Yet he also admits that rationality models play a causal role in creation of formal institutions.<sup>5</sup>

Having briefly reviewed two distinct approaches to the role institutions play in affecting actor's behavior, we are increasingly struggling with the inherent limitations of each standpoint, that are incapable of covering the vast complexity of institutional phenomenon. Scholars swiftly identified *gray zones* of the epistemological differences and pointed out the consequences of theoretical purity. Peter Katzenstein in his well developed sociological

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<sup>1</sup> Hall and Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism\*," 948; Peters, "Institutional Theory: Problems and Prospects," 2.

<sup>2</sup> Norgaard, "Democracy, Democratization and Institutional Theory," 3–5.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," 371; *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 19.

<sup>5</sup> W. Richard Scott, "Institutional Theory: Contributing to a Theoretical Research Program," *Great Minds in Management: The Process of Theory Development*, 2005, 365–366.

contribution to international relations (IR) cautiously argues to not overestimate the cultural aspects of political decision-making.<sup>1</sup> Powell and DiMaggio share the same concern and conclude that cognitive elements should not “eclipse the strategic elements” and the settings of the action.<sup>2</sup> If the behavior of an actor is constituted by the context created within the institution and, in turn, each individual action contributes to reconstructing social understanding, the ultimate result resembles a process, in which causal effects and linkages are very hard to recognize.

Not surprisingly, both rationalist as well as constructivist scholars realized that the loyalty to theoretical parsimony would often not outweigh the expected benefits of applying valuable insights of the rival school. The tendency within the sociological mainstream is to acknowledge the arguments of RC - account and agree that often subjects to institutional influence instead of passive compliance, can choose other strategic ways of response that include, avoidance, defiance, manipulation or compromise.<sup>3</sup> States as unitary actors seemingly monopolized by the rationalist scholarship program found more recognition by constructivist authors, who continued attaching key role to the commitment to norms and shared understanding, yet from the altered sociological perspective of community of states.<sup>4</sup> Conversely, rationalist literature showed more flexibility by reflecting growing importance of institutions, among others in terms of shaping individual preferences. To certain degree institutions acquired a kind of sociological face-lifting being capable of affecting individual preferences even before formal accession. Rationalist understanding of institutions and international ones, in particular, is featured by their inherent capacity to promote information exchange and manage uncertainty. Richard Scott strengthens this argument by highlighting the stabilizing effects of institutions comprised of “cognitive-cultural”, normative and regulative elements.<sup>5</sup> Rationalist model of *Public Choice* found a significant degree of commonalities within liberal IR - arguments on domestic origins of state preferences represented internationally. In this sense individuals and private groups moved into the focus of analysis and proved to be influential in affecting national decisions.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 27, 31.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, “Institutional Theory,” 13.

<sup>4</sup> Friedrich Kratochwil and John Gerard Ruggie, “International Organization: a State of the Art on an Art of the State,” *International Organization* 40, no. 04 (1986): 764.

<sup>5</sup> Scott, “Institutional Theory,” 8.

<sup>6</sup> Kenneth W. Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” *University of Illinois Law Review* 1 (2008): 5.

A universe of authors could have been added to the list of references we have used to exemplify the institutional dimension and the range of topical priorities within the mentioned academic research programs. Yet we would be better served, if instead of quantifying the descriptive evidence of institutions, we devote our attention to more relevant aspect of international cooperation, where International Institutions (II) play key role in enabling cooperation among states and other institutions. Narrowing down the focus of the theoretical analysis is a logical necessity, to avoid the perennial risk of conceptual stretching, which would inevitably undermine the cohesion of our argumentation - line from the very beginning. The ability to cover more by saying less, as pointed out by Giovanni Sartori, is not the mode we favor.<sup>1</sup> In contrary, we intentionally place the question of institutional influence of the North Atlantic Alliance within the international dimension of institutional analysis, where national policies generated under domestic factors are exposed to various sources of influence within the II.

### **2.2.2 Defining Institutional Patterns of International Organizations**

International institutionalism reveals somehow more ontological affinity to *international relations* than to the mainstream schools of institutionalist theory. Nevertheless, it is preoccupied with similar questions of individual and collective actions, as well as with the core issue of interdependence between domestic and international politics.<sup>2</sup> It is strongly associated with *international regime* studies that tackles the problems of international cooperation and reviews the tasks / functions of international institutions that traditionally have been regarded as the nation - state domain. The terms *organization* and *institution* are frequently used here interchangeably. The wide spread tradition of definitional blurriness did not spare the international dimension of institutions, and as in case of Oran Young generated a very broad definition of II, which encompassed various forms of organizational arrangements, so called, governing “social practices” consisting of roles and conventions. The most important element of the provided definition is that institutional analyses are not exclusively focused on formal international organizations.<sup>3</sup> We, however, are much more interested in international institutions as formal and structured entities that in even more narrow formal

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<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Sartori, “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics,” *American Political Science Review* LXIV, no. 4 (December 1970): 1034.

<sup>2</sup> Jönsson and Tallberg, “Institutional Theory in International Relations,” 2–3.

<sup>3</sup> Oran R. Young, *International Cooperation: Building Regimes for National Resources and the Environment* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1989), 32.

sense, possesses a well-organized bureaucratic body, offices and financial resources. To put it in a March and Olsen's manner, international institution is the collection of routinized behavior comprised of shared values, norms, and standards that:

*(...) constitute and legitimize political actors and provide them with consistent behavioral rules, conceptions of reality, standards of assessment, affective ties, and endowments, and thereby with a capacity for purposeful action.*<sup>1</sup>

In a very rationalist manner the design of an institution was regarded as the key indicator for means and incentives available for participants to pursue their strategies. Stephen Krassner developed the consensual definition of an international regime as “principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area” that is broadly shared among scholars, however is open for various interpretations.<sup>2</sup> The crucial factor for understanding regimes is the functional nature of cooperation incentives in a given area, in which the frequent interaction lead to the setting rules and norms, through which the individual behavior can be assessed. Obviously there is no essential discrepancy to observe between Krassner's regime and March and Olsen's definition of the institution. Regimes are Institutions and may vary both in terms of organizational rigidity as well as the mode a state can follow the procedures and norms defined by the regime, despite the low chance of sanctions. The low probability of sanctioning members is logical, since Krassner's formulation of regimes leaves little space for holding institution as independent units capable of norm-enforcement.

It is critical to our study to follow key aspects of cooperation process in institutional theory literature to discern major mechanisms responsible for political outcome, i.e. the particular state – behavior, internationally or on domestic scene. As already mentioned, neither Krassner in 1983 nor Keohane in 1984 while setting the groundwork of the *international regime* theory paid sufficient attention to formal international organizations, in order to explain institutional arrangements that affect international politics<sup>3</sup>. We regard formal, i.e. structured II as the constituent element of IR - theory encompassing the wide variety of institutional systems. Furthermore, when referring to II we explicitly base our contemplation on formal organizations and by large disregard informal regimes or agreements. Rationalist scholars

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<sup>1</sup> Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” 10.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, “Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables,” *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (1982): 185.

<sup>3</sup> Kenneth W. Abbott and Duncan Snidal, “Why States Act through Formal International Organizations,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42, no. 1 (February 1998): 6.



acknowledged the relevance of structured institutions that persisted over the long period of time and devoted their lion's share of analysis to the field of regime studies.<sup>1</sup>

Cooperation among states lays at core of IR - theory and the anarchic perception of the world system is essentially rejected. Originated by the application of insights from economics and game theories, and heavily influenced by Mancur Olson's seminal work on public choice and collective action, it draws on the beneficial nature of cooperation by providing common incentives for cooperation.<sup>2</sup> Benefits can be regarded as incentives and interests – in either broad or narrow sense, as security, social stability, economic development etc. Robert Keohane, arguably the most prominent liberal institutionalist solidified the neo - liberal view of international regimes by highlighting the invaluable role of regimes as best platforms to reduce transaction costs and the information uncertainty, thus facilitating to negotiations and agreements among states.<sup>3</sup> Definitional margins were further broadened by adding social-cognitive dimension, in which international organization played a role of the community representation of group of states that pursue community - policy by accepting and implementing common norms and principles, down to very procedural regulations in various fields of activities.<sup>4</sup> In this sense an international institution as a social construction was indeed able to shape actor's behavior in a particular policy - sector.<sup>5</sup> We do not see much of value in continuing the elaboration of the debate on the utility of international regimes (institutions) between the various schools of international relation. The brief summary of competing arguments of realist and the neo-liberal scholars on the function and the utility of international institutions will be offered in the next chapter, and mainly dwells on advantages of *neoliberal institutionalism* as the cornerstone of our response to the need of theoretical complementarity. In this part of paper, however, some constructivist contributions to the regime theory seem to be indispensable. As Katzenstein amply puts it:

*Conflict and cooperation thus emerge from a never-ending process of redefining social and political identities that generate consensually shared and contextually appropriate norms that provide standards for action. In international society these standards are called regimes.*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Shepsle, "Rational Choice Institutionalism," 28.

<sup>2</sup> Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971).

<sup>3</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "The Demand for International Regimes," *International Studies Quarterly*, International regimes, 36, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 4.

<sup>4</sup> Abbott and Snidal, "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations," 26.

<sup>5</sup> Young, *International Cooperation: Building Regimes for National Resources and the Environment*, 12.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Joachim Katzenstein, "Analyzing Change in International Politics: The New Institutionalism and the Interpretative Approach" (MPIfG discussion paper, 1990), 17, available at <http://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/43735>.

Clearly the definition used above rests on the broad understanding of institutions that possess the action shaping function. Yet the crucial difference, we see, is the explicit notion of identity formation and the use of standards for actions that ultimately make up a regime. The compliance to norms and standards is also an attribute derived from the broader concept of legitimacy, and can have mutually reinforcing effect as recognized by some liberal authors.<sup>1</sup> The sociological view regards the internal institutional dynamics as a very inter - subjective process of identity formation leading to the creation of the shared understanding of an issue-area and therefore influencing the individual preference - formation. John Ruggie extends even further the cognitive dimension of the regime and defines it as “sets of mutual expectations and rules...energies” accepted by a group of states.<sup>2</sup> The cooperation efforts of states in this sense are constrained by the social environment of an institution, and the policy formation, to put it bluntly, is not the result of objectively derived interests but a mere reaction on situations based on perceptions and expectations. This conclusion made by Kenneth Abbot in his attempt to reconcile rationalist approach with constructivist views, reflected a strong signal towards the necessity of finding theoretical convergences.<sup>3</sup> Developed as a reaction to the needs of explaining economic phenomena and by emphasizing the notion of transaction costs in international politics, the regime theory made significant shift towards its sociological dimension, increasingly recognizing its relevance in terms of establishing contractual patterns, member socialization and common legitimation of action. Even the core elements of liberal argumentation such as promotion of democratic values (Pevehouse, 2002), legal liability and reputational concerns (Duffield, 1992), the transparency and reciprocity, as well as negotiation patterns (Keohane, 1994) conform fairly well to basics of the constructivist view.<sup>4</sup>

### **2.2.3 Organizational Facelift of International Institutions**

Reducing the theoretical divide have been made possible through the increased attention paid to internal mechanisms, incl. bureaucratic leverage institutions apply to exercise their

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<sup>1</sup> Allen Buchanan, “Reciprocal Legitimation: Reframing the Problem of International Legitimacy,” *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 10, no. 1 (February 1, 2011): 5–19, doi:10.1177/1470594X09351958.

<sup>2</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, “Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions,” 660.

<sup>3</sup> Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” 13.

<sup>4</sup> Sara Mitchell, “Cooperation in World Politics: The Constraining and Constitutive Effects of International Organizations” (International Studies Association Meeting, San-Diego: Department of Political Science Publications, 2006), 1–5, available at [http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=polisci\\_pubs](http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=polisci_pubs).

influence over members. It must be noted that this was not always the case. Neglecting the organizational aspect of international institutions was one of the featuring elements of the regime theory. International institutions (organizations) have been largely disregarded by organization theory, and conversely the study of international relations made little reference if any to organizational theory. Scholars realized very soon the existing gap, which contributed to the development of the study-area, in which convergent theoretical insights could have been identified. Whereas the neo - liberal institutionalists like Robert Keohane attach international secretariats the function of unbiased information - sharing and transparency to manage uncertainty concerns, the constructivist scholars such as Martha Finnemore (1993) and Michael Barnett (1999) underline the crucial role of II's bureaucracy in defining agenda that might be well divergent from member-state's interest.<sup>1</sup> The role of neutral bureaucracy of II and its ability to influence the local elites and power groups inside the states is additionally strengthened by Ernst Haas (1989, 1990) and Jeffrey Checkel (1999), who are joined by Frank Schimmelfenning (2003) in his powerful exemplification of international institutions as *Community Organizations* that exercise the policy of conditionality via internalization of community norms and standards by aspirant countries before the actual accession.<sup>2</sup>

Recognizing the merits of each epistemological approach, the organizational theory could not escape from the "rationalist vs. constructivist debate" around the question of institutional identity and ability to act as autonomous agent. The apple of discord was rightly identified within the issues of the purpose, architecture and mechanisms of the institution. As Christopher Balding and Daniel Wehrenfennig put it in a truly rationalist way, the organizational design is a rational choice of the form in the "pursuit of specific objectives" that will either enhance or decrease the mode of compliance among members, and provide toolset for carrying out the missions originally assigned.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the existing mechanisms reveal the implied objectives and preconditions for the effectiveness of an institution, whether related to policy implementation and norm diffusion or to the formation of shared identity. Rooted within the notion of legal rationality in its Weberian understanding, it questions the sociological approach, according to which power depends on reputation and networks and decision are made collectively by calculus of consent, rather than by adhering to regularities and legal precedents.<sup>4</sup> To sum up, rationalist arguments rest on the basic assumption that

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 3–8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>3</sup> Balding and Wehrenfennig, "An Organizational Theory of International Institutions," 7–8.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 11.

institutions can do what they are objectively designed for, and not what they subjectively ought to do. States, therefore, looking for international institutional framework might abandon the existing one once they have proved to be ineffective to provide services desired.

Originally, regarded as a very functional in its core, and stressing the primacy of state willingness to cooperate in certain issue-areas, the regime theory went much beyond the original theoretical frontiers. Though highly controversial, regimes were still regarded as the representation of functional ministries and not of the state-governments.<sup>1</sup> Nowadays it encompasses various aspects of international professionalization, by which professional communities can be created and acquired the function of enforcing common norms and standards.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, the disaggregation of a state is a standard tool to highlight the trans-governmental nature of interactions. Furthermore, the interplay of governmental officials, ministries and agencies is regarded as independent from the state while creating professional networks and socialization mechanisms that ultimately lead to significant political effects, that of norm implementation.<sup>3</sup> We particularly stress the importance of said developments within the IR theory, for it drew the focus of institutional analysis to the role of international organization able to act as independent agent. This principal - agent model holds that principals (i.e. states) delegate certain functions to an international institution (agent). However, the dynamics of institutional interplay allows after while the agent to pursue its own interests rather than those of principals.<sup>4</sup>

Some rationalist authors distinguish formal international organizations in their ability to produce and enforce the norm - compliance among member - states, i.e by their degree of centralization and independence.<sup>5</sup> The first property of institutional organization refers, naturally, to the structure and bureaucratic apparatus, whereas the latter to the capacity of independent managerial activity and that of agenda - setting. Both inherently support the creation of neutral forums where negotiations can unfold, common policy can be crafted and monitored, and information can be disseminated. The neutrality is a crucial element in bringing states with conflicting agendas to the discussion table. Combined with a high level of institutional autonomy it allows to perform such activities that "...might be unacceptable in their original state – to - state form..." yet become "...acceptable when run through an

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<sup>1</sup> Abbott and Snidal, "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations," 30.

<sup>2</sup> Hall and Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism\*," 950.

<sup>3</sup> Abbott, "Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law," 27–28.

<sup>4</sup> Jönsson and Tallberg, "Institutional Theory in International Relations," 5.

<sup>5</sup> Abbott and Snidal, "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations," 4.

independent or seemingly independent IO.”<sup>1</sup> The sociological wing of organizational theory, similar to rationalist claims, devotes significant attention to the content of IO. However, it strengthens immensely the relevance of the bureaucratic apparatus in creating the institutional identity and spreading knowledge. Sungjoon Cho calls it “the theoretical emancipation” of institutions from their creators (states).<sup>2</sup> Institutions can exceed the limits of design set up by their creators and modify their original goal in changing environment in order to survive, thus becoming the ends themselves.<sup>3</sup> Assuming organization’s strong bureaucratic structure and a high degree of independence inherently supports the adoption of a different ontological foundation for international institution as corporations possessing *agency*. Since the field of international relations holds international institutions largely being controlled by states, and in contrary institutions often act in the way diverging from the members’ interests, the attempts to explain the effects of institutional influence on state - policy and behavior turned to be very difficult and often ineffective. As a result, some authors advocated for accepting the said ontological basis that would eliminate the epistemological divide and create significant space for the analytical freedom and the methodological flexibility.<sup>4</sup> This approach seems fairly reasonable for the purpose of integrating various modes of analysis, able to illustrate different aspects and dimensions of international institutions. In practical terms, it would require the major shift of analysis from the states (principal) towards the *institution* (agency), with more attention devoted to the agency’s capacity of professional socialization as well as its ability to disseminate and enforce the standardized practices.

Despite valuable efforts that scholars devoted to international institutions as formal and structured organizations, they are still defined by many as muddled concept lost somewhere between the realm of “institutional order of international system” and the reference to “organizations, or agencies that operate cross - nationally”.<sup>5</sup> Our brief familiarization with theoretical origins of institutional patterns revealed the similar picture. Acknowledging the said weaknesses, admittedly to be attributed to the increased complexity and intensity of institutional dynamics, we nevertheless are prone to detect key concepts that are of crucial importance to our study and significantly determine not only the theoretical perspective we

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>2</sup> Sungjoon Cho, “Toward an Identity Theory of International Organizations,” in *American Society of International Law Proceedings*, vol. 101 (Chicago-Kent College of Law, 2007), 4, available at [http://works.bepress.com/sungjoon\\_cho/36/](http://works.bepress.com/sungjoon_cho/36/).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 4,6,8.

<sup>4</sup> David C. Ellis, “The Organizational Turn in International Organization Theory,” *Journal of International Organizations Studies*, Theorizing International Organizations, 3, no. 1 (2012): 11.

<sup>5</sup> Connie L. McNeely, *Constructing the Nation-State: International Organization and Prescriptive Action* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), 5.

adopt, but not least the structure of our analytical concept, a key factor for the coherence and plausibility of our argumentation. It is the *rational and strategic* nature of state behavior within and towards the institution that must be analyzed first. Whenever states decide to engage NATO as an institution or to be engaged by other states and institutions within the NATO, the question of the role and the primacy of state interests (preferences) for the formation of the modes of behavior becomes very important. Second, we have to turn to the *concept of agency and organizational autonomy*, to determine the ability of the Alliance in creating and spreading the institutional identity, norms and standards based on shared values. Examining institutional design as well as the degree of autonomy as key properties of the institutional framework leads to the better understanding of the phenomenon of compliance, as well as the relevance of power-relationship the NATO supposedly is exposed to. Whether internal bureaucratic politics is of any relevance, or the preference - based state performance becomes limited once exposed to institutional influence of NATO, has yet to be verified. Nonetheless, the key theoretical elements distilled so far suggest that determinants of policy - formation and political outcome should not be analysed within a single, narrow theoretical perspective, but rather include valuable findings lying in other theoretical domains.

### **2.3 The Centrality of Neo - Liberal Institutionalism to the Concept of Study**

We do not engage questions that deal with a deep theoretical treatment of institutional formation or the organizational persistence that in fact, reveal marginal relevance to the object of our study. Our approach is featured by the selective mode applied to the large variety of questions asked by students of international institutions and for the most part responding to the need of explanation of institutional effects on a state behavior. Largely regarded as institutionalists' response to the realist agenda, it reviews the process of influence by addressing various mechanisms of institutional interdependence that shape particular political decisions.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jönsson and Tallberg, "Institutional Theory in International Relations," 4.

### 2.3.1 Theoretical Cleavages and the Need for theoretical Complementarism

As already touched upon in previous chapter, the neo-liberal view holds that international institutions perform the function of negotiation platforms, where transaction costs and uncertainty are reduced and the costs of illegitimate actions, in contrary, are high. Interestingly, however, the international regime theory did not exclude bargaining as one of the interaction forms, thus allowing the realist school to capitalize on it. Power and power - relationship as major attributes of international politics, has been utilized by realist scholars to explain the processes relevant to international institutions and to state's external policy formation. Originated from the Kindleberger's study of Great Depression (1973), in which the key role of a dominant actor for the purpose of global economic stability is highlighted, power distribution has been further elaborated by Stephen Krasner (1976, 1982) and Robert Gilpin (1975) as an important framework of causal explanation.<sup>1</sup> The neo - liberal approach to regime theory and international institutions, that centers its focus on the utility of institutional frameworks for enhancing international cooperation, is the major frontline of realist critique. Joseph Grieco emphasizes the inherent difficulty of states to accept structurally caused relative losses and therefore, evaluate very carefully the benefits international institution can provide.<sup>2</sup> The famous article bluntly titled as "The False Promise of International Institutions" drafted by John Mearsheimer, explicitly formulates the major realist argument that tolerates the existence of international institutions, however, as a mere reflection of state interests and power, without any constraining capacity.<sup>3</sup> Despite the rationalist foundation (purposeful ontology of action) shared both by neo - liberal and realist students, their underlying assumptions differ to the point that the notion of *power* takes central place in realist literature, and the *preferences* are assigned the critical importance in the liberal institutionalist theory.

We take both statements as tentatively valid ones and consider the sociological contribution to institutional theory as an additional concept that should be paid its share of attention. Though not central to our analysis and pretty muddled in the way it explains international regimes as "deep variety of authority relations", constructivist insights are still important to keep in mind while taking on the analysis of socialization mechanisms within the institution.<sup>4</sup> Standard accusations of theoretical limitations bear the risk of oversimplifying the key messages and of

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<sup>1</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions," 660.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph M. Grieco, "Realist Theory and the Problem of International Cooperation: Analysis with an Amended Prisoner's Dilemma Model," *Journal of Politics* 50, no. 3 (1988): 600–624.

<sup>3</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994 1995): 7.

<sup>4</sup> Katzenstein, "Analyzing Change in International Politics," 7.

missing the valuable nuances of each theoretical school. Constructivist claims cannot dismiss the influence states exert over institutions by various policy – mechanisms in funding and personnel assignment. Similarly, realist would hardly deny that the legitimacy of a state action and the chance of compliance would significantly increase, once regarded as legitimate and supported by other members of an institution.<sup>1</sup> Even more importantly, the perception of states as unitary actors purposefully operating to meet their predefined interests is an absolute valid and strong analytical assumption. However, it should not preclude us from attempts to investigate the domestic determinants of international politics largely disregarded in realist views.<sup>2</sup>

Here we arrive at the point, where the need for theoretical pluralism is clearly recognized. We join the growing number of respected scholars who advocate for accepting more flexibility with regard to theoretical rigor, and apply theoretical complementarisms as a valuable approach to encompass the huge complexity of social phenomena. The benefits of such approach are expected to be multidimensional. However, we cautiously argue that the application of the theoretical flexibility must be limited and should not bear a resemblance to the theoretical mosaic - building. The acknowledgment of this risk was an additional motivation to look carefully at the theoretical consistency of the literature and to identify the *neo - liberal institutionalism* as the framework flexible enough to respond to various analytical challenges as well as to meet key requirements of the theoretical rigor. The brilliance of the sharp exchange of arguments performed by realist (John Mearsheimer) and neo - liberal (Robert Keohane, Martin Lisa) authors is being revealed through the paradox that the radical divergence of analytical angles, does not prevent us from sharing one or another line of argumentation, depending on the context discussed. In fact, Robert Keohane stresses the strong affinity of the liberal approach to realist roots via realities of power and interests.<sup>3</sup> As our interest is to construct a solid theoretical foundation for the systematic analysis of empirical material, the partial convergence of issues would become apparent. As Kathleen Thelen graciously puts it, the synthesis or the “creative borrowing” would foster the strength of particular school, and points at rationalist scholars (Forejohn 1991, Bates et al. 1998, Levi 1997, 1998), who increasingly realize the relevance of norms and identities in explaining political actions.<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Abbot and Duncan Snidal also admit that the rationalist

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<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, “Cooperation in World Politics,” 5.

<sup>2</sup> Katzenstein, “Analyzing Change in International Politics,” 8–9.

<sup>3</sup> Robert O. Keohane and Lisa L. Martin, “The Promise of Institutional Theory,” *International Security* 20, no. 1 (1995): 41–42.

<sup>4</sup> Thelen, “Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics,” 371–379.



approach to regime theory would benefit from constructivist findings and be more complete.<sup>1</sup> Conversely, we can find more elements in constructivist literature (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998) that reveal the convergent dynamics with rationalist views, assigning a purposive actor the central role in pursuing his objectives in a strategic manner.<sup>2</sup> Hence, drawing a clear distinction line between the regulating function of incentives and constrains (rational choice) and the constitutive role of the normative standards (sociological institutionalism) is often difficult to do, since all seem to lead to the formation of similar behavioral patterns. The distinction is not that much, if any.

By concluding the stabilizing role NATO as a security regime had played internally via adherence of member - states to common norms and standards, John Duffield obviously leaves it up to privilege of a subjective assessment to attribute stabilizing effects of the Alliance either to rational choice or to sociological causes.<sup>3</sup> Various versions of institutionalism can be used as distinct lenses to illuminate particular aspects of political life.<sup>4</sup> It is not a surprise that two corrective arguments interact producing the need for broader perspective and the tendency for abandoning one - way deterministic arguments, as Richard Scott concludes.<sup>5</sup> Despite existing division lines, that have much to do with differing angles of contextual and theoretical analysis, there is more converging dynamics, than usually assumed. Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor suggest taking the said interchange of approaches as far as possible, while showing for instance, that none of sociological accounts claim that individuals are not rational or purposive, and in contrary, that actor's behavior can be well explained via reference to moral and normative templates.<sup>6</sup> What we observe is, basically, the attempt to reconcile two different narratives of the same phenomena, allowing the use of both analytical tools when appropriate. Paying tribute to theoretical parsimony often results in the blunt rejection of the valuable insights of the rival theory. Although institutional models are difficult to import within the context different from those in which originated, the need for multidimensional theory cannot be simply dismissed.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abbott and Snidal, "Why States Act through Formal International Organizations," 29.

<sup>2</sup> Abbott, "Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law," 13.

<sup>3</sup> John S. Duffield, "International Regimes and Alliance Behavior: Explaining NATO Conventional Force Levels," *International Organization* 46, no. 04 (September 1992): 819–55, doi:10.1017/S0020818300033269.

<sup>4</sup> Peters, "Institutional Theory: Problems and Prospects," 6.

<sup>5</sup> Scott, "Institutional Theory," 14.

<sup>6</sup> Hall and Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalism\*," 949–955.

<sup>7</sup> Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 27.

On the example of Frank Schimmelfennig's study (1998, 2001, and 2005) of accession process of East - European countries, in which he argues that the EU and NATO - membership was achieved predominantly by strategic use of normative arguments, we identify another significant challenge, that is maintaining analytical virtues of the distinct perspective. Whether the accession success had to be attributed merely to the inconsistencies between the rhetoric and entry - criteria, and not to the strategic bargaining and calculus of both sides, is highly controversial.<sup>1</sup> The question why those countries succeeded in joining the EU can certainly not be explained by mere reference to the technical aspect of procedural effectiveness (showing the opponents' inconsistency). Mark Pollack for instance argues that on the EU - level, the socialization of elites showed little role in determining preferences as compared with the socialization on domestic level.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the adjustment of causal relations to the benefit of theoretical parsimony may pose a serious danger. Not surprisingly, rational choice scholars doubt the ability of constructivist authors to measure based on their inter-subjective understanding of processes they ought to observe and analyze in a most objectively neutral way. Bringing domestic factors of politics into the reality of international institutions makes the analytical undertaking even more challenging by broadening the dimensions of inquiry. To sum up, "rationalism, encompassing liberal argument of voluntary agreement and realists' claim of power and coercion, as well as constructivism provide today the major platform of contestation" for IR scholarship.<sup>3</sup> Bearing in mind negative consequences of both the blind loyalty to theoretical purity as well as of conceptual stretching, we recognize *the neo-liberal institutionalism* as best framework capable of addressing issues in a way, other theoretical mainstreams are powerless to do. In the following chapter we provide the rationale of our theoretical choice, the strengths of the approach and the designed analytical concept, and the benefits it can bring to the results of our study.

### **2.3.2 Neo - Liberal Institutionalism – the Source of Analytical Design**

Infinite number of questions could be easily identified that touch upon the impact of institutional effects. Yet the most critical to us is, to what extent state behavior is influenced by international institution, and accordingly, what theoretical pillars can be preferred to solidify our analytical construct. The separation of domestic and external factors still poses a

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<sup>1</sup> See Frank Schimmelfennig, "The Community Trap: Liberal Norms, Rhetorical Action, and the Eastern Enlargement of the European Union," *International Organization* 55, no. 47 (2001).

<sup>2</sup> Mark Pollack, "International Relations Theory and European Integration," vol. 55, RSC (San Domenico: European University Institute Badia Fiesolana, Robert Schuman Centre for Advance Studies, 2000), 17.

<sup>3</sup> Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, "Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics," 646.

serious problem significantly hampering the elucidation of causal relationships. Correctly labeled by Michael McFaul as the “forgotten dimension”, the international factors of domestic change are essential to establish causal linkages between domestic actors and external agents.<sup>1</sup> It must be noted, that states are increasingly reviewed by realists students as a structure represented by the government. Yet realists fail to address the interrelation of domestic political factors and effects produced by international institutions in a way Robert Putnam’s *Two-Level Game* does by stressing multilevel structure (constituency) of the state in international policy - making.<sup>2</sup> Alongside with Robert Putnam, Robert Keohane (1982, 1995, 1998) and Andrew Moravcsik (1993, 1997) are key authors significantly contributing to the accomplishments of neo - liberal institutional theory and contribute to the solid body of arguments, our study heavily draws on. The theoretical mainstream we’ve adopted is largely rooted within the liberal theory of IR, and we believe is best to account for critical theoretical claims related to the role of international institutions in policy – formation and implementation.

We will first devote our attention to major findings of the mentioned scholars, whom we regard critical to our study, and then complement the gained understanding by adding valuable insights generated within the studies of other students of neoliberal - rationalist fashion. As briefly alluded in previous sections, and explicitly to be mentioned here, the crucial advantage of the liberal institutionalist theory is the focus on political (incl. domestic) origins of national preferences. In Andrew Moravcsik’s view the national governments are exposed to the influence of domestic interest - groups and respond to their demands via various mechanisms of representation (democratic, social etc.).<sup>3</sup> His model draws on the causal importance of state - society relations rooted within the well developed *Public Choice* theory that defines the political behavior via intensive interplay of political transactions and preferences. Stressing the paradigmatic significance of societal group - preferences in defining state behavior, he elaborates variations (three) of liberal theory. Though his attempts to separate liberal theory from its institutional wing (represented by Robert Keohane) sound very unconvincing, the insights developed in relation to social contexts the states are embedded internationally and domestically, serve great deal in explaining the political behavior in world politics. According to Andrew Moravcsik, the fundamental actors in international politics are individual and private groups that may cause state to act in a unitary

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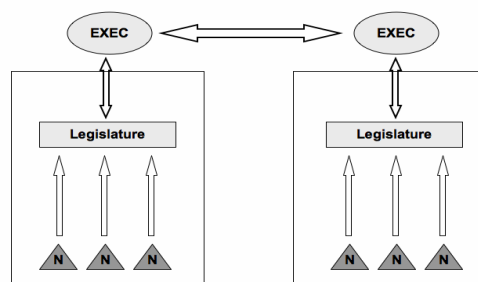
<sup>1</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, “Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions,” 6–7.

<sup>2</sup> Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games.”

<sup>3</sup> Moravcsik, “Taking Preferences Seriously,” 518.

or disaggregated way.<sup>1</sup> States and other political institutions represent various configurations of domestic society, i.e. social coalitions, interests of which are translated into state preferences pursued by state officials in a purposeful manner, which in turn may lead to different configuration or compatibility modes of states' preferences (compatible or conflictual).<sup>2</sup> Moravcsik's concept is perfectly applicable to international reality by showing the wide range of factors (social structures) relevant to the decision - making process performed by national representations (officials, agencies). Conversely, an international institution could refer to domestic constituencies to seek more support and legitimacy for policies and norms to be introduced.<sup>3</sup> This aspect among others is also provided by Robert Putnam in his more developed system of political interplay - negotiations, in which national executives are involved in to reach international agreements. The conceptual understanding of how domestic policy and diplomacy interact is visualized by two levels of political deliberation national executive officials are engaged in (see Figure 1).<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1. The Logic of Two - Level Game**



On the example of Bonn Economic Summit in 1978, where political leaders were forced to play on two game boards (international and domestic) to adopt the coordinated program of global reflation, he shows the limitations of analytical interpretation from purely domestic angle of causes and international effects (second image), or in contrary, from the standpoint of international causes and the domestic effects (second image reversed).<sup>5</sup> While national executives are engaged with counterparts internationally to reach an agreement, domestically they seek approval from various interest groups, legislators and political constituencies, who in turn decide whether to support or not. The *concept of ratification* presented by Robert

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 516,520.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 518–521.

<sup>3</sup> Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” 17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>5</sup> Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” 430.

Putnam in his insightful article sheds light on two key factors that determine the political outcome:<sup>1</sup>

1. National representatives, while negotiating, seek such solutions that will be most attractive to their constituents.
2. Possible actions that appear rational for one player at one level may be less acceptable for the same player at the other level.

It is noteworthy that within the complexity of multiple level negotiations, author attaches a great deal to the expectation effects, that heavily affect not only the proper phase of interaction leading to abortion, pause and other results, but cause also prior consultations with different constituents or even formal voting<sup>2</sup>. We share author's particular interest for the said factor, not only because of its huge practical implications and intrinsic relevance to the overall political outcome, but not least due to its ability to correspond to key neo - realist ideas, nicely encompassed by Joseph Grieco under the concept of *relative gains* of state preferences.<sup>3</sup> Two - level game model is a key concept we take as a starting platform for our own analysis. It will be further refined, by considering particular issues, relevant to our object of study, and by adding other elements derived from the literature of other liberal scholars.

The critical contribution of the model is that it links the structure and procedures of international negotiations to the realm of domestic political interactions. By doing this, it reveals two general effects on the political outcome likely to unfold: first – exposed to the dual pressure, national officials' strategy is to modify the “the scope of negotiations or the negotiated text to ensure approval at home”; and second – national officials may use both domestic concerns to strengthen their position during international negotiations, or, conversely apply international constrains to overcome domestic resistance.<sup>4</sup> We will push the theoretical horizon a bit further to illuminate the process of implementation, once an agreement has been signed and approved by national authorities. It invites scholars to the realm, what could be titled as *domestic obstruction of legitimized implementation*, in which international agreements serve the mere purpose of formal legitimation, however, are hardly implemented because of their incompatibility with domestic interests of much higher importance. The conflict of internal and external (international) agendas poses a serious

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 434–436.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 436.

<sup>3</sup> Grieco, “Realist Theory and the Problem of International Cooperation.”

<sup>4</sup> Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” 23.

concern - issue, theoretically born within the Putnam's model and deserving more attention. International commitments and promises have to be debated domestically and weighed against domestic preferences, otherwise they might be seriously put under the risk of obstruction. Conversely, if no reaction is to observe, or no implementation of the agreement has followed, the process of democratic deliberation in the country can be seriously questioned. Here we see a clear affinity to key concepts of democratic theory (representative and deliberative democracies), as well as to the principal - agent model that deals with the strategies of executive officials (agents) who pursue their own interests, different from those of their constituents (principals).

### **2.3.3 Neoliberal View of Institutions – The most compatible Framework**

We have briefly mentioned Andrew Moravcsik's vague attempt to place Robert Keohane outside of liberal theoretical mainstream. Understanding his strong internal drive for crafting the theoretical distinctiveness of the liberal concept, we are much less convinced by his arguments dismissing the *institutionalist theory* as not - compatible with core messages of the liberal theory. Instead we regard Robert Keohane as one of the key contributors to the liberal theory of international relations by enriching it with fascinating insights generated from international regime and institutional studies. Labeling him as "sympathetic to liberalism" does not make Robert Keohane less liberal<sup>1</sup>. In contrary, both authors' assertion of the importance of international institutions as well as of the purposive mode of state behavior in pursuit of its interests (preferences) constitute the major unifying framework of liberal thought when applied to international politics. Institutions in Keohane's view generally play positive role of supporting cooperation incentives in a given policy area and reduce initial uncertainty via increased distribution of information.<sup>2</sup> However, they are not always successful and the degree of successfulness of an institution as a measurement for general plausibility of institutionalists' claim is being openly rejected by neoliberal authors themselves.<sup>3</sup> Since bargaining and preference configurations somehow can be regarded as conceptual outlets for realists' argument of power and dominance relationship, the neo - liberal concept of international institutionalism seem to be well suited to respond both to claims of rival theories, as well as to the dynamics of real - world events. As Robert Keohane

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<sup>1</sup> Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously," 515.

<sup>2</sup> Katzenstein, "Analyzing Change in International Politics," 15.

<sup>3</sup> Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Can Interdependence Work?," *Foreign Policy*, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge, no. 110 (Spring 1998): 83.

and Martin Lisa argue, it does not deny the validity of realist approach to issues of power, security and interest, and by mitigating fears of cheating (positive distributional effect) it directly supports the logic of utility maximization of actors.<sup>1</sup> At this point, the immense significance of information to security considerations is clearly recognized, and creates additional incentive of cooperation, once information - sharing mechanisms (e.g. on defence costs or force planning) are on place. Defining his arguments as functional response to the hegemonic stability concept, Keohane argues that the existence of a hegemon is not a necessary precondition for the emergence of cooperation, and if present, the hegemon would even benefit from the cooperation to enforce the rules.<sup>2</sup>

Known for his propensity to focus predominantly on internal institutional structures, he also illustrates the institutional capacity to initiate domestic changes. In this sense, multinational institutions are given the ability to enhance the quality of “national democratic processes” and to guide institutional changes domestically.<sup>3</sup> He is joined by other liberal scholars, who highlight the broad variety of mechanisms of multilateral institutions that enhance national deliberation processes and decision - making, and range from platforms of negotiations and debate to the effective tools of expertise provision and professional networking. Illustrative are the words of James Madison in Federalist Papers that refer to the importance of objective assessment of third party for national political decision - making:

*An attention to the judgment of other nations is important to every government (...) that in doubtful cases, particularly where the national councils may be warped by some strong passion or momentary interest, the presumed or known opinion of the impartial world may be the best guide that can be followed.*<sup>4</sup>

Keohane, Macedo and Moravcsik apply this logic when reviewing the impact international institutions can cause in new democracies. They particularly stress the multiplying effect of such influence once national political leadership agrees to reinforce domestic efforts via international commitments that imply sanctions in case of policy revision.<sup>5</sup> International institutions perform a function of political assistance, when supporting states in advancing certain objectives domestically that initially originated somewhere else. This process of

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<sup>1</sup> Keohane and Martin, “The Promise of Institutional Theory,” 44–46.

<sup>2</sup> Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 35–37.

<sup>3</sup> Robert O. Keohane, Stephen Macedo, and Andrew Moravcsik, “Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism,” *International Organization* 63, no. 01 (2009): 1–31.

<sup>4</sup> Madison, *The Federalist Papers, Federalist. No.63* (A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication, 2001), 280, available at <http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/poldocs/fed-papers.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Keohane, Macedo, and Moravcsik, “Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism,” 17.

interdependence can be run in two - way direction. In one case national systemic flaws can be corrected by serious involvement of an international organization (IO); conversely national institutions usually impose tight control over IO by various mechanisms of accountability (information, financial) and the modes of decision - making procedures.<sup>1</sup>

The liberal view of the role states play in international institutions implies a high degree of governmental accountability towards its domestic constituents that can either support officials or punish them for their decisions made internationally. Allen Buchanan terms the said effect of the state - IO interdependence as *reciprocal legitimation*, which implies the mutual reinforcement of the “right to rule”, i.e. the justification to act in response of the requirements of moral duties.<sup>2</sup> Though mostly applied in the context of democratic nature of international institution (II), legitimacy enhancing mechanisms are crucial elements of II’s domestic influence and the general concept of the compliance. The prospects of diminishing legitimacy can produce a great deal of concern and prevent a state from actions that undermine its objectives publicly declared. Domestic policies can be shaped by a wide application of international standards, or IIs can be allowed to operate in domestic affairs in order to increase policy effectiveness.<sup>3</sup> The inherent openness of the said concept to multidimensional approach of the analysis resulted in a logical interest of scholars for the democratic effects of IIs influence. Whether picking on the topics of improved democratic governance, or the accountability of state officials (agents), the debate on the impact of international institutions encompassed various aspects of democratic theories and promised to improve the information asymmetry as well as the quality of monitoring state behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Two aspects here should be given attention to review the multidimensional effects of institutions in their conceptual totality. The role of national elites and interest groups in conjunction with the linkages established towards the bureaucracies of international institutions should not be underestimated. Though the general principle of coherent state preferences remains valid, the coordinating effects of bureaucracies on the final political outcome as a result of policy readjustment between different interest groups have to be

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Moravcsik, “Affirming Democracy in International Organizations,” *Global Challenges in 2030*, 2010, 14. Available at <http://www.princeton.edu/~amoravcs/library/goldstein.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan, “Reciprocal Legitimation,” 7–8.

<sup>3</sup> Wesley Carrington, Jim DeBuse, and Heejin Lee, “The Theory of Governance and Accountability” (Iowa: University of Iowa Center for International Finance and Development, May 2008), 4–5, available at [http://blogs.law.uiowa.edu/ebook/sites/default/files/Governance\\_%26\\_Accountability-Theory.pdf](http://blogs.law.uiowa.edu/ebook/sites/default/files/Governance_%26_Accountability-Theory.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Keohane, Macedo, and Moravcsik, “Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism”; Buchanan, “Reciprocal Legitimation.”



thoroughly scrutinized.<sup>1</sup> Another challenge is to bring to the fore the risk of the policies being “hijacked” by certain groups or even by political *elitist* circles. Hence, the historical play - back of political socialization processes between the representatives of national authorities and the officials of international organizations becomes indispensable tool to capture the moments, in which complex, costly but ultimately balanced institutional environment decisively contributed to the formation of likeminded political elites.<sup>2</sup>

Neo - liberal approach to the issue of institutions’ relevance in international relations is marked by its ability to encompass various aspects of power and interest - relations, structural dynamics and organizational influence that are shared by scholars of opposing theoretical mainstreams. The common epistemological foundation of neo - liberals and realists, that is the rational model of actor’s behavior which is assumed to have fixed set of preferences, allows to speak about a high degree of theoretical convergence.<sup>3</sup> Once the relevance of institution has been recognized, the neoliberal view can essentially subsume the realist claims and promise to provide more nuanced explanation of political processes. Despite the growing tendency of state disaggregation as a meaningful tool for understanding preference - formation, states still remain the main object of analysis, and as Mark Pollack argues, the creation of institutions “did not cause the transfer of authority from state to new center”.<sup>4</sup> The centrality of states in international relations is largely acknowledged by realist and neo - liberal institutionalist scholars, although the tendency “...to multinationalize, transgovernmentalize, bureaucratize and transnationalize the state led to its literal extinction as analytical construct.”<sup>5</sup>

While highlighting the growing importance of inter-sectoral, functional and horizontal interdependence in world politics, we might sometimes use definitions such as *Intergovernmentalism*, *International/Multilateral Institutionalisms* and *Neoliberal Institutionalism* interchangeably. We also share Robert Keohane and others’ claim that states still represent the major link connecting individuals with outer world.<sup>6</sup> Mark Pollack carefully puts together all major postulates of neo - liberal institutionalists in a very coherent way. Referring to state as the unit of analysis he concludes, that though consisting of various

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<sup>1</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, “Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions,” 659.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Pierson, “Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics,” *The American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (June 2000): 259, doi:10.2307/2586011.

<sup>3</sup> Pollack, “International Relations Theory and European Integration,” 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Peter J. Katzenstein, Robert O. Keohane, and Stephen D. Krasner, “International Organization and the Study of World Politics,” *International Organization*, *International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics*, 52, no. 4 (Autumn 1998): 657.

<sup>6</sup> Keohane, Macedo, and Moravcsik, “Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism,” 12.

interest groups, states ultimately aggregate the preferences and advance them in a strategic way by rationally choosing the institution that are designed best to maximize their utility.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, current institutional scholarship may simply vary depending on the empirical emphasis chosen (intergovernmental vs. very functional bureaucratic institution). Preferences play also key role in determining the autonomy of the organization. The principal - agent model becomes herewith a function of the state preferences that reveal themselves in the variety and relevance of issues. Principals (states) basically, very much define the level of autonomy of the agent (institution).<sup>2</sup>

Theoretical debates are of critical importance, yet they should not lead to a blind dismissal of opposing arguments as unacceptable, rejecting the benefits the successful “borrowings” can provide. No doubt, common standards of scientific research must be maintained. However, since the establishing of a causal relationship between the international action, the form of government and the domestic effects (politics) is our major goal and requires an analytical lens capable of providing the multidimensional (political, functional and ideational) picture, we adopt neo - liberal institutionalist approach as best framework for verifying the empirical evidence still to be gathered. We also admit that our theoretical choice does not preclude us from identifying other approaches as most applicable to certain issues, in overall, contributing to the better elucidation of causal linkages. Neo - liberal institutionalists’ interpretation of international institution, though rationalist, is very helpful in illustrating the domestic - international linkages, and in particular, is powerful in providing explanations in a “disaggregated manner”. The concepts it applies are multifunctional and increasingly able to incorporate other dimensions such as time, space and social (cultural) context. Consequently, we are able to pinpoint the key elements that will further determine the design of our analysis and the structure of our study. These are:

- Policy making and preference compatibility on two levels of game
- Factor of mutually enhanced legitimation
- Institutions as effective forums of communication and impartial management
- Domestic constituents of the state

Knowing the limits of comparative case - study approach, we restrain ourselves from the ambition of strong generalization of the findings. Yet the elements listed above, if carefully

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<sup>1</sup> Pollack, “International Relations Theory and European Integration,” 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 9.

applied, would immensely contribute to the illustration of existing political landscape and deepen the understanding of state - institution interdependence mechanisms, by providing powerful explanations of particular national policies adopted towards NATO and affected by NATO. This has not been done so far.

## 2.4 Analytical Design and Hypotheses

Defining causal relationship is the key objective of reasoning in general science.<sup>1</sup> Theoretical foundations of the study, among others, pursue the objective to assist students in their attempt to construct a model, capable of producing hypotheses that are empirically valid and can be verified or falsified. The idea that the essence of science must be seen as the production of clear concepts is not new and can be traced back to Max Weber.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the concepts created must help us disaggregate our general hypothesis into a set of competing (alternative) hypotheses translatable into indicators for the sake of objective evaluation and measurement. Since social science research often does not perform best in focusing on processes that are observable, designing solid concepts and models turns to be a major precondition for improving quality of data collection.<sup>3</sup> The rationalist coinage of institutional analysis, according to Andrew Moravcsik and Robert Putnam, is generally very suitable for constructing various interdependence models of domestic and international politics.<sup>4</sup> We are in particular very interested in the ability of NATO to influence the preferences of actors (Armenia and Georgia) and cause political outcome or change at domestic level. This capacity is often called as *transformative engagement* of institution.<sup>5</sup> Knowing well the methodological difficulties to test various causal lines used by *institution* (NATO) to influence the national behavior (defence transformation) the task of defining criteria for the testability of causal argument is even more challenging.

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<sup>1</sup> Kamel, "Rational Choice and New Institutionalism, a Critical Analysis," 78.

<sup>2</sup> David D. Laitin, "Disciplining Political Science," *American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1995): 455.

<sup>3</sup> Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, "The Importance of Research Design in Political Science," *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1995): 475.

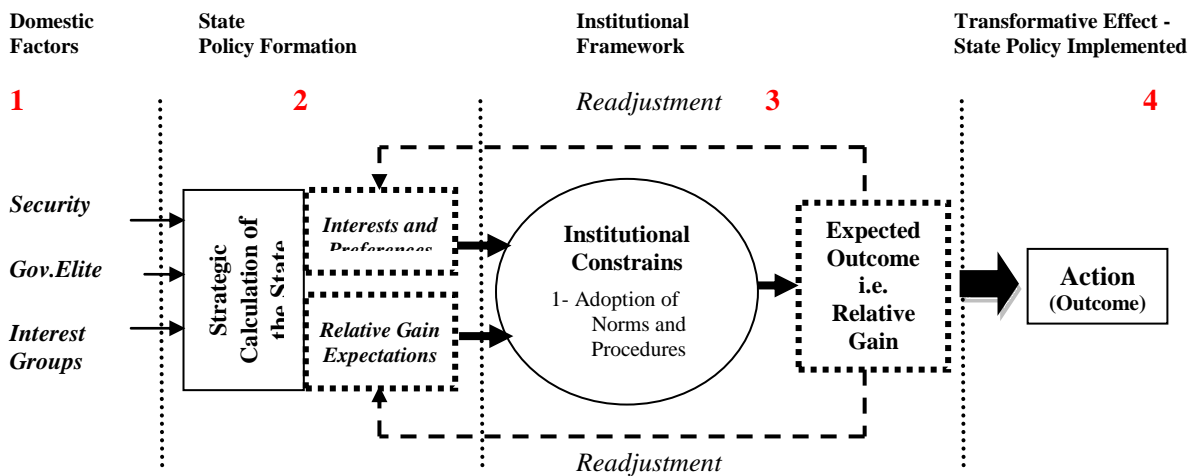
<sup>4</sup> Moravcsik, "Taking Preferences Seriously"; Putnam, "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games."

<sup>5</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions," 12.

## 2.4.1 Understanding analytical Design

As Robert Keohane and Martin Lisa put it “research designed to isolate the impact of institutions” from the underlying force is difficult to design and execute.<sup>1</sup> However, we believe that, even more, the efforts aiming at analyzing cases, where these factors are interrelated, must be appreciated. We are aware of the perennial need to check and control the degree in which a research design responds to key questions formulated within it. In this constant way of conceptual self - control, we’ll be able to combine theory with observations “in such a way as to demonstrate a causal effect.”<sup>2</sup> To respond to said challenges and to meet theoretical requirements of the study we designed a model (see below, Figure 2) that will guide us throughout the analysis. Bearing in mind the critical importance of domestic factors that may be the cause of state preference - formation we proceed in a rationalist manner by disaggregating complex international processes in single elements that in course of analysis can ultimately be aggregated in a “multi - causal explanation.”<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 2. Analytical Concept**



According to our model, the whole process of state - institution interplay is virtually divided in four phases, within which different forces (variables) come together and affect the ultimate political outcome. As Kenneth Abbott argues, the greatest impact comes through domestic politics allowing democratic leaders to “commit themselves publicly to reform.”<sup>4</sup> The first phase of our model highlights the diverse nature of interest groups and other domestic factors involved in the process of preference - generation. At the state level all individual preferences

<sup>1</sup> Keohane and Martin, “The Promise of Institutional Theory,” 47.

<sup>2</sup> Laitin, “Disciplining Political Science,” 455.

<sup>3</sup> Pollack, “International Relations Theory and European Integration,” 11.

<sup>4</sup> Abbott, “Enriching Rational Choice Institutionalism for the Study of International Law,” 37.

are being aggregated into the coherent body of well defined state - preferences, which are at core of strategic calculations of state officials and might be well correlated to the expected relative gains (incl. initial expectations) derived from the possibility of joining international institution. Once expected benefits speak for the initiation of cooperation with an institution, the actual engagement phase begins, in which state preferences and officials are exposed to institutional constraints, via the requirements of norm adoption and the bureaucratic effect of socialization and learning.

Already at this early stage we identify the inherent difficulty of operationalizing variables, generally acknowledged by many scholars.<sup>1</sup> How the degree of autonomy of the bureaucratic staff of an international institution can be measured? Can international bureaucracy be detached from the interests of member states, or should we dismiss this suggestion from the very beginning, well aware of Max Weber's argument that, the bureaucrats are those "who have not wished to be lords themselves, but who have entered the service of political lords".<sup>2</sup> The formidability of the task to validate the measurement is twofold: first is its contingency on the clarity of concept design, and the second - in the choice of measurement tools to capture best the possible ways and the object of measurement. As Giovanni Sartori passionately states, only in this case data collection becomes meaningful, otherwise will resemble the mission of fishing data without the proper net.<sup>3</sup> Thus we will provide a detailed explanation of the concept - operationalization in a separate chapter, which devotes also a great deal to the question of the measurement and data - sources.

At this stage, however, given the neo - liberal claim on the relevance of international institutions in terms of information distribution and coordination management, we will assume that NATO bureaucracy serves the purpose of objectivity and neutrality. Further, the national representatives once placed within the institutional framework, will be primarily affected by common standards, norms and procedures leading to the reevaluation of the expected benefits, and, consequently, to their readjustment with original expectations via the process of consultations (two - level game), effectively described by Robert Putnam. The final stage of intensive domestic consultations formally represents the ultimate assessment of relative benefits international institution can provide. Many factors (e.g. position of powerful interest group or elite) might play decisive role for the political decision to be made. As

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<sup>1</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions," 660.

<sup>2</sup> Keohane, Macedo, and Moravcsik, "Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism," 13.

<sup>3</sup> Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," 1038-9.

widely known, participation in international institution (II) does not result in improved performance inside the country.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the legitimating effect of II in domestic affairs might turn to be decisive trigger for accepting political outcome, that is, in our case, to initiate transformative effect. Our concept offers a plausible picture of influence - mechanisms that can be explained from rationalist as well as constructivist standpoints. Most importantly, they indicate certain dimensions or avenues, through which II exerts its influence and delivers messages. Though not explicitly reflected here, we attribute those dimensions to *political*, *functional* and *ideational* modes of institutional influence, to which national representatives are exposed and that are indicative for the subsequent empirical measurement.

## 2.4.2 Introducing Variables and Hypotheses

Effects of institutional influence pose a serious challenge to the task of their valid measurement. Though very successful in bringing more insights of political processes, institutions still lack on effective measurement tools for their characteristics and impacts in various policy areas.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the crucial importance of the predefined analytical concept capable of generating useful results has to be clearly recognized. The challenge of identifying observable processes and examples might be alleviated by proposing properties that can help measure unobservable (intangible) phenomenon through the effects in various functional areas. Conversely, we must be aware of serious challenges that accompany the overstated reliance on technical aspects of the research, by which students increasingly are awarded for their “mathematic acumen” rather than their ability to analyze the ways organizations operate, as stated by Peter Katzenstein.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Giovanni Sartori warns in a passionate way from the widespread tendency of assigning qualitative statements quantitative substances that has little if any to do with quantification.<sup>4</sup> To avoid the risk of sliding into the same temptation, we constructed the model in a way as to allow ourselves to strongly link ideas with observable processes we can measure. Equally, the data we will collect must precisely capture the essence of ideas, pertaining to the analytical design. This is how effective operationalization of the concept is being achieved and the validity of measurement enhanced.<sup>5</sup> The contextual effects of observation and measurement should not be fall into oblivion. Data collected in

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan, “Reciprocal Legitimation,” 12.

<sup>2</sup> Peters, “Institutional Theory: Problems and Prospects,” 1.

<sup>3</sup> Katzenstein, Keohane, and Krasner, “Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics,” 654.

<sup>4</sup> Sartori, “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics,” 1036.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Adcock, “Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research,” *American Political Science Review* 95, no. 03 (2001): 529.

certain contextual settings might not necessarily represent the same meaning in different circumstances. As Barbara Geddes puts it, concepts must be operationized in concrete ways to “reduce the ambiguity surrounding their identification in real - world settings.”<sup>1</sup>

The discussion on strengths and limits of our analytical construct would logically subsume the chapter (methodology), which tackles the necessity and advantages of comparative case - study analysis. However, methodological considerations would be best presented if separated from the aspect of conceptual design as the cause of measurement validity, largely related to the challenge of variable identification. Concepts are theoretical and practical platforms for data gathering. Variables in this sense represent channels, where information is concentrated. Undoubtedly, it is a considerable task to select relevant “channels” that lead to valid causal explanation. Giovanni Sartori underscores the problem of conceptual understanding of variables and criticizes the current state, in which nearly everything is regarded as variable (which in fact they are not), significantly complicating the gradation and measurability of observations.<sup>2</sup> We acknowledge the simple necessity that variables must measure what they supposed to measure. By doing that we also take account of the clear distinction of variables that measure qualitative characteristics from the variables that measure quantitative dimension of the phenomenon. It is the issue of magnitude and quality that makes this distinction, and ultimately the measurement valid.<sup>3</sup>

As briefly mentioned afore, the contextual underpinning of the study exerts significant impact on the ways and the interpretation of results gained. Further, we share and stress Robert Adcock’s claim that the validation of one set of scores in one context, does not imply the same interpretation within the different context, especially apparent in cross - country, cross - regional comparisons and within - unit analyses.<sup>4</sup> We base our validity claims with reference to specific indicators that are carefully selected with a great sense for politico - social meaning and context in each case - country. Inevitably, we construct such a model, in which cases are similar once dependent variable is considered, that is three dimensions of defence transformation. The merit of such design though, is the ability to discern the common set of

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues,” in *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Geddes Barbara (University of Michigan Press, 2003), 132.

<sup>2</sup> Sartori, “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics,” 1036–37.

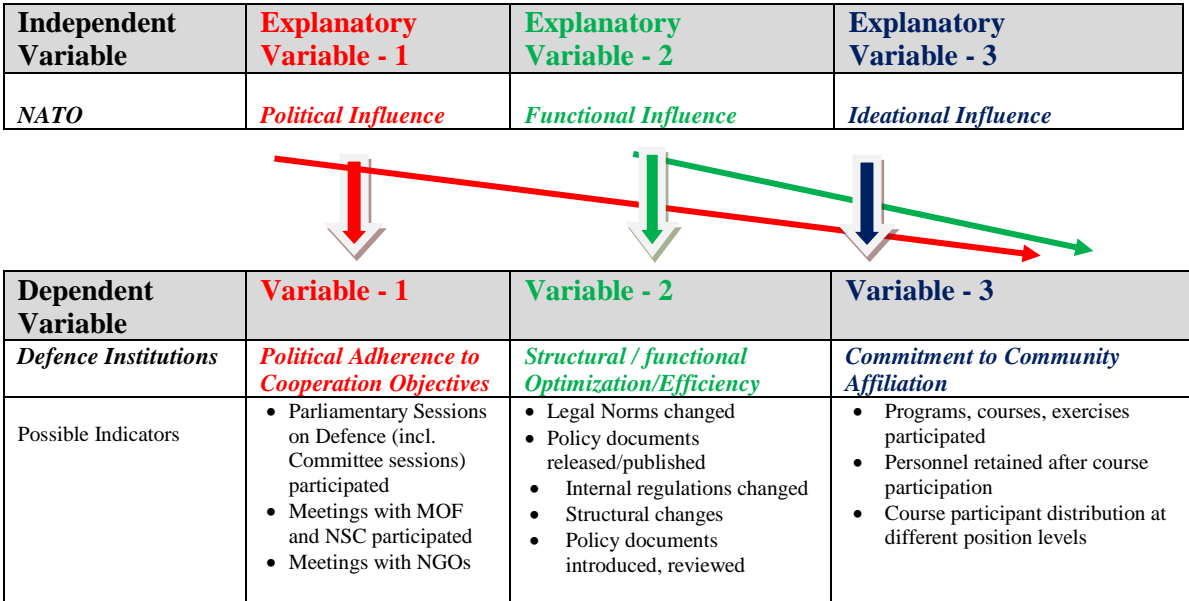
<sup>3</sup> James A. Caporaso, “Research Design, Falsification, and the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide,” *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1995): 457.

<sup>4</sup> Adcock, “Measurement Validity,” 534.

explanatory factors that “can push scholars to discover new explanations that might not have emerged from the analysis of a more homogeneous set of cases.”<sup>1</sup>

The picture below (Figure 3) illustrates the relationships of independent and dependent variables, by allowing the dimensional aspects of the analytical concept to be translated into explanatory independent variables (political, functional and ideational). Obviously the process of transformation turns the defence institution into the dependent variable.<sup>2</sup> It is disaggregated into three sub - variables so as to provide a clear set of issue areas, where indicators could be best identified. It is assumed that independent *political* and *functional* variables have major effects on the areas of *political adherence* and *structural/functional optimization*, but also partially affecting third (*ideational*) dimension. Thus the in - depth analysis of independent variables becomes a must, to establish strong relationship between variables and indicators or particular outcomes.

**Figure 3. Variables**



We will analyze the content of independent variables to identify priorities of policy agendas and program objectives as well as constitutive elements of functional and ideational influence. It must be noted that the regional security concerns, i.e. the factors associated with regional conflicts will not be excluded from the analysis and will serve the purpose of explanatory variables. With the developed set of variables, we hope to clarify and test the validity of

<sup>1</sup> David Collier, “Translating Quantitative Methods for Qualitative Researchers: The Case of Selection Bias,” *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (June 1995): 464.  
<sup>2</sup> Norgaard, “Democracy, Democratization and Institutional Theory,” 16.



mechanisms an international institution (NATO) can apply to influence, and shape the behavior of the actor (defence institutions of Armenia and Georgia) to gain a particular political outcome (degree of transformation).<sup>1</sup> Objectively, the results of the study must be based on meticulous work in a terrain not explored before and often associated with information not intended for public use. Even more, as Collier would argue, the intensive analysis of few cases would most probably render much more positive results than a broader study.<sup>2</sup> This approach allows collecting more data on dependent variable “by observing the same variable in another context, or by observing another dependent variable that is an implication of the same theory.”<sup>3</sup>

Based on the general model constructed and the variables offered, we suggest following hypotheses:

- The degree of institutional influence (domestic compliance), i.e. transformation of the national defence systems is contingent on compatibility of aggregated national preferences with the benefits / relative gains calculated within the framework of institutional (NATO) cooperation.
- Further, we claim that the extensive application of NATO - shared values and norms domestically by a country is contingent on the prevalence of external (international) political objectives over internal political agenda.
- Participation in NATO - institutional frameworks predominantly serves the purpose of legitimization of domestic actions and does not lead to imminent implementation.

Alternatively we argue that:

- International power - relations and security interests by far determine the speed and depth of defence transformation as the political outcome of institutional compliance.
- Cooperation mechanisms existing between NATO and Armenia and Georgia support the adoption of norms and practices of democratic control over armed forces, consequently, contributing to the increased level of institutional accountability rather than to the objective of military effectiveness.

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<sup>1</sup> *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Collier, “Translating Quantitative Methods for Qualitative Researchers: The Case of Selection Bias,” 465.

<sup>3</sup> King, Keohane, and Verba, “The Importance of Research Design in Political Science,” 479.

## 2.5 Conclusion

If effectively applied, the concept, which we have developed, seems to be very capable of: first - elucidating the variety of issues relevant specifically to neo - liberal institutionalist theory. Yet it also promises to tackle other aspects of a political phenomenon (institutional influence) that correspond to the core of other theoretical concepts. There is a great potential that students engaged in other theoretical domains could benefit from the insights of institutional theories. I am far away from claiming to bring revolutionary insight into the relevance of the theoretical approach adopted. However, while attempting to explain a particular case by testing certain theoretical propositions against identified phenomenon, we directly contribute to the additional development of the theory. Once again, we underscore our forceful desire to join the club of “conscious thinkers” who realize “the limitations of not having a thermometer and still manages to say a great deal simply by saying hot and cold, warmer and cooler.”<sup>1</sup> By devoting specific attention to the analytical concept and its constituting theoretical ideas we hoped to provide a solid fundament for the methodological choices, the structure and techniques of the scientific inquiry, we have privileged in the following chapter.

While adopting neo - liberal views to international institutions we aim at providing additional and more complex understanding of institutional mechanisms that strengthen the effects of compliance and furthermore, might serve as powerful tool to certify case - countries for certain type of governance (democratic or authoritarian), based on particular institutional patterns accepted towards NATO. It is especially relevant, once we start to analyze the performance of certain institution in a particular country that is embedded in the democratic transition process, as in cases of Georgia and Armenia. The analytical concept and the generated hypotheses contribute to the general debate on the relevance of particular theoretical approaches (neo - liberal, realist and constructivist) dependent on the context reviewed. Furthermore, we expect from our study to highlight important aspects of realist research agenda in relation to key determinants of state performance while transforming defence (strategic calculations and interests). Throughout analysis we will be able to discern key findings that would clarify the particular mode of state’s decision - making (rationalist vs. social context dependent) chosen to engage institutional framework of the Alliance. Last but not least, empirical evidence we base our analysis on, is supposed to reveal the practical

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<sup>1</sup> Sartori, “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics,” 1033.

achievements in military reforms, most probably to be attributed to the role of NATO – structural and bureaucratic bodies as agencies pursuing the strategic function of professional socialization. Not for nothing, the claim about the centrality of institutions in illustrating various aspects of national and international politics becomes more and more convincing.

# Chapter III: Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

Taking on the aspect of methodology, which we are about to adopt, the degree of its practical utility to collect and analyze the evidence (i.e. empirical data relevant for the hypotheses and research questions) becomes very central. Often regarded as the practical toolkit necessary for data measurement, the methodology and methodological preferences, in fact, represent a direct result and the logical consequence of how careful the entire concept was developed. As our highest goal is the establishment of valid causal inferences and effects, the success of the methodological application is ultimately contingent on the clarity and the particular characteristics of the analytical concept established in chapter before.<sup>1</sup> Bearing this in mind we must clearly distinguish the level of *methodology* from the level of *research techniques*, the last one best suitable for the collection and/or manipulation of data. As Giovanni Sartori puts it, most literature on methodology deals with survey techniques, is busy with methods of physical science and has nothing to do with the proper understanding of methodology, which is the logical structure and procedure of scientific inquiry.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes the capacity of the field of political science to absorb and tolerate the multitude of approaches and analytical formations stimulates the creation of eclectic techniques, where qualitative effects are being translated into quantitative results and thus hardly can be accepted. Such pitfalls heavily affect the reliability of data analysis and might render false results. We are aware of this danger and remain conscious about the need of our research design to respond convincingly to key research questions we have formulated. Furthermore, our concept was designed as to avoid any possible thematic stretching aimed at broadening of its meaning and the range of application. Good concepts are best tools for data collection and help very much understand the problem of what we actually are about to measure. Thus, we will first try to identify the spectrum of methodological options available and benefits associated. Then we will justify the particular approach we have selected. As last we will delineate the limitations that inherently feature the adopted methodological toolkit.

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<sup>1</sup> Laitin, "Disciplining Political Science," 455.

<sup>2</sup> Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," 1033.

## 3.2 Methodological Options available

Before touching upon the classical divide between qualitative and quantitative mainstreams, the entire study, perhaps, would best benefit if we shortly outline the particular aspect of the methodological pluralism, commonly known as the *complementaristic* approach. By that we imply efforts directed towards integrating varying (behavioral) explanations, that ultimately help very much understand the relative priority and the particular benefit of a certain methodological (qualitative/quantitative) approach. The methodological individualism strengthens the need of the individualistic approach to the analysis within social science. The extensive use of the microfoundation - analysis, i.e. the individualistic prism to explain the social phenomenon of a larger scale (group, class, and organization) is one of the valuable avenues for our research. On a number of fairly well developed examples Daniel Little draws the general conclusion that the macro level behavior and interests cannot be explained without detailed account of mechanisms working behind. Respectively, it leads to the need of analyzing individual interests and choices that constitute the larger group.<sup>1</sup> Pretty in line with rationalist school argumentation, the claim of necessity to provide micro - foundations for macro - explanations of social patterns seems very plausible. For instance, the mere reference to the role of a state to serve the interests of a certain interest group or a class (a functionalist explanation) cannot be regarded as sufficient. The collective interest here is referred to a rational choice of the individual actor, which contributes to the aggregated consequence of individual decisions.

Alternatively, the critique is being exercised by rejecting the narrow focus of the individual rationality (egoism) as impossible basis for social cooperation. Furthermore, each individual action is regarded as a kind of compromise between the individual interests and collective commitments, ideological beliefs and moral values. Emil Durkheim continues the mentioned course of argumentation and brilliantly stipulates the very essence of social facts (the way of acting, thinking and feeling) that are brought from outside and do not have the individual source.<sup>2</sup> The clear distinction of *social* from *individual* is the focal point of his argument and thus, a great help in attempt to avoid the confusion between what is called *social fact* and its “reincarnation” in individual. According to him, collective (group) aspects are determinants of

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Little, “Microfoundations of Marxism,” in *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, Michael Martin and Lee McIntyre (MIT Press, 1994), 479–96.

<sup>2</sup> Emile Durkheim, “Social Facts,” in *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, in Martin, Michael and Lee McIntyre (eds) (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 434.

individual behavior daily manifested in infinite ways.<sup>1</sup> Social phenomena are too complex to be explained solely on the basics of individual behavior. The army, for instance, is not a military organization due to number of soldiers, but the other way around - the institution of army makes from an individual a soldier.<sup>2</sup> Understanding existing problems in interpreting the nature of social phenomena is critical both from the conceptual and methodological perspective. It is, in fact, instrumental, in generating clarity about the facts and processes we are about to observe, as well as about the tools available to measure the mentioned facts and processes. This, in turn, enables us to decide whether qualitative or quantitative framework of the analysis would apply best to render valid results.

It is a perennial question, whether qualitative studies match the degree of the reliability of data produced in the field of quantitative research. Jack Levy, for instance, argues that the most parsimonious theory he could identify, which is the Neo - realism, is strongly anchored within the qualitative domain and is able to produce universally generalizable conclusions.<sup>3</sup> He advocates the combined application of quantitative tools with case - study methods, where a great deal must be devoted to the justification of the case - selection and control - variables in “meaningful subsets” in order to describe, explain or predict.<sup>4</sup> Two factors play important role in this regard: the call for the improvement of measurement strategies and the validity of scores achieved that are balanced by the findings of within – case (s) analysis. In this context Evan Liebermann argues that the Nested Analysis – an intensive combination of statistical tools with Small N - studies, is best to produce most reliable results.<sup>5</sup> However, central to this model is that specific conditions must be provided, such as the different levels of analysis within the case, and the variety of the dependent or explanatory variables.<sup>6</sup> The need for case - or cross - case analysis already indicates that the qualitative approach will play a crucial role while performing our research. Often the amount of information processed within the qualitative design is comparably equal to the massive flow of statistical data. Some authors even go further to assert that the methodological differences *quali* vs. *quanti* are in fact of

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 438.

<sup>2</sup> Steven Lukes, “Methodological Individualism Reconsidered,” in *Readings in Philosophy of Social Science*, Martin, Michael and Lee McIntyre (eds) (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 453.

<sup>3</sup> J. S. Levy, “Qualitative Methods and Cross-Method Dialogue in Political Science,” *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (February 1, 2007): 203–205, doi:10.1177/0010414006296348.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>5</sup> Evan S. Lieberman, “Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research,” *The American Political Science Review* 99, no. 3 (August 2005): 435–52.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 431, 444.

minor importance, and expose no contradiction in the fundamental process of inference.<sup>1</sup> This aspect, formulated as “supplementary mode of causal inference” is also highlighted by James Mahoney, who takes the case - study approach under serious scrutiny and identifies its great utility to grasp the context and the complexity of the reality.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, while acknowledging the priority of the qualitative approach to our research, we must be aware of the limitations and pitfalls of such approach.

We agree to the claim, that the cases we select pretty much affect the results we expect from analysis. It may be attributed, among others, to the violation of the rules of the “general convention” or to the inherent deficits of the “convention”.<sup>3</sup> Further concerns may arise about the validity of observations and measurements. Attempts to operationalize certain concepts and link them to observations and measurement - indicators, usually, presuppose their validity.<sup>4</sup> Yet the process of connecting facts (observations) meaningfully with ideas that makes up the concept often generates the problem of validation and interpretation of generated scores. The contextual uniqueness (political, social, cultural etc.) is the key limiting factor while making comparisons between the regions or different time - periods. The same applies while conducting a within - case analysis of different sub - units. James Mahoney suggests to limit the number of cases to those that share similarity in “causal and conceptual homogeneity.”<sup>5</sup> He is also supported by John Gerring, who convincingly puts forth the need for typical - representative cases that are relative to some causal relationship.<sup>6</sup> Ultimately the problem of the extreme multiplicity of variables, where everything is regarded as variables, should not be underestimated. It devaluates the proper meaning of variables and significantly limits one’s ability to measure and collect data, resulting in the low generalizability of findings.

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<sup>1</sup> Gary King, Robert O Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4.

<sup>2</sup> James Mahoney, “Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics,” *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (February 1, 2007): 123, 127, doi:10.1177/0010414006296345.

<sup>3</sup> Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues,” 89.

<sup>4</sup> Adcock, “Measurement Validity,” 529.

<sup>5</sup> Mahoney, “Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics,” 129.

<sup>6</sup> John Gerring, “What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?,” *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 02 (2004): 341–54.

### **3.3 Justification of the selected methodological Approach – the Case Choice and Comparison**

The starting point of our methodological justification will naturally refer to the importance of highlighting the unit of analysis of our research, which determines the *pro* and *contra* for the selection of a particular methodological toolkit. As we have mentioned, we need a method best for confirming the hypothesized relationship between the institutional performance (condition) and the policy - outcome. The dilemma of choice between the individualistic and collective scope of analysis should not be dismissed while taking into account the peculiarities of defence ministries as key units of our analysis. We need to have a good account of mechanisms working behind the scene, often very much person - related and unobservable, significantly affecting the course of action within the defence ministries. In this regard, the decomposition of a social structure (defence ministry) into micro - foundations cannot be bluntly rejected, but might turn to be very beneficial in understanding the individual related basics of social phenomena – the transformation of defence sector. On the other hand, it will be hard to deny that institutional transformation as any social phenomenon is of a very complex nature difficult to explain solely on the basics of the individual behavior. The distinction between individual and collective becomes a tough mission, and the international dimension makes the whole effort much more complex and difficult to model.<sup>1</sup>

#### **3.3.1 Opting for qualitative Approach**

Steven Lukes' statement that the institution of military – the army makes from an individual a soldier is equally valid and not less problematic than the assertion of opposite. Ultimately, we must admit that some social acts (if not all according to Emile Durkheim) have less if any individual source and possess the imperative of collective behavior.<sup>2</sup> Following this logic the ministries of defence of Armenia and Georgia represent complex political institutions that are exposed to individual influence and serve as powerful source of influence too. Defence institutions reveal the quality of unitary actors, but are also deeply involved in the thick network of domestic national as well as international structures, through which various interest - groups and individuals act and have a significant impact on the decisions and

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield," *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (February 1, 2007): 171, doi:10.1177/0010414006296346.

<sup>2</sup> Durkheim, "Social Facts," 433.



processes. Thus we don't see any need to limit ourselves beforehand and adopt a single scope of analysis, significantly reducing by that the probability of alternative dimensions of causal linkages. The *methodological complementarism* we regard as a valuable tool for keeping the needed flexibility. Even if we'd try to isolate a single mode of analysis to respond to a particular epistemological objective such as to describe, explain or predict, the inherent divergence of the resulting methodological toolkit would extremely endanger the ultimate validity of our claims.

The mentioned balance was less relevant for the decision we've made in favor of the qualitative approach of the study. Although Evan Lieberman admits that comparative method is a weak approximation of the statistical method, the causal inferences derived from the qualitative analysis of cases across the time and levels seem to him to be very helpful to confirm "hypothesized relationship between the institutional form and policy outcome."<sup>1</sup> We agree to the argument that statistical analysis, and especially the cross - national statistical analysis is of great advantage in producing the preliminary information and the range of dependent variables to test.<sup>2</sup> However, the nature of data available for our study, largely caused by the high sensitivity of the security and defence related issues, significantly reduces the probability of access to relevant sources and thus the probability of the full - scale statistical survey and analysis. Despite the high desirability of combining quantitative and qualitative approaches (*Nested Analysis*), we objectively have to resort to qualitative tools that offer distinct benefits that are even enhanced once applied in a comparative (cross - case) framework.

### **3.3.2 Arguments for Case - Selection and Comparison**

The comparison of defence ministries of South Caucasus countries (Armenia and Georgia) that are exposed to the influence of external processes (NATO - integration) invites us in the realm of international relations and foreign policy that according to Bennet and Elman are too complex, unstructured and difficult to model and test statistically.<sup>3</sup> This argument is persuasive and invites to accept a predominantly qualitative approach with the major effort to be devoted to cross - case analysis with the over - time comparison. Often a conventional

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<sup>1</sup> Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," 444-446.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 436-438.

<sup>3</sup> Bennett and Elman, "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield," 171.

statistical approach is marginal to projects due to the serious deficits of the research design in observational settings.<sup>1</sup> The contextual scope becomes very critical for the selection of cases, which in turn requires the clear understanding of its implications on research outcomes.<sup>2</sup> Mostly, it is best achieved provided the analytical concept is able to illustrate a strong link between the hypothetical logic and the domain of argument. We believe our concept does it. All units of our analysis (defence ministries and armed forces) represent countries (Armenia and Georgia) located in the same region that had common soviet past with no tradition of well - functioning democratic institutions and are now undergoing processes of democratic transformation, with NATO playing a significant role in national security and defence policy - making of each country. The Alliance as independent variable is less relevant for the choice of cases; however, the processes within which it applies all available elements of conditionality we are about to study, dictates a clear choice of case - selection, where similar developments took place. To avoid the selection bias caused by the inherent dependence on dependent variable, we evidently choose small number of case that share the similarity of “causal and conceptual homogeneity.”<sup>3</sup> The contextual scope is, consequently, mirrored in the process of case selection, and reveals the strong relation to certain causal linkages. The heavy focus on the dependent variable prerequisites the within - case approach with a consequent application of the cross - case analysis of two countries, which we believe is best able to illustrate the elements of NATO - conditionality and their effects. Further, the empirical justification of the intentional limitation of cases by Armenia and Georgia, with exclusion of Azerbaijan, has to be explained by the political stance of Azerbaijan, that of neutral balancing between the NATO and Moscow led CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization), which makes the narrow comparison of only Georgia and Armenia with their radically different strategic policies more plausible and even intriguing. The plausibility of such limitation, i.e. choice of cases that are not typical in their political objectives to the Alliance, is largely explained by a higher benefit of finding causal relationships that such analysis would reveal as compared to cases (Azerbaijan) that show even more political contextual similarity. Ultimately, the amount of information necessary for the chosen qualitative approach in case of Azerbaijan exposed a dangerously insufficient level, already limited by the nature of sensitive data – sources, so typical for the defence and security institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*, 475.

<sup>2</sup> Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues,” 89.

<sup>3</sup> Mahoney, “Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics,” 129.

Touching upon the very basic question of the benefits and limitation that the method of comparison exhibits, we must at first acknowledge that political science is largely of comparative nature. Political scientists always make comparison, and that is not to say that we put equation mark between the comparison as method of variable measurement, and comparison as technique. We are aware of this distinction. The real problem, once dealing with national political systems, is the usual asymmetry between the small number of cases and large number of variables.<sup>1</sup> It is further aggravated, as in our case, if the application of statistical data - gathering is not possible and the mere reliance of “objective interpretation” of inherently subjective data generated from interviews seems problematic. The danger of over-reliance on (dependent) variables will be examined in detail in following chapter. Here, however, we take advantage of Collier’s suggestion, by designing the comparison of cases that are matched on the dependent variable, but might reveal extreme differences in other respects.<sup>2</sup> From our analysis we hope not only to distill a common set of explanatory factors but to discover new explanations. There is little knowledge about the given phenomenon, which is the institutional influence of NATO over the defence institutions of Armenia and Georgia. Our cases have the contextual and conceptual similarity, but vary on dependent variable exposing different outcomes of institutional (political and military) performance. Thus, we believe that the comparison of cases we have selected is the most productive way to become deeply “familiar with the processes under investigation” and to increase the validity of our conclusions.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.4 Methodological Limitations**

As Barbara Geddes argues, the pitfalls of violation of the norms of “general convention” are often caused by inherent deficits of the “conventions themselves.”<sup>4</sup> We agree that deficits are unavoidable, nevertheless must reduce them by increasing the degree of the measurement validity. The conceptual setting established in previous chapter provides us with the logic that appears to be more beneficial for our study and encompasses both questions rather than just one:

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<sup>1</sup> Arend Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method\*,” *The American Political Science Review* LXV, no. 3 (September 1971): 685.

<sup>2</sup> Collier, “Translating Quantitative Methods for Qualitative Researchers: The Case of Selection Bias,” 464.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 465.

<sup>4</sup> Geddes, “How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues,” 89–90.

- What caused the outcome X?
- What was the effect of the cause Y?

The vast amount of information we collect must be appropriately marshaled and interpreted. One way to do it is to gather more observations on the dependent variable or by observing the same variable in another context.<sup>1</sup> This is very much critical to our study, due to concerns about the validation of scores generated in one contextual setting that have been put within another context. Additionally, national units, subunits or subgroups may also significantly vary in their political, social or cultural context.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, we do not apply a large number of explanatory variables but reduce them to those that carry similar underlying characteristics, as suggested by Arend Lijphart.<sup>3</sup> By doing so, we, in fact, compare the political phenomenon of institutional influence between the units of analysis (ministries of defence) on the basis of common trait - configuration (political functional and ideational/cultural change). We largely follow the objective to keep our analytical concept simple, which is only possible if we restrict the number of variables to the really major ones. It will prevent us from endangering the entire quality of the study by overwhelming readers with large number of variables and currents of data that human intelligence has “difficulty to cope with.”<sup>4</sup> To meet the requirements of the *general convention* we selected the variables that are kept constant for all cases, as shown in our research design (analytical concept). They are purposefully selected to measure, what they are supposed to measure – the outcomes of NATO - influence in three key dimensions of institutional performance: political, functional and sociological/ideational. Similar to King, Keohane and Verba’s claim we place the research design at the center of our study as the key provider of appropriate units/objects of analysis and the variance of explanatory variables.<sup>5</sup> This enables us to conduct measurement predominantly across qualitative categories (Elites, Bureaucracy, state agencies etc.), with some combination of quantities of the same variable. Numbers are important but not the central issue. An intensive research within each case, performed in the way of multidimensional observation, helps significantly to improve the measurement - stability, and makes sure that scores gathered will meaningfully capture the ideas contained in our concept.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> King, Keohane, and Verba, “The Importance of Research Design in Political Science,” 479.

<sup>2</sup> Sartori, “Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics,” 1048.

<sup>3</sup> Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method\*,” 687.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 690.

<sup>5</sup> Caporaso, “Research Design, Falsification, and the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide,” 457.

<sup>6</sup> Mahoney, “Qualitative Methodology and Comparative Politics”; Adcock, “Measurement Validity,” 530.

Obviously, the term of result - generalizability refers to the need of theoretical parsimony that is to explain more with less, and which is scientifically difficult to neglect. Knowing well that any political phenomenon is hardly possible to recur in different contextual settings, its degree of generalisibility remains always questionable. By narrowing down the scope of our case-analysis we naturally conditioned the applicability of expected results in other areas. However, the strong validity of the applied theory and concept can be very well tested against the cases and evidence that are representative in their subject (contextual area). By developing our explicit questions and inferences we also increase the utility of our approach to the falsification principle. Thus, the results generated from our study will be judged against prior relative expectations by avoiding the risk of Sartori's *conceptual stretching*. The example of the realist school theory is the best manifestation of a strong parsimony of qualitative studies as confronted with those of quantitative scholars.<sup>1</sup> Our cases reveal strong relation to certain causal linkage, show little potential to become idiosyncratic and less informative with questionable external validity.

As frequently mentioned afore, the political phenomenon and institutional performance, in particular, are very difficult to measure. Competing concepts speak for the preferable and distinct pool of data - sources. The questions we pursue to answer, to greater extent, encompass an intensive interplay between bureaucracies and various political groups, as well as individuals and public players. Monitoring these activities helps to shed light on particular preferences and interest - areas. Yet, exactly this aspect is an ongoing issue among political scientists.<sup>2</sup> For, within the domain of international relations, as well as for domestic affairs, monitoring function is largely associated with "gathering and analyzing empirical data" from the members or domestic organizations.<sup>3</sup> In fact, these "monitoring reports" represent the primary and most important source of information that are performed periodically and reflect best the qualities of national institutional performance. NATO, however restricts the access to this kind of documents due to sensitive (security and defence related) nature of information contained. National bodies (defence ministries and other agencies) also refuse to disclose related information both for the reason of national interest and bilateral (with NATO) obligations. We do not expect security policies to change soon in this regard and make certain

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<sup>1</sup> Levy, "Qualitative Methods and Cross-Method Dialogue in Political Science," 203, 205.

<sup>2</sup> Janet Johnson Buttolph and H.T. Reynolds, *Political Science Research Methods*, 7th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2012), 14–15.

<sup>3</sup> Carrington, DeBuse, and Lee, "The Theory of Governance and Accountability," 4.

documents public on routine base as it was done by the World Bank by 1993.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, we will heavily rely on a broad spectrum of information sources consisting of three distinct major data – pools, making the function of triangulation, i.e. data – comparison for proving the strength of evidence, quite possible.

The available NATO – documents (reports, communiqués, assessments etc.) represent a first strong body of available data, we naturally refer as primary sources. National official sources such as official documents, government decisions, statements and internal agency reports are the second pool of available data. Finally, contributions of respected think – tanks (national and international), academic and policy - centered journals (articles, surveys and analytical papers), as well as interviews with key – individuals complete the third pool of data. Interviews are of critical importance to our study due to large amount of information already collected and analyzed, and the ability of respondents to indicate causal, relational and motivational linkages between facts, individuals and behavior. We pay high importance to relate collected data to certain period of observation, and to distill concrete outputs from each interview conducted. This approach increases the visibility and structure of observations as well as the degree of responsiveness of a reader and his ability to understand the behavioral and motivational aspects of institutional decisions. Our interviews will be centered on facts, i.e. “observable implication” presented within the personal opinion of a respondent, and reflect motivations and preferences of people working at NATO, national defence ministries and other state agencies.<sup>2</sup> Whenever the data availability is limited or, as in our case, the phenomenon is especially difficult to observe, the relevance of interviewing techniques becomes much more understandable. For with each more interview conducted, a stronger consensual evaluation on certain issues and processes will be constructed. This, in fact, increases the degree of objectivity of findings, since the more individuals among those “in best position to know” agree on certain issue, the more objective conclusion can be generated that must be taken very seriously.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>2</sup> Brian C. Rathbun, “Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and Practicalities,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Box-Steffensmeier Janet M. et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 691; Lijphart, “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method\*.”

<sup>3</sup> Rathbun, “Interviewing and Qualitative Field Methods: Pragmatism and Practicalities,” 692.

# Chapter IV: Operationalizing the Concept of NATO - Influence

## 4.1 Introduction

Given the existing multiple level interconnection lines between NATO and national representatives of Armenia and Georgia, and the possibility of influence degree derivations among different players within the analytical model, the necessity of operationalizing the process of *influence* becomes apparent. The notion of *influence* already complex in its essence refers to the mere ability of an institution (NATO) to shape one's behavior, among others, by having power to establish a certain set of requirements necessary to meet, i.e. the behavior is conditioned. This in turn creates a necessity to understand the relevance of factors or incentives motivating actors (in our study national defence ministries) to either comply with certain requirements or deny (fully or partially) compliance.

The second dimension of influence refers to the content of the defined requirements themselves and enables by that the illumination of the character, i.e. the basic principles and objectives of behavior that has to be accepted. This is insofar instrumental as it helps devise an adequate measurement system by establishing an effective set of measurable indicators. In other words, three things have to be clarified:

- Whether a formal framework of compliance existed (conditionality).
- In what areas compliance happened (what requirements have been met).
- What factors (interests, benefits or incentives) motivated the compliance.

Formally, the first and third questions have to be attributed to the notion of *Conditionality*, and the second one is linked to the domain of *Security Sector Reform (SSR)*, though all questions are very much interrelated. Consequently, we will first highlight the importance of conditionality to the concept of NATO - influence, as the key determinant, within which various factors cause national compliance. Second, we will assess the relevance of SSR to the concept of conditionality and identify whether the principles of SSR are systematically embedded within the NATO - policy of cooperation/enlargement. Additionally we will review

the viability of socialization aspect of the Alliance's influence to the concept of conditionality and the degree of convergence of SSR - principles with the potential outcomes of NATO's socialization process. As last, a measurement tool will be offered, which explains the sources and techniques of data collection, its validation and the potential limitations.

## 4.2 Influence – an implied Conditionality

The question of national compliance is inherently related to the *concept of conditionality*, due to the core principle of agreement between two actors, whereby one gets rewarded by another if certain conditions (i.e. commitments) are fulfilled<sup>1</sup>. Thus, by highlighting particular aspects of defence cooperation between the Alliance and Armenia and Georgia, we hope not only to bring about more insight into the ability of the Alliance to apply various mechanisms of compliance, but not least the limitations of those mechanisms. It also elevates the importance of domestic factors and political incentives that either supported the national decision to comply, or in fact impeded any decision, leading to indecisive domestic actions and to increased concerns on the side of the external (international) institution (NATO).

The driving force of the successful cooperation within the institutional framework is, clearly, the readiness of the actor, i.e. the state to accept common procedures and policies that are of external origin yet constitute the logic of appropriateness related to the individual behavior. For instance, in the field of democratization studies the principle of adherence to democratic standards and norms is given huge importance. The process of the democratic transition within a country (e.g. EU-enlargement) usually involves an institution which is still infected by rules conflicting with the new requirements, and often results in a continuous adaptation to context and learning mechanisms.<sup>2</sup> Understanding external factors of influence in domestic affairs is crucial. Yet as some authors argue, the membership prospective alone seems to be the strongest incentive for democratic transformation and consolidation in East Europe.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the membership promises, though very critical, require additional features to speed up or to keep the pace of country's transformation. Lisa Martin isolates three core elements of national compliance that ensure a high probability of successful democratic

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<sup>1</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Compliance and Conditionality," *ARENA Working Papers*, no. 18 (2000), available at [http://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-publications/workingpapers/workingpapers2000/wp00\\_18.htm](http://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-publications/workingpapers/workingpapers2000/wp00_18.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Ole Norgaard, "Democracy, Democratization and Institutional Theory," DEMSTAR Research Report 4 (December 2001): 3-5.

<sup>3</sup> Pevehouse, *Democracy from above*, 96.



consolidation: the *degree of credibility of state commitments*, the *effectiveness* (effects) of the agreement and the role of *sanctions*.<sup>1</sup> Obviously, the second and third factors are also very relevant to the concept of conditionality; in fact they are the essence of it. Sometimes the term *transformative engagement* is being used to highlight the fluid nature of the processes, still highly contingent on the results achieved.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.2.1 Conditionality and Compliance

Though many authors recognize the existence and the need for further elaboration of constraining measures to bring about compliance and punish uncooperative behavior, most of the attempts to produce more insight into the effectiveness of NATO mechanisms applied towards aspirant countries remained fairly unconvincing and vague.<sup>3</sup> One of the most prominent writers in the democratization field Frank Schimmelfennig is not an exception in this regard. His contributions represent brilliant work illustrating the complexity of social and even political socialization of the aspirant countries' officials during the period of intensive negotiations with EU - executives. Yet, despite his exemplary findings that favor interest based explanations of the European policy of conditionality, the problem of scant evidence on the motives of the commitment to domestic transformation remains unresolved.<sup>4</sup>

As already mentioned, the notion of *conditionality* has mainly to be regarded as an analytical tool facilitating proper understanding of *institutional influence*, applied to Armenia and Georgia. Within this logic the close affinity of the category of *compliance* to the overall concept of conditionality exists, for which we will often use henceforth the abbreviation "CC" (Conditionality and Compliance). Clearly, every social phenomenon is a unique process, with its own historical context, not likely to reappear in other settings.<sup>5</sup> This fact, however, should not prevent us from extensive application of valid propositions to case - study examples of NATO - accession, which most probably will result in even more valuable findings, bringing

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<sup>1</sup> L. Lisa Martin, *Democratic Commitments: Legislatures and International Cooperation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 225.

<sup>2</sup> McFaul, Magen, and Stoner-Weiss, "Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Transitions," 12.

<sup>3</sup> Voeten, "Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance"; Mark Kramer, "NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 78, no. 4 (October 2002): 731-56; Frank Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East: An Analysis of Collective Decision-Making," *EAPC-NATO Individual Fellowship Report 2000* (1998): 1-75.

<sup>4</sup> Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East," 66.

<sup>5</sup> James J. Wirtz, "Review of 'Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War' by Patricia A. Weitsman," *The Journal of Politics* 69, no. 1 (February 2007): 258.

us closer to the truth. Bearing this in mind we focus our attention on a number of categories that appear to be most critical to the CC - concept. First, we capture the notions of *incentives* and *relative gains* (pay - offs), due to their close contextual and semantic relationship to state interests. As Celeste Wallander argues strong incentives allow countries to conform to international norms.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, the strength of incentives will increase if they correlate with states interests.

Whenever a state decides to engage an international organization (and NATO is not an exception here) or other states within the organization, the question of the hierarchy of state interests (preferences) for the formation of the mode of behavior becomes of utmost importance. From the analysis on NATO enlargement Franks Schimmelfennig could conclude that “...in this account, the alliance identity and norms had no independent effect on the enlargement outcome but simply happened to be in line with the preferences of the most powerful actor(s).”<sup>2</sup> Admittedly, this statement bluntly challenges the whole concept of CC and once more underlines the strength of the interest-based argumentation line of enlargement studies. Preferences are also often identified as expected pay-offs from certain action (decision), and as subject to rational orderings made by state.<sup>3</sup> They must be substantial in order to be detected by a state, and in the best case, to correlate with existing incentives to ensure rapid action and implementation. Incentives are rewards, offered by an external actor (NATO) in case of compliance; however, they also exist in the domestic realm, and together with potential gains at this level offer very powerful alternatives for a state to behave.

The evidence of post - communist European experience shows, the prospect of NATO - membership is a major stimulus to reforming the state and improving institutional performance.<sup>4</sup> However, as argued by Marina Caparini even though the carrot of membership appears to be very influential, the imperatives of the domestic agenda may turn this source of influence to become very vulnerable.<sup>5</sup> Domestic interests (preferences) and constituencies

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<sup>1</sup> Wallander, “Institutional Assets and Adaptability,” 709.

<sup>2</sup> Schimmelfennig, “NATO’s Enlargement to the East,” 65.

<sup>3</sup> Voeten, “Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance,” 732.

<sup>4</sup> Vladimir Socor, “NATO Prospects in the South Caucasus,” Contribution to “Building Stability and Security in the South Caucasus: Multilateral Security and the Role of NATO”, on the occasion of the NATO summit 2004 (Central-Asia Caucasus Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, J. Hopkins University, 2004), 13, available at [www.jamestown.org/fileadmin/Vlads\\_Corner/policypapers/natoscauc.doc](http://www.jamestown.org/fileadmin/Vlads_Corner/policypapers/natoscauc.doc).

<sup>5</sup> Marina Caparini, “Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement,” in *SIPRI YEARBOOK 2003: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 2003, 241–242, available at <http://www09.sipri.org/yearbook/2003/files/SIPRIYB0307.pdf>.

play a crucial role in creating such behavioral alternatives: partial compliance or non-compliance. The conflict between *external* and *domestic* might be very real and can very well illustrate the existing problems in preference orderings. We readily join at this point Stephen Krasner's resolute statement by slightly amending it, that the key question is rather, how essential and strategic are the objectives to be achieved both for the external actor as well as for the state.<sup>1</sup> Since the prospect of membership is the only substantial incentive - "carrot" and "stick" at the same time, the probability of real influence on the candidate (\*) must be assessed as high, so according to Reinhard Janine.<sup>2</sup> Applying this logic to the NATO - relations with Armenia and Georgia, where the prospect of membership at first glance is neither imminent nor procedurally guaranteed, the causal relationship between membership promises and democratic transformation of the national defence sectors seems to be problematic. Thus, the priority ranking of conditions, assumed to be fulfilled by a candidate, must be thoroughly studied, and may render surprising conclusions contrary to our initial expectations.

Not less important is the understanding of the Alliance's own interests. As some authors argue the more NATO is strategically interested in enlargement the less attention is paid to strict evaluation of conditionality (as was done earlier with former socialist satellite countries in east Europe).<sup>3</sup> Or the other way around – the less interest is shown in the enlargement the more scrutiny will be put to assess the aspirant country's performance. Other studies also reveal that the probability of good governance, reduced autocracy, and democratic consolidation increased, once NATO - allies demonstrated credible commitments to the survival of other states, contrary to other states that did not receive such guarantees and continued to face existential external pressures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, "International Support for State-Building: Flawed Consensus," *PRISM Security Studies Journal* 2, no. 3 (June 2011): 65–74.

<sup>2</sup> Janine Reinhard, "EU Democracy Promotion through Conditionality in Its Neighbourhood: The Temptation of Membership Perspective or Flexible Integration," *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 4, no. 3 (2010): 197.

\* We use terms *candidate* and *aspirant* interchangeably; however, within the NATO context, they refer to different country-categories. Candidate status is given to the country, which is under MAP (Membership Action Plan) and is formally recognized as next to become full member, whereas the status of *aspirant*-countries does not imply formal recognition of any timeframes of accession, not to mention the imminent membership.

<sup>3</sup> Inna Melnykovska and Rainer Schweickert, "Regional Security as a Driver of Institutional Change in Post-Communist Countries? Empirical Evidence on NATO Accession Incentives," *Kieler Analysen Zur Sicherheitspolitik*, no. 26 (January 2010): 8–9.

<sup>4</sup> Glibler M. Douglas and Jamil A. Sewel, "External Threat and Democracy: The Role of NATO Revisited," *Journal of Peace Research*, Special Issue on Alliances, 43, no. 4 (July 2006): 414–417, 424, doi:10.1177/0022343306065115.

## 4.2.2 Implementing Commitments – An Imperfect Indicator for the Compliance

The interests of a state may well be defined and identified, but not the preferences and their ordering. The decision-making process, which leads to the preference orderings, is also very difficult to observe, if at all.<sup>1</sup> We might detect them by decisions and actions in which state officials are involved; nevertheless, the ability to prove and measure the level of compliance at the functional level of bureaucracy still remains the component of wishful thinking. The problem of indication and measurement is twofold. On one hand, CC conditions must be clear, the mechanisms of the control of adherence identified, and the measurement performed transparently in a periodic manner.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the security and defence sector cannot be fully transparent. Understandably, information about the effectiveness of defence transformation and the degree of implementation of external commitments in various functional areas can be of very sensitive nature, thus classified. Unfortunately the credibility of national commitments can be validated only by imperfect mechanisms of implementation that in turn require close analysis and adequate data-interpretation. Finally, we are not secure from instances, where CC ends up with formal implementation at the national level, leaving the essence of a domestic “code of conduct” unaffected.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the danger of formality has several dimensions, each potentially detrimental to the success of CC. It might be a formal commitment, without any domestic consequences. Or it can take the form of formal compliance, meaning the initiation of certain regulations and legal provision that provide the impression of practical compliance, though still lacking the proper process of real life implementation. Ultimately we might face some evidence of implementation, yet of sporadic and false nature, very easy to reverse.

Based on key elements of the CC - concept that we have formulated before, and the intrinsic limitations of CC - concept measurement, we suggest at this point to regard our concept as a general analytical construct largely dependent on the interplay between external/domestic incentives and expected relative pay offs that are either negative or positive, and can lead to a positive effect on state behavior – compliance, or the negative effect – non compliance (see Figure 4). In the course of analysis, the generated findings will be placed into this model,

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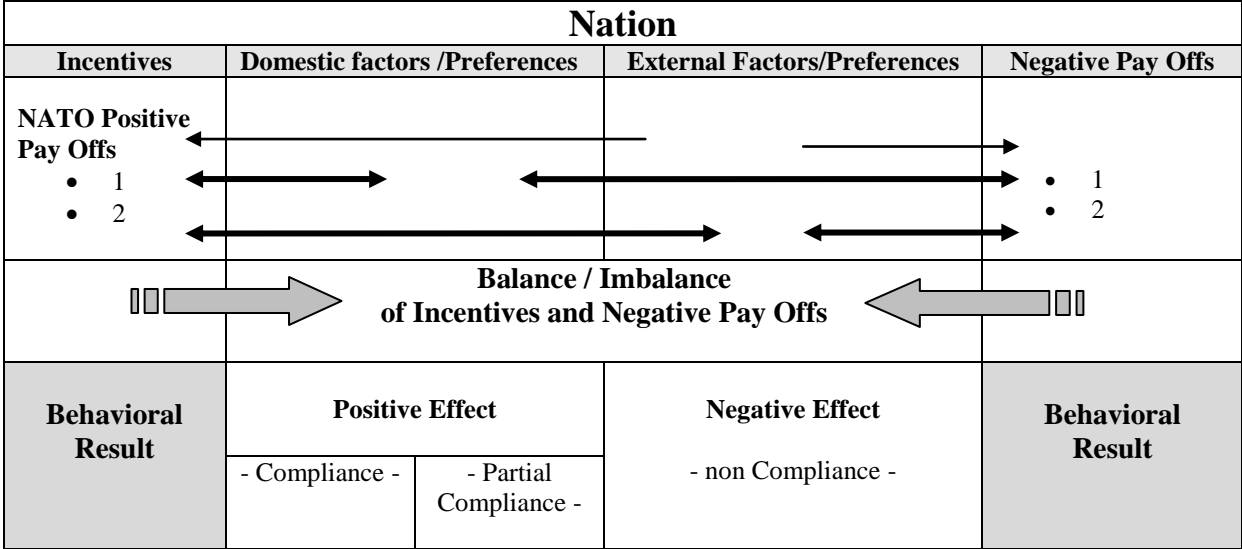
<sup>1</sup> Voeten, “Resisting the Lonely Superpower: Responses of States in the United Nations to U.S. Dominance,” 731.

<sup>2</sup> Reinhard, “EU Democracy Promotion through Conditionality in its Neighbourhood,” 202.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 203.

shedding light upon the mechanisms and motives of particular behavior. Consequently the final, more developed chart will be presented in the concluding part of this paper, visualizing the key data and causality lines within the effects of the CC.

**Figure 4. Interplay of Incentives, Preferences and Pay - Offs**



Following the adopted logic we found it problematic to concur to a basic sociological hypothesis, that argues that the faster the adoption of common norms and values, the earlier the membership prospective.<sup>1</sup> Leaving aside the case of Turkey in NATO, where a serious critique is directed towards the obvious lack of adherence to the norms of liberal democracy, we offer following hypothesis:

*If the value of external incentive cannot overweigh cost-calculations of domestic action, compliance will not take place and conditionality will fail. In other words, if relative gains of pursuing a state’s external commitment are lower than the expected pay-offs from conflicting domestic action, compliance will not take place resulting in the failure of conditionality.*

To prove the validity of our claims the problem of measurement indicators has to be touched upon once again. What mechanisms do we need to prove the degree of compliance and how do we avoid the risk of “buying” formal commitments and compliance (Masking) of the real implementation? Out of multiple mechanisms of foreign influence offered by Pevehouse, we choose *legitimization* and *political pressure* as most promising avenues for further

<sup>1</sup> Schimmelfennig, “NATO’s Enlargement to the East,” 8, 11.

investigation of behavioral motives.<sup>1</sup> The particular aspect of financial assistance can be generally disregarded, due to our major focus on the Alliance only as the institution, and the bilateral (country to country) nature of financial assistance, which frequently originated on behalf of NATO - initiative and to which it is often difficult to apply concrete tools of output measurement. As suggested by Lisa Martin, the role of the legislature in affecting the credibility of national commitments should not be underestimated, since it provides valuable information on the legal status and prospects of compliance.<sup>2</sup> The mentioned elements of national compliance (political pressure and legitimization) will be additionally instrumentalized in the chapter “SSR – Bridging Measurement Deficiencies” and translated into categories of political and normative adherence, measured by an appropriate set of indicators.

### **4.3 Security Sector Reform – a Term of Reference for NATO Conditionality**

Although over the last six decades the Alliance has developed a solid body of normative documents regulating the principles of accession as well as of general cooperation, the very basic act of its creation, the Washington Treaty 1949, already stipulates in a general manner core requirements for alliance members that at later stage found much more detailed manifestation, i.e. explanation in the concept of Security Sector Reform. The preamble defines clearly that parties of the treaty:<sup>3</sup>

*(...) are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.”*

Additionally the second paragraph of the document further elaborates future steps aimed at cementing that principle and asks participating countries to contribute to peaceful and friendly international relations by “by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded.”<sup>4</sup> The principles of democratic governance and the rule of law are directly recognized here as fundamental pillars upon which the institutions should be based. They both emphasize structure and processes to

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<sup>1</sup> Pevehouse, *Democracy from above*, 3–26.

<sup>2</sup> Martin, *Democratic Commitments: Legislatures and International Cooperation*, 225.

<sup>3</sup> “The North Atlantic Treaty (1949),” April 4, 1949, available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock\\_publications/20120822\\_nato\\_treaty\\_en\\_light\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/stock_publications/20120822_nato_treaty_en_light_2009.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 2.

get things done. Moreover, the notion of *Governance* refers to the ability of the institutions (in our case defence ministries) to get things done based on certain structures, processes or best practices (as far as the element of effectiveness is concerned).<sup>1</sup> The Geneva - based Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces shares this approach and formulates Security Sector Governance (SSG) as structures, values and attitudes that shape decisions about security and their implementation.”<sup>2</sup> Understandably, the best practices of governance have to be developed internally over time, or brought in from outside and internalized. This process is termed as Security Sector Reform (SSR). According to the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) Handbook, Security Sector Reform is defined as the establishment of effective governance, oversight and accountability in the security system, characterized by local ownership and sustained delivery of better security services.<sup>3</sup> Without deepening into the broader notion of security, which encompasses nearly all aspects of human life, and would be excessive for our approach, the governance and reforms in the security sector are clearly based on the understanding of state institutions as key areas where processes unfold and changes are applied.

### **4.3.1 Institutional Aspect of Governance – A Key Message of SSR**

Defence and defence institutions represented by ministries of defence (MOD) and armed forces (AF) directly fall under such classification. They in fact belong to the core areas of security, often more powerful than others in playing the central role in protecting a state’s sovereignty.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, the requirements of the effective security governance in the defence sector did not find a quick articulation, but developed over time. The demise of the socialist block and the clear victory of democratic rule over the communist alternative strengthened the process SSR - understanding and formulation. By 1994 the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) drafted the Code of Conduct on Political-Military Aspects of Security, which solidified the idea in the West that all security services and, especially, the defence/military had to be put under democratic control.<sup>5</sup> It should be

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<sup>1</sup> Heiner Hänggi, “Making Sense of Security Sector Governance,” in *Challenges of Security Sector Governance*, Heiner Hänggi, Theodor H Winkler (Eds.), DCAF Yearly Books (DCAF&LIT Verlag, 2003), 6, 13, available at [http://kms1.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/96725/ichaptersection\\_singledocument/607f6240-d18c-4efd-9351-2c84b34d665d/en/1+Hanggi.pdf](http://kms1.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/96725/ichaptersection_singledocument/607f6240-d18c-4efd-9351-2c84b34d665d/en/1+Hanggi.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> “Security Sector Governance and Reform,” 1.

<sup>3</sup> *The OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, OECD (Paris, 2007), available at 21, <http://www.oecd.org/development/incaf/38406485.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 124.

<sup>5</sup> “Security Sector Governance and Reform,” 4.

acknowledged that this coincided with the inauguration of the Partnership For Peace (PFP) framework by NATO in 1994 that made possible cooperation between the Alliance and non-member states in the Euro - Atlantic area, based on similar principles anchored in the OSCE - Code. As Marina Caparini aptly puts it, SSR promotes good governance, which is based on norms, rules and law of civilian control of security structures, the rule of law, a strong judiciary and a civil society that have evolved in mature western democracies.<sup>1</sup> Despite the comprehensive nature of the SSR - definition, in terms of practical utility it usually affects the wide range of functional areas, where state institutions execute their work. As far as defence and military are concerned, the SSR - focus on following areas becomes even more apparent:<sup>2</sup>

- Legal framework
- Strategic planning and policy - making
- Budgetary processes
- National capacity to manage and evaluate processes

The last function, which refers to the ability of defence institution to monitor, review and evaluate the processes, is critical for the proper functioning of reporting mechanisms within the defence system, as well as at the national level. Its existence is essential for the sustainability of reforms, and a serious indicator of continuing national commitment, with clear implications for daily work. In fact the controlling function is multidimensional. The multiple layers of control encompass internal (MOD) control, control from the executive (government), parliamentary oversight, judicial review and civilian oversight.<sup>3</sup> The availability of control mechanisms, especially monitoring and reporting tools, is devoted a special place within SSR. They serve two basic objectives. The first, is to identify the degree of efficiency to make the best use of available resources.<sup>4</sup> The second, is directed towards measuring the practical results of the reform. This in turn establishes a sound picture of progress, and supports the implementation of follow - up findings.<sup>5</sup>

The model of Putnam's *Two - level Game* and its inherent features of intensive interplay between international actors, national representatives and domestic factors are fully

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<sup>1</sup> Caparini, "Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement," 237–238.

<sup>2</sup> *The OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, 86, 113.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>4</sup> "Security Sector Governance and Reform," 1.

<sup>5</sup> *The OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*, 240, 242.



transplantable in the domain of SSR. The degree of local (national) commitment is directly linked to the political risk of domestic reform. The danger of formal implementation or the possibility of defence reform manipulation is always present. It is usually manifested by a declaration of support to reforms' - objectives and a persuasion of different interests instead.<sup>1</sup> Thus the importance of a common understanding of SSR - objectives, and of the progress deficiencies among key players involved in and driving the transformative processes, should not be underestimated.<sup>2</sup> The communication between key actors involved in the process of defence transformation, according to SSR - principles must be clear and effective. Ultimately it ensures that national representatives remain deeply committed to reforms despite the high political sensitivity of certain issues, and that supply-driven assistance is avoided.<sup>3</sup>

Key conclusions that we can draw from SSR can be summarized as necessary points of reference that have to be used in the following two chapters. On one hand, we have to prove whether its key principles have been properly reflected in the evolution of NATO - partnership and enlargement policies. On the other hand, we have to ensure that SSR - indicators find their place in our measurement tool, and support our effort of bridging measurement-deficiencies inherent in institutional performance. A specific emphasis will be made on the existence of well - functioning reporting mechanisms internally (within the defence ministry and the state structures) and externally (within NATO), that are able to produce a correct picture of transformational results (progress or setbacks) and ensure proper communication between the sides. The strength of the domestic commitment, so important to SSR, will be also instrumentalized in light of practical achievements that either support the evidence of formal compliance and rhetorical actions, or subscribe to real implementation of commitments taken. After all, the objectives of SSR, such as the effectiveness of armed forces, the efficiency and democratic oversight, should in fact reinforce and not run against each other.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the desire to establish democratic oversight and sound planning and budgeting practices (efficiency) by no means contradicts the objective to keep high combat readiness of forces. To the contrary, they are complementary.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 11, 16, 29, 36, 86.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 133.

### 4.3.2 SSR - The Message throughout The NATO - Partnership

In this chapter we evaluate the long path that the Alliance covered from its initial phase of developing partnerships with non-member states to the establishment of a clear mechanism of individual cooperation and membership. The objective is to prove clear evidence of conditionality principles based on Security Sector Reforms (Governance) that define the character of cooperation between the Alliance and the states that pursued different objectives: from the non-binding partnership, to full-scale membership. Already in the early nineties multiple and follow-up studies reinforced the idea that democracies tend to cooperate and enter joint commitments rather than other regime types.<sup>1</sup> Other researchers indicated that democracy had more chance to develop:

- If **internally** no domestic group had absolute dominating power over other groups and power structures.<sup>2</sup>
- If **externally** the existing threats (e.g. territorial disputes) are minimized upon the alliance-formation.<sup>3</sup>

Facing the challenge that former socialist bloc countries neither had any experience of such findings nor they had any clear view of how to transform their defence - and other state institutions, the sustainment of democratic values and principles while bringing those states closer became fundamental to NATO. The Western concept of security, which is based on a value system, sets as a primary state's objective to ensure security of individuals, and only then of other groups and structures at a higher level.<sup>4</sup> Therefore it became apparent that the mere reference to democratic control over armed forces was not sufficient. As a result, as some authors argued, the focus has been broadened towards a more comprehensive approach and targets a much more complex issue of the democratic governance of defence and other

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Lipson, *Reliable Partners: How Democracies Have Made a Separate Peace*, Princeton University Press, 2003; Brett Ashley Leeds, Andrew G. Long, and Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, "Reevaluating Alliance Reliability Specific Threats, Specific Promises," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44, no. 5 (October 2000): 686–99, doi:10.1177/0022002700044005006; Randolph M. Siverson and Juliann Emmons, "Birds of a Feather: Democratic Political Systems and Alliance Choices in the Twentieth Century," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 35, no. 2 (June 1991): 285–306, doi:10.1177/0022002791035002007.

<sup>2</sup> Mancur Olson, "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development," *The American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3 (September 1993): 573.

<sup>3</sup> Douglas and Sewel, "External Threat and Democracy: The Role of NATO Revisited."

<sup>4</sup> Gagik Avagyan and Duncan Hiscock, *Security Sector Reform in Armenia* (London: Saferworld, May 2005), 40.

security related institutions.<sup>1</sup> Since democratic governance is the core of SSR, the reform processes launched within it directly meant the existence of certain conditions and intentions to change the essence of the institution. Naturally all of this has to take into account international best practices and the sustained will to implement and, if needed, to enforce them.<sup>2</sup>

Basically both NATO and SSR - language embraced the same terminology demanding numerous actions under general references to democratic governance and democratic control of the armed forces. We agree with some authors, that in the early nineties, far from having formalized its accession criteria (Membership Action Plan – MAP), the Alliance introduced the Partnership For Peace framework (PFP) that provides clear evidence of conditionality by enforcing particular conditions of cooperation.<sup>3</sup> Launched in 1994, the PFP draws its essence from two official documents simultaneously issued on January 11, 1994. Signed by heads of the member - states the *PFP - Invitation Document* addresses the intention to cooperate with former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in fact they welcome the NATO - expansion, by strong commitment to democratic principles that underpin the Alliance. It briefly outlines the areas where cooperation seemed desirable, however “At a pace and scope determined by the capacity and desire of the individual participating states.”<sup>4</sup> Another document, called *Partnership for Peace Framework Document* reiterates the fundamental principle of adherence to democracy and substantiates fields of cooperation by admitting new partner countries to objectives of facilitating transparency in defence planning and budgeting, ensuring democratic control over armed forces, developing NATO - interoperable forces in the long run, and participating in joint training and exercises in the fields of peacekeeping, humanitarian operations and search & rescue.”<sup>5</sup> Certainly, the degree of conditionality here is somehow lowered by leaving the right to define the deepness of commitments in hands of national representatives. Nonetheless, despite this early inceptive nature of the cooperation

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<sup>1</sup> Andrew Cottey, Timothy Edmunds, and Anthony Forster, “The Second Generation Problematic: Rethinking Democracy and Civil-Military Relations,” *Armed Forces & Society* 29, no. 1 (Fall 2002): 31–56, doi:10.1177/0095327X0202900103.

<sup>2</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, “Security Sector Reform in Armenia,” 7–8.

<sup>3</sup> Melnykovska and Schweickert, “Regional Security as a Driver of Institutional Change in Post-Communist Countries? Empirical Evidence on NATO Accession Incentives,” 2–3.

<sup>4</sup> “Partnership for Peace: Invitation Document” (Press Release M-1(1994) 002), para. 4, accessed November 19, 2014, available at [http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_24468.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24468.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>5</sup> “Partnership for Peace: Framework Document,” Press Release Annex to M-1(1994) 002 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, January 11, 1994), para. 3, available at [http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_24469.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24469.htm?selectedLocale=en).

framework, it did, in fact, ensure a very important mechanism of conditionality – the monitoring. As the framework document states:

*6. The other subscribing states accept the following understandings:*

*e. building upon the OSCE measures on defence planning, the other subscribing states and NATO countries will exchange information on the steps that have been taken or are being taken to promote transparency in defence planning and budgeting and to ensure the democratic control of armed forces.<sup>1</sup>*

The limitations of conditionality, i.e. free choice of scope and intensity of cooperation, intentionally or not, laid out the platform of two - track cooperation mechanisms: one intended for those nations with membership aspirations, and another for those with no membership aspirations on their agenda. In essence the aforementioned objectives could be grouped into two sub-sets: one aimed at improving institutional efficiency, and the second on military interoperability of forces. The latter gained more importance for nations, who were about to enter closer partnerships with the Alliance.<sup>2</sup> As we have already noted, the intention of further expansion of the alliance was clearly formulated in the declaration of heads of member - states in 1994. Having this initial set of criteria in place, we can conclude that the SSR indeed was a core message of the NATO PFP - framework. It consolidated Europe and proved to be “a powerful engine for enlargement.”<sup>3</sup> We might interpret the *engine* in different ways, yet the simple logic links it with conditions that countries had to accept, once pursuing the interest of cooperation. It implied that western standards of security sector governance had to be adopted. Along with standards of a political and military nature, it introduced various institutional mechanisms (programs, missions and exercises) to support the pace of interoperability and as Svante Cornell argues, helped “foster a new generation of military officers whose thinking differs markedly from the Soviet military mentality of their predecessors.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., para. e.

<sup>2</sup> *NATO Partnerships: DOD Needs to Assess US Assistance in Response to Changes to the Partnership for Peace Program*, GAO-10-1015, Report to the Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate (United States Government Accountability Office, September 2010), 6, available at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/320/310716.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Barbora Marôňková, “NATO’s Partnerships Before and After the Chicago Summit,” in *PANORAMA of Global Security Environment*, Majer Marian, Ondrejcsák Róbert, Tarasovič Vladimír (Eds.) (Bratislava: Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA), 2012), 142, available at [http://cenaa.org/analysis/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Maronkova\\_final.pdf](http://cenaa.org/analysis/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Maronkova_final.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Svante Cornell, “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Regional Security,” *Turkish Foreign Policy Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (2004): 132.

Although the criteria for accession were not formalized until the introduction of the MAP - mechanism, the idea of NATO - enlargement continuously occupied the political agenda of alliance-members as well as former socialist bloc countries. The reform of military and civil - military relations became an apparent factor for future accessions and formed the Alliance's vision of a family of liberal democracies.<sup>1</sup> *The Enlargement Study*, initiated and made public in 1995, still was not able to define formally the rigid list of accession criteria, but it deals with the general purpose and principles of enlargement (Chapter I, II), the role that PFP can play (Chapter III) and, most importantly, the impact of enlargement on potential new members (Chapter V, VI). Thus all relevant references to the need of democratic control over armed forces, transparency in defence planning and budgeting, accountability to the parliament and public are spread throughout the document and are frequently repeated. Yet the degree of conditionality is even further strengthened where in multiple places a detailed description of actions is given, by which the behavior of candidates will be evaluated and measured. For instance, it is declared that "Possible new members' commitment to the shared principles and values of the Alliance will be indicated by their international behavior and adherence to relevant OSCE commitments."<sup>2</sup> Three times the necessity to adopt the principles, policies and procedures of the member - states is explicitly mentioned, and once more strengthened as under the forth chapter (on implications for future members) potential-members are requested to put them into practice. A clear attempt to avoid the risk of formal implementation is visible here.

As compared to PFP - framework document the *Enlargement Study* is much more elaborated and offers additional insights of how the alliance envisages the practical dimensions of cooperation that reach to the military criteria of conditionality, commonly referred as *interoperability* and *standards*. Though the document clarifies that the full interoperability is not a major precondition for the accession, the certain minimum of standards, however, is recognized as essential for proper functioning of the alliance. This minimum covers the following areas: command and control, communication equipment, and standard operating procedures (SOPs) in selected areas, especially in headquarters.<sup>3</sup> In the final chapter of the

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<sup>1</sup> Michael C. Williams, "The Discipline of the Democratic Peace: Kant, Liberalism and the Social Construction of Security Communities," *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 4 (December 2001): 543, doi:10.1177/1354066101007004006.

<sup>2</sup> "Study on NATO Enlargement," 1995, para. 38, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_24733.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 45, Interoperability.

document the military aspect of standardization is even more deepened and additional elements are added for the sake of clarity:

76. ...*Current NATO standardization priorities include commonality of doctrines and procedures, interoperability of command, control and communications and major weapon systems, and interchangeability of ammunition and primary combat supplies.*
77. *There are at present over 1200 agreements and publications that new members should undertake to comply with. Compliance should be an evolutionary and controlled process to enhance Alliance operational effectiveness.*

Symptomatically, the emphasis is on the word *compliance*, and throughout the document eleven times the word *must* is applied in the context of expected behavior of potential members. The word *should* is also mentioned more than thirty times in relation to future candidates. As for PFP, it is assigned an even increased role in transforming partner countries defence sectors closer to the standards of the western model (especially with regard to joint peacekeeping operations), and the core elements of SSR such as transparent defence planning and budgeting are frequently highlighted.

It is no surprise that after years of intensive work on the subject of what criteria potential members should meet to be accepted into NATO, the natural divergence of conditions came about. Those dealing more with the nature of political governance and others specifying more practical dimension of military cooperation. The political dimension was heavily influenced by the democratic ideal and concentrated around democratic (civilian) control over armed forces, which naturally catapulted SSR to the major deliverable of foreign military assistance and defence diplomacy.<sup>1</sup> The United States, the most powerful member of the alliance, eagerly supported this approach aiming at achieving stability in new partner countries via democratic legitimacy. The U.S. and NATO took on the mission of "...transforming the government institutions and military structures to more closely mirror western standards."<sup>2</sup>

The need for a more structured approach to areas, where partner countries and potential membership - candidates required making most of their efforts, motivated the Alliance to draft in 1999 the *Membership Action Plan* (MAP). The document basically listed the areas

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<sup>1</sup> Marina Caparini, "Lessons Learned and Upcoming Research Issues in Democratic Control of Armed Forces and Security Sector Reform," in *Security Sector Reform and Democracy in Transitional Societies*, Born Hans, Caparini Marina, Fluri Philipp (Eds.), vol. 30, Proceedings of the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, Workshops at the 4th International Security Forum, Geneva, November 15–17, 2000 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2002), 98, available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Security-Sector-Reform-and-Democracy-in-Transitional-Societies>.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald S. Mangum and William J. Craven, "Measuring Defense Reform," *Small Wars Journal*, April 26, 2010, 1.

(chapters) and subsequent actions aspirants had to consider, once a membership goal was accepted. Five chapters (Political/Economic, Defence/Military, Resource, Security, and Legal) discuss issues that support transformational processes, to be formalized under *Annual National Plans* (ANP) - a subject of annual review and progress assessment. Though MAP twice explicitly states that the document and issues discussed within it should not be considered as a list of criteria for membership, the focus on detailed actions contributing to the development of military capabilities in accordance with NATO - standards provides much higher sense of inclusion than any previous document.<sup>1</sup> What matters though, is that fulfilling the agreed objectives under MAP does not guarantee membership, and the decision is made case by case based on consensus, which clearly is a “escape clause...devised largely with Russia in mind” as argued by Jan Arved Trapan.<sup>2</sup> Similar to the *Enlargement Study*, the document recognizes the PFP - framework as the major instrument strengthening an aspirant’s political and military ties with the Alliance. As for PFP’s operational dimension, the Individual Partnership Program (IPP) is offered for careful consideration, where “certain generic areas would be marked as being essential” for membership to participate in.<sup>3</sup> Despite significant progress towards the clarifying conditions of accession in terms of practical activities (adapting national laws, norms and regulations to those of NATO – as one of many most critical), MAP still fails to go beyond general SSR - statements in the domain of democratic control of armed forces. As Marina Caparini rightly comments “the precondition of democratic civilian control was not defined in depth... These criteria were to be met prior to accession, and meeting them did not necessarily guarantee accession.”<sup>4</sup>

Since the introduction of MAP no substantial progress has been made towards further specification of accession - conditions necessary to comply with. Perhaps, this explains why in 2003 the Swiss government initiated a NATO - internal discussion about the possibility of incorporating SSR as an integral part of PFP - programs.<sup>5</sup> Though, officially, it failed to become a separate formal NATO-instrument of defence transformation, it received extremely high importance and recognition within the next phase of intensified partnerships (marked as

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<sup>1</sup> Caparini, “Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement,” 247.

<sup>2</sup> Jan Arved Trapan, “Conclusions, Georgia, the Black Sea and the Approaching West,” in *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, Fluri H. Philipp and Eden Cole (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 299, available at [mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21\\_From\\_Revolution.pdf](http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21_From_Revolution.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> “Membership Action Plan (MAP)” (Press Release NAC-S(99) 066, April 24, 1999), chap. II Defence/Military Issues, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_27444.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_27444.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>4</sup> Caparini, “Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement,” 242.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

*Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP)*, launched after the Istanbul Summit 2004. The Summit appointed the Special Representative of Secretary General of the Alliance to the Caucasus and Central Asia (Robert Simmons), which from U.S. - perspective had the main mission “to encourage democratic civil-military relations, transparency in defense planning and budgeting, and enhanced force inter-operability with NATO.”<sup>1</sup> Parallel to that, the Istanbul Summit introduced the *Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building (PAP - DIB)*, whose main objective was defined as to “build democratically responsible defence institutions.”<sup>2</sup> Given the fact that key participants of the program are the Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and other institutions (centers, universities, NATO - educational centers etc.), heavily involved in SSR - research, launching PAP - DIB cannot be regarded other than as a clear testimony to SSR - relevance and its practical incorporation by the Alliance.

#### **4.4 Socialization in Defence and Military – The invisible Hand of NATO - Influence**

The objective of this chapter is to show the capacity of the Alliance to use its socialization power as an additional tool of influence to bring about national compliance via ideational changes of national representatives engaged in the process of socialization. Especially, the domain of the military relationship lays at core of our analysis, because as very important branch of a government military organizations share common believes and values as “military members” that are border - transcending.<sup>3</sup> The article drawn by a former High Representative of the NATO’s Secretary General in South Caucasus, Mr. Robert Simmons in 2007 exemplifies the complexity and wide variety of the linkages, through which the ideational influence of the Alliance is exercised.<sup>4</sup> Frequent references in the article to *common thinking*, *shared values*, *common purpose* and *security culture* point at the very environment, where

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<sup>1</sup> Jim Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” CRS Report to Congress (Congressional Research Service, April 2, 2014), 49, available at <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33453.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> “Istanbul Summit Communiqué” (Press Release (2004) 096, June 28, 2004), para. 28, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_21023.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_21023.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>3</sup> Carol Atkinson, “Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972–2000,” *International Studies Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (September 2006): 512, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2478.2006.00412.x.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Simmons, “Ten Years of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council : A Personal Reflection,” *NATO Review*, 2007, available at [http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2007/Partnerships\\_Old\\_New/10\\_years\\_NATO\\_Atlantic\\_council/EN/index.htm](http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2007/Partnerships_Old_New/10_years_NATO_Atlantic_council/EN/index.htm)



integrational processes unfold. Yet at the same time they show the ultimate result, at which the Alliance aims within the cooperation - frameworks with partner countries.

Socialization is defined by Alderson Kai as a two - track (individual and political) process, in which changes of individual beliefs of individuals holding political power "...can produce behavioral compliance", and institutionalization is required to sustain it.<sup>1</sup> In others words, the change of beliefs, causes a desire to change, and generates policy initiatives to fix the changes in real life. As Alexandra Gheciu concludes on the example of former socialist bloc countries' relationships with NATO, the role of socialization is "the power to shape its socializees' interpretations of the world and ideas about proper ways of acting in that world", resulting in internalization of new norms.<sup>2</sup> Since the compliance is nothing else as a fulfilled requirement of the new norms' adoption, the power of socialization should be given its proper place within the concept of NATO - influence and conditionality. Not for nothing Jamie Shea, a former Spokesman of the Alliance, and current Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges regards enhanced partnerships as best insurance policy to promote norm - based cooperative security.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4.4.1 Military Socialization as the Means of normative Adaptation**

Once the relevance of socialization processes is recognized, the next challenge is to filter out the particular mechanisms of influence and the areas of its practical impact. This is insofar relevant, as allows the identification of valid indicators, and best evaluation strategies. According to Alexandra Gheciu a successful socialization would manifest in re - definition of the identity within the political elite, military and public, and its sustainment through embedding in institutions, legislation and practices.<sup>4</sup> The key areas (political, military) and indicators (legislation, practices) mentioned here, are pretty much compatible with those that indicate institutional performance. Thus their wider application, discussed in much greater detail in the following chapter ("Measuring NATO – Influence"), should be accepted without a major reservation. The mechanisms of socialization have been already indicated in the

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<sup>1</sup> Atkinson, "Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972–2000," 511–512.

<sup>2</sup> Alexandra Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the 'New Europe,'" *International Organization* 59, no. 4 (2005): 973, 977.

<sup>3</sup> Jamie Shea, "Keeping NATO Relevant," *Carnegie Endowment For International Peace*, April 19, 2012, available at <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/19/keeping-nato-relevant#>.

<sup>4</sup> Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?," 982, 987.

fundamental NATO - documents that deal with the essence of cooperation with non - NATO members. Here exists a common understanding that PFP - framework with its dominant emphasis on education and training, as well as on conceptual and normative approach, has developed various channels of interaction such as:<sup>1</sup>

- Educational courses (in country) and mobile expert teams
- Technical cooperation
- Military assistance (financial, sells, in country training)
- Field exercise (drills or combat operations)

These elements play important role in understanding the size and intensity of socialization processes. As rightly observed by Alexandara Gheciu, they give also a clear indication about the degree of the national commitment to actions within each program, as well as about the degree of legitimacy (teaching and persuasion) assigned to NATO - assistance by national socializees.<sup>2</sup> Various NATO - attached institutions, particularly the International (Military) Staff (IS, IMS) George Marshall Center, NATO Defence College, U.S. key military educational centers, Geneva Center for Security Policy and others ensure the widest possible coverage of assistance programs. As Mr. Bruce Bach, a former NATO - official dealing with Georgia and other partner - nations till 2009, “the IS - desk officers constantly act as the experts ... over the years have always been helpful when nations seek more information or clarity on an issue.”<sup>3</sup> Hence these contacts enable national representatives see “firsthand how professional and experienced personnel conduct themselves, and how to behave and prepare for those contacts.”<sup>4</sup> The consequence of such active professional interactions is that the selected cohort of professionals (military and civilians) share the western way of running the defence system and military meeting by that the principles of democratic governance. Consequently, within their authority they execute political decision - making and thus develop “new institutions and practices, thereby altering the fundamental character of the political institution.”<sup>5</sup> Naturally, all the activities are intended to contribute to commonly agreed goals

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<sup>1</sup> Velizar Shalamanov, “The PFP Consortium as a Change Management and Integration Tool: Ten Years of Experience,” *Connections The Quarterly Journal*, Summer Supplement, VII, no. 3 (2008): 63–64; Gheciu, “Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?,” 983–984.

<sup>2</sup> Gheciu, “Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?,” 979–981.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels, March 20, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Atkinson, “Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972–2000,” 514.

of cooperation, which in turn, need to be politically accepted by highly committed individuals. Their job would be supporting defence reforms and fostering defence institutions that indeed goes beyond the mere objective of improving the military interoperability, and is directly supported by the intensive political engagement of the NATO - high level representatives.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.4.2 Power of Identity - Change and its Limitations**

As we refer to socialization process as containing mechanisms of norms and the behavioral change, the claim can be made that, in core, while socializing in the defence and military area, a certain institutional design is being transplanted. This idea is actively supported by Melnykovska Inna, and Rainer Schweickert.<sup>2</sup> However, the norm adoption or the change in behavior does not necessarily imply that the identity change had place. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the Alliance has continuously stressed the importance of like - mindedness between the allied nations, as well as in relation to partner - countries. The fact, that among PFP - nations many can be easily identified as not like – minded, raises the stakes of cooperation additionally. Jamie Shea, the former NATO – spokesman (1993 - 2000) and current Deputy Assistant Secretary General of the Alliance, admitted that despite the existing differences, the bridges to these countries must be established.<sup>3</sup> Putting these differences into a more general political context, the issue of how and in what forms the socialization may result, asks for better clarification. Since the core of our discussion deals with security sector reform and the respective mode of governance exercised through and by state institutions, the political effect of socialization is greatly mirrored by the underlying political structure of a state. Alexander Wendt calls it the “political identity” of the state that is identical to those widely known as regime types: from democratic to semi - democratic and non - democratic (authoritarian or totalitarian).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alberto Priego, “NATO Cooperation towards South Caucasus,” *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 2, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 53; Simmons, “Robert F. Simmons Jr Gives an Insider’s View of the Genesis and Evolution of NATO’s Main Partnership Forum.”

<sup>2</sup> Melnykovska and Schweickert, “Regional Security as a Driver of Institutional Change in Post-Communist Countries? Empirical Evidence on NATO Accession Incentives,” 3.

<sup>3</sup> Shea, “Keeping NATO Relevant.”

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge, 1999), 226.

At this point, we must point at serious skepticism towards the state's behavior, which may significantly deviate from the intention of changing the political identity (mode of governance) and become more democratic. In line with the rationalist perspective states may decide to enter cooperative relations while pursuing very rational objectives such as military benefits in form of improved skills of personnel, combat effectiveness of military units, material and financial benefits etc.<sup>1</sup> Thus this approach may ultimately result in a significant reduction of socialization - impact. According to Alexandra Gheciu, there is enough evidence, that while applying its norms in former socialist countries NATO minimized its role and interacted only with decision - makers relying solely on effects of "self - socialization".<sup>2</sup> Most importantly, this can lead to manipulation or the reliance on rhetorical actions to "to secure the rewards provided by NATO with a minimum of domestic adaptation."<sup>3</sup> In light of these serious deficiencies, the role of the accurate monitoring mechanisms to verify the degree of commitment - implementation, i.e. procedural and structural change in a variety of poly areas (personnel management, equipment maintenance, doctrine development etc.) becomes even greater.

As the most powerful and potent alliance - member the U.S. has explicitly pursued social interaction with foreign militaries to promote American (i.e. western) values, norms and ideas as the significant avenue for strengthening democratic institutions and governance.<sup>4</sup> The *U.S. National Military Strategy 1997* unequivocally states that:

*(...) contacts between our military and the armed forces of other nations, promote trust and confidence...the development of democratic institutions, and helps keep some countries from becoming adversaries tomorrow.*<sup>5</sup>

Pursuing these objectives the U.S. - authorities have developed two major programs that allowed for a tailored military cooperation with friendly nations. The *International Military Education and Training (IMET)* program is considered as one of key instruments of U.S. security assistance on a grant basis to foreign students. Furthermore, IMET:

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<sup>1</sup> Atkinson, "Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972-2000," 513.

<sup>2</sup> Gheciu, "Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?," 980.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Atkinson, "Constructivist Implications of Material Power: Military Engagement and the Socialization of States, 1972-2000," 509.

<sup>5</sup> "National Military Strategy of the United States of America; Shape, Respond, Prepare Now: A Military Strategy for a New Era" (Washington D.C.: JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, 1997), 2, available at <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA330141>.

*(...) facilitates the development of important professional and personal relationships, which have proven to provide U.S. access and influence in a critical sector of society that often plays a pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments.*<sup>1</sup>

Among three key objectives, that combine a very rational interest of U.S. to have well capable and interoperable friendly forces close aside if needed, a particular one directly formulates the desired effects of socialization efforts:

*Expose foreign military and civilian personnel to the important roles democratic values and internationally recognized human rights can play in governance and military operations.*<sup>2</sup>

This and other programs initiated and monitored under the lead of U.S. State Department and the Department of Defence allow national representatives of partner - countries to familiarize themselves with NATO – common procedures in practical fields (for instance during field exercises, training, seminars or educational courses) of the defence and military management, as well as create the mutual understanding of the proper, common mode of governance. Symptomatically, one of such initiatives The Warsaw Initiative Fund (WIF) launched in 1994 for assisting PFP - countries has transferred the management responsibility for the WIF - DIB (Defence Institution Building) to the Center for Civil - Military Relations at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.<sup>3</sup>

## **4.5 Finalizing the Notion of NATO - Influence**

The NATO - membership has been increasingly defined through the reference to a community, whose borders are defined not by geography, but rather by a common identity, cultural tradition, and a solid portion of trust to each other.<sup>4</sup> In particular, democratic institutions (including norms and procedures) are seen as serving the primary cementing function for the Alliance.<sup>5</sup> The former British foreign minister Ernest Bevin (1945 – to 1951), as well as Walter Lippman, an influential American political writer and commentator (died in

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<sup>1</sup> “International Military Education and Training (IMET),” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed November 22, 2014, available at [www.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm](http://www.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> “NATO Partnerships,” 34.

<sup>4</sup> For detailed account of trust and identity values in building alliances see Christopher Hemmer and Peter J. Katzenstein, “Why Is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism,” *International Organization* 56, no. 3 (2002): 575–607.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 575, 588.

1974), also readily focused on the aspects of “spiritual” unity and civilizational similarity to underline the cognitive roots of NATO’s creation.<sup>1</sup> Those principles gained even more relevance once the military aspect of global confrontation radically diminished in the early 1990s. The guiding criteria for future membership (introduced in 1995) remained the same, and largely referred to the adherence to democratic principles and procedures, necessary for prospective member - states to adopt.<sup>2</sup> The core importance of democratic values and of functioning democratic institutions also became a major motivational factor for justifying the Alliance’s enlargement plans. While highlighting the internal aspects of negotiation and decision - making of the first former Warsaw Pact - countries that joined the Alliance, Frank Schimmelfennig very quickly comes to the conclusion, that adherence to democratic rule and norms represented the constitutive value of NATO and facilitated the recognition of democracy promotion as the organizational mission of the Alliance.<sup>3</sup> The *Study on NATO Enlargement* states explicitly four times the importance of “like - mindedness” and twice the need for “assimilation” of new members.<sup>4</sup> Out of eight political - economic requirements for the potential membership, three unequivocally stress the primacy of democratic rule and institutions, and one directly advises aspirant states to commit to social justice and economic liberty.<sup>5</sup>

The brief review of the normative foundation of the Alliance as well as the context of its gradual development makes it possible to conclude, that the mere intention of cooperation with NATO, not to speak about the membership, preconditioned a certain degree of national compliance, i.e. institutional transformation in various defence - related areas. A country entering partnership relationship with NATO would face fundamental requirements similar to the principles of Security Sector Reform that predominantly are focused on a deep democratic transformation of defence and military institutions. Sharing the claim that the Alliance consistently promoted the norms of transparency and democratic control of armed forces, we still struggle to find the deep and coherent elaboration of political criteria, whereas the practical - military dimension of criteria is much better structured under the concept of “force

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 597–600.

<sup>2</sup> Kramer, “NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement,” 736; “NATO - Enlargement,” NATO website; available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_49212.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49212.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Schimmelfennig, “NATO’s Enlargement to the East,” 1–2.

<sup>4</sup> “NATO - Study on NATO Enlargement,” NATO website; available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_24733.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_24733.htm).

<sup>5</sup> “NATO - Membership Action Plan (MAP),” NATO website; available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_27444.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_27444.htm).

interoperability” and mechanisms of its improvement (PFP, IPP).<sup>1</sup> Generally, NATO - requirements and standards are better defined conceptually than practical - procedurally and are based on the common acknowledgement of the major role democratic institutions play in running a country. Applied to the field of defence - and military, it essentially rests upon the primacy of the democratic control of military forces and the wide application of SSR to establish western standards of governance in defence.

Though the Alliance possesses the mechanisms of monitoring and evaluating the degree of the national compliance via progress reports within the Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Membership Action Plan (MAP) or Annual National Program (ANP), the existing framework of cooperation and partnerships (PFP) still leaves enough space for national authorities to decide themselves on the speed and depth of cooperation, which does not rule out actions that run against the spirit of compliance (free riding). As the former NATO - IS official Mr. Bruce Bach (in active duty till 2009) states “no NATO standards are mandatory for any Partner country, other than those spelled out in the fundamental PFP - program, which members are bound by”, and no requirements can be applied if a partner country does not seek to join the Alliance.<sup>2</sup> This ambiguity generated from the very first steps of launching partnership framework, is in fact an inherent challenge of a normative nature with a high likelihood of negative practical repercussions. The feature of “hollowed conditionality” might be explained by the desire of “founding fathers” to assist countries that aspired NATO - membership, but also to create architecture perfectly suitable to those countries, which do not seek the membership and would like to “contribute to Euro - Atlantic security without compromising their own distinct foreign and security policies.”<sup>3</sup> The conditions for the second category of countries theoretically must be the same as for those countries that despite their desire to join the Alliance did not get the explicit guarantees of imminent accession. This claim is plausible, since according to Mr. Steffen Elgersma, a NATO – IS official dealing with Armenia, the “stick and carrot” – principle has no relevance for countries with no membership objectives.<sup>4</sup>

The example of Armenia and Georgia speaks for the existence of two sets of partner nations for NATO: those (Georgia) interested in full membership, and those (Armenia) interested in

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<sup>1</sup> Caparini, “Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement,” 260.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Simmons, “Robert F. Simmons Jr Gives an Insider’s View of the Genesis and Evolution of NATO’s Main Partnership Forum.”

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels, February 12, 2013.

maintaining some kind of cooperation with the Alliance due to various internal or external interests.<sup>1</sup> Similar to other partner - countries, all both republics enjoy (ed) PFP as a major tool for developing deep political and military cooperation - ties with NATO. Since for neither country the membership perspective is provided (Georgia was not admitted to MAP in 2008) the question, how to provide stronger incentives for cooperation, becomes essential and very hard to respond. In this case, some authors ask about the essence of added value of the Alliance and out of 1600 PFP - activities struggle to define the “carrot” other than membership (know - how, training, expertise, skills) strong enough to ensure compliance.<sup>2</sup> Given the risk of partner country’s partial compliance, and even free - riding, the unique PFP - platform of practical military cooperation, gives an additional impetus to creation of “two - tire armed forces”: first one – that meets NATO - standards and is interoperable, and the second – remaining by the old model, and usually much larger than the former.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, if evidences of a such national behavior are found, the underlying motives of states (actors representing state and institutions) must be thoroughly studied, with specific emphasis made on the convergence of strategic interests of a state and the Alliance, domestic agenda priorities, and the potential benefits of rhetorical actions.

## 4.6 “Measuring” NATO - Influence

Social phenomena are generally very difficult to detect and measure. As Walter Powell and Paul DiMaggio have stated, such phenomena “cannot be reduced to aggregation or consequences of individual attributes or motives.”<sup>4</sup> The phenomena of political conditionality and compliance do not belong to the category of factors that have been well measured. Though many attempts have been made within the broader framework of Security Sector Reform (SSR) to identify clear mechanisms and areas of indication and measurement, it still remains a formidable challenge to all pioneers, who grapple with the particular topic of implementation of external commitments. Countries that are in a similar position as Georgia, usually, have the norms and procedures imposed on them from the outside that once were domestic properties of constituents of an international organization. From this perspective, NATO’s standards and procedures are indeed the externalization of those properties. The

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<sup>1</sup> Priego, “NATO Cooperation towards South Caucasus,” 50.

<sup>2</sup> Marónková, “NATO’s Partnerships Before and After the Chicago Summit,” 146, 148.

<sup>3</sup> Caparini, “Security Sector Reform and NATO and EU Enlargement,” 246.

<sup>4</sup> Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, eds., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 8.



commitment to comply, curiously, would imply the internalization of once externalized internal properties.<sup>1</sup> However, the concerns attached to the logic of Alliance's accession are twofold. The first is that the behavioral regime imposed on a candidate is not guaranteed during the pre - membership period. The second is the basic assumption that the behavioral regime imposed on a country by the pre - admission criteria will persist once that country becomes a NATO - member.<sup>2</sup>

This assumption is quite problematic. It voluntarily eradicates the risks and negative effects on domestic political structures, which are subject to changing influences of the deep - rooted political traditions and domestic incentives. Stephen Krasner underlines the flawed nature of the external influence and draws our attention to the need to change the domestic authority structures through the intensive application of clear and predictable rules, predominantly within the area of institutional capacity building and governance.<sup>3</sup> The degree of implementation is an imperfect alternative for the commitment - credibility, but compliance seems to be the best tool available for the moment. Mark Kramer claims that NATO has developed disciplinary measures to deter or to punish countries that fall back into undemocratic practices.<sup>4</sup> Yet, similar to other scholars, he fails to provide clear evidence of such disciplinary mechanisms. We might infer that the broadly formulated NATO - requirements indeed represent key areas, where assessment teams perform their mission. However, unlike the progress reports on the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) that are regularly posted online, the classified nature of all defense related documents makes our entire effort appear almost futile.<sup>5</sup> A significant effort must be made to provide much more clarity about the process of defense transformation in Georgia and Armenia in light of the respective cooperation processes with NATO. It would certainly stimulate the better option for deliberation and public debate, as well as a better understanding of the final cooperation - outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East," 15.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, "Chapter Two: The Planning Context," in *NATO Enlargement, 2000-2015: Determinants and Implications for Defense Planning and Shaping*, vol. 1243 (Rand Corporation, 2001), 21.

<sup>3</sup> Krasner, "International Support for State-Building: Flawed Consensus," 67-69.

<sup>4</sup> Kramer, "NATO, the Baltic States and Russia: A Framework for Sustainable Enlargement," 756.

<sup>5</sup> Transparency International, "Georgia Has Implemented a Large Portion of the EU Requirements, TI Georgia's New Interim Report Finds," *TI Georgia* (16 October 2013); available at <http://transparency.ge/en/post/report/georgia-has-implemented-large-portion-eu-requirements-ti-georgia-s-new-interim-report-fi>. See also "The Office of the State Minister on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration."

#### **4.6.1 Translating NATO – Requirements into measurable Defence Transformation Areas**

Operationalizing NATO - influence helped us delineate the relevance of conditionality principles and the incentives (relative gains), as key motivators for national compliance. It also provided a more structured understanding of SSR - principles as essence of the NATO - policy of cooperation, partnership and accession. Though the Alliance gradually developed a set of criteria to evaluate partner - nation's performance and applied particular monitoring mechanisms of PARP and MAP (ANP), two major deficits cannot be overseen. One is linked to the lack of clarity of mentioned criteria, and the second - to the classified nature of NATO - reports that limit the access to needed information, and force one to rely on more detailed mapping of defence related areas, the Alliance identified as critical to defence institutions' performance.

To avoid instances, in which objective assessment and “tailor - maid action plan” for institutional capabilities - building has been promised, but, in fact, no valid measurement toolset of institutional progress is provided, a clear translation of NATO - conditions into the language of defence transformation areas must take place.<sup>1</sup> We must also explicitly admit the difficulty of measuring SSR - based effectiveness. The lack of the ability to define and measure the progress of reforms is largely attributed to the trivial challenge of adopting “a “NATO compatible” defence establishment”, simply because there is no commonly accepted model among 28 allied nations.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the OECD Handbook on SSR, though extensively dealing with measurement nuances and problems of conceptual, i.e. expertise clarity, misses the objective of evaluating the institutional (defence) performance and instead devotes great deal to improving tools and techniques of assistance programs.<sup>3</sup> Dealing largely with qualitative methods of data analysis within our research, the notion of *measurement* must be accepted cautiously and interpreted exclusively as the synonym for the evaluation of research - results. Thus we should not rule out some challenges even if we formally adopt the SSR - approach to the analysis of defence institutions. Further, we support Ursula Schroeder's understanding of Security Sector Governance (SSG) as the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies to defence sector with a focus on

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Gayane Novikova et al., *Security Sector Reform in Countries of Visegrad and Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Opportunities* (Bratislava: Majer Marian, Centre for European and North-Atlantic Affairs (CENAA), 2013), available at [http://cenaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/security-sector-reform\\_FINAL.pdf](http://cenaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/security-sector-reform_FINAL.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Mangum and Craven, “Measuring Defense Reform,” 2–3, 5.

<sup>3</sup> *The OECD DAC Handbook on Security System Reform: Supporting Security and Justice*.

transparency and accountability in decision - making.<sup>1</sup> This inevitably links the objectives of transformation processes in various defence - related areas (policy fields) to the political set of requirements caused by the common western model of governance. We also add the element of civilian oversight and the management of resources as key components of the political control over military. The political segment of defence management must be augmented by an additional set of functional areas, where objectives and progress have to be studied even more thoroughly due to the significantly higher degree of practical implementation as compared to fuzzy nature of political requirements. Ron Mangum and William Craven suggest adopting the system that defines 10 critical functional systems/areas (most relevant in bold) of defence establishment, which includes:<sup>2</sup>

- **Strategic planning**
- **Resource management**
- **Force management**
- **Training and education**
- Command and control
- **Personnel management**
- Defence logistics
- Infrastructure
- **Public information**
- Intelligence

We regard command and control, logistics, infrastructure and intelligence of lower relevance at this stage, as they largely refer to narrow military (combat) functions, are mostly classified and thus less relevant to the core of SSR and our measurement approach. The rest, however, is crucial to evaluate due its huge importance in terms of normative and procedural developments within institution, as well as reference to key tenets of SSR, such as the civilian control over AF, institutional planning capacity, ideational effects within personnel, and the level of transparency. Indicated functional areas are specific and incompatible with widely used global indicators. As Ursula Schroeder states, the deficiencies of global indicators are

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<sup>1</sup> Ursula Schroeder, *Measuring Security Sector Governance: A Guide to Relevant Indicators* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Mangum and Craven, "Measuring Defense Reform," 6–8.

acute once applied to the domain of security sector governance, especially in an attempt to link causally the effects of external factors with changes on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.6.2 “Measurement Tool” Offered

The progress or deficiencies of institutional performance are heavily dependent on a clear understanding of practical achievements in the functional areas of defence. The crucial moment here is both, to have a comprehensive picture of policy statements (normative dimension) mirrored in policy papers, concepts and laws, as well as the sense of a practical implementation and changes on procedural level (best practices) of the real life. This is, admittedly, a very difficult mission to do. In this respect, the established practices and traditions, along with auditing provisions of the government must be also studied.<sup>2</sup> We complement this claim and suggest that the existence of well functioning reporting (monitoring) mechanisms within the defence institutions as well as outside (public or government), is an essential element of the sound progress – measurement tool. Ron Mangum and William Craven take this need even deeper for all levels of defence management by developing the *Defence Management Tracking Chart* along with clear reporting criteria and metrics.<sup>3</sup> Yet, the metrics, as they admit, is largely based on a subjective judgment and only to limited extent on mathematical tabulation.<sup>4</sup> Each area we identified as critical for our analysis inevitably will rely on individual evaluation. The in - depth analysis of dynamic processes cannot be substituted by other indicators (global like), and, as Ursula Schroeder insists, the significant limitations inherent to this kind of studies pretty much highlight that “there is no alternative to constructing aggregated indicators on the basis of subjective or perceptions - based measures.”<sup>5</sup>

We pay respect to this acknowledgement, which turns the results of the study to a subject of the individual assessment and intersubjective reflection. However, we will ameliorate the

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<sup>1</sup> Schroeder, *Measuring Security Sector Governance*, 5–6.

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Philipp Fluri and Hari Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building: Country Profiles and Needs Assessments for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova* (Geneva and Bucharest: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007), 5, available at [http://www.dcaf.ch/content/download/35356/525929/version/1/file/bm\\_pap-dib\\_profiles2007.pdf](http://www.dcaf.ch/content/download/35356/525929/version/1/file/bm_pap-dib_profiles2007.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Mangum and Craven, “Measuring Defense Reform,” 8–11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Schroeder, *Measuring Security Sector Governance*, 11, 13.

mentioned deficit by evaluating how results achieved matched the objectives, i.e. desired outcomes in each functional area (policy field) of defence institutions. The existing mechanisms of cooperation between NATO, Armenia and Georgia cover all related areas, and formulate relatively well the particular goals agreed within each area. By adopting following evaluation criteria (assigned value) of institutional performance (in relation to progress of reaching the identified objectives) as “strong”, “partial”, “partial+” and “no progress”, we hope to be able to capture best the degree of national compliance in defence related policy areas (functional sectors). The ultimate aggregation of the sectoral results will result in a complex and detailed picture of a national compliance translated into the general degree of NATO - influence (see Figure 5 below) exerted over a particular country.

**Figure 5. “Measurement” of NATO - Influence: indicators, progress - status**

Country	Sectors										
	<i>Political (aggregated)</i>			<i>Functional (aggregated)</i>					<i>Ideational (aggregated)</i>		
<i>Status of Commitment / Compliance</i>	Diplomatic / Rhetorical Adherence	Parliamentary Control	Civil. Control of the MOD	Normative (legal)	Standards / Interoperability	Defence Planning	Human Resources	Defence Budget / Public Transparency	Foreign Assistance	NATO-led Operations	Training and Education
strong / partial / partial + / no progress											
	<b>Result</b>			<b>Result</b>					<b>Result</b>		
<b>Status of NATO-Influence / National Compliance</b>											

Three aggregated indicators are offered within this model. The *Political* indicator encompasses the areas of diplomatic activities, parliamentary control of the defence, and the civilian control of the military as the key components of democratic governance. Within each area the intensity of actions and the validity of national commitments will be evaluated. The same approach will be applied to areas of *Functional* performance, which relates to the very practical fields of defence management (Structure, Planning, Budgeting, Personnel and Transparency), as well as to the normative dimension of policy change. A detailed explanation of the *Ideational* indicator is located separately under the third box. The socialization power of the Alliance is strongly individual based and ideally unfolds within all sectors manifested in rhetoric, language, terms and definitions adopted in politics, legal sphere, policy documents or daily military work. Thus ideational effects might be detected

throughout the study in various fields of the chart (such as political adherence, internalization of norms and policy related practices); Yet, it must be said, that the intensity of socialization linkages are best reflected in the fields of military training and education, participation in NATO - led operations, and the foreign (NATO, NATO - member) assistance (scale, structure).

The structured approach to the sectoral analysis of defence institutions in Armenia and Georgia makes it possible to conduct a truly cross - case analysis, comparing not only the general aggregated results of each country, but looking deeper into sectoral and functional disparities existing between national defence institutions. It will highlight policy areas, where significant discrepancies might become visible, and suggest the underlying causes of such divergence, or, in contrary, point towards areas of the behavioral (compliance) convergence. The picture below (Figure 6) shows a graphical visualization of the desired cross - case comparison.

**Figure 6. “Measurement” of NATO - Influence: Cross - Case Comparison**

<b>NATO-Influence</b> (indicator-areas)	<b>Georgia</b> status of commitments/compliance <b>strong / partial / partial + / no progress</b>	<b>Armenia</b> status of commitments/compliance <b>strong / partial / partial + / no progress</b>
<b>Political (aggregated)</b>		
• Diplomatic/Rhetorical Adherence		
• Parliamentary Control		
• Civil. Control of the MOD		
<b>Functional (aggregated)</b>		
• Normative (legal)		
• Standards/Interoperability		
• Defence Planning		
• Defence Budget-Transparency		
• Human Resources		
<b>Ideational (aggregated)</b>		
• Training and Education		
• NATO-led Ops		
• Foreign Assistance		
<b>Aggregated Result</b>	<b>Status of NATO Influence/National Compliance</b>	

By offering this assessment model we assume that all commitments have formally been recognized, received an appropriate place in each national agenda (legislative initiatives, or

policy papers, official statements), however by no means have guarantees of implementation. It is the mission of this study to find out whether the gap between the declaration of intentions (commitments) and the factual implementation on the ground exists, and try to respond why. The selected approach helps measure with a relatively high accuracy the status of progress, points towards areas, where alternative (domestic or external) factors (interests or motives) disrupt or might have disrupted the pace of compliance, and reveal the evidence of rhetorical actions, i.e. formal implementation. Since we have to deal with processes that are highly dynamic and unfold in different time - periods, the timelines of national commitments to reach agreed objectives will be assigned a high relevance, and might have a significant impact on the value of assessment. For instance if a certain goal was finally completed, yet required a significant extension of timelines, the compliance will not be assessed as “strong”, but lower, and will require an additional research of delay - factors that in turn may reveal additional deficits within the institutional architecture of the studied country. Similarly, an explanation will be made why certain areas, though showing the signs of positive compliance, do not result in an overall positive degree of NATO - influence, which might be attributed to conflicting domestic interests, the structural resistance or inefficiency of foreign assistance. Ultimately the developed model will also be able to demonstrate the practical utility of the existing institutional mechanisms, both national and NATO – owned, in implementing the made commitments.

Additionally, we intend to augment our analysis with the results of multiple structured interviews conducted with national – and NATO - representatives, directly involved in defence transformational processes in Armenia and Georgia. For the purpose of increased representativeness of overall findings, we believe it would be beneficial to summarize respondents’ topic related statements, in order to identify a tendency of divergence or the existing gap in the assessment of cooperation - status. The results, consequently, can be attributed to various factors, such as the deficits of political communication, the prevalence of national agenda - imperatives, institutional interest etc. Interviews serve also as a direct bridge to the domain of ideational influence. Due to individual and personal references to professional linkages as well as to the very understanding of terms and principles, they are a very potent means for providing a more nuanced picture of sociological influence and ideational transformation of national representatives.

### 4.6.3 Data Sources

The validation of achievements of national ministries of defence (MOD) will proceed by looking at various data sources, often not directly related to the defence area. The high sensitivity of security – and defence related issues turns most of relevant data (PARP and ANP, and to certain degree the IPAP - reports) to classified records, significantly reducing the amount of publicly accessible information. We face an additional challenge that the amount of available information differs significantly from Georgia – to Armenia, first one offering the plentitude of sources (less in IPAP), and the second with much more limited amount of information. Nevertheless, the pool of sources containing disclosed official documents, legal acts, media - interviews, statements, news and like constitute a solid empirical ground for launching our analytical investigation. The pool of primary sources consists of publicly released IPAP - documents that despite their notably reduced content and the “correct” language are still able to provide the best coverage of related issues and progress achieved. NATO - Parliamentary Assembly mission - reports (NPARs) are additional valuable source of information that offer a deep periodical review of cooperation – status in respective case - countries. NATO official documents (statements and communiqués) along with U.S. official reports (Congressional Reports, reports of State Department and Department of Defence, etc.) about the progress achieved by various areas of national defence institutions, the deficits to overcome or the nature of military assistance provided to Georgia and Armenia complement the list of NATO - related primary documentation. As for national sources, the publicly accessible official documents such as legal acts, policy - related concepts and regulations, budgetary information and official statements will comprise the basis of analysis. To widen the spectrum and reduce the danger of limitations in primary sources, so familiar to scholars working in sensitive fields of the security and defence, we will also resort to a large container of secondary sources, that are primarily based on interviews with key individuals that have or had a direct impact on defence transformational processes of Armenia and Georgia. These individuals are active and former representatives of national and NATO - bodies, who strongly contributed and still continue to shape various formats of cooperation with the Alliance. Additionally we will look at academic journals and contributions (incl. PFP - institutes) along with other think - tank and local reports (DCAF, ICG, TI etc.) that permanently produce brilliant assessments, based on their large expertise in respective areas (parliamentary control, budgetary transparency and corruption, and conflict resolution) and long experience in dealing with particular local stakeholders.



## **Chapter V: Basics of Influence: NATO's Interests in the Region and Mechanisms of Cooperation**

In this chapter we intend to provide a brief overview of the complex nature of interests, the Alliance pursues towards the South Caucasus region and Armenia and Georgia, in particular. We stress again the importance of the periodic limitation to our study, and concentrate on the basic events that had happened within the time - span of 2004 - 2012. Since many aspects of the Alliance's partnership - policy had already been touched upon, and the particular linkages to each country is the subject of the separate chapters, the main emphasis at this stage will be made on the essence and nature of NATO's general political messages towards the region, and the cooperation mechanisms it developed over time. Additionally, the specifics of the existing practical leverages to secure declared interests of the Alliance in the region will be briefly reviewed.

### **5.1 The Alliance's Interests in the South - Caucasus Region**

One of the key conclusions drawn from the analysis on the Alliance's policy of conditionality was that the success of conditionality, i.e. the degree of national compliance is strongly contingent on the strategic interest of the Alliance in a partner country, and respectively, on the credible implementation of taken national commitments. Thus it is of high relevance to know, how NATO viewed the region in the period of 2004 – to 2012, and what place the case -countries acquired within the strategic agenda of the Alliance.

In 2002 the Secretary General Lord Robertson (served in 1999 - 2003) stated that the South Caucasus (SC) region was of no specific relevance to the Alliance.<sup>1</sup> It is understandable, since 1994 all of SC - republics were engaged within a broader PFP - framework with no specific political course identified till NATO Prague Summit in 2002 (where Georgia first voiced its desire to become a member) that would unequivocally confirm any nation's major interest to join the NATO. As a former NATO - International Staff (IS) member Bruce Bach recalls, the Alliance pursued one principle objective towards all three SC - republics "to engage them in the processes and activities, which they seek while leaving open how deep an engagement

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Malek, Velizar Shalamanov, and Frederic Labarre, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia on Different Tracks," *Connections The Quarterly Journal*, 2008, 30.

may be.”<sup>1</sup> Just one year later the same Secretary General made a round - trip visiting the capitals of all three countries, meeting presidents and defence ministries, and publicly stating the importance of the region for the security in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

### **5.1.1 From Summit to Summit – From Neglect to Recognizing the Benefits of Military Cooperation**

The growing importance of the region to the Alliance should not be regarded in isolation from global context, and practical steps, that followed from NATO - side, speak clearly for that. The Istanbul Summit in 2004 elevated the partnerships with Caucasus and Central Asia - countries to a top priority, and paved the way to the creation of the position of Secretary General’s Special Representative in both regions, assumed by Robert Simmons.<sup>3</sup> In 2003 NATO took over the command in ISAF - operation and invited actively partner nations to contribute to the operation either by force - deployment or by other options. As an excerpt of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) puts it:

*The growing size and significance of NATO’s operation in Afghanistan has increased both NATO’s emphasis on developing PfP countries’ capabilities for participating in NATO military operations and the strategic importance of the Caucasus and Central Asian PfP countries to NATO, given their proximity to Afghanistan.*<sup>4</sup>

It meant that the ISAF - operation and the geographic proximity of SC - countries to Central Asia provided an additional logistical capacity (airlift and railway) for coalition supplies in Afghanistan; not least the proximity of Azerbaijan and Armenia to Iran played a certain role forming the Alliance strategic attitude.<sup>5</sup> Politically it was accompanied by the appointment of two liaison officers in both regions, who received the main mission to work daily with local defence and other state institutions and to assist the Special Representative in developing

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Priego, “NATO Cooperation towards South Caucasus,” 52–53; “NATO Secretary General to Travel to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan,” Press Release (2003)046 046, *Www.nato.int*, (May 13, 2003), available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_20003.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_20003.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>3</sup> Simon Schmidt, *NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries*, viewpoint (Yerevan: International Center for Human Development, ICHD, January 26, 2012), 2.

<sup>4</sup> “NATO Partnerships,” 3, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Cornell, “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Regional Security,” 130; Socor, “NATO Prospects in the South Caucasus,” 2.

advises with regard to NATO's overall strategy toward Caucasus and Central Asia.<sup>1</sup> It should be also noted that over time all SC - countries joined the U.S. military operation in Iraq by sending troops, thus creating an additional field of bilateral military cooperation. As the recognition of these efforts, the next Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (from 2004 to 2009) visited Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in November 4 - 5, 2004 and made a specific emphasis in Tbilisi on values of democratic rule, whereas the prospects of peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict have been discussed in Baku and Yerevan.<sup>2</sup> During these visits the growing menace of global terrorism and transnational crime was also highlighted as well as the potential contribution of the region to European energy - security. Basically, the South Caucasus linked with Central Asia had been recognized as an important transit route for energy resources and "a bulwark against drug smuggling and extremist organizations"<sup>3</sup>. This particular view was commonly accepted in the Alliance, with some national nuances. It emphasized the growing role of SC - countries in NATO - led operations as well as the danger of conflicts in the region due to geographic and political proximity to NATO - territory (Turkey).<sup>4</sup> Georgia's desire to join the Alliance created an additional dimension of political linkages to the region, which in turn, elevated the relevance of the particular military reforms in line with commonly accepted norms of democratic governance. As NATO Parliamentary Assembly's report puts it the *open door policy* and the framework of military cooperation in the region had to be regarded as assistance to national armed forces to develop "in a manner consistent with democratic governance."<sup>5</sup>

Even though the overall stability in the region has been recognized as the primary political objective of NATO in South Caucasus, the potential involvement of the Alliance in the processes of conflict - resolution (Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia) had been vehemently rejected. During the mentioned visits, the statements or speeches of Secretary Generals' always stressed the priority of OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) engagement in facilitating possible solutions, and left NATO no viable option in this regard. The Riga Summit Declaration in 2006 demanded the peaceful solution of ethno -

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<sup>1</sup> "The NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, March 27, 2014, available at

[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_50101.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_50101.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>2</sup> "Caucasus Visit Focuses on Partnership," *Www.nato.int*, November 3, 2004, available at

[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news\\_20669.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_20669.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>3</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," Committee Report, 168 DSCFC 06 E (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2006), 4, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?SHORTCUT=998>.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>5</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," para. 4,5.

territorial conflicts in the region; however, it did not explicitly define formats or desired model of solutions.<sup>1</sup> On another instance, the possibility of sending NATO - peacekeeping force in SC was explicitly ruled out in 2006 by the Chairman of the Alliance's Military Committee General Raymon Henault.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the general consensus has been reached among NATO - members, which does not foresee any serious political action, not to speak of military one, aimed at increasing NATO's peacekeeping role in the region. Nonetheless, NATO was able to agree on one of the fundamental principles of conflict resolution, and favored the importance of territorial integrity, on which the special emphasis was made during the Chicago Summit 2102, causing Armenian delegation to reduce its level of participation.<sup>3</sup>

The decisions made public during the Chicago Summit represent a logical continuation of the policy - review started short before the Lisbon Summit in 2010. The significant increase of NATO's dependence on force - contributions and material/financial donations of partner - nations in Afghanistan and Kosovo, in light of serious defence budgetary cuts by member - states, forced the Alliance to assign the Partnership Concept a much higher weight than before. The Strategic Concept adopted at Lisbon Summit in 2010 specified the role of partnership in general terms as preparing interested nations for membership.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, however, it also specified with a great clarity, that it would develop existing partnerships "while preserving their specificity."<sup>5</sup> The messages of the Chicago Summit, followed in May 2012, reiterated the need for keeping flexible formats of partnerships with no impediments for deepened cooperation in operational context (incl. NATO Response Force - NRF), the training and exercises.<sup>6</sup> Even though the declaration did not provide any specific details on Armenia (except. the reiteration of Georgia's membership aspirations), the signals sent, were clear enough to indicate that the military - operational dimension of cooperation lay at core of

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<sup>1</sup> "Riga Summit Declaration" (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO Press Releases, November 29, 2006), para. 39, 43, available at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2006/p06-150e.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Malek, Shalamanov, and Labarre, "NATO and the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia on Different Tracks," 49.

<sup>3</sup> "Chicago Summit Declaration," Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago on 20 May 2012, Press Release (2012) 062 (Chicago: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, May 20, 2012), para. 47, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_87593.htm?mode=pressrelease); Richard Giragosian, Zaur Shiriyevev, and Kornely Kakachia, "Security Perceptions: The Views from Armenia, Azerbaijan & Georgia," in *The South Caucasus 2018: Facts, Trends, Future Scenarios* (Tbilisi: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2013), 205–206, available at [http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas\\_35353-1522-35-30.pdf?130913081416](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_35353-1522-35-30.pdf?130913081416).

<sup>4</sup> "NATO - Active Engagement, Modern Defence - Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon," *NATO*, November 19, 2010, para. 29, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68580.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68580.htm).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 30.

<sup>6</sup> "Chicago Summit Declaration," para. 22.

the Alliances interest with those countries, that do not pursue the goal of membership. Evidently, Armenia falls under this category.

### **5.1.2 The U.S. Interests and the “good for Alliance”**

The U.S. being the most potent member of the Alliance traditionally pursued the general objectives of regional stability and the promotion of democratic transformation. Within this general pattern, the U.S. interests initially were “non – country - specific.”<sup>1</sup> The radical shift of the American policy in addressing the global threat of terrorism, and related risks, caused also changes in the approach to the South Caucasus region. As Vladimir Socor, a Jamestown Foundation analyst, highlights, the U.S. regional policy disregarded traditional (military) threats and made great emphasis on addressing international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), arms and drug smuggling.<sup>2</sup> In this context and in light of the tremendous increase of Caspian states’ capacity to export energy sources to Europe, the role of the each country in South Caucasus got much more articulated. The Congressional Report 2010 identified Georgia - as a model for implementing democratic reforms in post-soviet area and a “key conduit through which Caspian Basin energy resources flow to the West.”<sup>3</sup> Armenia received in the document a comparably less recognition, and is mentioned within the general context of international crime, the conflict resolution in Karabakh, and the desirability of improved relations to Turkey. The U.S. global security interests played key role in initiating security and military cooperation with all SC - countries. The follow- u p chapters will provide a detailed picture of particular cooperation programs. At this stage we would merely highlight that intensive military programs launched in the region from 2003 onward were also intended to support the general process of domestic political reforms. As the former Assistant Secretary of State in European and Eurasian Affairs Elizabeth Jones (served from 2001 – to 2005) stated in 2003, the results of the US - assistance are that “as each day passes, the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus are becoming better equipped, better trained and better coordinated”, and all efforts are integrated to enhance human rights and political reforms.<sup>4</sup> The continuity of the mentioned policy and objectives is visible in the Congressional Budget Justification documents for foreign operations from 2004 - to 2012,

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<sup>1</sup> James Nixey, “The South Caucasus: Drama on Three Stages,” in *America and a Changed World: A Question of Leadership* (London: Robin Niblett, 2010), 126, available at [http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe\\_derivate\\_00005179/CH\\_16492\\_us0510\\_nixey.pdf](http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00005179/CH_16492_us0510_nixey.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Socor, “NATO Prospects in the South Caucasus,” 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 32–33.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 31–32.

which turns South Caucasus to the largest financial recipient of US - aid (about 1/5 of all aid to Eurasia).<sup>1</sup>

On April 2, 2009 the German Foreign Minister Frank - Walter Steinmeier formulated in a "Der Spiegel" - article the core of NATO interests, embracing the trinity of "goods": the good for the candidate country, good for NATO, and good for pan - European security.<sup>2</sup> It is symptomatic how quickly the cancellation of NATO - Russia Council's as a reaction to Georgia - Russia War in 2008, was lifted in March 2009.<sup>3</sup> It exemplifies how the interests of an aspirant country can be overruled by the interests of the Alliance, i.e. key members of the Alliance. The German ambassador to NATO, for instance, called the decision to freeze the relations with Russia simply "stupid."<sup>4</sup> The decision to restore the Council's work was explained by existing common interests with Russia in Afghanistan and in areas of arms control and disarmament, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), terrorism, piracy and drug - trafficking.<sup>5</sup> This example testifies for the existence of a significant disparity inside the wide spectrum of Alliance - interests. It also makes clear, that despite the political commitment to admit Georgia to membership at Bucharest Summit in 2008, which increased NATO's political ties to the region, the importance of strategic calculations should never be underestimated.

In the end the Russia itself has been considered by NATO as a partner country, though clearly, with a different approach and the incomparably wide spectrum of common issues to work on. Compared to that, countries of the South Caucasus are engaged in a completely different set of cooperation packages. Yet as a former NATO – spokesman Jamie Shea argues, all partnerships can only be strengthened if common security interests persist that further "common or at least compatible value systems."<sup>6</sup> Since the tendency of rapidly diminishing and uncoordinated defence spending among NATO - members gradually amounted to the problem of the serious capability shortages, the integration of partners in the planning and command structures to participate in the "sharp end of operation" was a decision

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<sup>1</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 42.

<sup>2</sup> Frank-Walter Steinmeier, "Germany's Foreign Minister on NATO: 'We Face New Threats and Challenges,'" *Der Spiegel*, April 2, 2009, available at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/germany-s-foreign-minister-on-nato-we-face-new-threats-and-challenges-a-616969.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Ahto Lobjakas, "NATO Lacks the Stomach for South Caucasus Fight," *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no. 5 (April 16, 2009): 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Gegeshidze, "Post-War Georgia: Resetting Euro-Atlantic Aspirations?," 8.

<sup>6</sup> Shea, "Keeping NATO Relevant."

NATO - leadership favored and was ready to provide “a full seat at the NATO table” for respective partner nations.<sup>1</sup> Here we clearly see the core area of mutual benefits, where not only Georgia, but especially Armenia its interest to embed national forces into ongoing and future NATO - operations.

## **5.2 Mechanisms of Cooperation**

The organizational interests of every institution usually are backed by mechanisms that are intended to suit best the formal and practical requirements of both internal and external cooperation. NATO is no exception in this regard and applies a number of cooperative tools that reveal clear linkages to generic principles of western type defence governance, and can also serve the particular interests of some nations. The effectiveness and outcomes of these mechanisms will be paid a much greater attention in following chapters dealing with Armenia and Georgia. Here, however, we regard it as indispensable to provide a brief introductory overview of relevant cooperation formats that are utilized by the Alliance in cases of Georgia and Armenia. These programs and plans are not simply the venues, within which intensive military and defence - related interactions take place, but they represent a kind of “structural umbrellas” under which intensive processes of professional socialization, i.e. norms adoption and internalization unfold.

### **5.2.1 Partnership for Peace (PFP) – Tools**

Established in 1994 the *Individual Partnership (Cooperation) Program* (IPP/IPCP) allowed any in PFP involved country to identify among dozens of general areas the activities (over 1400) that best suit their political and military objectives.<sup>2</sup> The list of activities might vary from year to year and range from observer status in a maneuver exercise to training, language and other educational courses in various NATO - facilities.<sup>3</sup> The IPP is indeed a first and foremost practical level of cooperation, where the selected list of activities must be approved from the NATO - side. The Alliance can reject some activities and on some instances provide

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> “Partnership Tools,” *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, November 13, 2014, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_80925.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_80925.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>3</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” sec. II, BOX I, para. 3.

a full or partial coverage of participation costs.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the introduction of the PFP - framework served major objective of bringing closer the partner nations' military to the standards of NATO - forces. The IPP was in this regard a perfect platform and the invitation at the same time into the "world of NATO - annual activities." Yet the interest of the deeper political and military cooperation between a partner - nation and the Alliance under the PFP - umbrella could be only served if joint force - and capability planning procedures were initiated. Thus, along with IPP, the *Planning and Review Process* (PARP) had been established in 1994. It imitated the NATO force - planning system and allowed the interested nation to develop its force interoperability via assessing its military capabilities by NATO - teams and establishing specific goals (Partnership Goals - PGs) that enhance national capabilities for participation in NATO - operations or exercises.<sup>2</sup> The military - operational dimension of cooperation has been further enhanced as the *Operational Capabilities Concept* (OCC) was introduced in 2004. This relatively new program deepens the interoperability of designated national units with NATO - forces to a higher level. Countries are asked to identify units (no matter land, air or naval) they wish to form in full accordance with NATO - standards and thus will be evaluated and certified by the Alliance.<sup>3</sup> The OCC came into life as a response to the growing role of partner - nations' contributions to ISAF (International Security Assistance Force), and therefore serves first of all a very narrow objective of developing operational capabilities of partner forces. The evaluation and certification process of units can take several years, ultimately ensuring that partner units are ready to work with Allied forces once deployed.<sup>4</sup> The OCC is also used for developing partner's capabilities intended to become a part of NATO Response Force (NRF), and the achieved interoperability is usually ensured and evaluated via participation of respective units in various field - exercises.

The prevalence of the operational focus within the general PFP and PARP - objectives has become weaker over year, as the importance of general defence reforms in PFP - countries gained momentum. Consequently, PARP was increasingly used to support transformation of national defence institutions, and speed up military reforms. Alongside OCC the *Partnership Action Plan on Defence Institution Building* (PAP - DIB) was agreed by member - states at NATO Istanbul Summit 2004, which aimed at exploring the needs and gaps of defence

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> "NATO Partnerships," 15.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 15, 17.

<sup>4</sup> "Partnership Tools."



institutions and facilitate reforms that would develop efficient and democratically responsible defence institutions.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, the PAP - DIB objectives were in line with general PARP - objectives of a partner's forces' enhanced interoperability and the adoption of NATO - standards in a wide range of areas. For instance, educational standards serve the common understanding of basic military staff procedures, NATO doctrines, proficiency in English language (STANAG 3 level), high admission criteria, core mandatory areas to pass, high academic ethics etc.<sup>2</sup> PAP - DIB is used to develop tailored assistance programs for improving democratic control over armed forces, transparent management and budgeting, defence and security policy, or to check the compliance with agreed international norms and practices.<sup>3</sup> In fact, PAP - DIB's objectives are fundamental to the objective of building modern defence institutions. Thus it enjoys high attention from the NATO International Staff (IS) and the NATO - affiliated educational centers that try to ensure intensive networking of people, and the targeted exchange of ideas and programs. This platform of networking is being sustained by two NATO agencies that cooperate closely and provide partners with modern concepts and best practices: the Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP - a more strategic policy making body) and the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes (PfP - Consortium, an educational forum of nearly 300 institutions).<sup>4</sup> The PASP and PFP - Consortium have their own work specifications. The former for instance aims more at streamlining the security assistance by sharing relevant data and promoting donor - recipient country relationship via particular "Clearinghouse" mechanisms (national assistance programs).<sup>5</sup> The latter has much heavier focus on the educational aspect of assistance, thus concentrating on documental (conceptual and normative) development and building strategic community through education and research. The ultimate objective here is building "common understanding of security and security policy."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 3.

<sup>2</sup> James S. Corum, "Some Key Principles of Multinational Military Education," *Connections The Quarterly Journal* XI, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 21, 23.

<sup>3</sup> "Partnership Tools."

<sup>4</sup> Jim Barrett, "Education for Reform: New Students, New Methods, New Assessments," *Connections The Quarterly Journal* XI, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 39.

<sup>5</sup> A practice widely used by USEUCOM, in Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," 44.

<sup>6</sup> Shalamanov, "The PfP Consortium as a Change Management and Integration Tool: Ten Years of Experience," 63-64.

## 5.2.2 Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and Annual National Program (ANP)

At NATO Prague Summit in 2002 the Alliance decided to start a new partnership initiative called the *Individual Partnership Action Plan* (IPAP). It brings all defence and military related activities under one, much more politically loaded umbrella, with a heavy focus on domestic reform efforts.<sup>1</sup> Armenia and Georgia joined the framework, which identifies four major areas of reforms: political and security cooperation, defence, public information, and civil - emergency issues.<sup>2</sup> The first chapter clearly serves the political purpose and highlights the criticality of common security understanding between the Alliance and a partner - country. It also stresses the political relevance of security and defence reforms, as compared to particular objectives within the defence and military chapter, aimed at enhancing combat readiness or force interoperability. In general, IPAP's first chapter deals with various elements of democratic reforms and governance (e.g. judicial, economic etc.) and the second - with military reforms, in particular with policy and planning, budgeting, standardization and interoperability with NATO - forces.<sup>3</sup> This format is based on a two - year cycle and allows participating country to develop specific cooperation goals with NATO that are in the end assessed against progress achieved.<sup>4</sup> The assessment is made by the NATO (IS) - team and is reviewed by the North Atlantic Council (NAC). The cooperation goals in the document are tied to a concrete schedule of actions and provide an excellent platform for active political dialogue with NATO by means of regular meetings in Brussels.<sup>5</sup>

The most intensive and inclusive cooperation mechanisms are the Membership Action Plan (MAP) and Annual National Program (ANP). The second is similarly designed as IPAP and used to be a working plan of countries being under MAP. Yet, the evaluation criteria of ANP (MAP) are more rigorous than of IPAP in terms of progress in achieving political objectives (functioning of defence institutions in accordance with NATO standards), and are conducted annually.<sup>6</sup> These programs are, in fact, the last formal stages, where intensive membership - preparations must be completed to certify a partner country for full membership. Thus they

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<sup>1</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 1.

<sup>3</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," para. 28.

<sup>4</sup> "NATO Partnerships," 16.

<sup>5</sup> Simmons, "Robert F. Simmons Jr Gives an Insider's View of the Genesis and Evolution of NATO's Main Partnership Forum."

<sup>6</sup> "NATO Partnerships," 16.

are much more the subject of political influence than the IPP, OCC or PARP with their heavy emphasis on the military - operational dimension. The increased focus on tailoring individual formats of cooperation made the process more dynamic, but also pushed some early collective formats of cooperation (such as the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council - EAPC) into the growing irrelevance. The desire to establish a unique and individual cooperation process turned the “28 + 1” formula to the mostly used format between partner - countries and NATO, partially also due to non - decision making nature of the EAPC, and “because some PFP countries are reluctant to discuss their security concerns, given other countries that attend.”<sup>1</sup> This observation pretty much attests the limited weight a partner - country can attach to general PFP - requirements of supporting transparency and collective trust, once confronted with the dilemma of security concerns and the need of sharing defence - and security related information. Both case - countries use actively the “28 + 1” format, with Georgia moving a step ahead by having a separate NATO – Georgia Commission (NGC) created in the aftermath of war with Russia in 2008.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, the desire to revitalize the “cooperation between the partners”- format is openly acknowledged in Armenia’s IPAP documents that directly urge the country to “Actively engage in efforts to revitalize the Partnerships, in particular the EAPC”.<sup>3</sup> Out of all cooperation formats PARP - reports are the best documents that measure national performance in the defence area by assessing progress in achieving Partnership Goals (PGs), yet are unavailable for public review and analysis due to the sensitive nature of information contained. Some IPAP - reports are made public, though went under the significant censorship. In all documents (with except of OCC - evaluation) the progress review is structured in accordance with areas relevant to defence reforms and democratic governance and pretty much reflect the sectoral area - division of our measurement concept. Often we encountered instances, where no clear assessment or vague statements were made. However, the language and formulation of agreed objectives or commitments made it easy to understand the nature of national efforts (discontent or approval), and at what stage of progress the national authorities stood at the time of assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>2</sup> “NATO - Framework Document on the Establishment of the NATO-Georgia Commission - Tblisi, Georgia,” *NATO*, September 15, 2008, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_46406.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_46406.htm).

<sup>3</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia” (North Atlantic Treaty Alliance, 2009), Action 1.5.2, available at <http://www.mil.am/files/IPAP%202009-2010-Unclassified-1349253637-.pdf>; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia” (North Atlantic Council, NATO, 2011), Actions 1.1.1, 1.5.2, available at <http://www.mil.am/files/IPAP-2011-2013-ENG-Declassified-1349350859-.pdf>.

# Chapter VI: NATO and Defence Transformation in Armenia

## 6.1 Introduction

It has been already said that the turning point in the relationships between NATO and SC - countries was the inauguration of the IPAP. And even though, all countries were long before already engaged in PARP and IPP - formats, the real political push, i.e. the changes on the ground became visible only from 2004 on, as Georgia entered the IPAP and Armenia joined in the following year. The overall condition of the defence and security sectors in both countries at that time largely were described as being heavily affected by the soviet legacy. Some reports testify that the entire hierarchy of values was constructed in the way that the security of state was given much higher priority than that of individual, thus kept under secrecy by turning defence institutions as:

*(...) over - centralized decision - making system on strategic and even operative issues, a hierarchy which excluded civilian involvement in formulating, controlling and implementing defence missions, an arbitrary system of resource allocation, the absence of transparency to the public and public representatives, and a poor capacity to achieve medium and long - term planning.*<sup>1</sup>

The appalling deficits of defence institutions (ministry and armed forces) could be certainly attributed to the existing gaps in democratic governance. The tendency from 2004 to 2005 showed signs of some worsening, allowing Freedom House to attest Armenia the quality of weak governance, the prevalence of vested interests within power - structures and the insufficient level of law-enforcement and monitoring.<sup>2</sup> Not surprisingly, the quality of the political control of the armed forces, represented by the oversight - function of the national parliament and the civilian leadership of the defence ministry, raised serious questions. The defence system was highly militarized and inhabited serious signs of corruption and financial interests.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 40; Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 5.

<sup>2</sup> "Nations in Transit: Armenia 2004," *Freedom House*, 2004, available at <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2004/armenia#.VHX-nTHF-08>.

<sup>3</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 1.

## 6.2 NATO in National Agenda: The Political Purpose of Cooperation and Defence Reforms

The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on the degree of political influence NATO was exerting in Armenia from 2004 to 2012 by assessing how successful it was in promoting the Euro - Atlantic cooperation as the crucial foreign policy objective of the national political agenda and in strengthening key principles of democratic control of defence and military.

### 6.2.1 NATO in Armenia's Strategic Agenda

The regional approach was a major featuring element of the Alliance's policy towards the South Caucasus. According to Armenia's First Deputy Defence Minister Davit Tonoyan (in this position since 2010) the "indivisibility of the region" developed by the Alliance is a distinctive platform, which serves well for the individual policy formulation towards each country.<sup>1</sup> No doubt that the existing security situation in the region is very complex, and events in any country might have significant impact on the others. From this perspective the role of Karabakh conflict must be once more highlighted. It heavily influenced the security culture and domestic politics in Armenia and allowed political leaders from Karabakh in late 1990s to gain power in Armenia, consolidate it and eventually "capture the Armenian presidency" by Robert Kocharyan (served as the President of the breakaway Karabakh Republic from 1994 to 1998) in 1998.<sup>2</sup> Since then the security of the breakaway region became even more the integral part of Armenian security policy considerations and determined the very nature of country's political structure and decision - making. Thus it was no surprise that not only the defence area but the entire political culture was "driven by a deeper trend of insecurity and militarization" often resulting in the predominance of primitive politics.<sup>3</sup> Another factor playing its crucial role in forming Armenia's security perceptions is the traditional view that regards Turkey as the main enemy and brings it in the direct context of the possible confrontation with Azerbaijan. As the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan stressed in his interview in 2014, Armenia's security perceptions are strongly influenced by the role (negative) Turkey plays in the region, and effectively has an impact on Armenia's

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan, July 30, 2014, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Giragosian, "The Political Dimension: Armenian Perspective," in *The South Caucasus 2018: Facts, Trends, Future Scenarios* (Tbilisi: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2013), 12, available at [http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas\\_35353-1522-1-30.pdf?130910135923](http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_35353-1522-1-30.pdf?130910135923).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

policy towards NATO, as well as on the relevance of the Russian factor for the country.<sup>1</sup> The tense relationship between these two countries is no secret for NATO - officials. As a former NATO – IS (DPPD – Defence Policy and Planning Division) official Bruce Bach stated, Turkey remains as challenge for Armenia bearing the potential of causing problems at any time.<sup>2</sup> Despite these reservations, the growing size of the Alliance and the global scale of operations it assumed, raised its political relevance for Armenia and invited a policy change. Already in 2003 the Armenian foreign ministry voiced its desire to “ensure its security by developing the widest possible international ties, especially with the world’s “most influential” security body.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the NATO - affiliated *Baltic Defence Review* was reporting that, though the very strategic goal of counterbalancing the Turkish - Azerbaijani alliance was met by the Russian military presence in country, deepening cooperation with NATO was regarded as very beneficial and served following objectives:<sup>4</sup>

- To stimulate the political dialogue on international security issues
- To create forces interoperable with NATO and able to participate in international peacekeeping missions
- To use PFP programs to reform the Armenian armed forces
- To enhance bilateral military - political ties with NATO - member and partner countries

Yerevan identified both multilateral as well bilateral frameworks of cooperation to pursue a very practical interest of institutional reforms and transformation of the defence and military to support its strategic security interests. The National Security Strategy (NSS), adopted in 2007 and which is the guideline for consequent actions, formulates the intensification of cooperation with NATO as an integral part of the policy of *complementarity*.<sup>5</sup> This notion is largely referred to the ability of country to pursue multi - vector foreign and security policies with an aim to cover all directions that promise certain potential benefits. The benefits of the *complementary policy* in the context of NATO would mean better international political - military linkages and better security guarantees for Armenia. The statements of Presidents

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 25.

<sup>4</sup> Arthur Aghabekyan, “National Security Policy and Defence Structures’ Development Programme of Armenia,” *Baltic Defence Review*, Special Issue, September 2003, 26.

<sup>5</sup> “National Security Strategy” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, January 26, 2007), 10, available at [http://www.mfa.am/u\\_files/file/doctrine/Doctrineeng.pdf](http://www.mfa.am/u_files/file/doctrine/Doctrineeng.pdf).

Robert Kocharyan (in office from 1998 to 2008) and Serzh Sargsyan (in office from 2008 to present) must be also taken into account, since they shared the view that “joining NATO would barely improve country’s security, and affect its relations with neighboring countries”.<sup>1</sup> In line with these claims some sources also argue that the European Union (EU) would be much more relevant for Armenia in long run to lessen its dependence on Russia.<sup>2</sup> However, the considerable size of normative and policy - evidence suggests that these and similar statements seem to be mostly directed towards the Russian audience and perform more the function of political pacification of major ally rather than of real policy imperative. In this sense, the review of Armenia’s strategic level documents would contribute to more clarity about foreign policy objectives. At this stage, we choose to do this within the separate chapter (Defence Policy and Planning) that deals with country’s institutional capacity to produce sound strategic security - and defence related policy documents. Yet a short excerpt from IPAP - document makes clear that the national desire of the “full integration into European structures and institutions” is at least formally accepted as “Armenia’s main foreign policy objective.”<sup>3</sup>

Concerns had been expressed in the context of potential added value of cooperation with NATO to those countries that don’t envisage the membership as the ultimate strategic goal of cooperation. This question got especially relevant in cases, where the Alliance had not identified its strategic interest, as in the case of Armenia, and seems to pay less attention to the country, as compared to Azerbaijan and Georgia with their large energy resources - and transport potential.<sup>4</sup> Benefits of such cooperation are generally attributed to the increased capacity of political negotiations, the access to training and technical assistance programs, the increased interoperability, stimulation of defence reforms and the ability to “counter external pressures from other countries.”<sup>5</sup> It seems that the mentioned opportunities exactly matched the Armenian expectations, motivating the political leadership to intensify its ties with the Alliance. NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report (NPAR) findings capture the official position of Armenian authorities that reiterate the vital importance of NATO to country’s

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Malek, “NATO and the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia on Different Tracks,” *Connections The Quarterly Journal*, Summer Supplement 2008, VII, no. 3 (2008): 31.

<sup>2</sup> David S. Yost, “Armenian Perceptions of International Security in the South Caucasus,” *NATO Defence College Research Paper*, no. 32 (March 2007): 2–3.

<sup>3</sup> Aghasi Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” in *Defence Institution Building: Country Profiles and Needs Assessments for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova*, in Fluri Philipp, Viorel Cibotaru (eds.), Background Materials (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2008), 26.

<sup>4</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, “Security Sector Reform in Armenia,” 10.

<sup>5</sup> “NATO Partnerships,” 13.

security interests.<sup>1</sup> It becomes apparent, that due to small size and very limited resources of the country the national authorities very well realized the necessity of broadening the instruments of national security policy - making. According to former Armenian Foreign Minister Vardan Oskanyan (in office from 1998 - 2008), shared by many officials, with only two borderlines open, the flexibility in foreign relations becomes a very important and sound basis for conducting foreign policy.<sup>2</sup> Understandably, the partnership aspirations towards NATO are formulated in a way as not to endanger the existing military ties with Russia. Nevertheless, the priority of strengthening the relationships with the Alliance became apparent even in the rhetoric of country's top officials. For instance, in 2008 the President Serzh Sargsyan stressed that Armenia's top foreign security priority was the friendly relations with Russia and good relations with the United States and NATO, so that the latter does not jeopardize the former.<sup>3</sup>

The period between 2007 and 2010 is featured by a significant increase of political consultations at various levels between Yerevan and Brussels (NATO HQ). The President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan as well as the Defence and Foreign Ministers visited the NATO headquarter, and the Special Representative of the Alliance Robert Simmons visited Yerevan for bilateral consultations at least twice a year.<sup>4</sup> The regularity of meetings at all levels has increased significantly, and can be easily monitored by official sources of respective ministries or the Alliance. According to Armenian Mission to NATO, annually nine - to twelve official visits are conducted by NATO - officials to Yerevan, and eleven - to sixteen visits made by Armenian officials to Brussels.<sup>5</sup> Thus, summarizing the strategic - political aspect of the developed relations to NATO, it can be said, that the heavy reliance on Russian military guarantees and the close political - institutional linkage to Moscow (Armenia is a member of Russia led CIS and CSTO) did not prevent Armenian government to seek the ways of beneficial cooperation with the Alliance.<sup>6</sup> Since Russia itself had institutionalized its contacts to NATO, there was no good reason not to do the same.<sup>7</sup> As Mr. Steffen Elgersma, a

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<sup>1</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," para. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," 5.

<sup>4</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 3; "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," Committee Report, 167 DSCFC 07 E BIS (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2007), para. 12, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1283>.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO, February 8, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Armenia joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1991 and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) in 1992.

<sup>7</sup> NATO Russia Council (NRC) created in 2002 replaced the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) established in 1997



NATO - International Staff member (IS) argued, Armenia regards the Alliance “as a useful tool for defence transformation...some even consider the possibility of future membership and therefore view the existing contacts with the Alliance as a necessary tool for political bargaining with Russia.”<sup>1</sup> Additionally, some sources convincingly point out, that the motivating desire for Armenian authorities to join PFP - framework was, first of all, the fear of falling behind its neighbors Georgia and Azerbaijan and the necessity to be informed about the material aid and training provided to Azerbaijan.<sup>2</sup> This argument is convincingly strengthened by Bruce Bach (a former NATO – IS/DPPD official), who mirrors the same logic in the case of Azerbaijan and argues that Azerbaijan basically “wants to not see the Armenians gain any military political advantage from what it might do with the Alliance.”<sup>3</sup>

## **6.2.2 Purpose of Cooperation and Defence Reforms**

The formulation of clear objectives, i.e. expected benefits from NATO - cooperation formats has found its place in Armenia’s strategic documents. For instance, the National Security Strategy, adopted in 2007, pursues deeper connections to European security structures, the higher compatibility of forces with NATO - forces and the modernization of armed forces in “closer conformity with the defence systems of advanced states, including their forces.”<sup>4</sup> We must admit the existence of a certain ambiguity in the statement mentioned. There is no explicit mentioning of NATO or its member - state militaries. The *modernization* here can be translated in terms of technical upgrades and innovations, but also can refer to reforms of a general defence system and the military. The latter however, implies much deeper transformational processes (institutional, procedural, structural etc.) than the mere technical aspect of modernization. As we know, the stronger scope of military interoperability (PARP) was enlarged in 2005 to the broader emphasis of institutional reforms (IPAP), and NATO parliamentary report (NPAR) 2007 confirms this claim.<sup>5</sup> The evidence however, speaks more for the prevalence of practical benefits of force - interoperability and related standards. Especially, the active engagement of Armenia in NATO - led operations (in Kosovo and Afghanistan) since 2004 pushed for more intensive bilateral military cooperation with key

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 25.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> “National Security Strategy,” 11–12.

<sup>5</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 35, 36.

allied nations (USA, Germany, France, Greece and Italy) and, naturally, brought up the military - technical aspect to the forefront overshadowing other aspects of cooperation.<sup>1</sup>

Armenian authorities recognized the existing disbalance, yet it seems that this was exactly, what they were expecting. The NPAR - 2006 testifies that the NATO PA - delegation identified a broader consensus among political parties in Armenia that were more interested in practical benefits of cooperation such as the political dialogue and “certain standards.”<sup>2</sup> This stance is somehow strengthened by first deputy minister Davit Tonoyan. According to him, the initial weight of the “democratization” of the defence sector and the democratic values have been nowadays replaced by a heavier emphasis on practical benefits of cooperation, more related to national participation in NATO - led operations and the valuable expertise, predominantly provided by member - states and not the Alliance as organization itself.<sup>3</sup> Thus a clear distinction must be made between the value of membership and the value of cooperation for Armenia. The benefits of cooperation are tangible, identified and very much appreciated. Concerning the value of membership, there is no evidence of the wider discussion within the government. And those officials, who openly supported the idea of NATO - membership, seem to generate a serious discomfort for the Armenian leadership. The case of the National Assembly Speaker Artur Baghdasaryan, who in a Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung’s interview in 2006 outlined the strategic goals of Armenian membership in EU and NATO, is very much telling, as he was forced to step down and withdraw his party “Orinats Yerkir” from the government.<sup>4</sup> As long as the issue of membership is off table, the open support of cooperation activities with NATO and its key member - countries seem much less problematic. For instance, in July 2011 while discussing the IPAP - implementation the Armenian and U.S. - officials agreed to hold joint exercises in 2012 and expand the “spheres of cooperation”, that according to U.S. - officials did not pose any obstacles for Armenia’s military pact with Russia.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Giragosian, “Armenian Military & Security Policy: Regaining a Strategic Balance” (Yerevan: Regional Studies Center, December 2012), 1, available at [http://regional-studies.org/images/documents/publications/journals/yerevak/Yerevak\\_article\\_ENG\\_11.12.pdf](http://regional-studies.org/images/documents/publications/journals/yerevak/Yerevak_article_ENG_11.12.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Malek, “NATO and the South Caucasus,” 32.

<sup>5</sup> Emil Danielyan, “Armenia Plans More NATO-Backed Defence Reforms,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, The Jamestown Foundation, Global Research and Analysis, 8, no. 153 (August 9, 2011), available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=38299&no\\_cache=1#.VBMty\\_mSy08](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38299&no_cache=1#.VBMty_mSy08).

It is crucial to understand how Armenian authorities translate the notion of defence and institutional reforms. The reasons are simple, since the picture and views they share are directly reproduced with some changes into national commitments embedded in bilateral documents (IPAP or PARP). These in turn are acknowledged by NATO - representatives as a national obligation to pursue reforms in line with agreements made with the Alliance.<sup>1</sup> As already mentioned, the sequential introduction of every new cooperation format was designed in a way, as to enlarge and complement the existing ones by adding new elements, where the cooperation seemed beneficial. Thus, it is no surprise that the PARP increasingly used for addressing institutional aspects of defence reforms, was in this particular area supplemented by PAP - DIB, which itself proved instrumental in shaping the IPAP - format. In fact they are fully compatible and strengthen each other in achieving defined objectives.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, the rare examples of local expertise in Armenia - NATO relations reveal a common terminological tradition of security sector reform, which draws kind of dividing line between the notions of *democratic* and *defence* reforms. For example, a report produced by the Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA) in 2013 mentions the Armenian IPAP as an important tool for facilitating democratic and defence reforms. NATO is regarded here as a key provider of assistance and advice in democratic, institutional and defence reforms “that would bring the Armenian armed forces into conformity with NATO standards.”<sup>3</sup> The emphasis on armed forces and NATO - standards, as well as repetitive contextual disconnection of defence, institutional and democratic reforms points towards a peculiar understanding (intuitive or not) of defence reforms as the major means to achieve primarily the military - technical interoperability of national armed forces with the Alliance.

The closer familiarization with this particular aspect of cooperation will be offered in the next sections of this paper that deal with country’s strategic level, normative and policy documents. Yet even at this stage, we can conclude, that the peculiarity of contextual understanding of IPAP’s mission is further supported by Armenian perception of the PARP, which according to some local sources is a core element of cooperation with NATO, and is “helping to develop the ability of its forces to work with NATO forces on operations.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 4.

<sup>2</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” para. 1.1, 1–1.

<sup>3</sup> Gayane Novikova and Sergey Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” in *Security Sector Reform in Countries of Visegrad and Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Opportunities* (Bratislava, Centre for European and North Atlantic Affairs (CENAA): Majer Marian, 2013), 17, [vhttp://cenaa.org/analysis/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Chapter-1-Armenia-Novikova-Sargsyan.pdf](http://cenaa.org/analysis/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Chapter-1-Armenia-Novikova-Sargsyan.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Contrary to this statement, the NATO - understanding of defence reforms seems to be a bit different and attaches defence reforms the higher objective of democratic and institutional improvement. Already in the very first year of Armenian participation in the IPAP (2005), the requirements of defence institutional reforms stressed the need of separation of the General Staff (GS) from the Ministry proper, the establishment of civil servants' corps and the reform of defence planning and management areas.<sup>1</sup> The same NPA – Report 2007 also states clearly that the IPAP would strengthen the institutional cooperation of Armenia with the Alliance and provide more transparency in governance. As an active NATO - official dealing with Armenia, Steffen Elgersma makes clear that NATO regards “democratization . . . ., in particular the democratic control over Armed Forces as the key objectives, a part of which is a more decentralized, western style structure of defence.”<sup>2</sup> A strong mismatch of perceptions is visible here. It is also evident that a strong continuity of the selected approach is preserved on the Armenian side, as the Armenian delegation to the NATO - Parliamentary Assembly frequently reiterated, that various cooperation mechanisms with NATO support the modernization of the defence system, its efficiency and interoperability.<sup>3</sup> We might find different explanations for the term *modernization*, yet in general, it is comprehensible that the *modernization* in this particular context implied the recognition of superiority of the western military thinking and technology. This stance is additionally strengthened, as the first deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan stressed in his interview, that the enhancement of fighting capacity of the armed forces is the main goal of cooperation with NATO.<sup>4</sup> The further analysis of the relevant documents as well as national actions implemented will provide a more telling picture of concrete priorities in this regard.

The expected benefits of cooperation, naturally, might differ from the real benefits gained and cause significant delays of cooperation processes during the course of actions. Nonetheless, the decision of Armenian authorities to link the idea of defence reforms with the major assistance from the NATO - side, and not under Russia's guidance, is an extremely interesting example itself. It raises multiple questions we will try to respond to in this study. Yet it is already evident now that Armenia successfully established political linkages to a global security organization, within which the process of adoption of common communication

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<sup>1</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 35–36.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 13, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 18.

language to international stakeholders had been initiated.<sup>1</sup> There is no good reason to deny the existing differences in perceptions and expectations of involved parties. And it becomes very critical to distinguish the differences on the essence of defence reforms that require a deep systemic transformation, from the divergence of views on other less relevant issues of policy - making. In this regard illustrative is the dilemma, described by local experts, who admit that the military mission of the armed forces is dependent on the effective implementation of reforms in the defence area, which is hampered by external threats, “current circumstances” and “significant objective limitations.”<sup>2</sup> Although we don’t have any better explanation of the mentioned *circumstances* and *objective limitations*, we will look further whether this concern find their reflection both in fundamental policy documents as well as actions or inactions on the ground. We will try to illuminate the nature of such reservations that either lead to the evidence that support the former claim or rather reveal the formality of such excuses. If second is the case, it would indicate the objective of disguising the reality, in which, according to Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) - report of 2007, in fact, no critical factors were identified, that impeded “a swift revision of the current practices of defence control on behalf of the electorate and implementation of required improvements.”<sup>3</sup>

Finalizing this section we can conclude, that the cooperation with NATO turned to become an integral part of Armenia’s security agenda. Though some sources claim that the EU is much more important for the country in long-run due to its “day – by - day steps” effects on human rights, rule of law and lessening dependence on Russia, the same logic can be also easily applied to NATO.<sup>4</sup> For example, according to the explicit statement of the Armenian delegation made in NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report in 2007, the IPAP and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) must be regarded as complementary.<sup>5</sup> The Alliance asks for the general compliance with the norms of democratic governance of defence, offers tailored detailed plans of cooperation, and via the concepts of NATO- standardization and force - interoperability should, in fact, lessen the dependence of Armenian armed forces on Russian military. The benefits Armenia hopes to gain from the cooperation process are twofold: one is linked to the desire of establishing a certain balance of global powers in its

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<sup>1</sup> Michela Telatin, “The Development-Security Nexus and Security Sector Reform” (University of Westminster, 2011), 89, available at <http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/9571/>.

<sup>2</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 11.

<sup>3</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Yost, “Armenian Perceptions of International Security in the South Caucasus,” 2–3.

<sup>5</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 40.

strategic policy - making, and the second is related to the very practical gains of military - technical cooperation contributing to the effective upgrade of units in a western manner. This approach seems to be acknowledged by NATO - officials. According to Bruce Bach (a former NATO – IS/DPPD official) Armenia seeks what it can get from the Alliance and has made more progress in military domain, which is “a sole reflection what they desire to get out of any engagement.”<sup>1</sup> After all, the Armenian *Military Doctrine* unambiguously stipulates, that the key rationale for foreign security cooperation is the introduction of best international military experience based on the study of practical achievements in “international military scene, warfare and military - technical progress.”<sup>2</sup> For this purpose the variety of tailored mechanisms is applied within the general PFP - framework (IPP, PARP, OCC, and IPAP). Here again we see some evidence of the different interpretations of missions of the mentioned programs by NATO and Armenian officials. Whereas the Alliance increasingly regards the mentioned mechanisms as means to strengthen the democratic institutional pillar of defence reforms, the Armenian authorities primarily focus on developing interoperability and general capabilities of the armed forces. In fact, according to Mr. Steffen Elgersma, the NATO – IS official dealing with Armenia, the defence reforms are justified in Armenia by reference to the need of enhanced military capabilities, which also implies the adoption of democratic standards and practices.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the collective format of the PFP, initially widely welcomed and supported, seems to lose its relevance due to the clear preference of partner-countries to engage NATO in “28 + 1” (former 26 + 1) format, and the priority is given to bilateral programs (member country – partner country), along with growing negligence of the wider EAPC – framework (NATO + all partners).<sup>4</sup>

Next chapter will provide more clarity on Armenia’s performance in the field of democratic control of armed forces. Released IPAP - documents, DCAF - reports, as well as NATO - affiliated academic contributions and local reports will contribute to the comprehensive analysis of national achievements. Being aware that IPAP - documents are much more “political” than the PARP and typically are based on the content of the preceding IPAP - cycle documents (especially in the introductory part), the language and formulation of agreed

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> “The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia” (Ministry of Defence of Armenia, 2007), 7, available at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?lng=en&id=155588>.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” chap. 1, Action 1, p. 2–1; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” para. 2.2.

objectives and actions provide us with a sufficient degree of clarity about the made progress in the defence areas relevant to our study.

### **6.2.3 Democratic Control of Armed Forces**

As the title of the chapter suggests, it will deal with the political aspect of democratic control of Armenian armed forces. It is usually represented by a strong capacity of the national Parliament to control and monitor processes within the defence, by its constitutional obligation to hold the executive (incl. ministry of defence) accountable for their actions, and creating better conditions for a wider public involvement. Further, the proper decision - making chain between various bodies of the government with the civilian authority on the top complements the control function. The findings of previous chapters support the claim, that for Armenia's leadership the practical aspect of defence cooperation with the Alliance appears more relevant as compared to its "political", i.e. democratic dimension. An impression cannot be avoided, that the phase of "defence democratization" is formally completed allowing the parties to proceed with practical actions both sides can benefit from. Thus, we will briefly overview and prove whether democratic requirements of the alliance had been indeed fully met by the Armenian side, and how NATO interpreted the national achievements.

#### **6.2.3.1 Civilian Oversight of the Military and the Role of Governmental Structures**

Richard Giragosyan argues that defence transformation process in Armenia can be bluntly divided in generations of reforms, with the second generation aiming at introduction of democratic principles of civilian control of armed forces.<sup>1</sup> If narrowly translated, the civilian control of the military refers to the governmental structure, in which the civilian minister runs the defence ministry and the President or the head of the government carries out the highest political responsibility of country's defence and security. The view provided by Armenian representative, Defence Advisor at NATO HQ Mher Israelyan supports this approach. As he stated, that the adoption of the IPAP meant a step towards higher responsibility in supporting defence reform - program focusing on a stronger western model of civilian control within the ministry and other steps to improve force capabilities in peacekeeping operations.<sup>2</sup> Again a

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<sup>1</sup> Giragosyan, "Armenian Military & Security Policy: Regaining a Strategic Balance," 2.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO, 1.

strong reference to the practical - military aspect of cooperation cannot be overseen here. Still, as the civilian control of the military has turned to become the major principle of democratic reforms, its implementation became vital for the general objective (mirrored in IPAP) of getting closer to standards of western governance.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, the democratic pillar of IPAP - requirements led to the consequent enlargement of PARP content in 2005, adding ten new partnership goals (PGs) to twenty three agreed in 2004. In 2007 it made 39 PGs in total.<sup>2</sup>

The *National Security Strategy* (NSS) adopted in 2007 clearly recognised the dependence of the overall security of Armenia on a number of key factors, among which the democratic ones enjoy the higher priority in the document. It declares democratic principles of governance (transparent, efficient institutions and independent judiciary) as top guarantees for national security that rank above the force compatibility.<sup>3</sup> The ambiguity of the *compatibility of the armed forces* will be touched upon closer at later stage. It is crucial, however, to note that the primacy of the democratic governance over other factors for national security formally has been recognized by national authorities, and, respectively, anchored in the top strategic document. Furthermore, within the area of domestic security the NSS attaches the institutional reforms to strengthen democratic governance (incl. efficient public administration) again the first priority ahead of building the effective armed forces (second priority), which itself according to document must be based on civilian control and the “democratic planning.”<sup>4</sup> Again, putting aside the ambiguity of the term *democratic planning*, which raises the general question of its utility within the military, key point here is, clearly, the national adherence to democratic principles as the first priority to meet and ensure. For this purpose we have to take a brief look at the presidential authority as the top of the executive responsible for democratic and transparent functioning of defence institutions. Next we should overview the interplay of executive bodies within the government and ultimately examine the status and the capacity of the national parliament to execute its oversight and control functions.

Within the period of our research (2004 - 2012) the President Robert Kocharyan was re – elected (in 2003) for the next five year term, and as a response to internal political tensions he agreed to constitutional changes in 2005 that would “distribute some power away from the

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<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 26.

<sup>2</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 30.

<sup>3</sup> “National Security Strategy,” 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 6–7.



presidency.”<sup>1</sup> Despite the constitutional amendments, and active involvement of the Venice Commission, the presidential authority remains substantial, and the “power ministries” stayed strongly under his personal grip.<sup>2</sup> As the DCAF - report 2008 states, the president continues playing key role in foreign and security (defence) policy making, keeps the responsibility to convene the government sessions on relevant security issues, and holds defence minister personally responsible for developing and implementing defence policy – priorities.<sup>3</sup> The link between the president and the government remains strong, and the position of defence minister is clearly attached more power and authority as compared to other members of the government. Exemplary was the Parliament’s decision to withdraw the initiated changes in the Law on Compulsory Military Service in 2004 after Defence Minister Serzh Sargsyan stated, that there was no initiative from the Ministry’s side, neither the intention to approve the changes. In the same manner the Minister refused to agree on the creation of the post of military ombudsmen, although explicitly addressed in the IPAP document.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately as the result of the law amendment, the post was created in 2006, yet not as a separate body, but under the Office of the Human Rights Defender.<sup>5</sup>

NATO - reports and assessments do not reflect the internal mechanisms of governmental decision - making. However, they might well address issues of intra - governmental coordination or cooperation. This aspect of governance is very much relevant, as it relates to the general process of democratic deliberation, and reduces the risk of single - handed actions, especially in the field of defence. In 2005 the Alliance accepted Armenia’s plan for defence reform, which also envisaged the creation of an interagency commission to oversee the military.<sup>6</sup> In fact, this body acquired a more detailed mission after the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) was put on defence reform - agenda, as the key action to perform. Considering the overall coordination of reform actions and their communication to the Alliance, the close linkage between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence is well visible. The first IPAP - document presented in NATO headquarter and signed by the Defence Minister Serzh Sargsyan, was developed in strong cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign

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<sup>1</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 35.

<sup>2</sup> The key mission of the Venice Commission is - “to provide legal advice to its member states and, in particular, to help states wishing to bring their legal and institutional structures into line with European standards and international experience in the fields of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.” More information available at [http://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/pages/?p=01\\_Presentation](http://www.venice.coe.int/WebForms/pages/?p=01_Presentation)

<sup>3</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 10–11.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 17, 20.

<sup>5</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 23.

<sup>6</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 49.

Affairs and the President's Administration.<sup>1</sup> Another source claims that the coordination of ministries was managed by the National Security Council (NSC), chaired by the President and the Minister of Defence in a capacity of the Council's Secretary.<sup>2</sup> According to the source, the NSC has no clear status and permanent secretariat, thus acting like an informal arena for coordination of joint political actions. Although the constitutional changes ensured the NSC to become a permanent advisory structure under the president, there is no evidence of its active and continuing work on the defence related issues.<sup>3</sup> Given the circumstances, the role of President's Administration in formulating national defence priorities, objectively, gets more importance. It becomes also instrumental in organizing the NSC - meetings and defining its agenda. This view is additionally strengthened by the fact that the initiative of building the Center for Strategic Studies was picked up and effectively implemented by the President's Administration.<sup>4</sup> Once again it underscores the existence of two centers within the executive branch responsible for the formulation of defence and security policies, and suggests close linkages between the President and the defence minister, with less chance of interference from the rest of the government. Not to mention, that all senior military and civilian officials in ministry of defence are appointed by President.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, the role of personalities and the relevance of personal ties should not be underestimated. A good example is General Hayk Kotanyan, who chaired the Center for Strategic Studies serving at the same time as the military advisor to minister, and occupied the position of the Head of Staff of the National Assembly till 2009.<sup>6</sup> Current President Serzh Sargsyan himself served as the defence minister from 2000 - to 2007, keeping simultaneously the position of the Secretary of the National Security Council.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the acting defence minister Seyran Ohanyan occupied various military positions in the breakaway region of Karabakh from 1992 to 2000 (Chief of Staff and Defence Minister) and in 2007 assumed the posts of the Chief of Staff and the First Deputy Defence Minister of Armenia (under the Minister Serzh Sargsyan).<sup>8</sup>

Since defence reforms encompass various fields of defence activities, where new defence policies have to be implemented, defence officials are usually required to cooperate with the

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<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 24.

<sup>2</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 18, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>5</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 32.

<sup>6</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 18.

<sup>7</sup> "Serzh Sargsyan - the President of the Republic of Armenia," Official Website, *President of the Republic of Armenia*, accessed October 29, 2014, available at <http://www.president.am/en/serzh-sargsyan/>.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.mil.am/minister>

rest of the government to achieve needed legal or defence budgetary amendments. According to first deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan, the Ministry of Finances (to lesser degree the Parliament) remains the main venue for addressing defence budgetary issues.<sup>1</sup> However, even within the financial domain the government seems to be limited in its authority to monitor and control the defence spending. As DCAF - report highlights, although the prime - minister formally has all means available to audit the Ministry of Defence, no evidence of such auditing has been found so far.<sup>2</sup> The general weakness of the government to exercise the effective control over defence institutions might be attributed to the traditionally strong position of the defence minister within the executive. The exceptional linkages existing between the minister and the President contribute to the mentioned quality and the inviolability of defence institutions. Additionally, as some authors argue, the passive use and the inadequate weight of other state institutions, along with marginalization of the National Security Council does not allow the proper use of formally existing mechanisms, thus leading to mere implementation of already made decisions under the dominance of President's authority in security and defence policy - making.<sup>3</sup>

### **6.2.3.2 Role of National Parliament**

As for the issue of Parliament's (National Assembly) authority to execute its constitutional power of holding the government and the ministry of defence, in particular, accountable, a certain dichotomy comes onto light. On the one hand Armenia's legislative body formally owns all means available, yet in reality the application of control and monitoring mechanisms appears very limited. According to DCAF - report in 2005 the National Assembly's authority rests on the number of basic and well defined functions, such as legislative initiatives and amendments, inquiries and ability to question the members of executive, the budgetary control and monitoring of state procurement, and the approval of strategic defence policies as well as of the armed forces size (manpower).<sup>4</sup> The first document relevant to our research period and made public is the IPAP - 2005, which identifies number of areas, where substantial gaps had been identified and subsequent actions agreed. For instance, it acknowledges deficits in parliamentary control and civilian participation in defence policy

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 17.

<sup>3</sup> Giragosian, Shiryev, and Kakachia, "Security Perceptions: The Views from Armenia, Azerbaijan & Georgia," 191.

<sup>4</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 31.

and a serious need in speeding up the subsequent legal processes. In particular, it urges the Armenian side to enhance the committees' role (for Defence and Security, Financial - Credit, and Budgetary and Economic Affairs) in the oversight of the defence sector, and improve their capacity by providing specific education and training to their respective staff - members.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the need to review the *Military Discipline Code* along with the establishment of the post for military Ombudsman is suggested. In fact, the first IPAP - document challenges the ability of the Parliament to perform its defence related mission in a broad range of fields: defence - policy, defence - budgeting and defence - legal. The budgetary aspects mostly relate to the ability of the defence ministry to develop financial plans in a sound manner, and present them in great details. These functions will be discussed in the respective chapter dealing with defence budgeting and transparency. But as a short general reference we can conclude, that as for 2005 the defence budgets submitted for review to parliamentary committees, were not detailed, defence related laws contained many gray areas, and the only issue that caused the heated discussion, was the force - deployment in Iraq.<sup>2</sup>

By looking at the next IPAP - cycle document we were able to draw some conclusions about the progress made or not within the mentioned areas of parliamentary authority. Since the document for some reason is not made public, we rely on the secondary source, which at that time had access to the relevant information. Within the IPAP - period of 2007 - 2009 Armenia intended to optimize the parliament's role and involvement in defence issues by reviewing existing laws and providing additional staff training and educational courses.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly, a national commitment was made, according to which a project team was to establish to conduct a *Strategic Defence Review* (SDR) based on the updated *National Security Strategy, Threat Assessment and Defence Concepts*. It was also acknowledged that the team had to establish a reporting mechanism, that would keep the MOD and other relevant state agencies informed about the progress of the SDR.<sup>4</sup> Since we review the SDR much closer in the chapter dealing with functional aspects of national defence transformation, at this stage we limit ourselves with the summary of the evaluation of parliamentary functions. The DCAF - 2007 report attests serious deficits in investigative functions of the National

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<sup>1</sup> "Armenia's Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO," 2005, sec. 1.6, 1.3.5, available at <http://www.mil.am/files/IPAP-English.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 31.

<sup>3</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 25-26.

Assembly on defence matters, defence budgeting or other independent actions that would differ from the practice of authorizing the decision taken by the government.<sup>1</sup> Another DCAF - 2008 report continues in the same manner and identifies the absence of formalized methods of control and auditing, the heavy reliance on minister's annual report and the risk of turning the control function to a mere political rhetoric.<sup>2</sup>

The language to formulate national actions used in the IPAP - 2009 provide sufficient level of understanding about the degree of progress Armenia has achieved in the subsequent period. Among 52 actions fighting corruption and improving democratic oversight of armed forces take key positions for the success of democratic and defence reforms.<sup>3</sup> In general, the language of the earlier IPAP - documents is being repeated with the same emphasis on the same range of defence related issues. This fact clearly does not speak about the significant improvement in the quality of the parliamentary control. The same notions of promoting democratic oversight and parliamentary capacity along with committees' expertise are used again.<sup>4</sup> The references to the need of updating disciplinary code of military, as well as of the necessity to ensure maximum transparency in defence policy, budgeting and military human rights has not been changed.<sup>5</sup> There is also no major change in the language used by IPAP - document for the period 2011 - 13. Similar emphasis on parliamentary committees' staff training and the need to increase the general expertise in areas of national security, defence, budgetary planning and finances are once again reiterated.<sup>6</sup>

The legislature's weakness to follow its duties in the area of democratic control of the military is very well acknowledged by defence officials. As deputy minister Davit Tonoyan stated, the defence related parliamentary committee meetings lack both the quality and the quantity of discussions, that partially has to be attributed to the lack of expertise among committees' members in defence and military matters.<sup>7</sup> He also points towards the general passivity of the parliament in terms of initiating general inquiries about the processes and issues relevant to defence, i.e. asking ministers for more accountability. Furthermore, the ministry of defence, as explained by the Armenian Defence Advisor to NATO, does issue about ten annual reports

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<sup>1</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 17–21.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 3–4.

<sup>4</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," sec. 1.1, 1.4.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 1.4.1, 1.4.2.

<sup>6</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," sec. 1.4.1.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan, 2.

addressed to the President, Parliament, Security Council, Cabinet of Ministers, interagency commissions and other stakeholders, and provides targeted reports to public organizations (NGOs) mostly on demand.<sup>1</sup> This fact speaks rather in favor of the ministry of defence, being able to provide relevant information if required. But it also highlights two inherent deficits of parliamentary control of the military: first – except the annual ministerial reports there are no institutionalized mechanisms of a periodical reporting system; and second – there is a limited capacity of the legislative body to identify the areas of interest and provide the needed expertise in defence and military matters. Some rare events, e.g. the heated discussions about the potential negative effects of Armenian participation in RRCF (Rapid Reaction Collective Force of the Russia led CSTO) with a high risk of being involved in conflict with neighbors, points towards the existing potential in cases, where strategic level issues are at stake.<sup>2</sup> However, as far as narrow defence related policy areas are concerned (planning, budgeting, human resources etc.) no evidence of a strong parliamentary involvement has been found so far.

### **6.2.3.3 Converging Views on generational Division of defence Reforms**

It seems that there is a common view in Armenia, which regards the defence transformation process subdivided between the generations of defence reforms. In line with deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan's statement, some local sources claim that the "second generation" of reforms largely dealt with institutional development of the democratic (civilian) oversight of the military and achieved a significant improvement.<sup>3</sup> According to this view, the democratization phase of defence reforms has been successfully accomplished. Thus, according to source, a "third generation" of defence reforms is mainly aimed at practical improvement of defence management in areas of personnel management, military education and at increased transparency of the defence sector to avoid human rights violation within the armed forces. Indeed, the "civilianization" of the ministry and other defence structures improved in 2007 and the defence minister was no longer a military official.<sup>4</sup> It implied that the authority of the strategic decision - making moved to the civilian body, yet the composition of the ministry was by and large military dominated. The majority of the top leadership constituted former military servicemen with an extensive military and combat

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>2</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, "Chapter 1: Armenia," 14.

<sup>3</sup> Giragosian, "Armenian Military & Security Policy: Regaining a Strategic Balance," 2.

<sup>4</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 17.

experience in Karabakh conflict region, who went to civilian positions by the presidential decree in 2010.<sup>1</sup> Ideally, the military experience of a civilian servant speaks for the better quality of expertise and competence in the field of defence. Yet it is still, whether the soviet - mold military experience still has any effect in policy - formulation and implementation, which we might better explore in chapters dealing with functional and socialization effects of the Alliance on the process of defence transformation in Armenia. At this stage, we can strongly conclude, that the formal NATO - requirement of the civilian leadership in the ministry is completed. As for the “civilianization” of the lower level positions, it will be a matter of human resources (HR) policy evaluation in the subsequent section of this study. From the NATO perspective, as Steffen Elgersma (a NATO – IS official) argues, a tendency of bringing more civilian staff in defence institutions is clearly visible, with much more still to be done.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning the overall assessment of reform - generations, we see some signs of divergence of views between Armenian officials and particular NATO - representatives. In 2006 the NATO Liaison Officer for the South Caucasus Romualds Razuks briefed the NATO Parliamentary Assembly – delegation, that the cooperation - focus has switched from promoting democratic values to assisting Armenia in establishing a democratic civilian control over armed forces with an increased emphasis on budgetary, resource - and personnel management.<sup>3</sup> This statement reveals also the differences in approaches to the issue. Whereas the Armenian defence officials regarded the civilian oversight as the key element of democratic reform, and largely completed, the emphasis of NATO Liaison Officer on better defence policies as the precondition for better democratic and civilian control over the armed forces, makes it clear that the “second generation”- reform might not yet be completed. This stance is also supported by findings from IPAP - documents that attest over the period of eight years (2004 – 2012) the continuing deficits in parliamentary control, and its capacity to monitor defence institutions. The Freedom House identified the lack of transparency in governance as one of key problems of the country assessed as “partly free”, semi - consolidated authoritarian regime with the worsening democratic governance index since

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<sup>1</sup> “Deputies of the Minister of Defence,” *Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia*, accessed June 12, 2014, available at <http://www.mil.am/1295954750>.

<sup>2</sup> Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 31.

2009.<sup>1</sup> Some authors' argument can formally be applied here that explains the democratization deficit in Armenia by significant limitations imposed by external threats and strategic circumstances.<sup>2</sup> However, it is less comprehensible, why actions aimed at increasing parliaments' competences in defence area that contribute to the effectiveness of defence management and the development of sound and affordable plans and policies must be regarded as the jeopardizing factor to country's security. Evidently, this is also not an argument for NATO – officials. As Gustav Vroemen, a NATO – IS/DPPD official, puts it “there is a link between democratic control of defence and better military, since the building of well - educated and broad - minded officer corps supports the achievement of the long - term defence objectives, better planning and distribution of available resources.”<sup>3</sup>

#### **6.2.4 Summirizing the political Dimension of Cooperation**

Finalizing the entire chapter on the status of political influence of NATO in Armenia, we might already draw some preliminary conclusions. First, we have sufficient evidence to state that the cooperation with NATO had been strongly established within the national political agenda as one of the major strategic objectives, serving countries security interests. The benefits of cooperation for Armenia relate mostly to practical results in areas of military interoperability and force combat effectiveness. Some NATO officials share this view and underline the major importance of force - interoperability for both parties, as Armenia does not share membership aspiration.<sup>4</sup> However, the entire picture seems not as simple as at first glance, and the political emphasis on democratic reforms in the defence is not entirely dismissed. Politically, Karabakh conflict seems to be used as the major reference for reform limitations. As Bruce Bach, a former NATO – IS official, puts it on Armenia and Azerbaijan “progress is limited by that overriding consideration in their capitals as well as with Allies.”<sup>5</sup> The democratic dimension of defence reforms are clearly acknowledged by national authorities and formally mirrored as national commitments in respective cooperation documents as well as in top national strategic documents. Yet, the value parties (Armenia and

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<sup>1</sup> “NATIONS IN TRANSIT 2013: Authoritarian Aggression and the Preassure of Austerity” (Freedom House, 2013), 11, available at <https://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/NIT%202013%20Booklet%20-%20Report%20Findings.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 11.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, February 5, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.



NATO) attach to the relevance of these requirements to defence reforms, as well as their interpretation, vary significantly with the tendency of preserving such differences over the entire period of research. This conflict is very well visible through the permanent repetition of identical formulations in all IPAP – documents reviewed. Though the civilian control of the military at ministerial level is formally well established, the continuing deficits in parliamentary control and monitoring, leaves an ambiguous picture of the democratic (political) compliance. Consequently, it can be indicative either for the formal (hollow) nature of the democratic requirements set before country, or the inability of the Alliance to provide added value of enhanced cooperation and the subsequent compliance in this respect.

## **6.3 NATO - Influence in functional Areas of Defence**

### **6.3.1 Introduction**

As already introduced before, the functional aspects of defence transformation encompass changes that occur in the fields of defence policy and planning, law making, force structure and standards, budgeting and human resources. We are limited in our efforts to analyze the progress made by the Armenian defence ministry and armed forces on annual basis. Yet we still have sufficient data allowing us to compare the status of progress achieved by 2012 with the initial state of defence institution in early years of the millenium.

It is no surprise that due to decades of the soviet military legacy, defence ministries and armed forces of all former soviet republics were heavily influenced by the soviet military thinking and relied exclusively on the Russian made military hardware. By 2005, as Saferworld - report states, the Armenian army was run predominantly along soviet traditions, with the same hierarchy, military doctrines, culture, equipment and the officer corps receiving the military education in Russian military academies.<sup>1</sup> This tendency did not experience a radical change immediately after the launch of the IPAP - initiative. According to DCAF - report, fifteen years of the independent rule (since 1991) did little to challenge strong soviet traditions within

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<sup>1</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 25.

the military and bureaucratic circles.<sup>1</sup> Yet the global processes and the expansion of Euro - Atlantic cooperation ideas did not go unnoticed. Even though there was no demand for immediate change in the Armenian defence ministry, the acknowledgment of the need for reforms was firm. There is much of truth in the words of the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan:

*The changed strategic environment basically forced the Armenian defence establishment to acknowledge, that the existing system was not responding to challenges of the time and started looking for options to improve, especially its military education, defence planning and budgeting mechanisms, ultimately resulting in a significant improvement of capabilities of armed forces.*<sup>2</sup>

This statement, in fact, highlights key areas, where most of reforms were intended to happen. It also makes clear, that the domain of the military hardware and supplies had not been considered as reform - relevant. The signs of the potential dichotomy should not be dismissed prematurely at this stage, since in light of the expected western – type reforms Armenia was still heavily reliant on Russian arms delivery and maintenance. The existing dependence in this particular field has significant effects in areas (military training, doctrines and education) that are commonly regarded as having adopted a strong pro - western perspective.<sup>3</sup> The dilemma facing the Armenian leadership is quite understandable as well as their particular approach to the transformation process itself. It embraced a certain logic, according to which the best traditions of the soviet military school had to be preserved, and the radical changes or fundamental reform programs had to be avoided.<sup>4</sup> Translated into the military realm, any reform effort had primarily to support the high combat readiness of forces (due to the “frozen” conflict in Karabakh) and, if possible, improve the overall defence management. Given these circumstances, it becomes clear why Armenian officials do not contradict the common view, which puts the interoperability of the national armed forces with NATO as the major objective of Alliance’s reform - recommendations.<sup>5</sup> Under the “interoperability umbrella” a valuable advice and expertise are being provided in various functional areas of the defence. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report - 2007 underscores the critical importance of communication systems, logistics and HQ - officers’ education as key areas, where national standards had to be compatible with those of NATO. It also recognizes the PARP (introduced

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<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 28.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>3</sup> Giragosian, “Armenian Military & Security Policy: Regaining a Strategic Balance,” 1.

<sup>4</sup> Aghabekyan, “Advanced Research Workshop South Caucasus,” 27.

<sup>5</sup> Telatin, “The Development-Security Nexus and Security Sector Reform,” 91.

for Armenia in 2002) as a major mechanism for achieving interoperability with NATO.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it must be clarified whether NATO - standards are widely applied within Armenian defence institutions (ministry and armed forces), and not come into conflict with those standards that are necessary to operate Russian hardware. If defence planning and budgeting can be traditionally categorized as the domain of ministry's political responsibility, the education and training, along with logistics and communication represent the very area of standards' application inseparable from the armament systems military operates. We take account from the first deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan's statement, that the enhancement of the fighting capacity of the armed forces is the ultimate objective.<sup>2</sup> It is the mission of every responsible defence official to support this objective. Yet the question, what standards and to what extent are being introduced within defence, and how they affect the different branches of the defence, is key to understand the essence of defence transformation. It also pretty much reflects the dilemma of two - tire force (Russia - mold, and NATO - like), we formulated before with regard to Armenia's increased participation in NATO - operations. Subsequent chapters help clarify this ambiguity and make emphasis on particular issue – based (functional) areas of defence transformation, where NATO's influence can be identified and assessed. The legal aspect of change is subsumed here by policy - reviews, due to their practical implications on policy formulation and change.

### **6.3.2 Defence Policy and Planning**

In this section we attempt to shed light on a particularly important field of the defence – the defence policy and planning, which is the source of strategic level considerations and the national decision - making. Due to the top (strategic) nature of the field considered, the drafting process and the content of two critical documents will be reviewed, the *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and the *Military Doctrine* (MD). By that we will be able to detect whether NATO - like approaches and procedures were applied by Armenian counterparts, and how the logic of western strategic analysis was adopted and reflected in the national strategic and defence policy objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 18.

In a broader sense defence policy and planning refers to the process of identifying policy objectives and developing plans of their long – mid - or short term achievement. Various excerpts from the IPAP - 2009 document reveal the recommendation to revise the chain of command and control procedures within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and the General Staff (GS), to ensure the conformity of armed forces transformation to values inherent to democratic society.<sup>1</sup> In fact, this was a request to adopt basic procedures similar to those of NATO - countries. Within the same chapter, the document also asks to adopt “the required legislation” that would enable the implementation of new procedures. Already in 2005 NATO - officials indicated the need for Armenia to review defence policy and initiate the defence policy related legal amendments. As NPAR – 2007 (NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report) states, recommendations were primarily directed to the development of strategic level documents, e.g. National Security Strategy.<sup>2</sup> For NATO it was of high importance to support the formal adoption of strategic level documents in Armenia developed in close cooperation with other relevant state agencies. All IPAP - documents released stressed the need to reform defence policy and planning system, based on the adoption of strategic documents and building national planning capacity that subsequently affect and define the development of long - term plans in various field of the military. Most importantly, from the very first IPAP - document in 2005, the Alliance pointed to, and Armenian side agreed to adopt the western chain of policy and planning development (formulation), which starts by developing the NSS as a basis for drafting the *Defence Doctrine* (DD), and recognizes the *Strategic Defence Review* (SDR) as the key mechanism for long - term capability and resource analysis.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, the serious involvement of NATO - advisory teams in providing expertise as well as supporting the interagency - work approach, was a serious factor stimulating the entire process.<sup>4</sup>

### **6.3.2.1 A new Practice – Developing Strategic Policy Documents**

Although the topic of SDR takes the central place in the analysis of the capacity of Armenian defence institutions to perform proper defence planning, it would be reasonable to tackle it only after the general process of policy document adoption has been carefully reviewed. Further, the deficits identified in the initial phase of policy development might serve as very

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<sup>1</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” chap. 2, action 2.1.

<sup>2</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 37.

<sup>3</sup> “Armenia’s Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO,” sec. 2.2.3.

<sup>4</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 37.

indicative for the subsequent gaps and failures we might encounter within the Armenian SDR - process.

According to DCAF - report in 2008, Armenian defence ministry had shown no evidence of producing subordinated policy documents before 2007 that would regulate various fields of activities, and heavily relied on President's dominant authority in this regard.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the IPAP - document 2005 offers a detailed plan how the *National Security Strategy* and the *Defence Doctrines* had to be adopted. It attaches the Interagency Commission a great deal of responsibility to draft these documents, consequently to be approved by the National Security Council and the Parliament. This western model of security planning was recognized by many national observers as more beneficial due to the higher level of policy discussion and public involvement.<sup>2</sup> As one of the "fathers" of Armenian NSS Hayk Kotanyan admits, the general model of the "complementarity" of foreign and security policy made it unavoidable to adopt the US - model of the NNS, Military Doctrine – and the SDR development.<sup>3</sup> Armenian authorities followed the IPAP - 2005 recommendations literally. By December 2005 an interagency commission was created, headed by the Secretary of National Security Council (at that time Serzh Sargsyan) and his advisor Hayk Kotanyan, to draft both documents.<sup>4</sup> It must be noted, that despite the limited experience, Armenian authorities showed an open desire to make the work truly "interagency". The lead role for the work was given the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), which seemed pretty logical due to the lack of expertise within the military and the requested quality of interagency cooperation.<sup>5</sup> Yet despite positive signs, the entire period of the NSS - development showed challenges, that drafting process had to encounter and that become a featuring element of the entire field of defence policy and planning. It took over two years to finalize the document and to receive its approval by the National Security Council on January 26 in 2007.<sup>6</sup>

A general overview of the content of both strategic documents provides an impression that strong links to the Alliance are welcomed and appreciated as the top priority and important tool for enhancing bilateral relations with the U.S. and other members of the Alliance. This

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<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 16, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Giragosian, Shiryev, and Kakachia, "Security Perceptions: The Views from Armenia, Azerbaijan & Georgia," 190.

<sup>3</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, "Chapter 1: Armenia," 14–15.

<sup>4</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 27.

<sup>5</sup> Hayk Kotanjian, "Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.–Armenia 'Smart Power' Cooperation," *Connections The Quarterly Journal* XI, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 88.

<sup>6</sup> Malek, "NATO and the South Caucasus," 31.

observation is also shared by some local observers.<sup>1</sup> While taking a closer look at the content of the NSS we are able to identify following important elements of the national approach to the issue, often exposing conflicting statements and intentions. First, the cooperation process with NATO is translated as an effort to maintain the modern and professional armed forces that are compatible with NATO - units.<sup>2</sup> Here we must clarify that the compatibility of units is attributed to the Armenian peacekeeping battalion, identified by the document as the unit designated for participation in NATO - led operations. The NSS is consistent with IPAP - document messages and regards the IPAP - implementation as the major tool for fostering:

*(...) greater modernization and efficiency of the Armenian defense system and will bring it in closer conformity with the defense systems of advanced states, including their armed forces.*<sup>3</sup>

Knowing well from the IPAP - documents that conformity and interoperability with Alliance - forces means the increased adoption of western standards, the frequent reference to the notions of *modern* and *modernization* would imply the application of NATO - standards to the entire armed forces in long - run. Similar to NSS messages, the report submitted by the Armenian delegation to NATO Parliamentary Assembly in 2007 states, that the main goal of Armenia - NATO cooperation and the IPAP is to “shape a modern defence system and armed forces in Armenia, with the view of jointly functioning in NATO - led operations.”<sup>4</sup> Again we see here a clear signs of potential expansion of “interoperability” outside the margins of the peacekeeping battalion. As second, we hold it very plausible to conclude, that according to the Armenian view, the *interoperability* (adoption of NATO - standards) must be regarded as a synonym for *modernization* and enhanced combat readiness (in document – *combatability*). However, the next statement, which attaches the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) key importance in terms of major arms supplier under favorable conditions, turns the validity of previous political claims very much questionable.<sup>5</sup> As already discussed before, the NATO - standards primarily relate to the areas of communication, logistics, training and education. Yet as a member of CSTO, and heavily reliant on Russian supplies with “compatible weaponry”, with a large Russian base in the country as “indivisible part of

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<sup>1</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 13–14; Eugene Kogan, “Armenia’s and Georgia’s Security Agenda,” *Sozialwissenschaftliche Schriftenreihe*, July 2012, 23.

<sup>2</sup> “National Security Strategy,” 2, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 11–12.

<sup>4</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 13–14.

<sup>5</sup> “National Security Strategy,” 11.

Armenia's security system", the objective of NATO - interoperability especially in long - run, runs against the need to have the same forces interoperable with CSTO - forces.<sup>1</sup>

The conflicting nature of the revealed statements is mostly related to the technical - military dimension of the armed forces' life and seemingly less problematic on the level of political formulations. The strategic objective of force - interoperability is, in fact, the key defence policy objective and determines the entire process of military planning. Thus, we must further look for possible discrepancies in Armenian Military Doctrine, as the primary document exclusively dealing with defence issues of national importance. The 2007 adopted Doctrine states with sufficient clarity that the improvement of military standards goes hand by hand with the need of increased interoperability and compatibility with "leading security systems and defence systems of allied countries...to...carry out international missions."<sup>2</sup> As we can see, the ambiguity about what leading security systems are that are worth to get interoperable with, still persists. The document strongly avoids any mentioning of the force modernization requirement in the context of the western military model. Interestingly, it also does not stress the relevance of interoperability of the Armenian military with Russian forces, but reiterates the requirement of interoperability with U.S. and NATO forces in the chapter of "International Military and Military - Technical Cooperation" for the sake of participating in international operations.<sup>3</sup> Since the issue of interoperability has been put in no relation with the Russian dominated CSTO, and got a clear emphasis on NATO and the U.S, the reference to interoperability with *leading defence systems of allied countries*, could mean only NATO and its allied nations. Nonetheless, the existing ambiguity cannot be fully lifted, because of *defence systems* formulated in plural, leaving by that a chance of association with the CSTO.

The Doctrine defines very clear that the objectives and tasks set before the national armed forces determine the development and the consequent implementation of short to mid - term operational plans.<sup>4</sup> Even though the term *operational plan* is not well formulated here, and probably relates to armed forces' development plans, the excerpt indicates some deficits existing in the area of the long - term defence planning. This view is even strengthened as the very first page of the document presents the course of modernization of the Armenian military

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<sup>1</sup> Authors refer to interviews with President Sargsyan, and the Deputy Defence Minister, in Novikova and Sargsyan, "Chapter 1: Armenia," 13–15.

<sup>2</sup> "The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia," 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 9–13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

only in the context of short and mid - term perspective.<sup>1</sup> The further analysis of the Doctrine reveals some additional elements that characterize the status of Armenian defence policy and planning for 2007. First of all, it recognizes the need for reforms and the improvement of “defence planning bodies” by specification of “clear - cut” functions within the Ministry (defence policy, budget formation and procurement) and the General Staff (planning and management of units).<sup>2</sup> Second, it is recognized that the existing chain of defence planning was not effective due to the lack of capabilities “necessary for the establishment of a system to assess, plan and finance defence needs.”<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, the document assigns the “strategic review of the Military Security System” (probably the later Strategic Defence Review – SDR) the mission of reforming every single area of defence management (command, personnel, resource and capability needs, logistics, education and training) to be completed by 2015.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the SDR will be given a special mission by all IPAP - documents to identify a future force structure, capabilities and budgetary needs. Yet, apart from the findings of the SDR, the conclusions of the Military Doctrine made in 2007, are confronted by the provisions of the first IPAP - document, which already in 2005 demanded the introduction of the sound, affordable and transparent plans, as well as the planning cell, responsible for long - term planning.<sup>5</sup> The cross - comparison of relevant IPAP - statements makes possible to locate existing gaps and nuances of the defence planning that according to NATO - and Armenian officials had to be significantly reshaped and improved. Though the revision of the Military Doctrine is overdue, and no other relatively new document on defence matters (except SDR) is available, the only source for the sequential assessment of policy and planning issues remain the IPAP - 2009 and the IPAP - 2011 reports.

The first paper asks for the revision of strategic documents, conduct of the SDR based on the updated Threat Assessment, introduction of a new planning and budgeting system and, similar to IPAP-2005, reiterates the need to establish a separate cell for long - term planning.<sup>6</sup> The mentioned and other formulations indicate with great clarity, that by 2009 neither the major tool of defence planning (SDR) had been utilized, nor the needed structures and capacity was generated to meet the agreed defence planning objectives. The next cycle document (IPAP - 2011) stresses once more the need to revise the strategic documents based on the updated

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 24–25.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 25–29.

<sup>5</sup> “Armenia’s Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO,” sec. 2.2.4.

<sup>6</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.2, 2.3, 2.4.



Threat Assessment, to establish the long - term planning cell and to complete the SDR.<sup>1</sup> Three major conclusions can be drawn from the document. First, it proves that four years after 2007 no revision of the NSS or MD had been conducted, as requested by IPAPs. It also reveals serious internal deficits within the decision - making to adapt timely the organizational structure to the existing needs (requirements) and to generate the institutional capacity needed in the area of long - term defence planning. Further, the problems linked with the proper conduct of the SDR cannot be overseen, for even the language of the last IPAP - 2011 in relation to SDR is very confusing, if not problematic. Initially it states that “Armenia started to implement the results of the Strategic Defence Review”, however, in the next section it identifies the national objective to be achieved as follows: “complete the conduct of a Strategic Defence Review defining the structure, the infrastructure (bases, airfields, HQs), tasks and equipment of the armed forces.”<sup>2</sup> It is unclear from the document, whether the SDR was already completed, and the implementation started, or NATO was asking the Armenian defence authorities to complete the Review. We might assume that the revision of the wide spectrum of threats and risks was conducted under the framework of the SDR, as the Military Doctrine specifies with reference to “Strategic Review”.<sup>3</sup> This would be a logical and necessary step, before launching any defence system analysis. IPAP – texts, indeed, point towards the existence of an “updated threat assessment”, however, no guidance is provided, how this document is procedurally guaranteed and updated outside the SDR - margins.

Generally, the ambiguity in language and definitions is a common feature of the Armenian defence policy and planning. The additional findings are provided by the SDR - text body itself. Interestingly, the Military Doctrine formulates the SDR - mission as the identification and approval “of priorities of military strategy in a long - term perspective.”<sup>4</sup> We were not able to identify the nature of *military strategy*, as a document, due to the general absence of this document and no clear hierarchy between the existing defence policy documents. It seems that the *military strategy* is exclusively regarded as the component element of the SDR dealing with defence priorities. Yet, the reference to the long - term nature of these priorities turns the role of the *military strategy* very questionable, due to the mere mid - term validity of the Military Doctrine and the SDR themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.2, 2.3, 2.4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., sec. 2.2, 2.3.

<sup>3</sup> “The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia,” 24.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

### 6.3.2.2 Key Role of the Strategic Defence Review and its Deficiencies

The work on the comprehensive analysis of the defence system within the SDR implied a close coordination of various state agencies under the lead of the Ministry of Defence. An interagency working group was established, entrusted with the coordination of the SDR - daily management. According to the document itself the actual work started in September 2008 and was completed by March 2011.<sup>1</sup> As illuminated before, the Alliance suggested Armenian Ministry of Defence already in 2005 to start implementing reforms in a variety of functional areas, and by 2009 reflected in the IPAP - document the SDR as a project already launched. Though the DCAF - report of 2008 describes the SDR as a cornerstone of the unpublished IPAP 2007-2009, the vague formulation of the next IPAP 2009-2011 on Armenia just intending to conduct “a thorough Strategic Defence Review” suggests that the real work, in fact, did not start before 2009.<sup>2</sup> Basically the SDR was regarded as a major driving force for institutional changes and defence reforms in Armenia. It had to analyze armed forces capability and resource requirements, and produce a prioritized future force - structure and implementation plans with the specific emphasis on following areas:<sup>3</sup>

- Defence policy and planning
- Military education
- Human resource management
- Resource planning and acquisition
- Financial defence management
- Public relations

What progress has been achieved in the mentioned areas (except defence policy and planning) will be closer discussed in the respective sections to follow. There we also hope to get more clarity, whether the SDR indeed was a major cause of reforms. In fact, the coherence and consistency of reform implementation serves as a strong indicator of the reform - plan existence itself, i.e. SDR - implementation plan. As already touched upon earlier, we see certain inconsistencies between the formal declarations and the realities on the ground. The Defence Minister Seyran Ohanyan (in office from 2008 - to present) reiterated in December

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<sup>1</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” Public Release (Yerevan: Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia), 2, accessed September 15, 2014, available at <http://www.mil.am/files/SDR-eng.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 26; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” para. 2.1.

<sup>3</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 2, 3, 14.

2010, that potential threat scenarios have been analyzed and subsequent military planning conducted within the SDR.<sup>1</sup> The SDR - text itself claims to be based on the analysis of strategic level policy documents, the National Security Strategy and the Military Doctrine.<sup>2</sup> This, however, would imply the new threat and security analysis reflected in an updated National Security Strategy. In other words, since 2007 the NSS had to be at least once revised and published. The same argument is valid with regard to the Military Doctrine, which was similarly drafted in 2007. Even though all IPAP - documents since 2005 explicitly require the periodic review and update of the national security policy - and strategic documents, no public release of these documents was available before 2014.<sup>3</sup>

Another aspect, which appears somewhat problematic, is the general reservation made in the SDR - document. It claims that the periodic violation of ceasefire in conflict region of Karabakh significantly complicated the SDR and limited the Defence Ministry's ability for "more rigorous defence reforms."<sup>4</sup> It is pretty in line with the general approach, which reflects greater caution not to affect the current level of combat readiness of forces, i.e. 80% of Armenian units placed on the frontline.<sup>5</sup> Problems associated with this claim are twofold. On one side it cools any high expectations of comprehensive defence reforms. Further, it strengthens our hypothetical claim made before, that Armenia may face the risk of creating two - tire force, with larger part still being formed along Russian traditions. Given that Armenian forces regularly participate in combined military drills with units of "Karabakh army" and the Russian 102<sup>nd</sup> Base in Gyumri, the fears of the growing army - dichotomy should not be easily dismissed.<sup>6</sup> We regard the mentioned reservation with a great deal of skepticism, because of two reasons: the SDR serves the purpose of initiating defence reforms, and reforms themselves, as we were able to conclude, are regarded by Armenian defence officials predominantly as means to increase the fighting capacity of armed forces. If the ultimate objective of the SDR is nothing else but the higher combat readiness of forces, such reservations are less comprehensible. In an interview given to "Mediamax" news agency on August 9, 2011, the deputy defence minister Tonoyan indicated the areas (defence policy,

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<sup>1</sup> Kogan, "Armenia's and Georgia's Security Agenda," 17.

<sup>2</sup> "Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015," 2.

<sup>3</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," para. 2.1; "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," para. 2.1.

<sup>4</sup> "Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015," 11.

<sup>5</sup> Yost, "Armenian Perceptions of International Security in the South Caucasus," 3.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Malek, "Determinanten Der Sicherheitspolitik Armeniens," Research Report (Koeln: Bundesinstitut fuer ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, May 25, 2000), 17, available at [http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/4151/ssoar-2000-malek-determinanten\\_der\\_sicherheitspolitik\\_armeniens.pdf?sequence=1](http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/4151/ssoar-2000-malek-determinanten_der_sicherheitspolitik_armeniens.pdf?sequence=1).

human resources management, education and training and the development NCO - corps) where the SDR - implementation was expected and the U.S. - assistance appreciated.<sup>1</sup> The messages of the interview, indeed, omit the relevance of force structure and combat capabilities for the SDR, and given the mentioned reservation, presuppose less if any changes related to the combat readiness of forces, i.e. the force structure, unit design, combat capabilities, field doctrines and training.

The SDR is a milestone event, which is inspired and assisted by NATO in order to bring the Armenian defence institutions to a higher level of strategic thinking and planning. On July 27, 2011 in a meeting with North Atlantic Council the Armenian Defence Minister Seyran Ohanyan directly linked the Strategic Review with the plan of defence reforms in the period 2011-2015.<sup>2</sup> In the same year the public version of the document was released, which, understandably, censored large parts dealing with combat readiness and capability requirements of the Armenian armed forces. Unfortunately, the text content is disproportionally reduced, leaving the impression of the document featured more by general statements with less intention to provide a more detailed picture on what type of armed forces Armenia actually wants to achieve, and how. The document makes also clear, that quite a number of defence reforms have been conducted or completed during the course of SDR - development, and some will be a matter of future actions. This fact speaks less in favor of the Armenian approach to the process itself, and indicates somehow incoherency and hasty nature of reform - actions that actually had to be performed only after all SDR - findings had been finalized.

### **6.3.2.3 Summarizing the Progress**

Concluding the findings of this chapter, we recognize the fact that a general NATO - model of defence policy and planning has been formally adopted by the Armenian Ministry of Defence, as the most appropriate tool for identifying missions, objectives and structure of the national armed forces. The leading role here has been assumed by the Ministry of Defence, which was increasingly civilianized since the law amendment in 2007, which separated its functions from

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<sup>1</sup> Davit Tonoyan: "Armenian-U.S. defense cooperation grows impressively," Mediamax Agency, August 9, 2011, available at <http://www.mediamax.am/en/news/interviews/1985/>.

<sup>2</sup> Danielyan, "Armenia Plans More NATO-Backed Defence Reforms."

those of General Staff (GS).<sup>1</sup> The newly created Defense Policy Department (within the MoD) and the Strategic Planning Department (within the GS) created a strong link between the MOD and GS in performing the crucial function of strategic guidance and the management of planning processes, including budgeting and the SDR.<sup>2</sup> Key elements of the western defence policy and strategic planning process such as drafting strategic documents, the SDR and the interagency mode of work have been put in practice and implemented. Nonetheless, a number of challenges associated with the proper implementation and routinization of policy and planning procedures cannot be overseen. Though formally adopted, the process of the routine revision and update of strategic documents is still missing, largely owing to the legal deficits on the clear hierarchy and procedural (inter - or intra - agency, timelines) nuances of the strategic policy - paper development. Significant delays in implementation of the agreed objectives (e.g. long term planning cell) additionally point towards inherent internal difficulties (organizational or capacity based) to master new policies and procedures. The claim of the DCAF - report 2007, that no clear evidence of the correspondence between the desired objectives of strategic documents and the procedures of force planning and capability development was visible, is largely valid. Finally, some conflicting statements we found in the IPAPs and other documents uphold the ambiguity of the understanding of “force interoperability” and the risk of the “two - tire force” further unresolved.

### **6.3.3 Interoperability and NATO - Standards**

The narrow military nature of information concerning the application of NATO - standards in the Armenian armed forces is a limiting factor for our research. The sensitive nature of information concerned makes it quite difficult to provide a detailed picture of the progress made in every relevant area of “standardization” according to services, units or technical areas. Nonetheless, using multiple sources that record available scarce information makes it possible to generate a general picture of Armenia’s defence transformation from the perspective of NATO - interoperability and the adoption of western military standards.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 15.

### 6.3.3.1 Peculiarities in Understanding NATO – Standards and Interoperability

The Military Doctrine as the major defence policy document provides a pretty muddling statement about the need to improve proceeding and functions “in conformity with the logic of Military Security System modernization programs and deriving tasks and requirements.”<sup>1</sup> The notion of *modernization*, as we have established, revealed a strong contextual affinity to the need for Armenia to adopt NATO - processes, standards and procedures that are believed to contribute to the overall enhancement of the armed forces’ effectiveness. NATO - officials mostly refer to this as the process of standard - adoption under the interoperability - objective. According to Steffen Elgersma, a NATO - IS official, “the usual understanding of NATO-standards refers to the field of STANAGs that entail the vast number of standardized agreements in various fields (logistics, language, armament etc.).”<sup>2</sup> This view with an additional emphasis on the critical relevance of military standards (equipment, training) for conducting joint missions and operations is shared by Lieutenant Colonel Ferdinand Dycha, a NATO – IMS representative, and Gustav Vroemen, a NATO – IS/DPPD officer.<sup>3</sup> Since the PARP and IPAP are regarded as main vehicles of cooperation with the Alliance, and reflect agreements reached between NATO and Armenia, we might assume, that all interoperability and standardization issues are translated into partnership goals (PGs) and objectives formulated in the PARP and IPAP. As Armenian defence advisor in NATO, Mher Israelyan puts it “the notion of *Interoperability* is of practical nature and is handled within PARP - PGs (Partnership Goals) in accordance with strict standards and objectives run exclusively by MOD and Military.”<sup>4</sup> It must be also noted, that whatever partnership goals envisaged, they are contingent on the national approval, and once agreed can always be changed. The partner - nation’s desire is decisive in this regard, as argued by a former NATO – IS official Bruce Bach.<sup>5</sup>

The strategic security and defence documents of Armenia, though highlighting the need to increase the interoperability of forces with NATO, always reiterate the critical importance of CSTO and Russian military assistance (arms supply and 102<sup>nd</sup> military base in Gyumri) for Armenia’s defence. Hence the ambiguity of what standards (Russian or NATO - based) and

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<sup>1</sup> “The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia,” 24.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Ferdinand Dycha, NATO Military Committee, IMS, Partnership Section, Brussels, NATO HQ, February 7, 2013; Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO, Brussels.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

what organization is more important in terms of military interoperability, remains unresolved. To lift it, we have to focus on force (unit) - structure and the nature of foreign support provided to units that are mostly affected by interoperability demands. By the beginning of the millennium the Armenian defence system and the armed forces were largely soviet model based with old “hard security - oriented mindset and decision - making processes.”<sup>1</sup> The basics of Armenian military thinking were in fact influenced by the Russian military culture, with the entire personnel exclusively relying on Russian made equipment and heavy hardware<sup>2</sup>. Naturally, the soviet legacy was directly manifested in every policy area of the defence, thus affecting the entire process of decision - making. As Jan - Hendrik Zur Lippe states in his paper, the featuring element of this kind of system was a centralized leadership, the training and education heavily focused on technology and science, and the lack of civilian staff in military structure.<sup>3</sup> As already mentioned, the Armenian armed forces still entertain close contacts to Russian counterparts (incl. the military base in Gyumri), and exercise frequent joint military drills with Russian forces as well as units of a breakaway region of Karabakh. This fact should not be surprising, since about 80% of Armenian armed forces are located on or close to the frontline with Azerbaijan.<sup>4</sup> Knowing the common approach of Armenian defence officials that rejects any changes to the current level of combat readiness of forces deployed, it was no surprise that as for 2012 the most part of Armenian forces were still of soviet model, organized around regiments having three motorized rifle battalions and companies in each regiment.<sup>5</sup> The regimental structure of forces is also reiterated by the SDR - document.<sup>6</sup>

In light of the intensive ties existing between the Armenian and Russian armed forces, the frequent reference to the interoperability of forces makes it even more relevant to clarify the essence of this national objective, formulated by the National Security Strategy 2007 as “force compatibility” and the “guarantee for national security.”<sup>7</sup> In line with the NSS, where the conformity of national forces with NATO - standards is given high importance, the NATO - Parliamentary Assembly stipulates that the “firm belief of Armenian authorities” to deepen

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<sup>1</sup> Kotanjian, “Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.– Armenia ‘Smart Power’ Cooperation,” 85.

<sup>2</sup> Malek, “Determinanten Der Sicherheitspolitik Armeniens,” 10, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Jan-Hendrik C. Zur Lippe, “Military Compensation in the Armenian Armed Forces: Life Cycle Cost Model for the Armenian Army” (Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School, 2013), 15, available at <http://calhoun.nps.edu/public/handle/10945/39044>.

<sup>4</sup> Yost, “Armenian Perceptions of International Security in the South Caucasus,” 3.

<sup>5</sup> Barrett, “Education for Reform: New Students, New Methods, New Assessments,” 40.

<sup>6</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 13.

<sup>7</sup> “National Security Strategy,” 1.

the cooperation with NATO was associated with Yerevan's plan to dedicate one battalion for peacekeeping (PK) missions with the possibility to increase the size of the unit.<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, the Military Doctrine offers conflicting passages and declares the need of interoperability of this unit with "different security systems and separate countries" to meet the allied commitments.<sup>2</sup> Here we should not forget, that while being a member of the CSTO, Armenia entered a number of serious international commitments. Armenian defence forces constitute important component of the CSTO Rapid Reaction Collective Force (RRCF) and since 2007 established the Combined Task Force (CTF) on bilateral basis with Russia.<sup>3</sup> Based on the general acknowledgment that Armenian military units by and large are Russian like, we suggest intuitively at this stage to focus on the analysis of units designated for missions under the NATO - command. By doing that we'd be better able to capture a much better picture of the achieved progress within the context of "NATO - interoperability" and standard - adoption.

### **6.3.3.2 The Scale of Standard – Application in Armenian Armed Forces**

As NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report 2006 (NPAR) states, Armenia announced in 2005 its desire to create a fully interoperable brigade, which would meet NATO - standards and be able to participate in NATO - led peacekeeping operations by 2015.<sup>4</sup> The next NPAR - 2007 clarifies, that the plans had actually been devised since 2004, and the objective was to establish a peace - keeping battalion with all support units (logistical, communication, medical, CBRN and anti - tank), modern equipment, subsequent training and appointment of staff officers in NATO - HQs by 2010.<sup>5</sup> All this, of course, had to be accomplished by meeting NATO - standards, according to the same excerpt of the document. Interestingly, the most relevant sources, the IPAP - documents place under the interoperability issue no actions except those associated with the peacekeeping unit. The IPAP - 2005 talks, in fact, only about the battalion size unit, and the IPAP - 2009, similar to Military Doctrine of 2007, identifies the brigade level and the sustainment of one deployed battalion, as the final objective.<sup>6</sup> A bit

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<sup>1</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 29.

<sup>2</sup> "The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia," 28.

<sup>3</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency; Novikova and Sargsyan, "Chapter 1: Armenia," 14.

<sup>4</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," para. 50.

<sup>5</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 29.

<sup>6</sup> "Armenia's Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO," sec. 2.3; "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," sec. 2.5.1.



different prospect is provided by the SDR - document, which speaks about the half - brigade deployable for PK - missions, with the exclusion of the logistical component.<sup>1</sup> The IPAP - 2011 actions see no major change in this regard and again urge Armenian Ministry of Defence to ensure the brigade interoperability with NATO forces up to one deployable battalion with combat and combat service support<sup>2</sup>. The latest findings on the issue uphold the existing discrepancies. In a Mediamax interview on August 9, 2011 the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan described the current level of readiness of the 12<sup>th</sup> PK - brigade to be fully completed in 2015, by having two fully equipped infantry battalions able to provide two company level units for PK - missions on rotational basis.<sup>3</sup> He also added, that the third battalion was in a formation phase, and the logistical component was under development. Whatever the interpretation of *two companies on rotational base* might be, the mismatch of planned objectives is clearly visible. We see also the change of objective deadlines as well as the low progress between two IPAP - cycles 2009 - 2011 in terms of the brigade - interoperability level.

All segments of the designated unit, such as communication, command and control, logistics, medical etc., logically, must conform to NATO - standards. It implies, that certain procedures, practices as well as the technical aspect of operating equipment would differ from those existing in the larger (Russian like) rest of the armed forces. The assistance provided by the Alliance (largely bilateral, and predominantly U.S. – led as we will see next) could reveal the priority areas of assistance regarded as key enabler for interoperability improvement. Within the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs the U.S. and Armenian side agreed in 2004 on full modernization of command and communication systems.<sup>4</sup> The analysis of other sources such as reports of U.S. State Department confirms this and reveals following dynamics of financial aid and priorities:

**2004** - Delivery of communication equipment via FMF (2,490,000 USD) and English language training courses via IMET (870,000 USD).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 7.

<sup>2</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.6.1.

<sup>3</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>4</sup> Aghabekyan, “Advanced Research Workshop South Caucasus,” 29.

<sup>5</sup> “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Armenia,” U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2005), available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/55789.htm>.

**2005/2006** – Delivery of individual equipment, communication and medical assets, non - communication gear, limited unit equipment and language courses, support in planning of national logistics via FMF (2005-7,940,000 USD, 2006 - 3,96,000 USD), and IMET (2005 - 820,000 USD, 2006 - 840,000 USD).<sup>1</sup>

**2007** – Provision of PK - brigade with U.S. standard equipment (demining equipment, communication gear and vehicular assets) and training of 25 officers and non-commissioned officers in USA (FMF - 3,880,000 USD, IMET - 460,000 USD).<sup>2</sup>

**2008** - Delivery of transport equipment and radios, the equipment for surgical field hospital and demining center, specialized training and English language courses (FMF - 2,980,000 USD, IMET - 930,000 USD).<sup>3</sup>

**2009/2010/2011/2011** – developing defence institutions capacity in areas of peacekeeping, medical, humanitarian law and transparency (FMF – 3,000,000/ 3,000,000/ 2,994,000/ 2,994,000 USD, IMET – 360,000/ 449,000/ 449,000/ 675,000 USD).<sup>4</sup>

Two observations can be made from the sources above. First, we have a sufficient amount of evidence to conclude, that the first five years of cooperation were largely focused on the

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<sup>1</sup> “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Armenia,” U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2006), <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/63171.htm>; “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Armenia,” U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2007), <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/92784.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> “FY 2007 U.S. Assistance to Eurasia - Armenia,” FY 2007 U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiafy07/115968.htm>; “FY 2007 FSA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed June 23, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/116397.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “FY 2008 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance - Armenia,” FY 2008 U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiafy08/117311.htm>; “FY 2008 FSA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/117535.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “FY 2009 AEECA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed June 24, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/167528.pdf>; “FY 2010 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Armenia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, April 2011), [www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/167286.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/167286.htm); “FY 2011 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Armenia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, April 2012), [www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/193751.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/193751.htm); “FY 2012 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Armenia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, June 2013), [www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/2013/212955.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/2013/212955.htm).

priority of providing technical equipment for the PK - unit (battalion, brigade) as well as the language training. Second, the decline of the U.S. financial support from the year 2008 (especially FMF) coincides with the change of the cooperation priority, from 2008 on directed towards developing national institutional capacity within the ministry and armed forces. This is clearly reflected on the significant decrease of FMF funded equipment delivery and the relative sustainment of the IMET- funding level. Structurally the PK - Brigade shows by 2013 no adaptation and little change in the existing soviet model, exposing the personnel breakdown (200 officers, 80 warrant officers, 200 sergeants ) very similar to the old soviet rank model, where the officers' ratio reaches 30 % and stands in strong contrast to U.S example, with officers' ratio close to 17% and lower.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence above speaks for the fact that all units designated for NATO - led or other peacekeeping operations are predominantly trained and equipped under the U.S. assistance. According to deputy minister Davit Tonoyan, during the official visit in Washington D.C. on July 18-21, 2011 Armenian officials continued discussing the expansion of the cooperation scope onto the wider adoption of U.S. - capabilities by Armenian peacekeeping units and the organization of bilateral and multilateral combined exercises.<sup>2</sup> We tend also to conclude, that in line with respective IPAP - actions NATO - interoperability and standards are, in fact, regarded exclusively in connection with the PK - Brigade. As the evidence shows, the interoperability and standard - adoption is predominantly applied to the domain of technical equipment, its operation and the ability to communicate with Allied forces (communication gear, language training). The statement of the Armenian Defence Advisor in NATO Mher Israelyan, that standards are mainly applied to the Peacekeeping Brigade additionally strengthens the validity of our claim.<sup>3</sup> Finally, Dr. Jim Barret, a key U.S. advisor in the DEEP (Defence Education Enhancement Program), while assessing the status of Armenian defence reforms, bluntly admits that except the designated peacekeeping brigade defence reform had progressed in Armenia slowly.<sup>4</sup> Evidently, he refers to the adoption of western standards and effort to reach a high degree of interoperability as the main indicators of the successful reform - implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> Zur Lippe, "Military Compensation in the Armenian Armed Forces," 43, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>4</sup> Barret, "Education for Reform: New Students, New Methods, New Assessments," 40.

Apart from peacekeeping units, the PFP - framework, as we know, allows partner - nations to designate certain units for the PFP - pool of forces that must be also fully interoperable and evaluated (certified) for meeting NATO - standards. It is commonly known as the Operational Capabilities Concept (OCC). The Armenian authorities, apparently, decided to avoid the duplication of efforts and extended the OCC also to all PK - units. The IPAP - 2009 indeed confirms, that the PK - brigade had to be evaluated in the framework of OCC, and the IPAP - 2011 states that PK - units were intended to be evaluated in accordance with OCC - 2 level.<sup>1</sup> This would mean that from 2009 on the national PK - units successfully completed the OCC - 1 level evaluation (national self - evaluation) and were ready for the next evaluation - phase. In 2011 an engineer battalion, which was declared for the PFP - pool of forces, joined the Armenian PK - contingent, and had to undergo OCC - evaluation as well.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the selected units, the IPAP - documents reveal an initially cautious approach to the possibility of a wider application of NATO - standards and practices within the Armenian armed forces. For instance, the IPAP - 2005 urges the Armenian side to use the experience gained from the PK - units “as a catalyst to improve training and promote the gradual transformation of other units of the armed forces.”<sup>3</sup> The next document dated by 2009 reiterates the same objectives and the following IPAP - 2011 added the demand to “ensure OCC Level - 2 NATO evaluation and certification of one battalion from the Peacekeeping Brigade and its Combat Support and Combat Service Support units.”<sup>4</sup> Little change in the IPAP - language indicates not only the difficulties on the way of a wider standard – application, but also the limited progress and procrastination of the entire process with regards to designated PK - units.

### **6.3.3.3 NATO – Standards: the Prevalence of technical Understanding**

As introduced before, NATO - standards commonly refer to the technical aspect of equipment, as well as the rules of engagement and conduct, communication, language, logistics, doctrines and training. Similarly, the deputy minister Davit Tonoyan places them

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<sup>1</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” para. 2.3; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.6.1.

<sup>2</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>3</sup> “Armenia’s Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO,” sec. 2.3.1.

<sup>4</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.5.1; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.6.1.

largely within the technical domain, which encompasses the hardware, communication and logistics. Yet, most importantly, the minister also underlines the crucial role of STANAGs, (standard agreements) especially NATO - manuals and regulations that enable Armenian units to adopt procedures commonly practiced in NATO - units.<sup>1</sup> This particular aspect is crucial to note for the following reasons. The OCC - relevant units include Combat Support (CS) and Combat Service Support (CSS) elements. These are explained by IPAP - 2009 as follows: anti-tank, mortar, reconnaissance, artillery, combat engineer, air defence, intelligence, military police and NBC (Nuclear Biological Chemical) as CS; and logistics, supplies, maintenance, recovery and medical as CSS.<sup>2</sup> However, only the areas of logistics, communication and some other equipment are recognized in the next IPAP-2011 as most problematic, where improvements had to be made.<sup>3</sup> We have no evidence of U.S. equipment supplies other than communication, medical and transport assets. Thus, with great certainty we can assume that the most capabilities of Armenian PK - units, especially those relevant to actual fighting remain Russian made and by and large pose no significant problem from the perspective of NATO - interoperability. As for the logistics and communication, as well as the ability of Armenian officer corps to be fully involved in the command and control chain of operations, we see a completely different picture and incomparably high attention paid from the NATO - side. Hence, no wonder that the requirements of interoperability and NATO - standards are voiced here with much greater emphasis. Both IPAP – 2009 and 2011 documents expand this particular aspect of interoperability and highlight Armenia’s intention to develop a long term C3 (Command Control and Communication) plan and the architecture for C3 systems, in which the NATO - expertise and support is appreciated “for NATO - interoperability testing activities.”<sup>4</sup> In addition to that NATO - standardization policies are also suggested to be introduced in national logistics and industry. This is a fairly new initiative aiming at creating the national standardization and codification systems for the effective use in Life Cycle Calculation (LCC) and the acquisition of equipment.<sup>5</sup> But it also provides clear evidence that by 2011 no significant progress was made in the area of logistics,

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>2</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.5.1.

<sup>3</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” 2.6.1.

<sup>4</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.7; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” 2.8.

<sup>5</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.9.

which according to deputy defence Minister Davit Tonoyan, was identified in 2011 as one of the major areas, where national authorities were eager to study NATO - practices.<sup>1</sup>

Our concluding findings support the claim, which attests significant limitations existing in area of NATO - interoperability and standard adoption by the Armenian armed forces. Even reduced to the very narrow military - technical understanding of common norms of “doing business” (standards) the process of their internalization reflects slow pace and is exclusively utilized to small portion of units designed for peacekeeping (NATO) operations. There are also no signs of expanding NATO - standards to the rest of the army. As for the risk of creating a “two - tire force” within the Armenian army, the fact that the large majority of the units remains unaffected by reforms due to the perceived risk of decreasing units’ combat readiness, remains uncontested.<sup>2</sup> The deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan dismissed these fears in his interview owing to the technical nature of changes (standards) happening on the tactical level.<sup>3</sup> We indeed have sufficient evidence to conclude that the NATO - interoperability context in the Armenian reality omits large parts of the technical (fighting) equipment and primarily focuses on tactical communication, logistics, command and control and the medical support. We also have some evidence that as for 2013 the PK - brigade structure and rank - breakdown was still soviet model like. Along with long-lasting deficits existing since 2005 in the mentioned areas and little progress in efforts to expand NATO - standards to other units of the armed forces, we can suggest that the fears of “two - tire force” are unjustified and ungrounded. Even the units designated for peacekeeping missions and the OCC - pool are still largely Russian model - like and similar to the rest of the armed forces. As former NATO – IS official Bruce Bach stated, the issue of interoperability mostly matters to those partner - nations that want to join the Alliance, thus Armenia has “no particular need to be more widely interoperable...and NATO does not sanction a partner, who doesn’t achieve a goal.”<sup>4</sup> This claim very much conforms to the statement of another NATO - official, former senior officer for partnership and cooperation, George Katsirdakis, who regards NATO - standards predominantly within the larger context of shared understanding of “doing business”, thus as we understand at this stage less relevant to Armenia.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>2</sup> Yost, “Armenian Perceptions of International Security in the South Caucasus,” 3.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>5</sup> Wright, “Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict,” 2009, 22–23.

### **6.3.4 Budgetary Planning and Transparency**

In the earlier section we discussed the ability of the Armenian Parliament to execute its financial, i.e. budgetary control functions and to monitor the general process of defence financial planning. The defence budget and processes associated with its development and implementation is another pillar of the control capacity of the Parliament. Thus the review of defence budgetary planning and the degree of public awareness on it will expose the character of the relationship between the Defence Ministry and the National Assembly. Broadly speaking, the evidence we collected revealed some clear deficits of the national legal framework on defence, encompassing not only the process of drafting and approval of strategic documents, but not least the absence of clear policies and regulations that would coordinate defence related work of state institutions other than the Ministry of Defence. Although we don't have sufficient number of ministry level regulations at hand that delineate responsibilities and timelines of defence budget development and execution, the cross-document comparison of assessments provided by IPAP, SDR and other sources make it possible to generate a general picture of the progress made in this field.

#### **6.3.4.1 The Practice of Developing Defence Budget**

By 2005 the bad practice of submitting defence budget proposals with little details and insight of priorities continued its existence, so that even the respective parliamentary committees had no better information, and the defence - procurement could not be checked by the State Committee on State Procurement or any other body. As the Saferworld - report 2005 bluntly puts it:

*Following this, the National Assembly is presented with a final budget figure, which is not explained at all, which it can either approve or disapprove. This procedure is further weakened by the fact that the budget presented has little in common either with the Armed Forces genuine needs, nor their true expenditure. Instead, the budget that is presented reflects the highest figure that is thought acceptable, with the rest coming from other sources, including industries that are controlled by the Ministry.<sup>1</sup>*

We were not able to find any serious breakdown of information concerning the financial appropriations for the defence in the period concerned. Some short excerpts from the governmental budgetary plans were provided, yet with serious gaps on priorities of defence sector, mirrored in respective financial programs and objectives. Pretty in line with DCAF -

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<sup>1</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 31.

report in 2008, we see a common practice of presenting defence budget by a single article, with the possibility of more detailed discussion at Defence Committee’s closed sessions.<sup>1</sup> For instance, the government’s “Medium - Term Public Expenditure Framework 2003 - 2006” document puts Defence, National Security, Law Enforcement and State Emergency in one article and provides information on total defence expenditure, its share to the state budget, and the change or the forecast merely by a general figure (see figures below):

**Table 1. Defence Spending in MTEF 2003-2006 Document<sup>2</sup>**

**Expenditure for the Main Sectors or Functions as a Share of Total Expenditure between 2003 and 2006**

Indicators	2003	2004	2005	2006
Defence, national security, public order protection, criminal-executive and state emergency systems	18.35%	20.21%	20.51%	19.87%

**Proposed Changes in Resource Package of the State Budget for 2004- 2006 (Million Drams)**

Indicators	2003	2004	2005	2006
Defence, national security, public order protection, criminal-executive and state emergency systems	No data	5 459.5	6 571.7	4 030.2

**Forecast of State Budget Expenditures for 2004-2006, by Consolidated Groups of Functional Classification (Million Drams)**

Indicators	2003	2004	2005	2006
Defence, national security, public order protection, criminal-executive and state emergency systems	61 330.2	66 789.7	73 361.4	77391.6

**State Budget Expenditures for 2004-2006, by Functional Classification (Million Drams)**

Total Expenditure	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Defence	36 388.5	44 324.0	48 524.4	52 770.0	56 017

The exchange rates of the national currency can be seen in the table below.

**Table 2. Yearly Exchange Rates 1 US. Dollar to Armenian Currency (Dram)<sup>3</sup>**

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
578,74	533,43	457,70	416,04	342,08	305,98	363,31	373,72	372,46	401,74

<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 19–20.

<sup>2</sup> “Republic of Armenia 2004-2006 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework” (Yerevan: Government of the Republic of Armenia, 2003), 5, 49, 50, 63, <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/48.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “Central Bank, Exchange Rates,” *Best Exchange Rates: RATE.am*, accessed October 3, 2015, available at <http://rate.am/en/armenian-dram-exchange-rates/central-bank-armenia>.



The IPAP - 2005 document depicts the existing deficits not only in the area of defence budgeting and transparency, but not least in the national capacity to conduct sound and reliable financial planning. In particular, it argues to “explore different planning and budgeting systems”, to introduce stable and “sound financial planning” and to finalize the introduction of the budgeting system, supported by a trial period and “more transparent and improved auditing and accounting processes.”<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the Armenian government is advised under the same section to explore best practices in the area of defence budgeting and planning to develop the national expertise with the involvement of the Ministry of Finances. The Armenian Military Doctrine shares the spirit of the IPAP - document and admits the need for more transparency in defence and budgetary planning.<sup>2</sup> As we have no NATO - document at hand, which would evaluate the period between 2006 and 2008, we resort to two major sources available. First is the DCAF - report of 2008 and the second is the ICHD - Policy Brief issued in 2007. The ICHD - report highlights the national intention to conduct joint NATO - Armenia actions to implement the new and effective budgetary planning procedures.<sup>3</sup> Evidently, this statement largely refers to early IPAP - objectives, we already reviewed. As for the DCAF - report in 2008, it continues attesting the Armenian Ministry of Defence serious gaps in defence budgeting. According to it the defence budget is based on the “Program of Military Needs” as a part of the “Medium Term Expenditure Framework”, in which the decision of allocating and distributing resources rests on ministerial level with little possibility for internal, lower level segments to take influence on final decision and respectively, to change the top - down system.<sup>4</sup> Since the same report states that the modern “Planning Programming and Budgeting System” (PPBS) was not introduced yet, the made comment raises questions about the soundness and reliability of the general budgetary planning. Despite the huge importance of the armed forces for the security of the country, the “Government Program for 2008 - 2012” issued in 2008 leaves merely a short notice that “the Government will introduce a legislative initiative to increase democratic and civil oversight over the military forces.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Armenia’s Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO,” sec. 2.2.4.

<sup>2</sup> “The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia,” 27.

<sup>3</sup> “A Few Observations Made in the Domain of Armenia - NATO Relations,” ICHD Policy Brief (Yerevan: International Center for Human Development, October 2007), 4, available at <http://ichd.org/?laid=1&com=module&module=static&id=351>.

<sup>4</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 18–19.

<sup>5</sup> “Republic of Armenia - Government Program,” N 380 - A (Yerevan: Government of the Republic of Armenia a, April 28, 2008), 54, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/77.pdf>.

To see how Armenian authorities responded to the existing criticism a short review of the next cycle IPAP - documents is indispensable, where NATO - suggestions have been transformed into national commitments. Since 2005 the language used in IPAP - 2009 document has not changed at all and still encompassed a serious need to improve budgeting processes within the Defence Ministry. It is worth quoting the key section of the paper:

*Evaluate planning and budgeting system best fitting national situation and ensure proper coordination between all ministries and other appropriate government bodies involved in the planning process. The planning system should also aim at introducing a more stable planning basis and should be based on sound financial planning including life cycle costing methodology. The new system should provide for a timely and firm budget forecast for the next financial year as well as a reliable estimate for the following three to five years.*<sup>1</sup>

Comparing to the content of previous IPAP - cycle objectives, we clearly see the lack of progress since 2005. The only difference visible is that the requirements are even enlarged and include the proper training of MOD - and GS personnel in defence and budgetary planning field, along with the introduction of sound accounting and auditing processes.<sup>2</sup> Within the same period the 294 pages strong government program issued for the period between 2007 and 2009 has little to say if any about the defence budgeting priorities.<sup>3</sup> The next available program aiming for the period between 2011 - 2013 upholds the same tradition of secrecy, and under the Chapter 18, simply notes “18.1. DEFENCE, 18.1.1. Provision of Military Demands (confidential).”<sup>4</sup> The only information we were able to distill from the 392 pages strong volume was that of aggregated value in “functional classification” and the percentage of defence programs implemented in the period of 2009 - 2010 by means of internal sources (see charts below).<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., sec. 2.6.1, 2.4.

<sup>3</sup> “2007-2009 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework,” Government Programs (Yerevan: Government of the Republic of Armenia), accessed December 26, 2014, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/47.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “2011–2013 Medium-Term Public Expenditure Framework,” Government Programs (Yerevan: Government of the Republic of Armenia, n.d.), 283, available at <http://www.gov.am/files/docs/706.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 297, 298.

**Table 3. “2011-2013 MTEF Framework” – Government Programs**

The framework of 2009-2010 state non-financial assets expenditures by aggregated groups of functional classification (in Million Drams)

	2009 Actual	2010 Budget
<b>DEFENCE</b>	29,222.7	26,572.2

Programs implemented by the means of internal sources	percent of programs implemented by the means of internal sources in the total expenditure	
	2009 actual	2010 Budget
<b>DEFENCE</b>	33.2	65.3

The general dynamics of the defence budget development is best provided by the SIPRI and documents its absolute numbers as well as changes in the share of the national GDP (see the table below).<sup>1</sup> As it is clearly visible, a significant increase of defence spending occurred since 2008 and kept relatively stable, slightly above 400 million USD mark till 2012. The initial increase by 45 million USD was followed by subsequent increases in 2009 (16 million USD) and in 2010 (19 million USD).

**Table 4. Dynamics of the Defence Budget Development**

In Millions	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Armenia Defence Budget</b>	199	244	288	337	392	408	427	391	408
	2,7%	2,9%	2,9%	3,0%	3,4%	4,2%	4,3%	3,9%	3,8%

No records are available that would explain either the first 13% increase of the defence budget or the subsequent budgetary changes. As the Parliament approved the defence budget proposal in November 2012 public interest for details of budgetary appropriations was largely ignored. For many in Armenian public the Defence Minister’s explanation to the Parliament that additional funds will be spent on “increasing the number of professional soldiers and the acquisition of new arms and armaments” appeared insufficient.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the long standing deficits in the ability of Armenian Defence Ministry to produce long - term plans based on the sound analysis of objectives might be attributed either to serious gaps in the capacity of

<sup>1</sup> Figures are in millions of U.S.D at constant (2011) prices and exchange rates. Years are calendar years except for the U.S.A, where the figures are for financial years. Figures do not include spending on military pensions, that would make it 15-20% higher. “The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database,” *SIPRI - Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, accessed December 26, 2014, available at <http://portal.sipri.org/publications/pages/expenditures/splash-expenditures>.

<sup>2</sup> Gayane Abrahamyan, “Armenia: Flying Blind with \$400 Million Defense Budget,” *EURASIANET*, November 10, 2011, available at <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64489>.

drafting defence budgetary plans or the unwillingness to make them public due to security considerations. We will try to illustrate what factors could play the decisive role in keeping such approach.

#### **6.3.4.2 Conflicting Messages of Planning Documents**

In his interview on 30 July 2014 the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan admitted, that the work on modern planning and budgeting system (PPBS - Planning, Programming and Budgeting System), which started some years ago (in 2008), did not result in a full ability of the MOD to produce detailed long term budgetary plans and programs.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing this and other restricting factors such as the inability of other state agencies to provide sound financial forecast data, the ministry reduced its ambitions and is focused more on mid - term budgetary planning. The SDR - document conforms to deputy minister's statement by announcing the establishment of a full cycle mid - term defence planning that, as it argues, links the defence budgeting system with the areas of the military education, acquisition, infrastructure and industry.<sup>2</sup> Let aside the optimistic nature of the statement, we resort to IPAP - documents as the main source of measuring bar for progress, including the area of defence budgeting. Since they represent a mutually (NATO - IS, Armenian officials) agreed list of objectives and formulations, their credibility must be regarded higher than of those documents approved only by national authorities. As for 2011 the IPAP - 2011 similar to early cycle IPAP - documents urges again to improve planning and budgeting systems, to develop "affordable, transparent and sustainable defence plans" with effective account and auditing support processes that include the full life cycle costing (LCC) methodology.<sup>3</sup> Contrary to the SDR - statement and partially in line with deputy defence minister's selfcriticism the IPAP - text basically points towards following challenges:

- There are problems within the general process of defence budgetary planning
- There are also problems within the mid - term budgetary planning, due to little specific distinction made between the long and mid - term perspectives
- The existing LCC - system seems to be inadequate for proper budgetary and financial planning

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>2</sup> "Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015," 18.

<sup>3</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," sec. 2.4.

In a great contrast its own previous optimistic statement, that mid - term defence planning has been fully established, the SDR makes a short - term assumption that “the reforms in the budgeting and financial planning processes will progress significantly.”<sup>1</sup> It goes on also to declare, that the detailed life - cycle and the cost analysis of equipment replacement were done to ensure the purposeful planning of expenditures. This claim cannot be easily accepted because of its strong contradiction to IPAP - messages on that particular issue, we highlighted before.<sup>2</sup> Further, we resort to the LCC - analysis of the Armenian peacekeeping brigade made in 2013, which revealed a significant mismatch between the current model of cost - calculation and the NATO (U.S.) - based brigade cost model, confirming by that the IPAP – skepticism and the need for improvement. According to Jan – Hendrik zur Lippe the standard NATO (U.S. - based) LCC - calculation would include the analysis of the full strength of the brigade, with the different payment, rank and the retirement structure, resulting in a significant increase of necessary funding by nearly six fold.<sup>3</sup>

Understandably, the peacekeeping units operating in a different (coalition) environment require different approach, including a different, more standardized (NATO) financial planning. However, it does not presuppose the need for Armenia to apply the new cost calculation model to the rest of armed forces, i.e. units that have not been affected by NATO - standards. Thus the LCC - methodology identified by IPAP - 2011 as the problem area is still less problematic as compared to the general ability of conducting sound financial planning, which would conform to standard practices of the western (NATO) planning model, commonly titled as PPBS. The only serious evidence of referring to facts of PPBS - utilization is the SDR - document, which claims that the strategic review process was:

*Combined with the review of all the MOD financial planning and forecasting procedures and the development of a program - based budgeting system that will make it possible to plan financial requirements into the future and to forecast the financial commitments several years ahead.*<sup>4</sup>

If according to Deputy Minister Tonoyan the work on PPBS started some time by 2008, the critical messages of the IPAP dated three years later unmistakably conclude, that the

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<sup>1</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>3</sup> In total 183,712,360,298 ADM/ about 445 million USD (May 2014 exchange rate), and with 20% retirement factor. Zur Lippe, “Military Compensation in the Armenian Armed Forces,” 47–50.

<sup>4</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 11.

mentioned modern system was not even yet put in practice. In particular, the respective IPAP national objective is formulated as follows:

*Finalise the introduction of planning and budgeting system supported by more transparent and improved auditing and accounting processes, conduct a trial period and finalise implementation of the new system. The planning system should also aim at introducing a more stable planning basis and should be based on sound financial planning including life cycle costing methodology.*<sup>1</sup>

Consequently, we tend rather to conclude that as for the 2011 the Armenian Ministry of Defence, as the major institution responsible for financial planning and defence budgeting, was still lacking the capacity of producing stable financial plans that would meet the requirements (NATO) of modern program - based planning system. To the credit of Armenian defence officials, they clearly understand the relevance of proper budgetary planning to the general transparency of the defence ministry. As Armenian Defence Advisor at NATO HQ Mher Israelyan puts it, there is a strong connection between the notion of institutional accountability of defence and the field of defence planning and budgeting.<sup>2</sup> According to him the former is intensively required by the Alliance, and to certain degree presupposes the change of the mindset. Additionally, along with the obvious deficits in professional expertise of national personnel involved in the field of defence planning and budgeting, the argument of “professionally necessitated secrecy” should be regarded as equally relevant as the argument of “war caused secrecy.”<sup>3</sup>

#### **6.3.4.3 Defence Transparency - No Light in Sight**

All mentioned facts, obviously do not subscribe to a high level transparency of defence institutions in Armenia and the increased degree of public involvement in defence matters. As already mentioned before, the common belief shared among Armenian officials was that transparency and too much public control over the military would damage country's security, i.e. the combat readiness of forces deployed on the frontline.<sup>4</sup> In 2007 the major transparency problems were associated with the inability of a wider public to monitor the army, as well as the blurred division of responsibilities between the security related state institutions.<sup>5</sup> The deficits were acknowledged by every party including NATO. Geneva Center (DCAF) -

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<sup>1</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.4, action 1.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>3</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.7.2. action 8.

<sup>4</sup> Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 28.

<sup>5</sup> “A Few Observations Made in the Domain of Armenia - NATO Relations,” 2.

reports as well as all IPAP - documents identify several problem - areas and suggest to enhance ties with the wider public and to establish a reporting mechanism that would keep the Defence Ministry, Parliament and other institutions informed about the progress of reforms.<sup>1</sup> National objectives agreed bilaterally in all IPAPs, basically, demand the maximum level of transparency applied to every defence reform action, along with the increased capacity of the civil sector and Ombudsmen to monitor the defence sector. The need for expanded competence of the Ombudsmen - office is given a specific emphasis in IPAP2011-13, by suggesting the familiarization of the Office's staff with international standards and experience.<sup>2</sup>

The historical record shows no clear evidence that defence funds were spent for acquisition purposes based on sound and institutionalized planning or management mechanisms. DCAF - and CENAA reports attest significant deficits and the bad practice of discussing the military budget and spending in the Parliament on rare occasion, usually behind the closed doors.<sup>3</sup> Since then some national commitments have been implemented, especially the "Code of Conduct on Political - Military Aspects of Security", which gives the Armenian parliament the possibility of a deeper involvement in defence related policy formation and launching inquiries and investigations on budgetary allocations if required.<sup>4</sup> Further changes were also made in the field of military acquisition of armament and equipment. The responsibility of the military acquisition was transferred from the armed forces General Staff to the civilian Material - Technical Supply Department, which is placed under the ministry of defence, yet structurally is detached from the MOD administration staff.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, an important step towards the increased transparency was done, as Armenian MOD joined the NATO sponsored "Building Integrity in defence Institutions" - program, a self assessment based on a detailed survey.<sup>6</sup> Despite these changes no actual information is available, how funds are being spent or what mechanisms ensure the needed transparency. Since 2005 we don't have any evidence of the major improvement. As the "Eurasianet" - article concludes in 2011, any defence budget related information "is considered out of bounds for public debate", and the Control

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<sup>1</sup> Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 25-26; "Armenia's Commitment under Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO," sec. 2.2.3; "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," 2.3.

<sup>2</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," sec. 1.4.3.

<sup>3</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 29; Novikova and Sargsyan, "Chapter 1: Armenia," 21.

<sup>4</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 4.

<sup>5</sup> "Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015," 16.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

Chamber, which monitors the state budget and government's financial wrongdoings, has never published any information about the Defence Ministry's financial practices.<sup>1</sup>

The deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan admitted, that the notion of transparency is based on two basic principles: the openness to a wider public, which reduces the amount of information unnecessary classified, and the transparency within the domain of financial resources and acquisition, which is negatively affected by country's security challenges.<sup>2</sup> The positive message of the first principle is directly negated by the dilemma of second principle. It seems that the second principle prevailed and keeps its dominant position even today. On the other hand, the needed degree of transparency is usually ensured by the public itself, reflected in media, non governmental organization - and civil activities. They had increased their weight in the development of policy and strategic concepts, however, very much lack financial resources to initiate independent activity, or, as DCAF - report states, are fully dependent on governmental bodies, as far as defence is concerned.<sup>3</sup> It must be also noted, that not the financial plans and defence budgetary priorities per se are the object of intensive demands on transparency. Rather it as a general requirement to improve the awareness of the wider public in Armenia about the essence and priorities of ongoing defence reforms and transformation. This is exactly what IPAP - documents capture while demanding more active cooperation with the Public Council, more transparent defence and budgetary plans, and more civil participation in implementation of defence reforms.<sup>4</sup> The latter, admittedly, is not possible without the cooperation will from the MOD - side. As for 2011 the IPAP - document still urges Armenian defence authorities to make concrete steps to create a public information task group and conduct an information campaign on defence reforms as well as NATO - led operations.<sup>5</sup> The same sections of the document acknowledge the growing role of Information Center on NATO in Yerevan, especially by conducting annual "NATO weeks", seminars, conferences and other public events. Yet this seems clearly insufficient for achieving the requested high transparency level.

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<sup>1</sup> Abrahamyan, "Armenia: Flying Blind with \$400 Million Defense Budget."

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>3</sup> Authors refer to the military journal "Armenian Army" (soldier), the "DRO" Strategic Research Center and the Noravank Foundation, in Yenokyan, "Country Study - Armenia," 21-23.

<sup>4</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," sec. 1.4.1; "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," sec. 1.4.1.

<sup>5</sup> "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia," sec. 3.1.2; "Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia," 3.1.1.



In general, we see some initiatives towards the improved transparency of the defence budget and the efforts to reduce corruption practices by structural optimization of the Ministry. Nonetheless the problem of budget, not being made public for disclosing the objectives and priorities of military spending, remains acute. NATO - officials share the same concern and despite some good signs still seriously doubt Armenia's ability to conduct proper mid - to long term priority planning, still largely relying on a one year planning focus.<sup>1</sup>

### **6.3.5 Human Resources and the Pace of “Civilianization”**

While taking on the issue of personnel management in Armenian ministry of defence and armed forces, the need for an additional overview of the “civilianization” factor of the ministry becomes indispensable. Already in early 2000s Armenian defence authorities explored various options for restructuring the ministry in an attempt to make it more suitable to modern requirements and the objective of the civilian control of the military. A number of meetings, seminars and workshops were held in Yerevan, as well as in NATO educational centers. For instance, an interim evaluation of Armenia's progress was made in May 2006 and an important NATO - seminar (under the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies) was conducted on 5 - to 7 February, 2007 aiming at discussing the experience of NATO - countries in the “civilianization of the Ministry of Defence” with preceding amendments to the Law on Defence and Civil Service.<sup>2</sup> During his speech to seminar participants the Deputy Defence Minister, Lt. General Arthur Aghabekyan highlighted the importance of the IPAP as the driving force for the defence reforms; and the Marshall Center Professor, Marine Colonel James Howcroft reiterated the value of recommendations to be elaborated by the experienced international team. According to him:

*The working groups, which included a number of Marshall Center alumni, were composed of serious professionals who provided a number of concrete and realistic proposals for the Ministry of Defense regarding the division of responsibilities between the ministry and the General Staff, the filling of certain positions with civilian personnel and the development of a civilian personnel career management system.*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> “Marshall Center Holds Seminar on Armenian Defense Reforms,” *Embassy of the United States, Yerevan-ARmenia*, February 1, 2007, available at <http://armenia.usembassy.gov/news020107.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Joe Ferrare, “Seminar Focuses on Armenia's on-Going Defense Reforms,” *United States European Command*, February 8, 2007, available at <http://www.eucom.mil/media-library/article/20964/seminar-focuses-armenias-going-defense-reforms>.

It must be acknowledged, that the defence transformation effort at least in some policy areas at national (strategic) level in Armenia reveals a solid degree of the coordinated governmental approach and interagency cooperation. The internal examination of various structural options for the ministry of defence, in fact, was accompanied by a time - consuming but thorough analysis of staff - positions and the possible legal amendments to follow. In 2007 the reform program for the national defence was approved by the President, and the consequent approval of the Law on Special Civil Service followed on November 28.<sup>1</sup> The management of personnel did not embrace an immediate full transition from the military positions to civilian ones, and adopted a more gradual approach. As DCAF - reports admit, although by 2007 the Minister of Defence was civilian, civilians within the ministry were assigned marginal positions, and the real first steps of change have been initiated only by 2008.<sup>2</sup> The representatives of the ministry confirm the slow pace of reform, and attribute it to the natural need of adapting the entire legal body to the initiated change. The deputy defence minister Ara Nazaryan even labeled the post law - amendment period as the:

*Preparation stage, during which over a dozen of normative - legal acts were approved, 12 normative decrees were issued by the Defense Minister, related to the order of holding the competition for vacant positions in civil special service, attestation and retraining of civil servants.*<sup>3</sup>

These work had been further enhanced by new internal regulations of the Defence Ministry and the GS of the Armed Forces. These are, naturally, mentioned in the Armenian Strategic Defence Review (SDR) document with the specific emphasis on the introduction of civil positions within the MOD.<sup>4</sup> In fact, the SDR was meant to drive the transformation process of the armed forces, and, as long as reforms continue till 2015, additional steps are further envisaged. In the period between the initiation of reforms and the SDR - final document several problems have been identified. As DCAF - report argues, the larger part of the ministry (about 70 % of positions) remained occupied by former military servicemen, and the performance and evaluation system for civilian and military personnel exposed serious gaps, thus negatively affecting selection and promotion procedures that are not guided by standard

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<sup>1</sup> “Civil Service System Already Introduced in Defense Ministry of Armenia,” *Mediamax*, accessed December 28, 2014, <http://m.mediamax.am/en/news/98/82>.

<sup>2</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 17; Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 10.

<sup>3</sup> “Civil Service System Already Introduced in Defense Ministry of Armenia.”

<sup>4</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 15.

and transparent policies, but by a very high level of authorization.<sup>1</sup> The process of “civilianization” of the ministry continued throughout 2009 by involving other state agencies in defining the nuances of the civilian service. In particular, as Deputy Minister Nazaryan recalls:

*The list of positions in the civil special service was composed, the authority to approve which belongs to the Civil Service Council of Armenia. After approving the list, the Defense Minister approved the staff list, the lists of positions in each group and subgroup. And already on December 12, 2009, the corresponding people were approved for positions in the civil special service.*<sup>2</sup>

This particular statement makes it clear that, as suggested before, some kind of preparation phase was in place from 2007 to 2009, when the structure of the MOD was redrafted and the civilian positions identified. It seems that certain kind of “learning by doing” was adopted, by which setbacks and errors could not be avoided. The IPAP - 2009 document identifies these deficiencies by pointing following aspects of personal management:<sup>3</sup>

- The need to ensure adequate mix (incl. senior positions) of civilian and military personnel in the MOD.
- The need to introduce more civilians into MOD and review of Human Resource Management (HRM) on civilian and military sides.
- The need for a clear job - description of positions with respective length of service before retirement, as well as the development of a clear promotion and evaluation system, along with a standard and adequate salary system.

The objectives above, in general, encompass various areas of personnel management, where deficiencies have been detected by NATO - evaluator teams and agreed by national defence representatives as the objectives for future improvement. As for 2010 the total number of civilian positions in the Ministry of Defence was counted by 403, and they were not directly related to military functions (i.e. legal, financial -budgetary, others dealing with issues of planning, public relations, military education and staff).<sup>4</sup> The problems of the adequate payment for the newly introduced system indicated by IPAP - 2009, have been responded by the defence leadership by amending the law on “Payment for the Work of Civil Servants”,

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<sup>1</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 17–18, 26; Yenokyan, “Country Study - Armenia,” 26.

<sup>2</sup> “Civil Service System Already Introduced in Defense Ministry of Armenia.”

<sup>3</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 1.4.2, 2.6.3.

<sup>4</sup> “Civil Service System Already Introduced in Defense Ministry of Armenia.”

which anticipated additional payments to the basic salary of civil servants.<sup>1</sup> Despite the initiated changes, the next cycle IPAP - 2011 repeats the same language and urges to find the adequate mix of the personnel in the Ministry and General Staff and to improve job-descriptions, selection, promotion and standard compensation policies along with the improved evaluation system.<sup>2</sup> The SDR – text, though not fully in line with IPAP – messages, still agrees with the need of additional work on certain aspects of HRM - improvement. For instance, it requires the amendment of the Law on Military Service, the improved regulations in the Disciplinary Code and the Code on Internal Service to increase the professionalization (NCO - ratio) level of the armed forces.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly the document states, that a guidance was issued to General Staff to examine the entire HRM and respective policies for a more integrated system, which will be developed in the period of next two years.<sup>4</sup> Some national reaction on NATO - advises is visible. In response to IPAP - evaluation and future objectives a NATO (U.S. staffed) working group continues assisting Armenia in restructuring its human resource management and the Disciplinary Code, in fact, was quickly amended, as Defence Advisor in NATO HQ Mher Israelyan stated.<sup>5</sup> Despite these moves, as the former NATO IS - official Bruce Bach puts it, the legacy of soviet era system in Armenia still persists with some old practices of treating the personnel.

### **6.3.6 Training, Education and Participation in NATO - Missions**

In this section we intend to show training – and educational activities within the NATO - cooperation framework with Armenia that are best utilized as the means of ideational influence of the Alliance. Mirrored in the variety of field exercises, courses, educational and foreign assistance programs, they increasingly gained importance and turned to develop into the powerful vehicle of professional military socialization. We will first refer to the general statistics on Armenia’s participation in NATO (PFP) – exercises, as well as to the record of Armenian peacekeeping efforts under the Alliance - umbrella. Then, we will touch upon the issue of bilateral assistance, primarily provided by the U.S.. As last, the educational aspect of Armenia’s military will be reviewed and related to the particular examples of ideational

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 1.4.2, 2.7.3.

<sup>3</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 8, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

transformation and effects of professional socialization that unfolded under the contacts to NATO military and civilian staff - members.

### **6.3.6.1 Growing Intensity of Cooperation: The welcomed NATO - Assistance**

One should be reminded first, Armenia is a co - founder of the CSTO and benefits from the membership by sending its personnel to Russian military schools, receiving military hardware (incl. Air Defence and fighter planes) at low prices and hosting a large Russian military base in Gyumri (3.500 estimated) with additional Russian border control units in country.<sup>1</sup> After the closure of two Russian bases in Georgia by 2008 most of the withdrawn personnel and equipment were relocated to Armenia, increasing by that the number of Russian presence in country and the scale of joint exercises (about 4.000 in summer 2008), partially also held in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> The mentioned serves the purpose of factual objectivity and completeness, in order not to be overly impressed by a subsequent abundance of information on the growing intensity of Armenia's practical military cooperation with NATO.

In 2003 Armenia hosted a joint PFP - exercise "Co - operative Best Effort", where eight NATO - member states and eight PFP - nations sent their forces for participation.<sup>3</sup> A similar large format exercises "Co - operative Longbow" and "Co - operative Lancer" were also conducted in 2008.<sup>4</sup> According to NATO Parliamentary Assembly Report (NPAR) - 2007 a NATO - expert team from the Allied Command Operations (ACO) visited several times the country in following years and a delegation of the Joint Force Command (JFC) - Brunssum agreed with Armenian defence counterparts on mobile teams to arrive in Armenia for thematic training and support. Further, Armenian military participated in various Allied Command Transformation (ACT) events, and one officer was appointed at ACT headquarter.<sup>5</sup> As mentioned before, the PFP - framework serves as the basic platform for all related activities, no matter host - nation or invited/joined as simple participant. The initiation of the IPAP - format caused a gradual increase of the number of activities. For instance, in 2006 Armenian defence representatives participated in 95 military related IPP - events, and in 2007 the number increased to 105 encompassing 20 cooperation areas (incl. peacekeeping,

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<sup>1</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," 59.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>3</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 21.

<sup>4</sup> "NATO's Relations with Armenia," *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*, March 5, 2012, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/fr/natohq/topics\\_48893.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/fr/natohq/topics_48893.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>5</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 25, 26.

language training, communications and management systems, education, logistics, defence policies, military medicine, budgeting and planning).<sup>1</sup> The tendency of keeping the high intensity of participation above the “hundred” - level preserved throughout the years, according to Armenian Defence Advisor Mher Israelyan.<sup>2</sup> A NATO - official Steffen Elgersma also points towards the high intensity of contacts, reaching at the peak some 180 PFP - events participated annually.<sup>3</sup> The intensity of military contacts embraced not only the area of field exercises, but also caused the enlarged involvement of Armenian military representatives in Alliance’s PFP - related command structures. According to IPAP - 2009 Armenia had to appoint staff officers in NATO PFP – Staff Element (PSE) posts to provide them with international staff work experience, as well as to look for NATO trainers in support of national operational and exercise planning.<sup>4</sup> As the official website of the Ministry of Defence reveals the national military representatives are indeed present in Brussels, Supreme Headquarters of Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE/ACO) in Mons and Allied Command Transformation in Norfolk, USA.<sup>5</sup>

As for Armenia’s participation in NATO - led operations, it is important to mention again, that all PFP (IPP) activities are regarded as basic means for partner - nation forces to enhance their interoperability with NATO - units, in order to operate smoothly in NATO - operations. Thus, the short overview of the dynamics of Armenia’s peacekeeping efforts would be indispensable, to illuminate the scale of progress and areas of the increased interoperability. Since 2004 a platoon (35 servicemen) is deployed in Kosovo within the Greek battalion command, and in 2005 a small unit of 46 men had been sent to Iraq, later pulled out in 2008.<sup>6</sup> Armenian troops had been also participating in ISAF - operation, being deployed in Kunduz under the German command up to the level of 121 men by January 2014.<sup>7</sup> On the whole, some 161 servicemen of the Armenian peacekeeping brigade are permanently deployed in the “theatres of multinational operations”, and those participating in ISAF have been exclusively trained under the aegis of U.S. - assistance programs since 2001, according to deputy defence

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., para. A, B, C, D.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.5.2.

<sup>5</sup> “Military Representatives Abroad,” *Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia*, accessed November 1, 2014, available at <http://www.mil.am/1298098036>, 01 Nov. 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 3, 49, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 6.

minister Davit Tonoyan.<sup>1</sup> The areas of training assistance included practical exercises in peacekeeping, communication, medical and emergency response, as well familiarization with equipment acquired from special funds. The broader emphasis on fighting against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) was increasingly shifted by 2004 to modernization of command and control system of the armed forces, along with the humanitarian demining under FMF (the equipment and training of national demining center).<sup>2</sup> The FMF (Foreign Military Finance) and IMET (International Military Education and Training) programs constituted the major programs under which the U.S. - military assistance unfolded. The precise figures will be provided below (see Table 5.), yet the total figure of 223 million of U.S. dollars of the financial aid to Armenia provided from 1992 - to 2010, is illustrative for the increased importance of the military cooperation with Yerevan to the U.S.<sup>3</sup> On average 3 - to 5 million U.S. dollars are allocated in support of Armenia's military (education, language and medical courses, and preparation of the Armenian troops for peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan and Kosovo).<sup>4</sup> According to 2012 financial year reports 269 armenian students accomplished the training at cost of 1,88 million U.S. dollar, and 115 participants belonged to the peacekeeping brigade trained by the USEUCOM (U.S. European Command) at the Grafenwoehr Training Facility in Germany.<sup>5</sup> The results of the intensified cooperation, especially in this field, are greatly appreciated by the American side. As Manmohan Lal, a lieutenant of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) in the ISAF Command "NORTH" puts it, with some need of English - language improvement the performance of Armenian soldiers left "high impression of Armenian soldiers discipline and combat readiness" and good knowledge of nato - rules, procedures and equipment, and the ability to operate under foreign command.<sup>6</sup> The figures of various U.S. - funded assistance programs are provided below (Table 5.)

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<sup>1</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>2</sup> Aghabekyan, "Advanced Research Workshop South Caucasus," 26-29.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 45.

<sup>4</sup> Kogan, "Armenia's and Georgia's Security Agenda," 11.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 45.

<sup>6</sup> Kogan, "Armenia's and Georgia's Security Agenda," 22.

**Table 5. Security Assistance Funding (in thousands USD)<sup>1</sup>**

Account	FY 2007	FY2007	FY 2008	FY 2008	FY2009
	Actual	Supp	Estimate	Supp	Request
FMF	3,883	--	2,976	--	3,000
IMET	904	--	286	--	300
NADR	1,005	--	600	--	600

**Table 6. Security Funds Budgeted FY 1992-2008 (in million USD)<sup>2</sup>**

Major Security and Defence Related US-Assistance Programs	Law Enforcement	Non-proliferation of WMD & Disarmament	Foreign Military Financing -FMF	International Military Exchange and Training -IMET	Peacekeeping Operations	Anti-terrorism Assistance (ATA)	Humanitarian Demining	Sec. 1206: Counter-Terrorism & Train & Equip
<b>ARMENIA</b>	18.86	6.55	30.236	4.692	0	3.68	4.45	0.0

The cumulative financial aid to Armenia between 1992 and 2007 under the U.S. Peace and Security Assistance program accounted for 170.1 million USD (3 times less than for Georgia and roughly the same level as Azerbaijan - 187.8 million USD).<sup>3</sup> Compared to that the funds allocated for defence institution building (Warsaw Initiative Fund - WIF), though seem minimal, reveal in the Armenian case the tendency to receive much more recognition, as compared to Azerbaijan (950.000 USD – Arm. vs. 550.000 USD – Azer. in 2010; 1.177.000 - USD Arm. vs. 879.000 USD – Azer.).<sup>4</sup>

The figures above highlight not only the financial dimension of cooperation between the Armenian MOD and the NATO (largely USA), but much more the areas, where interoperability is regarded critical by both sides, requiring consequent actions in applying NATO - technical standards for training and education of personnel. As we see, the critical bulk of the assistance is accommodated within the programs intended for Armenian peacekeeping units. The shift, however, is clearly visible and attaches a growing priority to the areas of institutional development of the military and the defence sector. The key role of

<sup>1</sup> “Armenia: Security Assistance” (U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, October 20, 2008), available at <http://www.state.gov/t/pm/64754.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Jim Nichol, “Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications” (Washington D.C., March 6, 2009), 41, available at <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA481837>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 38–40.

<sup>4</sup> “NATO Partnerships,” 34, 45.



the national personnel involved in educational programs designed under the NATO - assistance can not be overseen here. Due to their intensive familiarization with western military educational systems, and the subsequent introduction of NATO - standardized training and education programs back home, Armenian officials, in fact, establish a formal pattern, under which the ideational transformation of the national military seem to unfold. The next section tries to respond to the question of how deep such efforts took roots in Armenian military and what results can be accounted so far. Additionally, it reviews the role of NATO - International Staff (IS) as the crucial transit - point for national (Armenian) representatives to undergo the process of NATO - professional socialization.

### **6.3.6.2 Thorny Path of adopting NATO - educational Standards**

In 2003 Armenia intensified sending its military officers to the U.S. and other NATO - countries to train in multiple areas such as intelligence, communications, defence management, artillery, and infantry combat training etc. due to severe limitations of the national military education system.<sup>1</sup> Existing gaps naturally caused a heavy reliance on courses and programs offered by Russian military education centers. As Major - General Hayk Kotanjan recalls, the most problematic issue was the education necessary for senior - level officers that Armenia was simply not able to provide, thus looking for Russian aid.<sup>2</sup> Although some cooperation programs existed even before 2003, as in case of Greece and the U.S, the coherent approach of building a comprehensive military education system evolved much later largely by focusing on the Institute for National Strategic Studies (INSS) as the basic platform to be transformed in conformity with the U.S. National Defence University (NDU) model.<sup>3</sup> As we have seen before, the Armenian top strategic documents such as the National Security Strategy and the Military Doctrine frequently refer to the need of familiarizing with most advanced military experience of the world. This objective is consequently reflected on the level of military training and education, by efforts to establish a system compatible with most advanced educational models that meet high international standards.<sup>4</sup> General Kotanjian, a founder head of the INSS (served as the military attaché in

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<sup>1</sup> The Military Institute was able to run courses only for motorized rifle, artillery and signal officers and the Aviation Institute to provide course for aviation engineers. in Aghabekyan, “Advanced Research Workshop South Caucasus,” 28.

<sup>2</sup> Kotanjian, “Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.– Armenia ‘Smart Power’ Cooperation,” 85–86.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 85–87.

<sup>4</sup> Novikova and Sargsyan, “Chapter 1: Armenia,” 21.

USA from 1998 - to 2002 and the NDU - graduate in 2004) was, in fact, a leading force behind the process. He looked for several methodological and other assistance forms from various U.S. military academic institutions (NDU, War College, INPS) and key faculty individuals to develop curricula and teaching methods that responded “best practices in use in the Western defense education and training institutions.”<sup>1</sup>

The year 2008 marked the beginning of the period where the intensive adoption of NATO - standards in training and education system of the Armenian Armed Forces started. NATO heavily supported national authorities in providing regular educational modules in the Military and the Aviation Institutes, introducing the new modified junior officer courses and providing expertise and knowledge to develop a military education and training concept as one of the major IPAP - objectives.<sup>2</sup> According to General Kotanjian, who was already put in charge of drafting the National Security Strategy and the Military Doctrine, a first NATO-expert team (Dr. Jim Barret – Royal Military College of Canada and Dr. Jim Keagle – U.S. National defence University) arrived in spring 2008 and under the DEEP (Defence Education Enhancement Program) the initial roadmap for defence education reform was developed.<sup>3</sup> It envisaged the development of improved courses for non - commissioned and junior officers along with new command - and senior officer courses with a strong objective of building a military academy, a strategic defence institution similar to NDU that would meet Bologna Process standards. The IPAP - 2009 sets also an objective to launch a review of the education system, which would produce a new education and training doctrine, as well as courses already mentioned.

Cooperative initiatives also suggested a strong development of the analytical capabilities of the INSS.<sup>4</sup> Contrary to the stated objectives, the SDR - document issued in 2011, as well as the 2011- cycle IPAP - document mark no significant progress in this regard. In particular, the short - term assumptions of the SDR envisage, that the full cycle of officers’ education and training program will be initiated by the “guidance to the General Staff” to develop a modern

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<sup>1</sup> Kotanjian, “Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.– Armenia ‘Smart Power’ Cooperation,” 86–87.

<sup>2</sup> Schmidt, “NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries,” 5.

<sup>3</sup> Kotanjian, “Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.– Armenia ‘Smart Power’ Cooperation,” 87.

<sup>4</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.6.1.

concept of professional military education.<sup>1</sup> In essence, it implies that the overall concept was not yet completed or at least not yet ready for implementation. The IPAP - 2011 repeats the early national commitments with no greater change in language and urges to complete the implementation plan of the military education system review with the additional emphasis on developing Lessons Learned (LL) capacity from international operations (KFOR, ISAF).<sup>2</sup>

What we have seen so far speaks for a clear gap between the identified objectives and the results achieved. Let aside the new LL - commitment, the period between 2008 and 2011 reveals no serious progress in transforming Armenian military education system in accordance with NATO - standards. Despite extensive support from NATO - expert groups, three years period seems not to produce any serious impulse for a full - scale change of the education system. Along with inability of the MOD to complete the review and the detailed development of the educational programs within the SDR - process (as document itself admits), the incomparably easier objective of improved language training by assuring its quality at all levels (Military Academy, peacekeeping units and for senior - officers), is also far from being completed, according to both IPAP - documents of 2009 and 2011.<sup>3</sup> The same section of the IPAP - 2011 makes it clear, that the idea of transforming the INSS into an “Armenian NDU”, strongly supported by the General Kotanjian and his NATO - colleagues, was not implemented, since the Institute was not even included by 2011 in the national educational system, and the MOD merely intended to study the feasibility of such inclusion.

In his article Dr. Jim Barret, one of the leading figures in assisting Armenian officials under the DEEP, admits, that despite intensive national and international efforts, the quality and capacity of mid - and higher level officers’ education in Armenia remained by 2012 very limited, and the first pilot command - and staff course could be launched not earlier than 2014.<sup>4</sup> We might assume, that the IPAP - cycle 2013 - 2015 will incorporate all important national commitments that remained uncompleted during the previous cycles. In an interview to “Mediamax” news agency in 2011, The Deputy Minister Davit Tonoyan indeed assigned the next IPAP greater role in implementing the SDR - actions.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, he underlined

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<sup>1</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2011-2015,” 7–8.

<sup>2</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” sec. 2.7.1.

<sup>3</sup> “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2009: Armenia,” sec. 2.6.4; “Individual Partnership Action Plan 2011 - 2013: Armenia,” para. 2.3, Objective 2.7.4.

<sup>4</sup> Barret, “Education for Reform: New Students, New Methods, New Assessments,” 40–41.

<sup>5</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

the need of studying capabilities for “improving battle training programs for various types of Armenian Armed Forces” in the time, when no unified concept of military education was developed yet. It was put in place only in 2013.<sup>1</sup> In light of the existing deficits this fact once more highlights existing incoherence in transforming the field of military education.

Another indicator, which exposes the nature of educational dynamics, is the number of Armenian students sent to western (NATO) or Russian military educational facilities. According to deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan, the number of the first category is steadily growing with the “major break - through” in the period between 2008 and 2009, partially explainable by the decision to form a peacekeeping brigade.<sup>2</sup> He also admits, that there are still number of courses, where Armenia lacks significantly the capacity to provide education and training, thus will remain dependent on Russia. However, as he stressed, these courses are more tactical and of technical military nature (aviation, logistics etc.) and will steadily diminish, as the national capacity to cover more areas of military education will grow, and the number of students sent to Russia will decrease, not least due reduced ability of Russia to co - finance Armenian participants.

The full funding of foreign courses or the factor of co - financing appears to be a significant incentive affecting the overall ratio of Armenian students abroad. At this stage, however, it seems that the total number of Armenian militaries educated in Russia is still much higher than that of officers educated in NATO - centers, according to Armenian defence advisor to NATO HQ, Mher Israelyan.<sup>3</sup> It can be simply attributed to the structure of courses needed, as well as the logic of the educational pyramid, in which the higher level courses require fewer participants. The reality is, that the category of officers intended for foreign deployment (under NATO - command), as well as some higher level officers undergo western style education and training, whereas the lower ranks, i.e. larger portion of armed forces still rely on Russian model (more tactical level) education and training generating the slow pace of change. Nevertheless, we see a certain logic and justification of such approach. A military still largely structured and equipped in a Russian style, objectively has little need for the dramatic change on lower (tactical) level, with a subsequent low pace of educational transformation. Yet in areas of international (NATO) cooperation, where both low - level officers’ as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

higher - rank western education is required, improvements, though far from being perfect, are clearly visible.

Courses, field training and exercises are regarded by Armenian counterparts as very beneficial for developing particular capacities and capabilities of the armed forces. There is clear evidence that Armenian defence officials try to strengthen the ties of bilateral and multilateral military exercises under the NATO - umbrella. In summer 2011 the U.S. and Armenian sides were considering the possibility of bilateral military exercises, however, due to restoration of the NATO/PFP “Live and Comand Post Exercises” the urgency of strictly bilateral exercises decreased, still remaining on the agenda of U.S. - Armenia consultations.<sup>1</sup> The plans for bilateral peacekeeping exercises for 2012 and 2013 were also made public in 2012.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the interview with the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan exposed a deep carefulness of Armenian authorities, trying to decrease the sensitivity of the issue for Russia by favoring the PFP (multilateral) - format, in which despite the formal umbrella of multilateral participation the U.S. weight is dominant, i.e. expected cooperation benefits guaranteed.

### **6.3.6.3 Individuals – Key Factor for Policy Approval and ideational Change**

Bilateral and multilateral exercises preserve important linkages of the professional socialization at every level of contacts, political or military. Many western officials praise Armenian leadership (President Serzh Sargsyan, and the Defence Minister Seyran Ohanyan) for evry NATO - related gesture as the “terrific partner”s, and Celeste Wallander, the Deputy U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence noted that every time she meets with Armenian minister of defence, there is “more and more to discuss.”<sup>3</sup> Similar to General Hayk Kotanjian, the deputy defence minister Davit Tonoyan, a major figure driving defence reforms and the SDR, can refer to his large professional experience with NATO, serving as the national Military Representative at NATO - ACO (SHAPE) and the NATO - HQ (Brussels) from 1998 till 2007.<sup>4</sup> He openly stressed the value of NATO (Western) military educational centers, where Armenian representatives receive a complex knowledge and “their mentality gets shaped by

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<sup>1</sup> Exclusive Interview of the First Deputy Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Davit Tonoyan to Mediamax Agency.

<sup>2</sup> Kogan, “Armenia’s and Georgia’s Security Agenda,” 24.

<sup>3</sup> Danielyan, “Armenia Plans More NATO-Backed Defence Reforms.”

<sup>4</sup> “Deputies of the Minister of Defence.”

western value - system.”<sup>1</sup> Thanks hundreds of PFP - activities of various formats national participants are directly exposed to NATO - military practices and the professional culture.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Steffen Elgersma, a NATO – IS official, reiterates the critical importance of courses offered to Armenia, especially to the personnel of peacekeeping units and the General Staff officers. The reason is simple, because they often combine the core information on democratic control of the armed forces (such as defence institution building, its structure and functioning) with major subjects on military.<sup>3</sup> As a result, the returning personnel often is confronted with the internal professional dilemma. As explained by one Armenian colonel, the virtual split of personality is on place within those officers who were born in soviet times:

*One personality remains loyal to the army where he began his service and developed is military traditions. The other personality has been to Western Europe, and to the United States, and has come to understand that the army he serves is not yet a modern army. So he is two people – a Soviet officer and a modern officer – and every day these two persons wrestle with each other to find an Armenian solution.*<sup>4</sup>

These words are the vivid reflection of challenges awaiting every “socialize” in terms of cultural, menthal and procedural (professional) adaptation. As former NATO – IS/DPPD official Bruce Bach admits “all civilian and military members are affected by their engagement in the NATO - environment and often adapt to the ways of that local environment and adopt the language and slang of that situation.”<sup>5</sup> The relevance of norm - adoption as the means of additional legitimation is clearly recognized both by NATO and national officials. According to Steffen Elgersma, the NATO – IS official, the example of the deputy minister Davit Tonoyan is the best illustration of transformative processes, where “individuals involved in joint actions (training, courses etc.) as well as part of leadership, actively engaged with NATO, get more space, authority and legitimation to implement their reformist agenda.”<sup>6</sup> In other words, all structural platforms of the Alliance that allow interconnections to develop, serve as critical venues, where common norms are presented, practiced and ultimately internalized by national representatives. For instance, General Hayk Kotanjian stresses the crucial importance of personal communication between NATO - officials and Armenian senior leaders such as Defence Minister Seyran Ohanyan and his First Deputy

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>2</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, “Security Sector Reform in Armenia,” 25.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> Barrett, “Education for Reform: New Students, New Methods, New Assessments,” 41.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Steffen Elgersma, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP IS), Brussels.

Davit Tonoyan in reforming the military education system.<sup>1</sup> Steffen Elgersma goes further to claim, that the members of defence establishments improve their skills and “shape by that their behavior - logic that is NATO - based”.<sup>2</sup> The International Staff (IS) and its military branch the International Military Staff (IMS) are two major structural units, the Alliance possess, where partner nations interact with NATO - officials according to their political or practical need of cooperation (see the Table 7. below).

**Table 7. Formats and Intensity of Contacts between the NATO - and Armenian Representatives<sup>3</sup>**

Visits in Armenia (Annually)		Visits in NATO HQ (Annually)	
Format	Frequency	Format	Frequency
SecGen/Deputy/Asist.SecGen	1	President	Once every 2 years
Special Representative	1-2	Defence Minister	2-4 (ISAF, KFOR, EAPV, 28+1/NAC)
IPAP/PARP Assessment team	1	Foreign Minister	1-2 (ISAF, KFOR, EAPV, 28+1/NAC)
IS-team		Deputy Defence Minister	3 (28+1/PPC, PARP, CNAD, DPRC+1)
IMS Team	1	Deputy Foreign Minister	1-2 (28+1/PPC, PARP, CNAD, DPRC+1)
Mil. Educ. Ass. Team	2-3	CHOD	2-3
Strat. Commands' Team	2-3	GS/MOD-departments' Heads	3-4 (Logistics, CNAD, NC3B, Medical...)
NATO Week (PDD)	1	Minister/Deputy Minister of Emergency	1

Dependent on the focus, which may lay on the priority of close political association or the sheer necessity of military cooperation, each NATO and IS - body might assume the leading role. Although they seem have little influence on national decision - making of each member - state, the coordinating power and the ability of providing a deep expertise is undeniable. As deputy minister Davit Tonoyan highlighted, the Armenian side highly values the core function of the IS (International Staff), which is the coordination of efforts, as well as of the requested experience, knowledge and personal engagement in shaping national programs, IPAP and other cooperation formats.<sup>4</sup> A similar view is shared by the Armenian defence advisor at NATO HQ Mher Israelyan, who stresses the limitations of the IS - staff to influence NATO - decisions that are based on consensus - principle between member - states, yet possesses a potential of growing influence over partner nations due to the growing intensity and scale of

<sup>1</sup> Kotanjian, “Managing Strategic Changes Through DEEP Reforms: A View from the Perspective of U.S.– Armenia ‘Smart Power’ Cooperation,” 88.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

political cooperation.<sup>1</sup> Both high level officials appear to have the same perspective, which might be pretty indicative for the general position shared by the Armenian leadership. In particular, they place the IS and IMS much higher than the NATO Liason Office (NLO) in the region, and the military aspect of linkages appears to have upper hand within the general process of cooperation.

For instance, the First Deputy Defence Minister argues that “due to increased importance of OCC (Operational Capabilities Concept) and NATO standards to Armenia, the role of IMS (military) is incomparably higher than that of IS (political).<sup>2</sup> The same conclusion can be drawn from the next statement, formulated by Armenian Defence Advisor Mher Israelyan, who, once referring to the practical dimension of NATO - influence on Armenian defence institutions, makes a clear reservation that “it can be clearly identified only within the margins of peacekeeping brigade.”<sup>3</sup> The core message of the previous chapters also was that, the application of OCC and NATO - standards was an issue exclusively regarded in relation to peacekeeping units. In line with our early observations, the balance between the value of the IS - assistance and the weight of bilateral (NATO - nation/Armenia) cooperation tends to be much in favour of the latter, for as Mr. Israelyan argues:

*The NATO as organization can rely only on limited pool of assistance and expertise, especially when it comes to more targeted assistance. In terms of practical assistance on the ground the bilateral cooperation format with NATO-member states is more efficient, providing more resources and possibilities...especially, in the case of our contribution to NATO - led operations.<sup>4</sup>*

## 6.4 Concluding Findings

While evaluating the progress of national institutions within the transformation process of the defence sector and the role NATO played in it, a general impression is, that the initial efforts and goals set by Armenian authorities had been very energetic and ambitious. The Alliance enthusiastically supported Armenia’s intention to reform and transform its military and defence related institutions into a kind of western model, yet was quickly confronted with a

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the First Deputy Minister of Defence of Armenia Mr. Davit Tonoyan.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



slowed pace of reforms and the significant mismatch between the objectives agreed and the results achieved. Despite the direct involvement of some key figures from the top of the Armenian leadership, the internalization of common norms of “doing business”, largely referred as NATO – standards, turned to become a dragging process with the significant limitations. The findings, we were able to draw from our analysis, allow us to fill the pre-designed country “measurement” - model with the following progress - values (see the Table 8. below).

In early years of the millennium we see Armenian political and defence officials actively embracing the opportunity of intensified cooperation with the Alliance. Despite the strategic limitations for the possibility of future membership and the “cooling” factor of Russia, the dynamics of political contacts and linkages in the period between 2004 and 2012 showed clear signs of the revival. The relevance of NATO for the national strategic agenda has not been diminished and continued to keep an important place both in the political rhetoric as well as in strategic security - and defence - related documents. We assess this as the first and most positively affected area, to be given the evaluation value “partial+”. The area of the democratic control of the military, which is divided into parliamentary and civilian control of the defence, shows both some progress in establishing the effective mechanisms of control, as well as continuing deficits significantly limiting the control - function. Though the civilian control of the military at ministerial level is formally very well established, the serious gaps in the parliamentary control and the capacity of respective committees to exert their monitoring power, leaves an ambiguous picture of democratic achievements. Consequently, the respective values assigned are “no progress” and “partial+”.

**Table 8. NATO – Influence in Armenia: Results**

Country	Sectors											
	<i>Political (aggregated)</i>			<i>Functional (aggregated)</i>						<i>Ideational (aggregated)</i>		
<i>Status of Commitment / Compliance</i>	Diplomatic / Rhetorical Adherence	Parliamentary Control	Civil. Control of the MOD	Normative (legal)	Interoperability /Standards	Defence Planning	Human Resources	Defence Budget / Public Transparency	Foreign Assistance	NATO-led Operations	Training and Education	
Strong / partial + / partial / no progress	partial +	no progress	partial +	partial	partial	partial	partial	no progress	partial	partial +	partial	
	<b>Some Positive Progress</b>			<b>Little Progress</b>					<b>Positive Progress</b>			
<b>Status of NATO-Influence / National Compliance</b>	Some positive influence on <i>Political</i> and <i>Ideational</i> Dimension with little effects on <i>Functional (Policy)</i> areas of defence											

The most problematic area, revealing the variety of serious challenges and setbacks for NATO to exert influence and initiate change, is the functional area of the defence, closely related to policy areas of defence transformation. The western model of defence policy and planning had been formally adopted, and key elements (drafting strategic documents, the SDR and interagency mode of work) of authority division within the defence planning process between the respective MOD - and GS departments had been also approved. Nonetheless, a number of challenges associated with the proper implementation and routinization of policy and planning procedures, legal amendments, timely update of strategic documents and the serious delays of agreed objectives cannot be overseen. This altogether points towards the inherent internal difficulties (organizational or capacity based) to master new policies and procedures. Similarly, the lacking capacity of producing stable financial plans that would meet the requirements of modern long - term program based planning system and make public defence priorities, do not provide a positive picture of progress. Some steps, initiated to improve transparency of the defence budget and reduce corruption practices, still show little effect on the overall increase of defence transparency for a wider public. NATO documents expose continuing deficits in personnel management of the Armenian military, from the overall structure down to the job - descriptions, selection, evaluation, promotion and standard compensation policies. In light of these and other mentioned capacity shortages the argument of “professionally necessitated secrecy” of the defence sector gains more weight as compared to “war caused secrecy.” Hence, the value given to each area is “partial” with exception of defence budget - transparency that received “no progress” due to major concerns from the NATO - side over the entire period of analysis. As for NATO - interoperability and standards, the findings clearly show their application exclusively in relation to units designated for peacekeeping (NATO) operations. The focus is primarily made on the technical equipment of units such as the tactical communication, logistics, command and control, and the medical support. The Armenian army is still Russian model based (hardware and structure). Even the units intended for foreign (NATO) deployments have Russian like rank – structure, i.e no signs of expanding NATO - standards to the rest of the army, thus receiving the value “partial”.




As last the ideational dimension of the Alliance’s influence exposes some promising signs, being disaggregated into three venues, where national commitments are channeled. The foreign assistance remains relatively stable over the years with the constant focus on peacekeeping units and the military education (incl. language) courses, receiving the value

“partial”. The transformation of the overall training and education system, though energetically approached in initial phase, faced serious delays of implementation and is still lacking major break - through. Contrary to that, the peacekeeping units appear to be the bulk of the Armenian army, mostly exposed to western (NATO/US) model of field training and professional education, thus deserving the value “partial+”. To sum up, we aggregate the evaluations of single sectors and suggest the following general conclusion on the degree of NATO - influence on the process of defence transformation in Armenia:

*The Alliance was able and continues to exert **some positive** influence on **Political and Ideational** dimensions of defence institutions; however, it exposes little effects on **Functional (Policy)** areas of defence management.*

Along with the evaluation model generated, we are also able to offer a completed schematic picture of the interplay of incentives/pay offs (positive and negative) and the national preferences (see Figure 7. below), we suggested in the introductory chapter, which dealt with the concept of conditionality and compliance (CC). The Benefits of cooperation relate foremost to practical military domain such as participation in NATO - led operations and the valuable expertise, equipment and capabilities predominantly provided by member - states and not the Alliance as organization. The democratic requirements, key to NATO, are acknowledged, but less implemented as institutional pillars of defence reform falling behind the imperative of enhancing fighting capabilities of the armed forces. Consequently, it can be indicative either for the formal (hollow) nature of democratic requirements towards the country, or the inability of the Alliance to provide added value of enhanced cooperation and subsequent compliance in this respect.

**Figure 7. Armenia: Interplay of Incentives, Preferences and Pay – Offs**

<b>Armenia</b>			
<b>Incentives/Relative Gains</b>	<b>Domestic Preferences</b>	<b>External Factors</b>	<b>Negative Pay Offs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic bargaining with Russia</li> <li>• PfP-information share similar to Azerbaijan</li> <li>• Support of defence reforms</li> <li>• Practical benefits of force-interoperability (limited to military-technical aspect)</li> <li>• Democratically run military</li> <li>• Valuable NATO expertise in various policy fields of defence</li> <li>• Potential for strong bilateral relations and assistance</li> </ul>	<p>Security of Karabakh</p> <p>Weak democratic system</p> <p>Security-sation of the political system</p> <p>Strong personal ties between key officials</p> <p>Weak public control</p>	<p>NATO Enlargement</p> <p>Georgia, Azerbaijan – PFP members</p> <p>Turkey – still as enemy</p> <p>CSTO – Russia as major security guarantee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russian dismay and reduced military support</li> <li>• Defence priorities transparent to potential enemies</li> <li>• Full democratic control of the military negatively affecting the combat readiness of units</li> <li>• NATO-standards as challenge to combat readiness of forces</li> <li>• No security guarantees provided by NATO</li> <li>• Dependence on public support for defence spending priorities</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Balance / Imbalance of Incentives and Negative Pay Offs</b></p> <p>Though negative pay offs outweigh the positive ones on the whole, the selective or limited acceptance of some positive pay offs that do not cause any serious negative consequences (pay offs) has taken place.</p>		
<b>Behavioral Result under Weak Conditionality</b>			
	<p><b><u>Positive Effect</u></b></p> <p>Compliance</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>Partial Compliance</b></p> </div>	<p><b>Negative Effect</b></p> <p>- non Compliance -</p>	

# Chapter VII: NATO and Defence Transformation in Georgia

## 7.1 Introduction

The case of Georgia serves as the best example of a country that shares the historical and contextual similarity with Armenia, however starkly differs through the strong willingness to join NATO (as early as the Prague Summit in 2002) and firmly follows the chosen path towards the full membership.<sup>1</sup> Similar to the case of Armenia the key document that enables the comparison of agreed objectives between Georgia and NATO and the results achieved is the IPAP document 2004 - 2006. It delineates large number of steps to be done in the broad political and narrow defence areas, and illustrates by that the utility and effectiveness of the existing mechanisms that are supposed to support the process of national defence transformation. The validation of national achievements will be structured along the functional/thematic lines of the IPAP - document and mirror the analytical - structure already adopted in the case of Armenia. Despite the fact that no other IPAP - document had been made public since 2006, and the Annual National Program (ANP), introduced in 2008, remains classified, the latter reflects the same functional division of working areas as the IPAP does, with the only difference of annual assessment as compared to the biennial assessment mechanism of the IPAP. Whether NATO declarations or communiqués, all official documents broadly indicate the degree of national progress achieved. Other pool of sources such as the defence related official documents, national and international reports, legal acts, interviews and media news constitute a solid foundation for identifying the effects of NATO - conditionality or results to be associated with domestic interests and cost - calculations.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, n.d.; available at [http://mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang\\_id=GEO&sec\\_id=453](http://mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=453).

## **7.2 NATO in Georgian National Agenda – The Purpose of Cooperation and Defence Reforms**

This section will examine the strategic nature of formally declared objectives pursued by NATO and Georgia, review actual policy priorities, and attempt to establish a general picture that would either prove a high degree of congruence between policy objectives of both actors or indicate the existing or a widening lack of alignment of respective political agendas. In doing so, we will naturally refer to all available sources to establish a picture of the normative foundation and the ideational paradigm, necessary to be confronted with the processes at the functional level of the defense ministry in terms of practical implementation and procedural compliance. At this stage, we are primarily interested in understanding, how consistently the Georgian government and leadership established the idea of NATO - membership as the major goal of the national political agenda. Furthermore, we are focused on how effectively it was able to capture and reflect the common (democratic) identity messages of NATO within the process of defence policy formulation, and how those messages were balanced with long existing security concerns.

### **7.2.1 NATO – Cooperation: The Prevalence of Security Concerns in Georgia**

The history of Georgian clear - cut membership aspiration starts with the NATO - Prague Summit in November 2002, where President Shevardnadze voiced the desire to join the Alliance.<sup>1</sup> The unresolved territorial and ethnic conflicts and the existence of Russian military bases in Georgia caused the Georgian government to regard Russian forces as the persistent security problem since its independence and to welcome NATO as a “guarantee for Georgia’s security”, as declared by President Shevardnadze in a radio – interview after the Prague Summit.<sup>2</sup> The turbulent events of November “Rose revolution” in 2003 and the subsequent change of political leadership brought even more intensity in pursuing the goal of

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<sup>1</sup> Socor, “NATO Prospects in the South Caucasus,” 2.

<sup>2</sup> *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, Fluri Philipp H., Cole Eden (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: Bureau for Security Policy at the Austrian Ministry of Defence, National Defence Academy ; Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 19, available at [mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21\\_From\\_Revolution.pdf](http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21_From_Revolution.pdf); Elkhan Mehtiyev, “Perspectives of Security Development in the South Caucasus,” in *Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Visions*, Ebnöther Anja H. and Gustav E. Gustenau (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: National Defence Academy, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, PFP-Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, 2004), 184, available at <http://www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/publikation.php?id=122>.

membership.<sup>1</sup> In October 2004 the first IPAP - document was approved for Georgia under President Saakashvili, and since then “NATO has become the very embodiment of the entire “western idea” for Georgia” as described by Kakha Innadze from the Georgian Institute for Russian Studies.<sup>2</sup>

The Georgian leadership enthusiastically supported the idea of membership and even tried to achieve the national consensus on this issue. In March 2007, the representatives of all relevant political parties in Georgia and parliamentary fractions drafted and signed the memorandum “On Membership of Georgia in North Atlantic Treaty Organization” as a sign of a wider national consensus that the membership in NATO is the strongest guarantee for security and democratic development of the country.<sup>3</sup> Yet the understanding of the Alliance, its essence and the principles remained beyond public attention and discourse. Thus, we regard it as imperative to assess the value of security concerns, Georgian authorities attached to the idea of the membership. In this context the issue of territorial integrity and its relevance as one of the key factors determining the Georgian security perception and the national political agenda, cannot be avoided. Further we will weigh out national security perceptions with the signals and political messages NATO was sending to Georgian leadership, and try to establish the degree of congruence. As last, we will attempt to find out whether the brief war with Russia in 2008 had caused any general revision of security and defence related policies, with effects on the issue of their practical implementation.

### **7.2.1.1 Security as the Motive and the Military as Enabler for NATO – Integration**

Since presidential authority represents the highest point in the executive pyramid in Georgia, we began our analysis with documents posted on the president’s website.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly enough, out of 215 contributions related to NATO, only one could be formally regarded as an official document (a record of a speech that was similar to other summaries of presidential

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<sup>1</sup> The “Rose Revolution” in November 2003 is associated with the peaceful removal of President Shevardnadze’s rule and his government by mass – demonstrations organized and led by United National Movement (UNM) party under Michael Saakashvili.

<sup>2</sup> Malek, “NATO and the South Caucasus,” 34, 40; “Regional Developments in the South Caucasus: Challenges, Opportunities and Prospects (Report),” Seminar Reports, 73rd Rose-Roth Seminar, Yerevan, Armenia, 11-13 March 2010 (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2010), para. 24, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?CAT2=0&CAT1=0&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=2183&SEARCHWORDS=Regional,developments>.

<sup>3</sup> Malek, “NATO and the South Caucasus,” 35–36.

<sup>4</sup> The website has been completely changed after the new President, Giorgi Margvelashvili was elected in October 2013, and many previously posted documents and sources have been removed.

speech records). A close study of those transcripts reveals an appalling deficit in the formulation of Georgia's prospective NATO - membership in the framework of common identity and shared democratic values. NATO is almost exclusively regarded as a security institution providing security guarantees, and as an important justification for meeting certain standards of military - technical interoperability.<sup>1</sup> According to various sources, whether at NATO multilateral or bilateral meetings with national officials from member states (including a visit to Georgia's major strategic partner, the United States), President Saakashvili's core messages disregarded the value - based perception of the Alliance, and nearly completely avoided mentioning the transformation of Georgia's defense sector in accordance with democratic principles.<sup>2</sup> Already in 2004 he was pointing at strong security guarantees Georgia was looking for, and reaffirmed the government's position by following statement that "We need stable guarantees of security, and NATO is the only guarantor."<sup>3</sup> Similar references to the security imperative were frequently made by other government - members. The former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gela Bezhushvili (in office from 2004 to January 2008) was stressing the security effects of Georgian integration to NATO by creating a "stabilizing effect" on the relationship between Georgia and Russia.<sup>4</sup> The former Defence Minister David Kezerashvili (in office from 2006 to December 2008) used the security related argumentation during the meeting with NATO-parliamentary delegation and defended the view that the highest priority had to be given to security and army in a "(...) climate of potentially serious security threats."<sup>5</sup>

The National Movement Party, once it came to power, immediately reflected the NATO - membership aspiration in governmental structural changes and in major security and defense related documents. The careful review of the official policy documents as well as interviews and other relevant sources suggest findings pretty in line with the core of the mentioned statements. The National Security Council, as the leading body in crafting strategic security

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<sup>1</sup> The Administration of the President of Georgia, 15 March 2007; available at <http://www.president.gov.ge/en/PressOffice/Documents?4952>.

<sup>2</sup> The Administration of the President of Georgia, 19 March 2008; available at <http://www.president.gov.ge/en/PressOffice/News?3250>.

<sup>3</sup> Svante E Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus: The Role of NATO* (Washington, D.C.: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies The Johns Hopkins University, 2004), 74.

<sup>4</sup> "17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC))," Mission Reports (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2007), para. 17, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=0&CAT1=0&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=1328&SEARCHWORDS=17-19,September,2007,>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 18.



policy in Georgia, placed remarkably little emphasis on the aspect of common democratic identity as it relates to Georgia's NATO aspirations. The current National Security Concept views the Alliance solely as a mechanism for securing Georgia's independence and stable development.<sup>1</sup> The Georgia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also tends to share this perspective, as it makes little, if any reference to the unifying power of common democratic values or identity.<sup>2</sup> The Office of the State Minister on European and Euro - Atlantic Integration, as the center of gravity for all Georgian state agencies dealing with NATO - integration issues, follows the same path, as the entire issue of national priorities and progress made towards NATO – integration (incl. other relevant reports) are dramatically underrepresented at the office's webpage.<sup>3</sup>

Contrary to the heavy weight of security considerations among Georgian interlocutors, the very sensitive nature of Georgia's potential membership caused NATO - assistance to be primarily focused on implementing key democratic principles from the very initial phase of reforming defence and military. The International Security Advisory Board (ISAB), composed of internationally recognized and experienced high rank professionals (nine members from U.K., U.S., Germany and Baltic States) in military and diplomatic affairs developed and submitted a clear proposal for approval to President Saakashvili with the conclusion that "Reform of the military sphere must be NATO - compatible."<sup>4</sup> The plan, which envisaged the appointment of the civilian minister and staff - members as the civilian control element, was approved by the President in 2005 as the roadmap for the structural reduction and functional optimization of armed forces.<sup>5</sup> This period can be characterized as the phase of overwhelming optimism reigning among Georgian officials and international partners. As the DCAF (Geneva Center for Democratic Control of Armed Forces) - drafted document stated in 2005, the implementation of IPAP objectives would remove last obstacles for offering MAP, and members of the Georgian Mission to NATO were certain that "If we

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<sup>1</sup> *National Security Concept of Georgia*, n.d., 6; available at <http://mod.gov.ge/documents/cfgeyzvjwhgeo.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia website.

<sup>3</sup> "The Office of the State Minister on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration," n.d., available at [http://eu-integration.gov.ge/index.php?que=eng/official\\_documents#](http://eu-integration.gov.ge/index.php?que=eng/official_documents#).

<sup>4</sup> Garry Johnson, "Security Sector Reform in the Southern Caucasus," in *Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Visions*, Ebnöther Anja H. and Gustav E. Gustenau (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: National Defence Academy, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, PFP-Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, 2004), 48–50, available at <http://www.bundesheer.at/wissensforschung/publikationen/publikation.php?id=122>.

<sup>5</sup> Garry Johnson, David Smith, and Franz Werner, "ISAB REPORT 2006" (Winchester UK: Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, February 15, 2006), 1, available at [http://gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/resources/ISAB\\_REPORT\\_2006.pdf](http://gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/resources/ISAB_REPORT_2006.pdf).

conduct reforms effectively we could be able to join MAP.”<sup>1</sup> From the military perspective, the Georgian Chief of Staff, Levan Nikolaishvili also shared a very optimistic view and believed, that country could be admitted to MAP “(...)as early as 2006.”<sup>2</sup> The language and arguments used by Georgian side pursued two objectives: first to convince NATO - partners that there was no other formal mechanism of deeper integration than MAP (the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament Mikheil Machavariani and the Deputy Head of the Committee on Defence and Security Mr. Nikoloz Rurua), and that this step was necessary to strengthen institutional reforms and to justify Georgia’s participation in NATO - missions.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Giorgi Baramidze (former Vice - Prime Minister and State Minister for Euro - Atlantic Integration from 2005 - 2012), who stressed the key importance of Georgian participation in Irak and Kosovo - operations, Gela Bezhuashvili, a former Defence and Foreign Affairs Minister appears as a rare exception in Georgian leadership, who emphasized the relevance of the Alliance for consolidation of the democratic model, the country had developed so far.<sup>4</sup>

### 7.2.1.2 Prevalence of democratic Achievements for NATO

The conclusions NATO was able to draw from the existing atmosphere in Georgia was, that despite NATO - membership being a top priority of national and security agenda, the country in fact, needed a positive encouragement for enhanced institutional building that in turn would foster defence reforms and the speed of integration.<sup>5</sup> The Riga Summit decision in 2006 to offer only the Intensified Dialogue (ID) format, must be regarded in this context as a cautious

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<sup>1</sup> Kornely Kakachia, “Chapter 4, Problems of Post-Conflict Public Security Management in Georgia,” in *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, Fluri Philipp H. and Eden Cole (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 106, available at [mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21\\_From\\_Revolution.pdf](http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/.../21_From_Revolution.pdf); Antje Fritz, “Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia,” in *Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Visions*, Ebnöther Anja H. and Gustav E. Gustenau (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: National Defence Academy, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, PFP-Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, 2004), 143, available at <http://www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/publikation.php?id=122>.

<sup>2</sup> Shorena Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” in *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, Fluri Philipp H. and Eden Cole (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 247–248, available at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=15226>.

<sup>3</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 11.

<sup>4</sup> “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” Mission Reports (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2006), para. 33–34, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=0&CAT1=0&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=971&SEARCHWORDS=12-16,June,2006,>

<sup>5</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 85–86.

attempt to reserve the right of checking the democratic progress of the country. The key event of Bucharest Summit in April 3, 2008 along with the rejection of granting Membership Action Plan (MAP) reinforced the heavy message of democratic requirements to be met by Georgia. The final declaration stated unequivocally that:

*NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations. **We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia and look forward to free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in May.** MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership. Today we make clear that we support these countries' applications for MAP. **Therefore we will now begin a period of intensive engagement with both at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding pertaining to their MAP applications.** We have asked Foreign Ministers to make a first assessment of progress at their December 2008 meeting. Foreign Ministers have the authority to decide on the MAP applications of Ukraine and Georgia.*<sup>1</sup>

The in bold highlighted excerpts point to the prevailing division among allied nations about the degree of commitment from the Georgian side to perform necessary steps of democratic transformation. It seems that members were arguing to delay the decision on Georgia's MAP invitation, making it contingent on the assessment of the parliamentary election in May 2008. President George Bush was strongly in favor of MAP, and a strong partisan group of senators (led by Joseph Lieberman and Richard Lugar) adopted resolutions (S.Res. 391, 439) urging allies to offer MAP to Georgia and Ukraine; however, the U.S.A also regarded the May election as litmus paper for successful membership aspiration.<sup>2</sup> Since the Summit declaration was issued after the violent crack - down of the opposition political forces in November 2007 in Tbilisi, its message could only mean that if parliamentary elections were to be accessed positively, the next NATO - meeting even of the lower (foreign ministers) level would grant MAP to Georgia. What we see here, is a persisting feature of the Alliance relationship to Georgia, which turned the credibility of democratic reforms as the core of the strategic messaging and the key requirement for political decision for the next step of integration.

All respondents interviewed, representing NATO in relation to Georgia at HQ or bilateral level, stressed the huge prevalence of country's democratic achievements before practical military cooperation for the membership decision. For instance Krisztian Meszaros, a key

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<sup>1</sup> "Bucharest Summit Declaration," Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008, Press Release (2008) 049, (April 3, 2008), para. 23, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_8443.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_8443.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications," March 7, 2008, 3,6.

interlocutor with Georgia in NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP), reaffirmed that:

*Much more attention should be devoted to issues of standard democratic procedures that are key because of their huge political importance. We need a functioning democracy in Georgia first, and some skeptical nations made it clear that not the best military performance and interoperability but the high level of democratization would be decisive for Georgia's NATO-membership, because we have only a big carrot of membership, and no meaningful sticks.<sup>1</sup>*

The same position is shared by Gustav Vroemen, a senior officer representing NATO's Defence Policy and Planning Division (DPPD), as well as by Defence Advisors from Latvia and Estonia that highlight the dominance of the political aspect of cooperation (democratic transformation) due to membership - promise and the weakness of the existing enforcement mechanisms to ensure the national compliance.<sup>2</sup> All documents related to Georgia reaffirm the key importance of democratic transformation as the primary channel towards full membership. The background document on NATO - Georgia relations explicitly highlights this requirement:

*As an alliance based on democratic values, NATO has high expectations of prospective new members and urges Georgia to continue to pursue wide-ranging reforms to achieve its goal of Euro-Atlantic integration. (...)The Euro-Atlantic partnership is about more than practical cooperation - it is also about values. In doing so (signing PFP - Agreement), partners commit to the preservation of democratic societies.<sup>3</sup>*

The same document strongly encourages the Georgian government first, to implement "Particularly democratic, electoral, media and judicial reforms" along with defence and security sector reforms.<sup>4</sup> Often the official visits to Georgia were used by NATO high officials to reiterate the mentioned priority. In his speech to the audience at the Tbilisi State University in October 4, 2007, the Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer made several point, with sufficient clarity and no space for misinterpretation:

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Krisztian Meszaros, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP-IS), Brussels, NATO HQ, February 12, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ; Interview with Latvian Defence Advisor to NATO HQ, NATO HQ, Brussels, March 13, 2013; Interview with Christian Liflaender, the Former Defence Advisor at Estonian Delegation to NATO, Brussels, March 28, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> *Deepening Relations with Georgia*, NATO Background (Brussels: NATO Public Diplomacy Division, 2013), 1-3; available at

[http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_publications/2013530\\_backgrounder\\_nato\\_georgia-eng.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/2013530_backgrounder_nato_georgia-eng.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

*The Alliance has long aspired to the creation of a Europe that is whole and free, united in peace, democracy and common values. Both NATO and the European Union have played a major role in fulfilling this aspiration. But it is not a reality just yet. There is still work to do. And NATO is very much committed to continue playing its part.*

*(...) Over the past fifteen years, the Alliance has used the interest of countries in joining NATO to promote democratic and security sector reforms, and to hold aspirant countries to the highest standards. This has already helped to make our continent much more stable and secure. And that will remain our key objective.<sup>1</sup>*

The precise references to democratic reforms created a framework, within which the alliances narrow interests in Georgia can be defined. Understandably, the U.S. - interests played to large extent the dominating role in defining the practical steps initiated on the ground. The security cooperation with Georgia gained momentum in 2002 when the U.S. - military started training and equipping Georgian units to fight against terrorist groups in Pankisi gorge, and the Georgian government decided to participate with a large contingent in U.S. - led operation in Iraq.<sup>2</sup> As already mentioned in earlier chapters, Georgia signed the memorandum on Host Nation Support (HNS) in 2005 that implied the country's readiness to support the deployment and transit of NATO forces once required.<sup>3</sup> The logistical facilities provided by Georgia via road, rail and air presented an important communication and even more the political support to ISAF - operation. The critical importance of this assistance for operation in Afghanistan was clearly recognized by U.S. - authorities in respective official documents.<sup>4</sup> During the NATO Parliamentary Assembly delegation visit to Georgia in 2007 the U.S. Ambassador in Georgia John Teft formulated four U.S. major goals in country, with the first one to support constructing the democratic system to "Become an example for other countries in the region."<sup>5</sup> In 2007 the U.S. Congress issued the NATO Freedom Consolidation Act urging under the strong support of senators to extend MAP to Georgia, shared by the U.S. delegation to NATO Parliamentary Assembly in May 2011.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia," October 4, 2007, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_8501.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_8501.htm?selectedLocale=en).

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications," March 6, 2009, 32; Nixey, "The South Caucasus," 127.

<sup>3</sup> *NATO and Georgia to Sign a Transit Agreement*, Press Release (2005) 026 (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, March 2, 2005), available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_21668.htm?utm\\_source=tik&utm\\_medium=smc&utm\\_campaign=130621+georgiatl](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_21668.htm?utm_source=tik&utm_medium=smc&utm_campaign=130621+georgiatl).

<sup>4</sup> "NATO Partnerships," 19.

<sup>5</sup> "17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),," para. 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 51-52.

The overall political objective of Georgia's membership, in fact, has never been strongly pursued by NATO itself. Thus, the recognition of the membership aspiration appears here as just one side of the coin, which also complicated the practical essence of cooperation process. The ambiguity of the Alliance's intentions generated also certain doubts on Georgian side, even within military ranks. As the deputy Chief of the General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces Vladimir Chachibaya put it:

*I don't think NATO has a major well formulated strategic objective in Georgia, Even the ISAF-operation and our active participation in it do not assign our position a strategic value. It is initiated by Georgian side and remains much more important to us than to NATO.*<sup>1</sup>

Similar as in case of Baltic States Jan Arveds Trapans asks for the clarification of the vision and intentions of NATO, to avoid "Debilitating effect on military development (...) and (...) adverse effects on the steady democratic developments of the states."<sup>2</sup> The alliance easily adopted a number of issue – areas, where its position could be made clear without any fear of political repercussions. It highlighted the importance of energy corridor and supply - lines (Baku - Supsa, Baku – Tbilisi - Ceyhan, Baku – Tbilisi - Erzurum) connecting the region with the world and upheld the non - recognition policy of Georgian breakaway regions.<sup>3</sup> It also quickly switched the focus from promoting democratic values to strengthening parliamentary and public control of the armed forces by adopting transparent defence budgeting and resource management processes.<sup>4</sup> As for the narrow military dimension, even the NATO-parliamentarians were convinced, that NATO objectives were largely related to the improvement of operational capabilities of the Georgian military, as we will better see in next chapters.<sup>5</sup>

### **7.2.1.3 The Importance of Territorial Integrity to the Issue of NATO - Integration**

The Crystallization of NATO - objectives run in parallel with Georgia's rapidly worsening relationship with Russia that elevated the dilemma of territorial conflict - resolution to the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence, July 22, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Trapans, "Conclusions, Georgia, the Black Sea and the Approaching West," 311.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 6–7.

<sup>4</sup> "12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance," para. 35.

<sup>5</sup> "NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region," para. 25.

highest political level. The Georgian leadership shared the common motivational understanding of joining alliances as a way of reducing the “probability of being attacked” (deterrence) and of preventing an “ally’s alliance with one’s adversary.”<sup>1</sup> As we mentioned earlier, the Alliance was not eager to take on conflict resolution efforts in the South Caucasus region. From the early stages of cooperation it has been made clear that “NATO did not aspire to a role in the negotiation process, but that it would be ready to assist in any post - settlement arrangement.”<sup>2</sup> This line has been consistently kept by the Alliance and found its reflection in country - backgrounder documents.<sup>3</sup> Not surprisingly, the security fears of the new Georgian leadership under the UNM (United National Movement party), and a high priority devoted to country’s security and defence turned the issue of the restoration of country’s territorial integrity to the top priority, according to former Parliament Speaker Ms. Nino Burjanadze (in office from 2001 till 2008).<sup>4</sup> In one of his speeches President Saakashvili stated:

*Undoubtedly, our goal is NATO integration, since Georgia is not only a user of a security system. For me, as a democratically elected leader of my country, the main audience are people, rather than any expert or international organization.*<sup>5</sup>

The statement was made as the president addressed the Georgian Security Forum in his welcoming speech in 2006. Put aside the emotional aspect of the text, a clear neglect of the international dimension of commitments and of balance of interest is evident. Already in 2005 Dov Lynch identified worrying “conflation” of the Georgian nation with the issue of the territorial integrity, and the unification of the country as the driving force and the “supreme goal” of his life, as declared by President Saakashvili.<sup>6</sup> He (author) was worried about the style and handling of Adjara crisis in 2004 by the new government due to the “reckless gene at the heart of the new leadership” that could become the strength but also its fatal weakness.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Schimmelfennig, “NATO’s Enlargement to the East,” 5.

<sup>2</sup> The reference to the statement of NATO Liaison Officer Mr. Razhuks during the NATO Parliamentary visit to Georgia, in “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” para. 44.

<sup>3</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 4.

<sup>4</sup> “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” para. 42.

<sup>5</sup> The Administration of the President of Georgia, 18 February 2006; available at <http://www.president.gov.ge/en/PressOffice/News?2685>.

<sup>6</sup> Dov Lynch, “Chapter 12, Georgia: An Emerging Governance: Problems and Prospects,” in *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, Fluri Philipp H., Cole Eden (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2005), 266, available at [http://www.bundesheer.at/pdf\\_pool/publikationen/10\\_wg11\\_chapt12\\_130.pdf](http://www.bundesheer.at/pdf_pool/publikationen/10_wg11_chapt12_130.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., In 2004 short after the Rose Revolution a crisis escalated in Adjara, an autonomous Georgian territory, between the local power holder Aslan Abashidze and the central government in Tbilisi with the high risk of armed confrontation, which ultimately ended up peacefully under the Russian mediation effort, und forced Aslan Abashidze to leave Georgia.

Other sources additionally indicate the ever growing relevance of territorial integrity to national agenda. Not least it was do to prevailing idea among many Georgian officials that the membership was, in fact, preconditioned by the need to settle the conflicts and territorial disputes.<sup>1</sup> According to NATO Parliamentary Report (NPAR) report in 2006 some government members were in favor of a military solution of the conflicts, but were held in check by more moderate voices and the pressure coming from some NATO - members.<sup>2</sup> In September 2007 a large NATO - PA team arrived in Georgia and met President, parliamentarians, defence and foreign ministers as well as the U.S. - ambassador. During the meeting President Saakashvili firmly stated, the direct military intervention would cause a too high cost for Russia, because “Georgia had come too far to be “overrun” or “subdued” and “Georgia would never trade these territories, even for NATO and/or EU membership.”<sup>3</sup>

The implications of real - world political actions were more in favor of the preponderance of the preservation of territorial integrity as the key legitimizing factor for the Georgian government in the domestic arena. The restoration of national dignity, domestic political momentum, and “the heat of street” seemed to have higher priority than the capacity of rational thinking and well - developed planning.<sup>4</sup> As stressed in July 2104 by the Head of the NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia, William Lahue:

*The Georgian MOD, in my opinion, served different political objectives in the past. The former president inherited territorially and politically a very fractional country and his efforts were directed to solidify the power-structure.*<sup>5</sup>

A startling example of the dichotomy of Georgia’s domestic military agenda has been provided by Geoffrey Wright, who identifies the fact, that the formal side of the Georgian objectives aimed at achieving interoperability with NATO forces, in practical terms meant forging a military force “capable of leveraging a political settlement in the so - called Frozen Conflicts or, if necessary, reoccupying these territories by force.”<sup>6</sup> In this context, as the author argues, the organizational and technical interoperability of Georgian forces with

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<sup>1</sup> Nichol, “Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications,” March 7, 2008, 4.

<sup>2</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 19.

<sup>3</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 2, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Till Bruckner, “Decision-Making and Georgia’s Perpetual Revolution: The Case of IDP Housing,” *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3:2 (2009): 175; Jesse David Tatum, “Democratic Transition in Georgia: Post-Rose Revolution Internal Pressures on Leadership,” *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3:2 (2009): 160.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, Tbilisi, NATO Liaison Office, July 12, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Wright, “Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* 20:3 (2009): 20.



NATO was a desirable effect, but one, that was merely of a supportive nature to a primary domestic imperative. For this and other reasons, the policy of confrontation and “menacing rhetoric” led to the advent of the August 2008 war with Russia.<sup>1</sup> The International Crisis Group (ICG) reported in June 2008, that Georgian military was subtly making preparation in western parts of country, and some powerful advisers around president saakashvili were convinced that “a military operation in Abkhazia is feasible and necessary” with an aim to establish a temporary partition of a brake a way region.<sup>2</sup>

There have been early indications of discrepancy between the formal cooperation process and the practical implementation of policy. For instance, despite the recommendations of the International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) to reduce the actual strength of the armed forces, those actions have never been implemented. To the contrary, the re - equipment of the Georgian Army’s Fourth Infantry Brigade and the formation of a new Fifth Brigade run against all agreements and figures agreed upon during the first IPAP negotiation round, raising the question of Georgian credibility.<sup>3</sup> The rapid increase in the nation’s military budget was also regarded as a clear indication of Georgia’s militaristic plans. Kříž Zdeněk and Zinaida Shevchuk concluded, that the significant share of national GDP (8 to 10 percent) spent on army modernization and hardware, combined with the character and structure of the forces, indicated the nation’s primary motive to subdue militarily the secessionist regions.<sup>4</sup> The security prism, through which NATO has been perceived by the Georgian leadership has not changed even after the debacle of the 2008 war with Russia, where separatists’ provocations led to a military clash between the Georgian and Russian armed forces, and continued to influence the formulation of Georgian security policy, leading to the relevance of the defense sector as a means of upgrading the armed forces’ skills, equipment, training doctrines, etc.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dieter Boden, “Conflict Settlement for Abkhazia and South Ossetia: Lessons and Prospects,” in *South Caucasus-20 Years of Independence* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011), 131.

<sup>2</sup> “Georgia and Russia: Clashing over Abkhazia,” Europe Report 193 (International Crisis Group, June 5, 2008), 1, available at

[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/193\\_georgia\\_and\\_russia\\_clashing\\_over\\_abkhazia.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/europe/193_georgia_and_russia_clashing_over_abkhazia.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Philipp H. Fluri and Viorel Cibotaru, *Defence Institution Building: Country Profiles and Needs Assessments for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova* (Geneva: DCAF, 2008): 55. The authors note an “an increase of 25–30 percent of the figures envisaged in the original IPAP.”

<sup>4</sup> Zdeněk and Shevchuk, “Georgian Readiness for NATO Membership after Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict,” 93.

<sup>5</sup> “The Administration of the President of Georgia,” September 15, 2008, available at <http://www.president.gov.ge/en/PressOffice/News?3127>.

#### 7.2.1.4 Russo - Georgian War in 2008 and Changes in Relationship with NATO

We might suggest that, though the general attitude towards the Alliance has not been changed, the role of armed forces and military acquired a different interpretation after Georgia's violent confrontation with Russia in August 2008. The "frozen" conflict in the Georgian breakaway region of "South Ossetia" escalated, as separatist troops intensified heavy shelling of Georgian controlled villages in late July, and President Saakashvili ordered armed forces to subdue the enemy on August 8, 2008. Using this as a pretext Russian army invaded Georgia and drove Georgian units far out of conflict area close to the very outskirts of the capital Tbilisi. As Michael Mihalka and Mark Wilcox argue, after 2008 war debacle the military was increasingly viewed as a threat to the ruling regime, and a more moderate defence minister Vasil Sikharulidze (in office from 2005 to 2006 as a deputy defence minister, and from 2008 to 2009 as defence minister) was replaced by Saakashvili's "own man" Bacho Akhalaya (in office from 2009 – to 2012) with an objective to "assert greater security service and regime control over the military, and to ensure the military will follow orders even when asked to move against civilians."<sup>1</sup> This claim seem even more convincing since as authors report, the ministerial replacement happened short after the tank battalion mutiny in 2009, allegedly linked to Russian intentions to disrupt NATO - exercises, according to government's assertion.<sup>2</sup> Key government members continued strengthening Georgia's NATO - aspiration. Giorgi Muchaidze, a Deputy Defence Minister (in office from 2006 to 2008) stressed to a NATO - PA delegation, that the priority of improved deployment capabilities will remain high on agenda.<sup>3</sup> Overall, the delegation was assured that NATO remained the "prime security partner" with the stabilizing effects in country and region.<sup>4</sup> Though strong security concerns kept dominating position among NATO - integration motives, some clear signs of change could not be overseen. For instance, in 2010 contrary to the state minister for Euro – Atlantic integration, Giorgi Baramidze's claim that territorial integrity ranked among highest national priorities, President Saakashvili pointed rather to the need for Georgia to continue being a

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<sup>1</sup> Mihalka and Wilcox, "Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus," 30.

<sup>2</sup> There is no clear picture about the tank battalion mutiny, raising multiple suspicion and doubts about the credibility of governments explanations. All key individuals accused in organizing mutiny were granted amnesty after the government change in October 2012 and released from jail.

<sup>3</sup> "4 – 8 May 2009 - Visit to Tbilisi, Georgia - PC Sub - Committee on NATO Partnerships," Mission Reports (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2009), para. 22, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?SHORTCUT=1901>.

<sup>4</sup> Rui Gomes Da Silva, "180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO" (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2009), para. 37, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=0&CAT1=0&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=1776&SEARCHWORDS=180,PCNP,>.

“success story”.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, he avoided an explicit reference to the democratic reforms and defined the “success story” as a model consisting of the fight against corruption, police reform and attractiveness for foreign investments. As for the ministry of defence, the Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze (in office from 2009 to 2010) highlighted the issue of military interoperability along with a strong civilian control as the main priority to implement.<sup>2</sup>

Initial steps taken by the new elected government, built as a result of the electoral defeat of the UNP – party in October 2012, illustrate some visible shift towards granting more recognition to democratic values and a greater awareness of the relevance of democratic change to the process of integration.<sup>3</sup> As argued by the new defence minister Irakli Alasania, who also served in various governmental positions under president Shevardnadze and represented Georgia at UNO under president Saakashvili’s rule:

*Former elite tried to bring NATO on top of the agenda as an effective tool of security bargaining with Russia. They believed through active cooperation with U.S. and intensive exploitation of “democracy lighthouse” image to become NATO member quickly.<sup>4</sup>*

This excerpt brilliantly gets to the point of the whole essence of Georgian behavioral strategy. At the same time it doesn’t entirely rule out the existing challenge of capturing adequately the Alliance’s priorities and organizational dynamics, and to fall into the delusion of premature expectations. It was clear that the war with Russia in 2008 severely damaged Georgia’s NATO - membership plans, especially due to the country’s damaged credibility in the West.<sup>5</sup> As explained by Bruce Bach, a former NATO – IS official with extensive experience of dealing with Georgia, “politically, its cooperation has suffered since 2008, as its delegation and national leadership has had try to improve its image.”<sup>6</sup> The following actions initiated by the Alliance also indicated with the sufficient clarity that the way to NATO - membership became much more difficult. It suspended the NATO - Russia Council, however the work was

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<sup>1</sup> “5-8 April 2010 - Visit to Georgia,” Mission Reports (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, 2010), para. 8–9, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/default.asp?CAT2=0&CAT1=0&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=2131>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., para. 27.

<sup>3</sup> “Sakartvelos Tavdacvis Saministro, Ministry of Defence of Georgia,” *Mod.gov.ge*, accessed November 9, 2013, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/index.php?pubid=69>; “Sakartvelos Premier-Ministri NATO-Sakartvelos Skhdomas Daeszro,” November 26, 2013, available at [http://www.government.gov.ge/index.php?lang\\_id=GEO&sec\\_id=269&info\\_id=37418](http://www.government.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=269&info_id=37418); “Sakartvelos Premier-Ministri NATO Saparlamento Asambleis Seminars Daeszro,” accessed November 9, 2013, [http://www.government.gov.ge/index.php?lang\\_id=GEO&sec\\_id=269&info\\_id=36713](http://www.government.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=269&info_id=36713).

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Georgian Defence Minister - Irakli Alasania at NATO Defence Ministerial, Brussels, February 21, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Nixey, “The South Caucasus,” 128.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

renewed by early March 2009.<sup>1</sup> The language used by NATO - officials as well as documental sources additionally reflect the credibility problem the Georgian government faced. The frequent reference to “disproportionate military action” while condemning Russia’s aggression in Georgia, in fact, directly implies that if the military action was proportionate, the Alliance would not have any difficulty with that.<sup>2</sup> The replacement of the IPAP and ID (Intensified Dialogue) by the Annual National Plan (ANP) in 2008 did not cause any change of the cooperation -spectrum covered formerly by IPAP, yet it elevated the political level and strengthened the democratic pillar of cooperation through the establishment of NATO - Georgian Commission (NGC).<sup>3</sup> The format of the NGC allowed parties to commence on the levels of heads of states, ambassadors, military representatives, foreign and defence ministers as well as Chiefs of Staffs.<sup>4</sup>

#### **7.2.1.5 The Reluctance to Admit and the Divergence of Expectations**

Despite the structural innovations introduced for Georgia, the Alliance continued upholding its cautious stance towards Georgia with frequent comments at various levels on ongoing political processes within the country. For instance, the Secretary General (SG) Anders Fogh Rasmussen reiterated the attention the Alliance would pay to the judicial reform in Georgia, reflecting the cases of former government members brought to trial.<sup>5</sup> As for the language utilized in official documents, starting from the key message of the Bucharest Summit in 2008, the introduction of ANP was accompanied by a strong formulation of “closely watching Georgia’s democratic reform progress.” Additionally, NATO listed the whole spectrum of areas (military personnel management, transparency of the military budget, etc.), in which Georgia was urged to show better performance.<sup>6</sup> Here, as well as in the Strasbourg/Kehl Summit Declaration of 2009, any reference to Georgia being offered MAP - status was avoided with the Allies’ central focus remaining on the ANP as the core mechanism of assessing Georgia’s integration performance. Similar to both declarations, the Lisbon Summit in 2010 did not offer radical improvements with regard to Georgia’s hopes. While it

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<sup>1</sup> Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” para. 15.

<sup>2</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 5.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 37.

<sup>4</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 6.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 51.

<sup>6</sup> “NATO–Chairman’s Statement–Meeting of the NATO–Georgia Commission at the Level of Foreign Ministers Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels,” NATO website; available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_46248.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_46248.htm).

acknowledged her membership aspirations, as it also did toward the Balkan countries, it also made it clear, that negotiation on MAP remained a distant option.

The issue of granting MAP - status is of critical importance. While NATO on the one hand denies Georgia any chance of being granted a Membership Action Plan as a firm guarantee of future membership, and urges Georgia to regard the ANP as an alternative mechanism of direct membership, the Alliance has openly extended to Bosnia - Herzegovina in May 2012 an invitation to complete formal preparations to be accepted in MAP process.<sup>1</sup> No less important is the structural and topical organization of the documents mentioned, that reveal a significant dwindling of relevance of the enlargement - topic to the Alliance's organizational mission and dynamics. The strain placed on NATO by the ISAF - operation in Afghanistan, along with NATO's resource limitations and its military restructuring, have forced NATO HQ to rethink the Alliance's priorities and to lower the priority placed on enlargement plans. Thus, the Alliance requires from Georgia to undertake deep systemic and institutional reforms in accordance with democratic standards, norms, and values.<sup>2</sup> Second, it sends signals that expectations of quick membership are futile, and makes it clear that reforms that are requested, even if successfully implemented, have to be evaluated in a long - term perspective to ensure Georgia's democratic credibility.<sup>3</sup>

The domestic debate in Georgia is less concerned with the above - mentioned aspects of integration, although capturing the clarity of NATO's strategic messaging and preference orderings adequately would greatly benefit the logic and efficiency of policy making domestically. At first glance, the understanding of strategic interests and preferences would favor the following formula that "the more explicit the guarantee, the greater the likelihood that the commitment will be met", which is plausible in the case of Georgia's membership aspirations.<sup>4</sup> As we have clearly seen, NATO is not ready to offer explicit guarantees to Georgia that would naturally imply an invitation to MAP process, nor has Georgia regarded NATO - integration higher than the objective of territorial integrity within its security policy

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<sup>1</sup> "NATO-Chicago Summit Declaration Issued by the Heads of State and Government Participating in the Meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Chicago on 20 May 2012," NATO website; available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_87593.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87593.htm).

<sup>2</sup> "NATO Praises Georgia and Encourages Further Reforms," NATO website (27 June 2013); available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_101669.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_101669.htm).

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.mod.gov.ge/index.php?newsid=2019>.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas S. Szayna, "Chapter Two: The Planning Context," in *NATO Enlargement, 2000-2015: Determinants and Implications for Defense Planning and Shaping*, vol. 1243 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 30.

realm. These diverging interests have not been compensated by strong incentives that would keep Georgia's ambitions high while encouraging the transformation of its political and defense systems. In a very explicit sense the gaps in gains caused by cooperation had to be credibly limited or compensated by "side - payments."<sup>1</sup> Since it was not the case either, the North Atlantic Alliance was not able to elaborate credible insurance mechanisms for Georgia, nor was Georgia ready to abandon pressing domestic imperatives. As argued by a former Estonian Defence Advisor Christian Liflaender in : "The government of Georgia needed external legitimacy to gain more power internally, and somehow NATO played a legitimacy - enhancing role in Georgia to justify or reject some actions."<sup>2</sup>

It is remarkable, how frequently NATO - and affiliated officials reiterated the critical importance of the consequent implementation of reforms in Georgia, including the defence ones. For instance, in an interview to Radio Free Europe in 2006 Robert Simmons (a NATO special representative in South Caucasus) four times stressed the crucial importance of the implementation of multiple promises made and urged Georgian side to "carry them (especially the agreed IPAP - objectives) out in the practice of the Defence Ministry".<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the ISAB (International Security Advisory Board) - report produced in 2006 identified the political will and dedication to implement reforms as the most critical factor determining the ultimate success of reforms.<sup>4</sup> Other sources point also to other factor, with the potential of positive and negative repercussions. Antje Fritz, for instance, highlights the lack of implementation efforts as the major impediment for reforms, manifesting in a formally energetic support of MAP - idea with no consequent and consistent implementation actions. As she claims, it would even be worse, since "in case Western support would stop, no chances would be left for any progress."<sup>5</sup> Pretty in line with this claim, the Transparency International Georgia (TI) report in 2007 summarizes the views of local defence experts and states that "NATO - specific objectives have been fulfilled on paper only, while substantive reform has yet to be realized."<sup>6</sup> Further it claims that the mentioned deficiency along with the ambiguity

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<sup>1</sup> Grieco, "Realist Theory and the Problem of International Cooperation: Analysis with an Amended Prisoner's Dilemma Model," 620.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Christian Liflaender, the Former Defence Advisor at Estonian Delegation to NATO, Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Georgia: A NATO Progress Report, Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty, May 26, 2006, available at <http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1068688.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, "ISAB REPORT 2006," 6.

<sup>5</sup> Fritz, "Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia," 129, 150, 152.

<sup>6</sup> "Reform of Georgia's Defence Sector" (Tbilisi: Transparency International Georgia, January 2007), 1, available at <http://transparency.ge/sites/default/files/Reform%20of%20Georgia%27s%20Defence%20Sector.pdf>.

of NATO - requirements to Georgia turned the overall compliance of national authorities to an especially difficult task.

It is evident, that Georgian hopes of membership and actions implemented on the ground significantly mismatched the NATO - expectations. Despite President Saakashvili's insistence on the recognition of progress made by Georgia and Giga Bokeria's (head of the National Security Council till 2013) criticism of NATO lacking the vision "on certain fundamental issues", the Alliance upheld its cautious approach to Georgia and continued denying the discussion on a "big carrot" - MAP.<sup>1</sup> Understandably, the Georgian considerations are legitimate in the light of Georgia's desperate search for strong security guarantees and the fact of their banal absence. Yet it is far from evident that Georgian authorities would decide in favor of the long path of NATO accession if they had an alternative bilateral military agreement with the U.S.. As Hooman Peimani observed, Georgians were very much interested in having a strong U.S. military presence in the country, preferably a large military base.<sup>2</sup> His claims seem to have a solid foundation, since even after the change of the government in 2012 the new chair of the Security and Defence Committee, Irakli Sesiashvili admitted, that for him "much more important is the status of the US - ally rather than integration in NATO."<sup>3</sup> In the case of a U.S. - Georgia bilateral military agreement, being implemented without any precondition of democratic reforms in defense and security, the nation would meet its primary strategic objective - ensuring its physical security, thus eliminating the need and incentive to deeper institutional reforms, as required by NATO. The war with Russia made it impossible at least in mid - term prospective to pursue the imperative of the domestic agenda - the restoration of territorial integrity, forcing President Saakashvili to make in early 2009 a statement unthinkable before, as he stated that the "EU membership is more important to us than integration into NATO."<sup>4</sup> Naturally, this statement is not about the abrupt change of strategic orientation. But it also indicates, how strongly the NATO - integration process and defence reform actions were contingent on the political will of Georgian authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> "5-8 April 2010 - Visit to Georgia," para. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Hooman Peimani, *Conflict and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 277.

<sup>3</sup> Translation from "«Статус союзника США предпочтительнее интеграции в НАТО» - Сесиашвили," *Gruzija Online*, December 23, 2014, available at <http://www.apsny.ge/2014/pol/1419362480.php>.

<sup>4</sup> Jim Nichol, *Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications*, CRS Report to Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 6 March 2009), 9; available at <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA481837>.

As NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NPA) report in 2007 puts it, the delegation was assured by Georgian counterparts, that the guiding principles of reforms were predictability, sustainability and continuity.<sup>1</sup> Next chapters will shed more light in this regard and provide more insight about the degree, with which the mentioned ambitious principles were applied in various (incl. functional / policy) fields of defence transformation.

## 7.2.2 Democratic Control of Armed Forces

The large body of defence related strategic documents in Georgia has little to say about the democratic principles of governing defence. A relatively new document issued in 2012 on the *Status of Defense Transformation* similarly avoided any explicit mentioning of democratic values-related references within the context of NATO integration.<sup>2</sup> The only powerful statement along these lines that we have been able to discover was the resolution of the Georgian Parliament on the major directions of the country's foreign policy. This document unambiguously interprets the Euro - Atlantic integration process of Georgia as the path towards strengthening democratic institutions, rule of law, and individual liberties.<sup>3</sup> Along with an interview given by the Defense Minister, Irakli Alasania to MOD – press service, in which he recognizes the shortfalls of Georgia's democratic system from NATO's perspective, this parliamentary resolution is a rare example of anchoring the issue of democratic identity and shared common values in the agenda of official and policy - relevant documents.<sup>4</sup>

### 7.2.2.1 Continuing Deficits of parliamentary Control

The democratic control of armed forces has been commonly recognized as the guiding principle of security sector governance, and, as extensively touched upon in previous chapters on Security Sector Reform (SSR), is based on the managing role of the civilian defence minister and his civilian dominated staff, as well as on the crucial role of the national

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<sup>1</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 82.

<sup>2</sup> "Modern Armed Forces" (Tbilisi: Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2013), available at <http://mod.gov.ge/documents/Modern%20armed%20forces.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Resolution by the Georgian Parliament, 21 March 2013, chapters 3, 4; available at [http://www.parliament.ge/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=3136%3Aresolution&catid=54%3Astatements-appeals-and-resolutions&Itemid=88&lang=ge](http://www.parliament.ge/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3136%3Aresolution&catid=54%3Astatements-appeals-and-resolutions&Itemid=88&lang=ge).

<sup>4</sup> "Interview with the Georgian Defence Minister Irakli Alasania," *Ministry of Defence of Georgia*, accessed June 17, 2014, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/index.php?pubid=69>.



parliament to hold the ministry of defence accountable for any plan or action. Despite the preponderance of security concerns in Georgian strategic agenda, the application of democratic rules of governance to defence sector, faced in fact, no formal, legal or practical impediment. Committing partners “to preservation of democratic societies” had been a clear message, constantly addressed by NATO in relation to Georgia.<sup>1</sup> An exceptionally strong speech was delivered by Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at Tbilisi State University on October 4, 2007:

***Contrary to what people may think, modernisation of the defence and security sector is not all that NATO is interested in. As a matter of fact, quite the opposite is true. NATO supports Georgia's sovereign right to spend what it chooses on defence, and to organise its military forces as it thinks best. However, the Alliance will continue to look carefully at how the defence process is conducted, in order to ensure that money is spent rationally, according to agreed plans, and balanced against other priorities like poverty reduction and education. When assessing progress in Georgia, NATO has looked, and will continue to look, at the whole reform picture, and not just the military dimension. One crucial reform priority that is not linked to the military is to firmly establish the rule of law, which really is the cornerstone of any democracy. These are the very same values and principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law that NATO, the North Atlantic Alliance has stood for almost six decades. And that is why I hope, and expect, that Georgia will continue to embrace those democratic principles.***<sup>2</sup>

Undeniably, the higher prioritization of democratic principles than that of purely military management is more than visible here. This statement also shows clearly the areas, where the Alliance expects Georgia to make progress, making the membership - aspiration almost entirely contingent on the scale of democratic achievements. Similarly, the NATO - officials dealing with Georgia on daily basis “sign up” under the mentioned statement of the Secretary General. As Gustav Vroemen, a NATO IS - officer argues in his interview in 2013, despite the military, i.e. defence focus of the work “first of all, we look how Georgia meets western democratic standards and government accountability”.<sup>3</sup> As for the essence of the democratic control of the military the NATO regarded following elements as necessary to implement:<sup>4</sup>

- Appropriate legislation setting out the roles and responsibilities
- Effective and transparent financial planning and resource allocation procedures

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<sup>1</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 3.

<sup>2</sup> “Speech by NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer at Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia.”

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- Transparent management of Defence

These principles indeed have been recognized by Georgian authorities as priority issues along with adoption of NATO - standards to enhance interoperability of forces. Yet as it becomes evident, the immature institutional structure and the peculiarities of the overall political system created serious impediments for the swift establishment of the democratic control mechanisms in early 2000s. Based on the extensive use of interviews and surveys Antje Fritz concluded in 2004, that the whole defence and military system was determined “by personal relationships rather than by well defined democratic procedures” resulting in clannish thinking, clientelism and corruption.<sup>1</sup> The period of 2004 to 2007 is strongly characterized by the formal presence of strong legal provisions enabling the national parliament to execute control functions. However, as DCAF - report concluded, by 2005 the Parliament exposed a significant weakness in every day management and routine application of control mechanisms.<sup>2</sup> In particular, the most difficult areas for the first IPAP - phase appeared to be the inability of parliamentarians to participate and execute their monitoring functions in defence policy formulation and the control of defence appropriations.<sup>3</sup> The ISAB - team while drafting assessment and recommendations on defence reforms arrived to the same conclusion. It stressed the lacking practice and the weakness of the Defence and Security Committee of the parliament to check the transparency of defence spending and supplementary special funds.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the DCAF - report in 2007 attests the Georgian Parliament no practice of thorough investigations on defence matters, defence budget, nor other independent actions “other than authorizing policies and actions taken by the Executive.”<sup>5</sup>

The report describes the existing legal arrangements as ideal for implementing an effective parliamentary control. In reality, however, the inherent deficiencies of the oversight function could not be overseen and had to be related to following dimensions: the legal provisions of control, the structure of the formal control body, and the lack of professional expertise of the people involved. The parliament can only approve or refuse the draft of the state budget submitted by the government, and the delegates cannot request the amendment of the budget, neither receive the detailed picture of defence appropriations, nor participate in budget -

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<sup>1</sup> Fritz, “Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia,” 119–120.

<sup>2</sup> *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Fritz, “Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia,” 129.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, “ISAB REPORT 2006,” 4.

<sup>5</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 13.

development or interagency budgetary discussions.<sup>1</sup> The quality of the insufficient budgetary transparency, i.e. submission and approval of the budget based on very general defence budgetary parameters, will be dealt in depth in another chapter on “Budgetary Planning and Transparency”. Yet, it must be briefly mentioned, that through the annual reports provided by State Audit Office the Parliament possesses the ability to control the legality and feasibility of the budgetary spending of defence ministry.<sup>2</sup> As the Georgian Atlantic Council final report reveals, during the review period of 2004 - 2014 the Audit Office checked only few offices and departments, and none of reports reflected any results of auditing ministry of defence for 2011 and 2012.<sup>3</sup> Evidently, there was no interest from the parliament to inquire or demand a financial investigation in defence matters and to utilize the Audit Office as effective tool of holding the ministry of defence accountable.

The Defence and Security Committee is the key instrument to ensure the executive’s accountability. Once a year the minister of defence has to present a report to parliamentarians on ongoing activities and plans of armed forces, as well as on the participation in foreign missions.<sup>4</sup> The committee is the first body, through which the requested information is being channeled. It has eighteen members and ten staff - workers.<sup>5</sup> Even with the support of the committee and its staff - members parliament is not liable to question the professional qualifications of senior military and civilian officials employed in the ministry and armed forces.<sup>6</sup> Nor there is any informal tradition of inviting external experts, NGO - or Think - Tanks representatives for discussing defence related issues or receiving independent reports. The former deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze (in office from 2012 to 2014) attests a serious deficit of expertise in Parliament till 2012 as “it lacks the competence both in the committees and in the administration.”<sup>7</sup> Within the committee a group of confidence or so called *Trust Group* is mandated to question any issue and demand information or report from the ministry of defence. According to Georgian Atlantic Council report in 2014 the group had right to meet once a month in a non - public format before 2008; however, amendments made

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<sup>1</sup> “Georgia’s Security Sector Review Project,” Final Report (Atlantic Council of Georgia, 2014), 109, available at <http://acge.ge/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/usaaid-ENG.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>5</sup> “Parliamentary Activities,” *Parliament of Georgia*, accessed March 21, 2015, available at <http://www.parliament.ge/en/saparlamento-saqmianoba/komitetebi/tavdacvisa-da-ushishroebis-komiteti-144/komitetis-wevrebi1106>.

<sup>6</sup> “Georgia’s Security Sector Review Project,” 118–119.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze, Ministry of Defence of Georgia, Tbilisi, August 18, 2014.

in 2008 reduced the frequency of mandatory meetings to once in six month period.<sup>1</sup> It is also noteworthy, that in 2005 a candidacy named for the *Trust Group* by the opposition was rejected by the majority of the parliament, the ruling United National Movement (UNM) party, leaving the group in a sole ownership of three UNM - members.<sup>2</sup> Throughout 2007 no opposition party member was included in the group.<sup>3</sup> Even after certain amendments were introduced in 2008, and the minimum frequency of meeting was defined as twice a year, a fully staffed *Trust Group* met only once in November 2008, and October in 2009.<sup>4</sup> In light of heavy damages Georgian military suffered during the August war 2008 and the following energetic efforts to restore its military capabilities as well as the material base, the startling passivity of *Trust Group* requires a proper explanation, which can be only interpreted as the unwillingness of the Government and its party – majority (UNM) in the parliament to draw unnecessary public attention to the issue.<sup>5</sup>

As a former independent researcher and current UNM – member, David Darchiashvili stated in 2007 that, starting from 2004 the defence committee resembled more a prolonged arm of the ministry of defence, since it always supported MOD’s initiatives and never scrutinized them in terms of financial activity, or the violation of rights of the military personnel.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the former deputy Defence Minister, Nikoloz Vashakidze recognized, that the “Parliament played a very formal role and allowed itself to be involved in defence matters only at minimal level. The defence ministers always had cart - blanche and could do whatever they wanted.”<sup>7</sup> Until the parliamentary elections of 2012 the parliament was dominated by the ruling UNM - party holding 119 sits out of 150.<sup>8</sup> This posed a serious factor allowing ruling party to initiate or delay at will any defence - related investigation. The Defence and Security

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<sup>1</sup> “Georgia’s Security Sector Review Project,” 124.

<sup>2</sup> Hedvig Lohm, “It’s Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution” (Lund University, Department of Political Science, 2006), 37, (Department of Political Science), available at <http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=1323368&fileId=1323369>.

<sup>3</sup> “Reform of Georgia’s Defence Sector,” 5.

<sup>4</sup> Shorena Lortkipanidze, “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Mechanisms and Practice,” in *Democratic Control over the Georgian Armed Forces since the August 2008 War*, Tamara Pataraiia (Ed.), DCAF Regional Programmes Series No. 4 (Geneva, 2010), 47.

<sup>5</sup> Apart from hundreds of dead and injured personnel, Georgian armed forces lost in battle dozens of heavy armor (tanks and armored vehicles) and more were captured by invading Russian units at military bases that were later left greatly damaged or destroyed. For more information see in Tagliavini, “Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia”; Barabanov, Tseluiko, and Lavrov, *Tanks of August*.

<sup>6</sup> David Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007* (Tbilisi: Caucasus institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, 2008), 40, available at <http://www.cipdd.org/pdf2/4/5356053UsafrEng.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi, July 27, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Duncan Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts: The Case of Georgia,” in *Security Sector Reform in Challenging Environments*, Hans Born and Albrecht Schnabel (Eds.) (Zuerich, Muenster: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Lit Verlag, 2009), 128, available at [http://dcaf.ch/content/download/36930/529077/file/Ch05\\_Georgia\\_12Oct.pdf](http://dcaf.ch/content/download/36930/529077/file/Ch05_Georgia_12Oct.pdf).

Committee records on parliament's website do not expose any activities or reports before 2012. However as Duncan Hiscock convincingly puts it, whenever seemed necessary and beneficial for the party, initiating intensive hearings was not a problem, as in the case of hearings of special investigative commission, where high political and military ranks including President Saakashvili himself were invited to testify about Russia's aggression in 2008.<sup>1</sup> Since neither before nor afterwards the investigative practice acquired the quality of a permanent parliamentary tradition, a conclusion can be made, that such exceptional actions served a certain political purpose, which seemed advantageous at that particular time and for the particular domestic or international context. Most likely it served the objective of restoring the government's damaged international credibility and legitimation. Not least it attempted to provide a picture of adherence to the basic practices of a western parliamentary investigative model. Nonetheless, no evidence of the routine and repetitive application of the mentioned practice leaves rather a disturbing picture of masking efforts than the coherent adoption of the commonly shared norms of behavior.

Between 2005 and 2006 committee sessions were open, with the possibility of wide attendance from the civil sector, and till 2007 the information about ongoing reforms and activities in the defence sector was regularly provided on committee - and parliamentary hearings, among others, by a frequent attendance of deputy defence minister.<sup>2</sup> Since then, as the source claims "this practice has virtually disappeared."<sup>3</sup> The period between 2005 and 2006 seems indeed a rare example of a regular interaction between the Georgian ministry of defence and the parliament. As the Georgian Atlantic Council report in 2014 admits, only in 2005 the deputy defence minister took part in five parliamentary/committee meetings, and the open format hearings in the next year on various issues of defence reforms and their implementation were frequently attended by senior military and civilian representatives of the defence ministry.<sup>4</sup> Further, in the period between 2007 and 2010 the defence minister just once attended the committee session and once hosted the committee meeting in 2009 discussing the defence concept, ongoing processes in armed forces and the situation in occupied territories.<sup>5</sup> The strange mixture of issues discussed, barely to be completed even in a long series of sessions, indicate a very formal nature of the meeting with no real importance

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Lortkipanidze, "Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Mechanisms and Practice," 44.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> "Georgia's Security Sector Review Project," 127.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

or the chance of successive follow - up on the ground. This claim is further strengthened by the fact, that in the period from 2010 to 2012 no evidence of the particular interest on the side of parliament was found to hold a respective session and invite defence minister; neither minister showed any initiative to attend parliamentary meetings.<sup>1</sup> The governmental change in 2012 brought some change in this regard. The new defence minister Irakli Alasania declared in the *Building Integrity Self Assessment* report his desire to enhance its relationship with Parliament with a goal “to communicate with the Defence and Security Committee leadership on a weekly basis.”<sup>2</sup> However, even in light of those optimistic words, the reality seemed much more sober. The tradition of the “passive engagement” with the ministry of defence continues to preserve within the Defence and Security Committee. As Bruce Bach, a former NATO – IS official concluded: “Only after elections in 2012 the opposition parties and NGOs have really become engaged in defence matters of any kind meaningfully” with persisting deficits in knowledge and initiative on Parliament’s side.<sup>3</sup>

Although some improvements in the domain of the parliamentary control of the military are visible, the overall picture is still featured by rare committee hearings, mostly initiated by Defence Ministry and attended by the passive or “moderately critical” majority of the committee - members.<sup>4</sup> In general, it is symptomatic, how passively Parliament followed, in fact, disregarded its legal duties prescribed by the Law on Defence Planning, especially with regard to discussing the defence development plans, concepts and budgetary programs.<sup>5</sup> As Teona Akubardia highlights in an article, the central element of program - based budgetary planning and its implementation remained a perennial problem for the Ministry of Defence, and the parliamentary committee has done little if anything to correct “this imperfection”, nor it does better job to review key defence and security related policy documents.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 127–128.

<sup>2</sup> “Building Integrity Self Assessment,” Peer Review Report Georgia (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, December 2013), 6, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/documents/BIRreportENGunofficialtranslation.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>4</sup> “Georgia’s Security Sector Review Project,” 127.

<sup>5</sup> *Law on Defence Planning, 2956-Ib*, 3–4, accessed March 22, 2015, available at [http://nsc.gov.ge/files/files/legislations/kanonebi/tavdacvis\\_dagegmva.pdf](http://nsc.gov.ge/files/files/legislations/kanonebi/tavdacvis_dagegmva.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Theona Akubardia, “Overview of the Legislation: Facilitating the Civil Democratic Oversight of Armed Forces in Georgia,” in *Democratic Control over the Georgian Armed Forces since the August 2008 War*, Tamara Pataraiia (Ed.), DCAF Regional Programmes Series No. 4 (Geneva, 2010), 26–27.

### 7.2.2.2 “Civilianization“ and incompetent Leadership

The second, not least important element of democratic control of the armed forces relies on the effective management of the ministry of defence run by a civilian minister and an administration staffed predominantly with civilian professionals. *Law on Defence* issued in December 2004 delineated the chain of command and functional responsibilities between the president, defence minister and the chief of staff.<sup>1</sup> The IPAP - report 2004 - 2006 testifies the swift transition to civilian - run ministry of defence, and praises steps to solidify the process by necessary legal amendments.<sup>2</sup> Various sources confirm that by the year 2007 the overall process of “civilianization” was completed. For instance, DCAF – report in 2007 highlighted that reforms ensured the minister was a civilian and all executive positions within the MOD were manned by civilians with total of 750 civilian personnel.<sup>3</sup> Functionally the ministry was responsible for policy issues, financial management and international affairs.<sup>4</sup> NATO parliamentary delegations documented the progress achieved in establishing a full civilian control over the ministry of defence, and basically confirmed the positive assessment of IPAP – 2006, which labeled Georgia as the “most advanced country” in implementing reforms.<sup>5</sup> Yet the early indications of authoritative style of management could not be simply dismissed, due to common perception of the minister as a “commanding officer rather than a civilian” creating such conditions, in which political authority directly interfered in military affairs and undermined the military chain of command as well as personnel policy.<sup>6</sup> As William Lahue summarizes:

*In 2008 a new leadership came to the Ministry of Defence and everything changed, more to worse. As the previous defence minister Akhalaya was appointed, it was clear that the major goal was to ensure the 100% loyalty of the armed forces to the existing power-hierarchy.<sup>7</sup>*

Furthermore, the competence of the appointed leadership in ministry of defence raised serious doubts even within the military ranks. The deputy Head of the General Staff, Vladimir

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<sup>1</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, “ISAB REPORT 2006,” 3.

<sup>2</sup> “Georgia’s Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006” (Parliament of Georgia), para. 1.5, accessed April 11, 2014, available at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_886\\_771740\\_ipapnatoeng.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_886_771740_ipapnatoeng.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 16–17.

<sup>4</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 90.

<sup>5</sup> “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 32; “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” para. 36.

<sup>6</sup> Lohm, “It’s Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution,” 31–32.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, Tbilisi, NATO Liaison Office.

Chachibaya admitted in 2014 that: “In the past, one of the major problems was the lack of political will within the ministry to implement reform agenda, as well as the decision - making with a high dose of incompetence.”<sup>1</sup> After parliamentary elections in October 2012 the former defence minister David Kezerashvili was charged in Georgia for bribery and money laundering, and another ex - defence minister Bacho Akhalaya along with Chief of Joint Staff Gigi Kalandadze and number of senior, mid - level military officers was charged for the abuse of power, torture and other crimes.<sup>2</sup> Though all this aspects are of a particular importance to the issue of democratic control of the armed forces, we prefer to provide more details on this topic in the following chapter dealing with the particular issue of personnel management policy.

Finalizing this part we can conclude that the period between 2004 and 2007 was largely characterized by two diverging processes. On one side the parliament has revealed continuing inability to control government’s, i.e. defence ministry’s activities and hold both accountable, which primarily had to be attributed to the lack of political will, and partially to the absence of the relevant expertise in the field.<sup>3</sup> In 2004 a civilian minister of defense was appointed to head the office, which was also staffed primarily by civilians. Although budget plans have been regularly presented to NATO officials, critics pointed at inadequate legislative oversight.<sup>4</sup> The critique also highlighted the few checks on executive authority and on the failure to adopt deep institutional reforms.<sup>5</sup> The level of public involvement in discussing defense - related policy issues has been very low. Similarly, the parliamentary oversight of defense policy development appeared to be insufficient, rarely having broad discussion on defense priorities and the budgetary plans to meet the strategic and long - term requirements. The mere reference to a small *Group of Trust*, which possessed access to classified information on defense spending and acquisition, could not serve as a plausible excuse for the existing participatory deficit.<sup>6</sup> The approval of defense budgets without any detailed review of budgetary appropriations and the required level of coordination with other state bodies has

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<sup>1</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 33–34, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 40; “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Nichol, “Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications,” March 6, 2009, 2–3.

<sup>5</sup> Michael D. Mihalka and Mark R. Wilcox, “Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus,” *Joint Force Quarterly* (2010): 26.

<sup>6</sup> Fluri and Cibotaru, “Defence Institution Building: Country Profiles and Needs Assessments for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova,” 60–62.



frequently led to the creation of the “exclusive club” of trustees, where no deeper insight could be provided.<sup>1</sup> Along with its budgetary control function Parliament largely disregarded other monitoring mechanisms of the defence such as discussing deployment issues and associated risk factors, the adequacy of troop equipment, the appointment of high - ranking military officers etc.<sup>2</sup> The radical change of the political landscape in Georgia in 2012, brought some signs of revival, initiated and supported from the top of the new leadership (coalition “Georgian Dream”). The new Speaker of the Parliament David Usupashvili was asserting to NATO - PA delegation that the supervising quality of the parliament as well as the degree of transparency increased significantly.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the Defence and Security Committee session reports are regularly placed on Parliament’s webpage. However, the indigenous challenges of effective parliamentary control and participation remain still an issue.

Throughout diplomatic visits to Georgia in 2013 (NAC in June 2013) and NATO HQ (NGC, on March 14, 2013), no specific comment was made on problems existing within the military realm of cooperation, but much on democratic transformation and international cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, referring to the “solid achievements” in defence reforms brought up by U.S. State Secretary John Kerry on February 26 in 2014, we might suggest that these achievements were rather of functional and military nature than a radical break - through in democratic and institutional management of defence.<sup>5</sup>

## **7.3 NATO - Influence in Functional Areas of Defence**

### **7.3.1 Introduction**

Since the notion of *defense transformation* is very much related to reorganization of defense policy, priorities, structures, capabilities, training, and even business practices, the application of NATO requirements, i.e. norms, standards and procedures would mean a significant

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>2</sup> Akubardia, “Overview of the Legislation: Facilitating the Civil Democratic Oversight of Armed Forces in Georgia,” 34.

<sup>3</sup> “Georgia and Armenia: 24-28 March 2014,” Mission Report, 173 JOINT 14 E (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, July 28, 2014), chap. Georgia, para 9, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=1765&CAT1=16&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=3550&SEARCHWORDS=24-28, March,>

<sup>4</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 51.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 1.

change in all areas mentioned afore.<sup>1</sup> We admit that the lack of first - hand information, especially of NATO - reports, is a serious limiting factor for the reliability of findings we present in this chapter. Nevertheless, we believe that an intensive review of secondary sources still makes it possible to provide more than just a general picture of the results achieved by Georgian government and defense ministry in the period between 2004 and 2012.

We could not avoid regarding the brief war with Russia in 2008 as a second point of analytical departure after the year 2004, which directly affected all decisions made by Georgian political leadership and the Ministry of Defence. Thus, whenever we revisit the policy areas for a closer analysis, the effects of the war in 2008 will be constantly kept in mind. In general, however, we should reiterate the critical importance of the situation created by the end of 2003, which was featured by a lack of basic understanding of security policy, the confusion of roles between the military and civilians, and the local politicians trying to establish a personal, rather than the state's control over armed units.<sup>2</sup>

The reforms initiated in 2004, naturally, could not change everything overnight. The IPAP 2004 - 2006 indeed praises the fulfillment of PAP – DIB (Partnership Action Plan – Defence Institution Building) objectives, however, it also highlights some areas, where a significant improvement is required. These are: affordable and sustainable defence strategies along the personnel and resource management.<sup>3</sup> In a meeting with NATO - PA delegation in 2007 the Defence Minister David Kezerashvili admitted that the army had to be put together of scratch.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, however, the Transparency International report of the same year claims that the main reform efforts to meet NATO - requirements were directed to infrastructural projects, and many objectives were implemented on paper only, leaving substantial changes still missing.<sup>5</sup> The aim of the following chapters is exactly to check the evidence of that claim and to prove, whether the reforms were indeed pushed by “impatient reformers without reference to a wider sectoral strategy.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Sheldon Hamilton, *Transatlantic Transformations: Equipping NATO for the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: Johns Hopkins/Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2004), 3; available at [http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/publications/books/transatlantic\\_transformations.pdf](http://transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/publications/books/transatlantic_transformations.pdf). See also Hans Binnendijk, *Transforming America's Military* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2002), 3, 41, 203.

<sup>2</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 17.

<sup>3</sup> “NATO's Role in South Caucasus Region,” para. 28, 32.

<sup>4</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 18.

<sup>5</sup> “Reform of Georgia's Defence Sector,” 1.

<sup>6</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 120.

## 7.3.2 Defence Policy and Planning

Despite the extensive political focus on the key importance of the North Atlantic Alliance in safeguarding Georgia's independence and stability, close study of the relevant sources reveals an ambiguous picture of preferences existing among a range of national objectives.

### 7.3.2.1 Confusing Messages of Georgian strategic Documents

The parliamentary resolution mentioned earlier is the only document that places the Euro - Atlantic integration at core of country's foreign policy, while recognizing its primacy among other foreign and security policy objectives. Contrary to that, the National Security Concept (NSC) assigns the Euro - Atlantic integration an unfortunate fifth place among Georgia's core national interests, whereas democracy and rule of law stand at only third place in the list of national values.<sup>1</sup> While we do not wish to comment on the inherent failures of the document to present national values as key elements of national way of life, it was surprising that among the nation's security policy priorities NATO integration ranked below "de - occupation" and the "improvement" of defense capabilities.<sup>2</sup>

Georgia's governmental websites exposed a general feature of frequent change since the practice of the quick turnover of governmental appointees became standard, resulting in the loss of previously posted information or documentary material. The Georgian ministry of defense is no exception in this regard. The earlier versions of the "Minister's Vision" document have been withdrawn, with the exception of the last one, which was amended and renewed under Irakli Alasania, the defense minister appointed by the new government in 2012. This short - term (2013 - 2014) policy paper lists the defense priorities of the ministry, and obviously assigns NATO integration the lowest importance due to its placement as last among the ministry's priorities. Furthermore, it is formulated in conjunction with the broader notion of enhancing international cooperation, and is directly defined as focusing on the interoperability aspect of cooperation.<sup>3</sup> If this is formally the case, the single element of interoperability improvement in the NATO integration framework has then to be considered as equally relevant and not more important than other forms of bilateral or multilateral

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<sup>1</sup> *National Security Concept of Georgia*, 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> "Minister's Vision 2013-2014" (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2013), 3, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/documents/476501Ministers%20Vision%20Geo.pdf>.

defense cooperation. The same tendency of certain neglect is evident in other chapters of the document, where nothing specific to the Alliance's importance with regard to the priority of improving defense capabilities, or improving the NATO interoperability of Georgia's forces, is mentioned, not to mention the critical relevance of NATO requirements and standards.<sup>1</sup>

Another important source of information is the Document of the *"Defense Policy Priorities for 2005 - 2006: main directions of the Ministry of Defense."* It identifies three major policy priorities, among which the improved combat capabilities ranks as top one, the facilitation of NATO - integration process by enhanced interoperability of forces as the second one and better planning and defence management (personal, material, financial) system as the key tool for implementing decisions effectively.<sup>2</sup> The solid evidence of the uncoordinated efforts of Georgian institutions to reflect the proper significance of the Alliance for country's strategic foreign, security, and defense policies points either toward the absence of the strong coordinating signals from the top of the government to pursue more coherent national actions, or the inability of government branches to detect and correct the policy inconsistencies. It can also have certain effect on the pace of integration with the Alliance, since the theoretical primacy of territorial integrity over the nation's Euro - Atlantic aspirations would imply the accession process to be only initiated once Georgia's sovereignty over its breakaway regions has been restored, and not vice versa.

The lack of coherent defence planning had its roots in the serious deficits in understanding SSR. This in turn resulted in a chronic inability to produce a precise program of reforms based on a clear hierarchy of identified strategic objectives and interests, translated into the missions of the armed forces. As Antje Fritz testifies, the "White Paper" drafted by the ministry of defence in 2002 failed to provide the needed clarity, and without approved National Security Concept it literally put "the cart before the horse."<sup>3</sup> An attempt is evident here, by which the formal acceptance of requirements of defence policy planning (formal compliance) by national authorities faced serious challenges in terms of their coherent implementation. Antje Fritz describes the symptoms of the problem as the conflict between strategic considerations

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 3–8.

<sup>2</sup> "Defense Policy Priorities for 2005-2006: Main Directions of the Ministry of Defense," 1, accessed December 2, 2015, available at [http://www.parliament.ge/files/292\\_880\\_864945\\_modeng.pdf](http://www.parliament.ge/files/292_880_864945_modeng.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Fritz, "Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia," 125–126.

and personal influence, individual preferences of politicians and ambitions of “military commandment’s” resulting in a frequent structural and personnel change of the army.<sup>1</sup>

### **7.3.2.2 Frequent Change - the Feature of Georgian Defence Planning**

By 2004 a general agreement was reached and consequently supported by the ISAB - team to move “from quantity to quality, a reduction of numbers and an enhancement of capability to provide a more flexible military which is interoperable with NATO and other western forces.”<sup>2</sup> As Philipp Fluri and Eden Cole argue, after the Rose Revolution the military was given an objective of building a smaller and much capable military force to meet NATO - requirements.<sup>3</sup> By 2004 the ministry of defence was clearer about the reform intentions. According to Korneli Kakachia in 2005, the major principle was declared by defence officials to reduce the size of forces to 14.648 servicemen by significantly increasing its training, equipment quality and capabilities and to optimize the staffing structure of the civilian office and the General Staff.<sup>4</sup> The number indicated does not differ radically from the number provided by other sources. For instance, Shorena Lortkipanidze refers to 15.000 as the size - objective of future forces to be downsized from 24.000 servicemen.<sup>5</sup> Yet, the multiple uncertainties about the blurred lines of responsibilities, authority and the soviet legacy of a very centralized decision - making, left many doubts about the course of action open. In particular, two events seemed to be of crucial relevance. First was the western partners’ major recommendation to integrate the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Interior into the regular armed force by the end of 2004.<sup>6</sup> The second one implied the strategic review of the armed forces titled as SDR (Strategic Defence Review) to develop professional capabilities and ensure the necessary restructuring of forces. Noteworthy that the key phase of the SDR and defence planning system envisaged the development of strategic defence documents that would provide guiding principles in drafting and implementing various functional policies.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, “Security Sector Reform in the Southern Caucasus,” 53.

<sup>3</sup> *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Kakachia, “Chapter 4, Problems of Post-Conflict Public Security Management in Georgia,” 105–106.

<sup>5</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 237.

<sup>6</sup> Kakachia, “Chapter 4, Problems of Post-Conflict Public Security Management in Georgia,” 104.

<sup>7</sup> “Georgia’s Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006,” para. 2.2, 2.1.2.

Concerns about the credibility of Georgian plans were not ungrounded. As feared by many observers, the initial objectives of reforms were quickly reversed, as Irakli Okruashvili took over the ministry of defence in December 2004. According to some local observers, the new minister undermined civilian control, conducted a radical personnel change among civilian and military staff members and was involved in “haphazard spending on weapons bought from former Warsaw Pact countries.”<sup>1</sup> Although the issue of SDR is devoted a separate place in this chapter, it should still be mentioned here that this document represented a major long - term planning guidance, approved by the President, and provided with sufficient clarity the overall size, structure and the needed capabilities of armed forces. The document envisaged by 2009 the decrease of forces to 26.000, which was clearly abandoned by the decision to form a fifth brigade and to increase by that the total number of personnel to 32.000.<sup>2</sup> Here, we have a clear evidence of not only rejecting early given promises and commitments of force – reduction, agreed by all sides in 2004, but even worse, a spontaneous revision and disregard of the plans approved within the national SDR – process itself. As Gustav Vroemen highlights, NATO - officials could not justify the idea of creating fifth brigade and the “International Staff (IS) was arguing to use available scarce resources to better optimize combat capabilities of existing four brigades.”<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned before, the conflicts regions of Georgia and associated security concerns heavily influenced the domestic agenda. We agree to Duncan Hiscock’s conclusion that all this decisively affected the policy priorities of Georgian leadership with the subsequent follow - up steps in force planning that disregarded NATO’s concerns and aversion to any kind of increase of Georgian armed forces, including the reserve units.<sup>4</sup> Objectively, Georgian authorities had all reasons to be concerned with deteriorating security environment in the region. The eruption of violence in 2004 and 2006 were followed by increased provocations and air - space violation from Russian side in March and August 2007, during which Georgian administrative facilities were attacked.<sup>5</sup> Facing the challenge of a growing military threat and combat capabilities of separatist forces, Georgian leadership indeed had to solve a

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<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 246.

<sup>2</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 29.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>4</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 132–133.

<sup>5</sup> During the summer 2004 hostilities between Georgian forces and Ossetian separatist units escalated, with heavy losses and casualties on both sides, causing the Georgian side to consider the major attack, soon after put off table. For more information see in, Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 22–23.

huge dilemma of how to respond to the worrying developments.<sup>1</sup> As it became evident, the decision was made to revise the earlier agreed objectives and pursue the policy of a hasty force increase by formally reflecting the made changes post - factum in key defence policy and planning documents. In light of the early statements made by President Saakashvili and Defence Minister Okruashvili in 2004 and 2005, such decision appears less surprising. In February 2004 during the cabinet meeting President Michail Saakashvili made clear the intention “to form the armed forces, which will terrify the separatists”, and Minister Irakli Okruashvili declared in 2005 that Georgians were “a warrior nation (...) We have no right not to unite Georgia.”<sup>2</sup> The made decisions on structural changes of armed forces indeed were later included in the SDR - document, approved by the President in November 2007.

### **7.3.2.3 Strategic Defence Review (SDR) – rather Formality than the Guidance**

The frequently mentioned process of the Strategic Defence Review played a crucial role in shaping Georgia’s defence policy and planning capacity. The need of its initiation was already indicated as the one of the major IPAP - objectives in 2004 that would define the structure and capabilities of armed forces throughout 2015 and assign the interagency commission the monitoring function of implementation.<sup>3</sup> As Shorena Lortkipanidze recalls in 2005, the Georgian ministry of defence was advised to start developing the SDR “along the lines of reviews done by Western defence establishments”, without which the government would “advance in an uncertain direction.”<sup>4</sup> It is symptomatic that the first major defence planning document developed and issued by the ministry of defence in 2007, is simply missing on the ministry’s webpage, whilst other less important documents are still available. There might be multiple reasons explaining such awkwardness. We assume, however, that it has rather to do with the general fate of this document, turned to become completely irrelevant already on its approval day. For proving this, we will briefly analyze the key statements and figures provided by the SDR - 2007 and compare them with the actions performed on the ground.

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<sup>1</sup> “Abkhazia has between 3,000-5,000 personnel (up to 45,000 on mobilization), 35-50 tanks, 70-86 AIFVs and APCs, 80-100 artillery systems and 6 combat aircraft. South Ossetia maintains approximately 2,000 personnel (planning to expand to 6,000), 5-10 tanks, 30 AIFVs and APCs and 25 artillery systems.” In Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Lohm, “It’s Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution,” 42.

<sup>3</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 248.

The SDR, basically, developed short - term (2007 - 2009), mid - term (2009 - 2012) and long - term (2013 - 2015) force structures and capability objectives.<sup>1</sup> It was evident from the very beginning of the process that due to the lack of defence planning and policy expertise and institutional capacity, a clear hierarchy of the strategic level documents had to be established first. This objective was also reflected in the respective IPAP document.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, several steps were initiated. The National Security Concept (NSC) was endorsed by the Parliament on July 8, 2005, and the National Military Strategy (NMS) made public in the same year.<sup>3</sup> They were followed by the adoption of the Threat Assessment Document (TAD) and the Minister's Vision 2007, approved in December 2006.<sup>4</sup> The IPAP served here as the driving force for listing major policy and planning documents and establishing an initial foundation of their legitimation. Yet, the proper mission of providing legal basis for strategic and defence planning was the draft law on Defence Planning adopted in 2006, which set out necessary procedures for drafting and executing force planning and budgetary cycles.<sup>5</sup> The law provided a clear delineation of strategic and agency - level policy and planning documents, allowing ministry of defence and the General Staff to concentrate on *Defence Planning Guidance* and the multi - year as well as annual defence programs.<sup>6</sup>

The public version of the SDR, which in its first chapters delineates major strategic documents along with the *Law on Defence Planning* as the crucial framework for force - planning procedures, states clearly that the authorized strength of the Georgian armed forces (GAF) of 28.666 personnel in 2007 had to be reduced to 18.755 by the end of 2015.<sup>7</sup> This radical reduction of forces had to unfold with a phased approach over a transitional period, limiting the personnel number in 2009 by 26.007 and in 2012 by 21.701.<sup>8</sup> The inactivation of the 4<sup>th</sup> infantry brigade and other smaller units was a key step in this regard.<sup>9</sup> Contrary to the plans of the already approved document, the changes made later, indicated an essential reversal of the declared policy, but also a significant disregard of the cyclic and sequential

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<sup>1</sup> Theona Akubardia, "Security and Defence Policy Development," in *Democratic Control over the Georgian Armed Forces since the August 2008 War*, Tamara Pataraiia (Ed.), DCAF Regional Programmes Series No. 4 (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2010), 14.

<sup>2</sup> Lortkipanidze, "Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities," 234–235.

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, "ISAB REPORT 2006," 1–2.

<sup>4</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 87, 89.

<sup>5</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, "ISAB REPORT 2006," 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Law on Defence Planning*.

<sup>7</sup> "Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified" (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, November 2007), 85, 89, available at

[http://gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/resources/The\\_Strategic\\_Defence\\_Review.pdf](http://gfsis.org/media/download/GSAC/resources/The_Strategic_Defence_Review.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 87–89.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.



procedures required by the newly adopted Law on Defence Planning. The changes added to the SDR envisaged multiple structural changes, among others, a serious increase of the regular and reserve forces to over 30.000 and 100.000 respectively.<sup>1</sup> Most importantly, additional 5<sup>th</sup> infantry brigade had to be created with all necessary infrastructure works and equipment, generating a harsh criticism that all this were not in line with NATO recommendations and budgetary guidelines.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the Land Force Command was created already in 2006, though the SDR - draft document was presented only in June 2007 at NATO HQ in Brussels.<sup>3</sup> As Teona Akubardia, an independent expert, recalls in 2010, many changes, especially the plans related to military reserve force were not guided by the proper calculations and capability analysis, but resembled rather a PR - campaign under the motto “Join the reserve! It’s Cool!” with no consequent implementation actions, as promised by the SDR - implementation plan.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, the SDR required the adoption of a new long - term financial and resource planning mechanism called PPBS (Planning Programming Budgeting System). Several times it states with a strong clarity that PPBS is a first action to implement in the context of NATO - integration and improved defence management priorities, as well as stands for a backbone system to produce military development programs, defence planning guidance (DPG) and annual programs.<sup>5</sup> Many steps indicated in the SDR - document such as surveillance of airspace and the control territorial waters were to accomplish by 2009 only after the close evaluation within the PPBS procedural framework.<sup>6</sup> The law on Defence Planning and the PPBS are, in fact, based on the same conceptual planning requirements that shape the defence budget development for the financial year and the following four years period.<sup>7</sup> As the Transparency International report claims in 2007, due to obvious capacity and qualification shortages, many of staff members of MOD were sent to U.S. and Europe for respective training, forcing the ministry of defence to expect the first tangible results of PPBS - utilization only in 2009.<sup>8</sup> In terms of tangible results it would mean a fully program based defence budget, the force development programs, a defence planning guidance and the fully functional chain of decision - making. Despite the adopted law and the PPBS - manual issued

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<sup>1</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 120.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, “Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications,” March 7, 2008, 3.

<sup>3</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 91.

<sup>4</sup> Akubardia, “Security and Defence Policy Development,” 14–15.

<sup>5</sup> “Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified,” 68.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>7</sup> “Reform of Georgia’s Defence Sector,” 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

in 2009, the available planning mechanisms have not been institutionalized, i.e. internalized on routine basis.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to the SDR the PPBS represents a permanent and procedurally well - defined institutional tool for a multi - year resource and financial planning. Yet as Teona Akubardia claims, even after the debacle of 2008 there was no evidence of its proper use, and the figures of approved defence budgets continue differing significantly from the figures projected in the SDR (see Table 9. below):<sup>2</sup>

**Table 9. Difference between the SDR - projected and implemented budgetary Figures**

Year	SDR-projected	Implemented	% of GDP
2008	1.100.000	1.494.535	5.4
2009	1.151.960	897.000	5.0
2010	1.167.016	750.000	4.5

Interestingly, the approved SDR - document provided two versions of defence budget estimation. First one was initially approved, and the second one as the *Annex 1* added into the document, as it approved after the SDR was published:<sup>3</sup>

**Table 10. Difference between the SDR - projected Figures (initially vs. annex)**

*Initially approved (In Thousands of GEL)*

Year	Projected GDP	Projected Defence Budget (DB)	DB as % of GDP
2008	18,878,000	736,000	3.9%
2009	21,218,900	809,600	3.8%
2010	23,851,700	780,000	3.3%
2011	26,813,800	796,200	3.0%
2012	29,495,180	737,380	2.5%
2013	32,444,698	746,228	2.3%
2014	35,689,168	820,851	2.3%
2015	39,258,085	902,936	2.3%
2016	43,183,893	993,230	2.3%

<sup>1</sup> “Planning, Programming and Budgeting System Guide” (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2009), available at <http://mod.gov.ge/?pages=dagegmvis-skema>.

<sup>2</sup> Akubardia, “Security and Defence Policy Development,” 17–18.

<sup>3</sup> “Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified,” 93, 98.

*Annex 1 added (In Thousands of GEL)*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected GDP</b>	<b>Projected Defence Budget (DB)</b>	<b>DB as % of GDP</b>
<b>2008</b>	20,440,400	1,100,000	5.4%
<b>2009</b>	23,039,200	1,151,960	5.0%
<b>2010</b>	25,933,700	1,167,016	4.5%
<b>2011</b>	29,171,400	1,166,856	4.0%
<b>2012</b>	32,817,825	1,148,623	3.5%
<b>2013</b>	36,920,053	1,107,601	3.0%
<b>2014</b>	41,535,059	1,038,376	2.5%
<b>2015</b>	46,726,942	1,074,719	2.3%
<b>2016</b>	52,567,810	1,209,059	2.3%

Shorena Lortkipanidze similarly attests a common practice of the Georgian executive, especially of the President to approve frequent budgetary increases without a detailed parliamentary discussion and bypassing the advanced decision - making and resource planning system at the MOD.<sup>1</sup> Along with the Law on Defence Planning and the PPBS, the requirements of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) introduced by the Ministry of Finances since 2006 call all Georgian state ministries and agencies for submission of detailed budgetary plans projected for four – years period.<sup>2</sup> As it is evident, the ministry of defence was either unable to provide solid and reliable plans, or it was unwilling to implement the approved ones. William Lahue, a head of NATO Liaison Office in Tbilisi, argues that the problem of PPBS falls to certain degree under the category of “formal implementation”, by which hundreds of rules based procedures at various levels and their routine utilization had not been done.<sup>3</sup> Another view - angle is provided by the former deputy Minister Tamar Karosanidze (in office from 2012 to 2014), who found in 2014 clear words for describing the past situation:

*The people trained to run program based, long-term resource management are now either out of MOD or their number is so low that the system simply cannot be run. The reason was that the whole issue of PPBS was either not the top priority of former administration or the people could not apply their knowledge properly, thus remained de-motivated, dismissed or left the armed forces on their free will.*<sup>4</sup>

A more detailed analysis of budgetary proposals will be provided in the chapter of budgetary transparency with the particular focus on the functional level of policy implementation. The strong linkage, however, existing between the the SDR and budgetary planning, indicates that the updated SDR 2013 - 2016, which was launched in aftermath of the political turnover in

<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Parliamentary Oversight of the Security Sector: Mechanisms and Practice,” 58.

<sup>2</sup> “Reform of Georgia’s Defence Sector,” 3.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, Tbilisi, NATO Liaison Office.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze.

Georgia in 2012, had the mission to correct the early document adopted in 2007, once again undermining its quality of a real strategic document. It reflects urgent steps the MOD - leadership regarded necessary to restructure the General Staff Structure and armed forces. For instance, the Maritime Defence Department was established on place of the early abolished Naval Force Headquarter and the Armed Force Readiness Monitoring Division has been introduced.<sup>1</sup> The force composition of the GAF, termed as “current” in the document, significantly differs from that one described in SDR – 2007, and the suggested structural changes make the difference even more. It establishes two Operational Commands in East and West of Georgia, plans to create separate intelligence and medical units, as well as the joint Command of Air Operations and Air Defence.<sup>2</sup> As for defence budgetary projections the amended SDR provided following figures (see Table 11.):

**Table 11. SDR 2013 – 2016 Defence Budgetary Figures<sup>3</sup>**

Year	Projected GDP	Projected Defence Budget (DB)	DB as % of GDP
2008	19 074 900 000	1 547 183 106	8,1%
2009	17 986 000 000	869 015 694	4,8%
2010	20 743 400 000	728 007 459	3,5%
2011	24 344 000 000	728 427 012	3,0%
2012	26 308 500 000	728 500 000	2,8%
2013	28 863 100 000	660 000 000	2,3%
2014	32 430 600 000	720 000 000	2,2%
2015	36 095 200 000	770 000 000	2,1%
2016	40 174 000 000	880 000 000	2,2%

As expected, the data provided does not match the early budgetary projections of 2007, which is understandable due to significant negative effects imposed by the Russian aggression in Georgia in summer 2008. However, the proper defence planning would instead imply a serious re - launching of the strategic analysis and planning by updating all documents stated by the Law on Defence Planning and ultimately resulting in a full revision of the SDR with the planning horizon stretching far beyond 2016. In fact, we found a reference to the planning margins of 2016 in the document called *Modern Armed Forces*. This paper, owing no legal status according to Law on Defence Planning, resembles a kind of “white paper”, which declares policy achievements and objectives. Yet it makes clear that “eight years have been established as a long - term reform period for the armed forces” divided in two sets of four - year planning periods, with the first one ending in 2016 and the second by 2020.<sup>4</sup> Much

<sup>1</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2013-2016” (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2013), 24, available at <http://www.mod.gov.ge/documents/yzqhgsgsreng.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>4</sup> “Modern Armed Forces,” 40–41.

interesting is, however, that the *Modern Armed Forces* reflected the planned force restructuring and budgetary actions before the updated SDR was published, which raises serious doubt about its substitutive role for the proper SDR document as well as the total irrelevance of the latter.

#### **7.3.2.4 Defence Planning – A clear Evidence of sporadic Actions**

The picture provided so far does not speak about the strong tradition of the well established defence planning procedures in Georgia. The frequent disregard of the agreed plans and promises leaves a disturbing effect on the overall Georgian performance. More importantly, it indicates a permanent gap between the high, official level of promises made and the low degree or probability of their practical implementation. The benefits of the new planning mechanisms were also recognized by the high military ranks in GAF due to better picture provided for resources spent and the quality of unit combat readiness or the level of NATO - interoperability.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as it seems, they never received a clear political signal for the practical implementation of new policies. The Interagency Commission responsible for monitoring and supervising the implementation process never materialized, although explicitly mentioned by SDR - 2007.<sup>2</sup> Further, the Management Teams (MTs) and Decision Making Board (DMB), the structural entities of the decision – making chain designated by the updated SDR – paper, in fact, never fully took over the functions envisaged by the PPBS - framework, endangering by that the credibility of the entire planning process.<sup>3</sup> As Gustav Vroemen, a NATO – IS official, puts it:

*The Georgian leadership must vitally be interested in benefits of implementation while reaching designed objectives. We clearly see it with new government that contrary to Akhalaya's permanent promises and future plans has already provided sober and realistic timelines of Force-transition.*<sup>4</sup>

The evidence collected proves that the heavy weight of a solely rhetorical action and permanent promises was a major feature of the Georgian defence officials for the entire period of 2004 to 2012. Bruce Bach, a former NATO – IS official, doubts entirely on the ability of Georgian MOD to conduct proper long term planning, with much of focus on the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>2</sup> “Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified,” 97.

<sup>3</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2013-2016,” 32.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

year ahead and the inherent difficulties to identify needed capabilities based on the rigorous process of requirements analysis.<sup>1</sup> Not far from this conclusion is the statement of the Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgia, Vladimir Chachibaya, who highlighted three critical weaknesses of the policy and planning process:<sup>2</sup>

- Fragmented (chaotic) nature of strategic vision and planning
- Inadequate prioritization of GAF - objectives
- Formal nature of strategic documents and particularly the Strategic Defence Review (SDR)

Another perspective of looking at the problem is to check briefly how the revision of the strategic planning documents unfolded within the period of analysis. The National Security Concept was not approved as late as August 2011, although the war against Russia occurred three years before.<sup>3</sup> Similar observation can be made with regard to the National Military Strategy (NMS), which was updated as late as 2013 (five years after the war) and published by the MOD in 2014. This evidence of delays and the degraded sense of timing serve as a good indicator for the lack of institutional adaptation, capacity and interagency coordination. But this also testifies a significant disregard of formal policies and procedures at the level of decision - makers (mid - to high level), with the consequence of missing the policy norm and procedure - internalization at lower levels of daily routine. The assessment could be more radical, since it was the NATO that urged Georgia immediately after war in 2008 to continue reforms with “lessons learned from the war in mind.”<sup>4</sup> This process of the comprehensive review of the security and defence sector was termed as the National Security Review (NSR). Its main objective was to unify national efforts in rationalizing the security agencies’ functions, missions, and capabilities.<sup>5</sup> The process strongly encouraged by the Alliance showed no real signs of life, and was largely stuck in the phase of strategic document revision. With no consolidated body of authoritative suggestion to transform the security sector in the long - run in accordance with strict implementation - timelines, officially approved by the involved state agencies, the picture of half - hearted Georgian actions would be difficult to get rid off any time soon. Bob Hamilton’s, a key U.S. - military official at the

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>3</sup> Kogan, “Armenia’s and Georgia’s Security Agenda,” 4.

<sup>4</sup> Akubardia, “Security and Defence Policy Development,” 5.

<sup>5</sup> *National Security Review of Georgia*, n.d.; available at <http://nsc.gov.ge/eng/NationalSecurityReview.php>.

Office of Defence Cooperation (ODC) in Tbilisi from 2006 to 2008, comment that the lack of a modern military bureaucracy had its devastating effects in policy planning, is largely valid. However, as for the end of the first decade of millennium, the situation looked a bit more nuanced. The formal and legal framework as well as procedural policies of a western - type defence planning was, in fact, on place in Georgia. The practical output, however, showed no correspondence of the desired planning objectives with existing procedures and conducted actions.

### **7.3.3 Interoperability and NATO - Standards**

Referring to NATO's standards, George Katsirdakis, a former senior NATO officer for defense partnership and cooperation, noted the absence of any formally agreed definition of NATO standards, yet he still stresses the common feature - that of a shared understanding of "doing business," of objectives, resource allocation etc.<sup>1</sup> Two dimensions can be distinguished in this regard: a more broad area of so called "doing business", which is very much about shared understanding and values, and the second dimension of technical issues closely related to the principle of force interoperability. Since the value based identity effects are subject of another chapter dealing with professional socialization of the Georgian military, we will primarily deal in this section of paper with the issue of military - technical standards and interoperability.

#### **7.3.3.1 Initial Steps: a Bottom – up Approach in the Military**

Robert Hamilton, describes the state of Georgian armed forces in early years of millennium as poorly organized, having problems with the discipline and combat skills, and managed by "famously corrupt leadership."<sup>2</sup> This assessment is shared by Georgian officials, who like Gela Bezhuashvili, a former Head of the National Security Council and former foreign ministry, admit that "there was no fuel, no ammunition. The stockpiles were empty. Weapons,

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, "Defense Reform and the Caucasus: Challenges of Institutional Reform during Unresolved Conflict," 2009, 22–23.

<sup>2</sup> Robert E. Hamilton, "Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View," Commentary (Washington D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, February 3, 2009), 1, available at [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090203\\_hamilton\\_militaryreform.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090203_hamilton_militaryreform.pdf).

machines, tanks – they were all in a disastrous position.”<sup>1</sup> It was no surprise that the most equipment, the Georgian army owned, was soviet made. Additionally, the long standing political cleavages with Russian government deprived Georgia of any meaningful possibility of spare part supply. As NPA - report states, Georgian forces lacked sufficient maintenance and inherited a significant shortage on experienced officers capable to provide “essential leadership.”<sup>2</sup> The only first real highlight of the GAF on the NATO - interoperability issue was, the bottom - up approach initiated by the U.S. in 2001 and called GTEP (Georgian Train and Equip Program), under which four infantry and one mechanized battalions were trained and equipped by 2004 in accordance with NATO - standards.<sup>3</sup> An early indication of the adopted version of NATO standard - understanding is clearly visible here, and mostly refers to the tactical level of unit training and mission - equipment. Objectively, this approach might have seemed more logical to stimulate a transition of the GAF to a modern military. Nonetheless, as Gustav Vroemen, a NATO – IS official, admits, the notion of *standards* must be taken more broadly and applied in a wide range of issue - areas. According to him, the military standards are fixed and based on Standardization Agreements (STANAGs) referring to common standards in training, equipment, supply, capability codes, unit composition etc.<sup>4</sup> They can be applied to all partner - nations. As for the standards of more political nature, the approach is more selective and country – specific, formulated in national Partnership Goals (PGs) that cover all kind of cooperation areas:<sup>5</sup>

- Defence planning and budgeting
- Stable budgetary planning
- Implementation of defence reform
- Public information and the role of civilians in formulating security policy
- Legal arrangements for participating in collective defence
- National programme for security cooperation with NATO

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<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 248.

<sup>2</sup> Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 50.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Forster, “The Paradox of Policy: American Interests in the Post-9/11 Caucasus,” in *Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Visions*, Ebnöther Anja H. and Gustav E. Gustenau (Eds.) (Vienna, Geneva: National Defence Academy, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, PFP-Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes, 2004), 30, available at <http://www.bundesheer.at/wissen-forschung/publikationen/publikation.php?id=122>.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



Interesting view is provided by William Lahue, the head of NLO, who stresses the mandatory nature of NATO - standards (political and narrow military) to those countries that want to become NATO member and must ensure that they are ready to join by exposing their “nature”- similarity to other member nations.<sup>1</sup> This aspect is as much important as it directly links the high level of standard adoption to membership - aspiration, i.e. ideally present in the case of Georgia.

Despite the mentioned expectation, we have already detected a significant level of underrepresentation of NATO - standards and requirements in Georgian strategic policy documents. We also highlighted the systematic disregard of formal requirements and procedures formally adopted by Georgian authorities to guide defence reforms and military transformation. Contrary to Gustav Vroemen’s statement, the core body of defence related institutional documents, though they pay significant attention to the critical importance of the Alliance to Georgia, basically concentrate on the issue of interoperability of forces as the major enabler of NATO cooperation. For instance, the current *Minister’s Vision 2013 – 2014* and the *Military Strategy* issued in 2005 strengthen the value of capability developments in various military areas as key determinants to achieving military interoperability with NATO forces and ultimately full membership.<sup>2</sup> The newer, in 2014 revised document of the NMS, mentions only once the term *standard* within the context of improving standard operating procedures of the GAF, and the whole area of NATO - interoperability is subsumed by the broader issue of regional security and cooperation.<sup>3</sup>

We should not be misguided by a wrong assumption that the Georgian leadership was not aware about the proper meaning and the applicability of NATO - standards. For instance, Giorgi Baramidze, a former State Minister for European and Euro - Atlantic Integration, promised to the NATO - PA delegation, that the government will make sure that “Georgia is ready and fully compliant with NATO standards across a broad range of government responsibilities, many of which are beyond the realm of security.”<sup>4</sup> The statement could not be clearer. Furthermore, the proper communication on the relevance of the standards of force

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, NATO Liaison Office, Tbilisi.

<sup>2</sup> “Minister’s Vision 2013-2014,” 7; “National Military Strategy of Georgia” (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2005), 1–3, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/index.php?pages=erovnuli-strategia>.

<sup>3</sup> “National Military Strategy of Georgia” (Tbilisi: Ministry of Defence of Georgia, 2014), 7, 10, available at <http://mod.gov.ge/documents/samxedro%20strategia%20ENG.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 22, 42.

- and budgetary planning had been included in nearly all relevant documents agreed between NATO and Georgian officials. For instance, the IPAP 2004 - 2006 links all life cycle cost and multiple actions within each GAF - service to the outcomes of the SDR.<sup>1</sup> It must be also noted, that the drafting of the IPAP and ANP (Annual National Plan) documents involves the direct participation of not only mid - level issue - focused professionals, but often ministers and their deputies from various Georgian ministries. Hence, the concerns of improper messaging from NATO - side can be easily disregarded. It must be done so, not least due to permanent NATO - efforts to escape the “operational patterns” of standards and to indicate their applicability even in the PARP - context far beyond the defence sector, as it is shown in the NATO - Backgrounder.<sup>2</sup>

The evidence, nonetheless, speaks much about the approval of the practical military, i.e. operational approach by Georgian officials. Moreover the Georgian military regarded higher interoperability as the means of better combat readiness. General Vladimir Chachibaya for instance stated:

*I tend predominantly towards the technical understanding of standards, and leaving aside the political dimension of Georgian NATO - aspiration (acquiring MAP or not), this linkage between interoperability and higher level of combat readiness is very decisive to us.<sup>3</sup>*

Even after 2012, for instance, the Georgian Ambassador to NATO Grigol Mgaloblishvili, and the former deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze were referring to standards as issues of more technical nature relevant to force - interoperability and compatibility of units.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it is not surprising that the first initial steps to resolve the interoperability and standard issues were done under the general force - restructuring umbrella.

### **7.3.3.2 Nuances of NATO - Standardization in Georgia**

As reported by Shorena Lortkipanidze, an independent expert, in 2005, the plans of force downsizing from 24.000 to 15.000 personnel had to be conducted along with introducing

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<sup>1</sup> “Georgia’s Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006,” para. 2.2.1.

<sup>2</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 9–10.

<sup>3</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with H.E. Ambassador of Georgia to NATO, Grigol Mgaloblishvili, Brussels, Georgian Mission to NATO, August 3, 2013; Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi.

policies and procedures to meet western standards.<sup>1</sup> The plans, as we know, were changed. The Chief of General Staff, Levan Nikoleishvili (in office till 2006) reversed the downsizing and identified the goal from the existing 16.000 to 23.000 personnel, structured in four infantry brigades, one artillery brigade and a special force brigade.<sup>2</sup> As author describes, the primary concern came from western observers due to obvious “inadequacies in long - range planning, establishing priorities, and resource allocation (...) and no feasibility study.”<sup>3</sup> Despite the existing criticism, the ministry of defence initiated several steps largely focusing on infrastructure and training improvement. Several airfields (Kopitnari, Marneuli) have been modernized under the U.S. and Turkish assistance by 2004, and the Vaziani training center received a significant upgrade being able to conduct multinational exercises, i.e. meeting NATO - standards.<sup>4</sup> The GTEP completed a structural turn towards brigade type units. Yet despite intensive efforts to restructure and especially retrain the GAF by introducing non – commissioned officers (NCOs) and building NCO - training center, the entire equipment of forces remained soviet made.<sup>5</sup>

We don't have any open IPAP or PARP document listing all priority activities and objectives in the period after 2004. Yet the six page document *Defense Policy Priorities for 2005-2006 (main directions of the Ministry of Defense)*, drafted by the Georgian MOD not later than 2005 and still available only on the Parliament's webpage, formulates all actions the Georgian leadership regarded as the top priority to be implemented:<sup>6</sup>

- Modernization of the equipment, weapons and vehicle by replacing with new ones.
- Ensure high readiness of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> brigades under SSOP - programs, and the creation of the 4<sup>th</sup> brigade of the former interior troops.
- Full reorganization and the equipment of the artillery brigade as well as Special Forces brigade.
- By 2006 three brigades intended to be fully interoperable with NATO – forces.
- Join the NATO - air situation data exchange and train specialists and modernization the air defence system.
- Upgrade of military airfield in Marneuli meeting NATO standards.

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<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 237.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>4</sup> Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 75.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>6</sup> “Defense Policy Priorities for 2005-2006: Main Directions of the Ministry of Defense.”

- Develop and modernize naval service as well as the military intelligence system.
- Training and equipment of 20 light infantry reserve battalions.
- Full inventory of equipment and munitions, ensure the standardization and categorization system, i.e. logistics codification system and ensure HNS capabilities for NATO - led operations
- Develop and equip the C4 communication system with modern NATO - interoperable equipment, by using partner assistance in equipping all brigades, especially 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> brigades with NATO - interoperable “Harris” radio systems as well as training of signal specialists

The information provided above allows us to make a major conclusion about the focus of Georgian efforts in increasing the degree of interoperability with NATO - forces and in ensuring the application of western standards. It makes it clear that, first of all, the brigades that underwent the GTEP and SSOP (Sustainment and Stability Operations Program), i.e; designed for international (and NATO) missions, had to be highly interoperable. The primary areas of interoperability, i.e. of NATO - standards’ application had been identified as logistics, airfields and command, control and communication systems, as well as tactical training of respective units. The heavy accent on improving logistical capabilities corresponds very well with objectives of IPAP 2004 - 2006 to “Ensure Host Nation Support (HNS) capability for NATO - led exercises and operations, Develop national HNS Capability Catalogue Database, Negotiate an MOU with NATO.”<sup>1</sup> Indicative is that these actions are placed under the section title “Military and Interoperability Issues” and a clear statement is provided that:

*Georgia regards interoperability as essential, and intends to establish, training management policies and procedures and their correspondent institutions as related to the development of overall armed forces standards and practices.*<sup>2</sup>

Similar to the *Defence Policy Priorities 2005-2006* the IPAP 2004 - 2006 accentuates the training and education along with logistics as the most relevant issues, explicitly regarded in the narrow context of interoperability. So, for instance, it urges Georgian side to enhance logistic interoperability with NATO - forces, to develop a national interoperability concept in logistics and to train logistics personnel. But it also identifies the development of individual

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<sup>1</sup> “Georgia’s Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006,” sec. 2.3.2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., chap. II, 3. Military and Interoperability Issues.

and small unit training standards and the review and adoption of NATO doctrines, tactics, techniques and procedures by the Georgian Armed Forces as the next objectives to reach.<sup>1</sup> Due to the lack of official reports on Georgian performance, we rely on secondary sources that are still able to provide valuable insight on the matter. According to one NPA - report in 2006 the newly constructed Senaki Base, designated for the 2<sup>nd</sup> infantry brigade, was “in line with bases in NATO member states.”<sup>2</sup> A year after, the same delegation visited the base and notified a brigade organized along standard NATO - structure with lessons learned from operations abroad applied in tactical training and the objective “to perform to NATO standards at all times.”<sup>3</sup>

More broadly, the increased defence budget allowed defence ministry to spend more money for military infrastructure (storages and bases) in Gori, Senaki and other locations, as well as speed up the renewal of military equipment, especially in areas of command and control, training and exercises and logistics.<sup>4</sup> It seems that the area of most concerns remained the general (incl. fighting) equipment of nearly all units of the GAF. In September 2007, the NATO Parliamentary delegation was instructed by the defence minister David Kezerashvili, that growing acquisition of non - NATO standard military equipment from the East European countries was a result of the simple factor buying “not what I want, but what I can get.”<sup>5</sup> In general, the attempts to ensure a swift transition towards NATO - standards faced several serious challenges in terms of funding, policy adoption and the coordinated approach. The rapid change of plans, planning objectives and the consequent disruption and the revision of planned activities took heavy toll on the GAF. As Teona Akubardia, an independent expert, reported in 2010, by 2008 the rapid mechanical increase of force - size led to the conditions that military units’ officer positions were manned only by 60 - 70%, and brigade commanders lacked necessary knowledge and experience of command and suited rather the positions of a company or battalion commander.<sup>6</sup> Hence, it is by far not evident, whether the Georgian defence leadership would manage the interoperability objectives without the serious military assistance, provided by foreign (NATO) partners and the U.S. in particular.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., sec. 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.6.1.

<sup>2</sup> “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” para. 32.

<sup>3</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 21, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Akubardia, “Security and Defence Policy Development,” 16.

### 7.3.3.3 U.S. – Assistance : Focus on foreign Deployments

Georgia started receiving U.S. excess defence articles under GBSLE program in 2002 and was supplied with communication equipment (radios and base stations), vehicles and helicopters (incl. spare parts), surveillance and detection equipment, computers for automation of applications and some 250.000 USD for uniforms.<sup>1</sup> From the prospective of timing this process went in parallel with the GTEP (Georgian Training and Equipment Program) and must be understood as the constitutive element of it. Though the concrete figures are not provided, the scale and the spectrum of supplies is very much telling about deficits of the GAF and the initial U.S. assistance priorities. By 2004 following assistance teams were on place in Georgia:<sup>2</sup>

- EUCOM Joint Contact Team
- Turkish consultant , instructors in Commando battalion, and Marneuli Airbase
- German advisors in Logistics and NCO - training
- British advisor in PPBS
- A Greek advisor in Georgian Navy

The General Staff received NATO - styling and codified its departments as follows: J1 for Personnel, J2 for Intelligence, J3 for Operations, J4 for Logistics, J5 for Force Strategic Planning, J6 for Control and Communication, J7 for Infrastructure.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, within brigades and separate units certain combat readiness standards were introduced by U.S. (in infantry units) and French teams (in mountain training center Sachkhere), essentially to prepare them for foreign deployments.<sup>4</sup> The overall U.S. military assistance to Georgia appears very impressive, since from 2002 to 2007 nearly 200 million USD were spent for Georgian military, which thanks the rapid increase of budgetary funding, was able to take over some programs (training and maintenance of UH - 1 helicopter fleet) fully funded by the U.S. before.<sup>5</sup> Some financial figures of the U.S. military assistance to Georgia are presented in the chapter of comparative summary (Table 22.) structured in accordance with the respective

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<sup>1</sup> Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 61.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>3</sup> Lortkipanidze, "Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities," 239.

<sup>4</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Hamilton, "Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View," 1–2.

assistance program provided. The detailed description of the programs and the content of the assistance delivered can be summarized as follows:

## 2004

- **FSA (Foreign Security Assistance) Border Security and Law Enforcement** - Provide uniforms, transportation, infrastructure upgrade, training, command-control-communication devices (C3), vessels and aircraft, spare parts and maintenance, radar and management operation, new tactical utility vehicles.
- **IMET** – English language courses and courses on civil - military relations required for PFP participation. Equip and train Georgian deminers to UN - standards.
- **FMF** – Sustain efforts initiated under GTEP, (i.e. SSOP), equipment and training for UH - 1 helicopter unit.<sup>1</sup>

138 students participated in IMET – funded courses and programs.<sup>2</sup> 800 Georgian soldiers went through the deployment in Iraq and the overall number of Georgian students traveled to the U.S. reached 283.<sup>3</sup>

## 2005

134 Georgian soldiers were deployed in Kosovo and 858 in Iraq and following equipment had been delivered to the GAF:<sup>4</sup>

- Equipment of the combat support units of the 1<sup>st</sup> brigade, support of UH - 1 helicopter personnel, aviation mechanics and squadron pilot training.
- Training of 2<sup>nd</sup> brigade from the company to a brigade staff level, training in aero-evacuation medicine, language training; assistance in strategic and operational planning issues, incl. SDR.
- MTT assistance in establishing Captain Career Course and Basic Combat Training Course, sending 43 officers and NCOs to US military schools.

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<sup>1</sup> “FY 2002 - 2004 Europe and Eurasia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, 2002), 340–341, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/17787.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> “FY 2004 Military Assistance,” Fact Sheet (U.S. Department of State, 2004), 196–199, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/42247.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Georgia,” U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2005), available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/55792.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Georgia,” U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2006), available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/63174.htm>.

The total number of students under IMET in this year reached 97.<sup>1</sup> Under the FSA similar assistance was provided as in 2004 to Georgian Coastguard and the GTEP - units to sustain, as well as to reduce the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance.<sup>2</sup>

## **2006**

The number of 82 students was estimated under IMET, though 46 Georgian officers, NCOs and civilians attended the U.S. educational facilities.<sup>3</sup> According to the same source, the U.S. mobile training teams (MTTs) provided training in logistics, instructor development, medical care, self - deployment, SDR - development, as well as the training and equipment for the 2<sup>nd</sup> infantry brigade and assistance for UH - 1 helicopter unit. The U.S. continued efforts to train and equip Georgian deminers to UN - standards.<sup>4</sup>

## **2007**

According to the U.S. State Department following areas were identified critical for providing assistance:<sup>5</sup>

- Assisting in developing SDR and PPBS.
- Developing acquisition planning concept in HRM (human resource management) to erode a soviet style personnel management system.
- Assistance in developing logistical supply chain concept and national intelligence concept.
- Training and equipment of 2000 soldiers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> infantry brigade, training and equipment of the 1<sup>st</sup> infantry brigade, training of 25 brigade and battalion intelligence officers and NCOs.
- Assistance in developing logistics captain's course, introducing US - style Officer and NCO - courses.

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<sup>1</sup> "FY 2005 - 2007 Military Assistance" (U.S. Department of State), 218, accessed February 21, 2015, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/60649.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> "FY 2005 - 2007 Europe and Eurasia" (U.S. Department of State, 2005), 411, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/60653.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> "FY 2005 - 2007 Military Assistance," 218; "Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Georgia," U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State, January 2007), available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/92787.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> "FY 2004 - 2006 Europe and Eurasia," Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, 2004), 387, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/42251.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> "FY 2007 U.S. Assistance to Eurasia - Georgia," FY 2007 U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiay07/115976.htm>.



## 2008

Comparatively little information was available for this year, summarized as follows: <sup>1</sup>

- 26 civilian and military defence officials attended U.S. military education institutions.
- Equipment and training for the 1<sup>st</sup> infantry brigade (2000 soldiers) for deployment in Iraq and for the 4<sup>th</sup> infantry brigade (2132 soldiers) along with the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion and the Staff of the Special Operation Force.

## 2009

The tendency of scarce information was also a featuring element of this year: <sup>2</sup>

- 52 civilian and military defence officials attended U.S. military educational institutions.
- Training and equipment of 752 soldiers for the ISAF deployment.
- Destruction of 16.000 obsolete munitions and clearance of 26 minefields through PFP - trust fund.

## 2010

The priorities of previous year have been largely maintained with some new elements introduced: <sup>3</sup>

- 50 civilian and military defence officials attended U.S. educational institutions.
- 1500 soldiers were trained and equipped for ISAF deployment.
- Launching the Georgian Coastguard maintenance program by refurbishing 2 primary patrol vessels and completing the modernization of another by granting 2 million USD.

## 2012

The amount spent for this year reveals a stable tendency of keeping the relatively same level of spending as in 2011 and 2010. Thus it is no surprise that the most assistance efforts were

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<sup>1</sup> "FY 2008 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance - Georgia," FY 2008 U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiafy08/117314.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> "FY 2009 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia," FY 2009 U.S. Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with Eurasia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiafy09/136825.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> "FY 2010 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia," Performance Report Highlights: Georgia (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, U.S. Department of State), accessed June 24, 2014, available at <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rpt/eurasiafy10/156874.htm>.

devoted to programs of equipping and training GAF - units designed for foreign deployments and for reducing the threat of landmines and unexploded ordinance, i.e. ammunition.<sup>1</sup>

The U.S. policy of military assistance to Georgia can be described as a policy of heavy material - financial support in its initial phase to improve operational capabilities of Georgian forces, especially of those designated for U.S. or NATO - support operations. Logically, the tactical doctrines and training, as well as communication and logistical capabilities were key areas, where the U.S. support to Georgian units was greatly needed. NATO officials, similarly to U.S, regarded the small sized GAF as the best force capable of joint operations and interoperable with NATO - forces. On the other hand, the adoption of NATO - standards on tactical level, especially in command and control, field training and exercises, was equated by Georgian leadership to an automatic increase of combat capabilities of forces, with no logical impediment for the subsequent and significant force - increase in 2007.

The inherent deficiencies and inadequacies of the Georgian decision - making in defence planning and policy took heavy toll on the results of war in 2008. As defence minister David Kezerashvili (stepped down after war) admitted, Georgia lost some 250 million USD equivalents of advanced weapons and hardware, including some 60 battle tanks.<sup>2</sup> But the consequences of war also highlighted, that the application of NATO - standards in the GAF lacked both its comprehensive understanding as well as the continuity of their routine practice. The classified EUCOM (European Command) assessment of the GAF - performance in war revealed “number of flaws in Georgia’s planning, supply, co - ordination, air defence and combat communications systems.”<sup>3</sup> Robert Hamilton, who served as the Chief of the U.S. Office of Defence Cooperation in Georgia from 2006 to 2008, largely agrees to the leaked report and qualifies GAF as “overcentralized, prone to impulsive decisionmaking, undermined by unclear lines of command, and led by senior officials who were selected for personal relationships rather than professional qualifications.”<sup>4</sup>

As for the period after 2008, we see a clear shift towards more emphasis on education and training. However, with persisting flaws in defence policy and planning the shared

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<sup>1</sup> “FY 2012 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, June 2013), available at [www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/2013/212977.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/2013/212977.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” para. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton, “Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View,” 1.

understanding of “doing business”, i.e. standards as defined by NATO, seem again hard to achieve. Nonetheless, the overall picture of the GAF - transition to NATO - standards leaves an impressive picture of large scale efforts initiated predominantly within the military realm and focused largely on the material - technical (facilities and equipment) as well as the tactical level of force - training and management. Despite numerous challenges the most progress achieved in the tactical dimension is best visible through the smooth integration of Georgian units within ISAF - operation, highly praised by all rank NATO - military representatives. As Tamar Karosanidze, the former deputy Defence Minister admitted: “During the IMS (International Military Staff) visit to Georgia a terrific evaluation of Georgian performance had been made with no further objections to Georgian NATO - membership.”<sup>1</sup> Her assessment could be assessed as partially biased, yet the another assessment provided by Gustav Vroemen, leaves even more impressive picture of Georgian achievements:

*The best visible results are demonstrated in Afghanistan and the ISAF is a clear example how perfectly Georgian units fit into command structure and can perform combat operations with Allied forces without any difficulty. I would argue that from the ministry of Defence of Georgia I don't see much of difficulties that would undermine future accession.*<sup>2</sup>

### **7.3.4 Budgetary Planning and Transparency**

The issue of budgetary planning and financial transparency is inherently tied to the ability of defence institutions to produce sound financial plans with enough details made public and the sufficient degree of public involvement to audit and hold the defence ministry accountable. In this light this chapter will also look how consequent the deep commitment of Georgian authorities to rearrange the budgetary planning in accordance with western standards (PPBS) had in reality been put in practice.

#### **7.3.4.1 The Budgetary Practices 2004 - 2012**

As for 2004 a general lack of understanding how to plan, allocate and spend defence resources was a matter of fact, even though, since 2001 the MOD was considering to adopt

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

the PPBS as the main planning framework, supported by a British advisor.<sup>1</sup> The first IPAP - document similarly attests the absence of a proper resource management system in the defence area and urges the ministry to restructure the financial department and to train the financial staff with new accounting and procurement techniques and procedures.<sup>2</sup> Detailed figures of early defence budgets unfortunately are not present on MOD's website, however, they are provided by the Ministry of Finances with some inconsistencies once compared to other sources. Interestingly, the way defence spending figures are structured and presented in the state budgetary documents speaks very much about the intentions and policies the defence and state authorities pursued with regard to the overall defence objectives, but not least about the degree of adoption of NATO - financial and accountability standards. It must be also noted that 2004 stands in a stark contrast to the subsequent financial years. The 2004 - state budget document and the document *On Implementation of the State Budget* issued in 2005 provide a fairly good picture of annual defence activities planned and executed. The planned defence budget differs in absolute numbers once presented in different classification categories. The absolute number of ca. 183 million GEL (85 million USD) contrasts to ca.174 million GEL (81 million USD) within "activity"-classification and to 169,4 million Gel (78,8 million USD) within "financial" category.<sup>3</sup> Though no clarity is provided on 43,5 million GEL (20 million USD) of "capital costs", the list of activities under "NATO - and bilateral activities" (17.4 million USD) and "Enhancing combat readiness" (52,6 million USD) generates a relatively clear impression of defence priorities among force services and planned activities:<sup>4</sup>

### **Enhancing Force Readiness**

1. Land Force	8,6 million USD
2. Reserve units	6,8 million USD
3. Logistics	3,8 million USD
4. Infrastructure	10,1 million USD
5. Armament and Re-equipment	19,4 million USD

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<sup>1</sup> Fritz, "Status Report On Security Sector Governance in Georgia," 129–133.

<sup>2</sup> "Georgia's Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006," para. 2.4.1.

<sup>3</sup> "2004 State Budget" (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed September 14, 2014, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4594>.

<sup>4</sup> GEL (Georgian Lari) exchange rate is based on CIA World Factbook 2004 in "Facts & Information For Georgia," *Facts, Maps & Flags Of The World*, accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.country-info.com/facts/Georgia.htm>.

## NATO - and bilateral Activities

6. PK Operations	3,9 million USD
7. GTEP	12,5 million USD

Clearly, even among priorities presented the GTEP; i.e. the training and equipment of Georgian units for peacekeeping operations takes the major bulk of defence spending along the infrastructure renewal and re - equipment efforts. The document *On Budget Implementation* reflects spending figures according to activities conducted (the way presented in the planned budget) and indicates general areas where most money was allocated. It confirms the priority of training and equipping 10 infantry battalions as well as continuing importance of infrastructure and the equipment/ammunition procurement.<sup>1</sup> In general, all activities under “NATO - Integration” category take the biggest chunk (65%) of defence allocations (ca.114 million from 174 million GEL), however the detailed breakdown of expenditures within various services, bodies and structural units of the ministry, though present, does not contain any figures. Following years show a significant increase of budgetary allocations but also serious deficits in budgetary figures and priorities provided (see Table 12. below).

**Table 12. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2005 (in GEL)<sup>2</sup>**

Planned Budget – 138.885.000			Budget Expended		
1 <sup>st</sup> Approved	2 <sup>nd</sup> amended	<b>Final planned</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Correction	2 <sup>nd</sup> Correction	3 <sup>rd</sup> Correction
159.623.700	368.052.800	<b>392.365.700</b>	368.952.800	391.528.100	393.275.700
			<b>Expended</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Expended</b>
			<b>366.765.100</b>	<b>389.292.600</b>	<b>391.061.700</b>
No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc			No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc		

An intensive investigation in the mentioned budgetary documents of 2005 revealed a persisting priority of US - led training and equipment programs (SSOP) for Georgian units designated for peacekeeping operations (1714 servicemen participated in mission in Iraq and 368 were sent to NATO-mission in Kosovo). Along no spending figures provided the several

<sup>1</sup> “2004 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2004 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed September 14, 2014, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4672>.

<sup>2</sup> “2005 State Budget,” 2005 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4592>; “2005 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2005 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4670>.

waves of defence spending increase speak more about the hasty mode of decisions with “no planning, no acquisition or procurement process, and no feasibility study.”<sup>1</sup>

The picture of the next 2006 year reveals no significant deviation from the established tradition of limiting financial data available for parliamentary or wider discussion. In line with existing criticism the ISAB - report 2006 identified the financial management and procurement area as one of the most deficient ones and recommended to use the principles of newly approved Law on Defence Planning to improve the process of multi - year budgetary planning.<sup>2</sup> Another document called *Defence Policy Priorities 2005 - 2006* and issued by the Ministry of Defence explicitly highlights the commitment to introduce the new budgetary planning methodology and to draft three - year development programs and budgetary plans.<sup>3</sup> The reality, however, looked much more sober (see the Table 13. below).

**Table 13. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2006 (in GEL)<sup>4</sup>**

Planned Budget – 392.570.000			Budget Expended	
1 <sup>st</sup> approved 429.588.600	2 <sup>nd</sup> amended 680.016.000	<b>Final planned</b> <b>716.157.000</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Correction 684.919.400	2 <sup>nd</sup> Correction 721.071.900
			<b>Expended</b> <b>684.039.600</b>	<b>Expended</b> <b>720.147.900</b>
230.694.800 were devoted for “capital costs” usually associated with infrastructure works and procurement, and 268.675.600 for “other items and services” with no further clarification.			261.236.400 spent for “other items and services” and 265.794.900 for “capital costs”.	269.984.800 spent for “capital costs”
No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc			No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc.	

The priorities of the planned Budget, in fact, match the actions reflected in the budget implementation document of 2006. Despite the exorbitant doubling of defence budget the major focus remained at equipping and training the units for PK -operations under SSOP (about 1500 servicemen), foreign missions in Iraq and Kosovo, as well as continuing efforts to renew the infrastructure (bases, storages and facilities), armament and equipment,

<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 246.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, “ISAB REPORT 2006,” 4.

<sup>3</sup> “Defense Policy Priorities for 2005-2006: Main Directions of the Ministry of Defense,” 6.

<sup>4</sup> “2006 State Budget,” 2006 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4590>; “2006 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2006 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4620>.

whenever possible with NATO - standard hardware. As for the new priority areas, the salary increase and enhanced training of 28 reserve battalions complete the overall picture and provide general indication where the ministry of defence was actually heading to. The year 2006 is not least important from the institutional point of view, as it marks the beginning of the period of Dutch assistance to the Georgian MOD in adopting the PPBS - procedures to increase financial efficiency and transparency. As the NATO parliamentary delegation was assured in 2007, the system (PPBS) had to be operational in 2008.<sup>1</sup> This objective is also reiterated by the Transparency International (TI) report in 2007, which states that for operating the system, which went in effect by September 2006, the respective staff members have been sent to U.S. and Europe for qualification improvement; therefore, the full effects (nine major programs and program - based defence budget) of PPBS - utilization had to be expected after two years, i.e. in 2009.<sup>2</sup> The optimistic prognoses made by Georgian officials found their reflection also in strategic level documents. As the SDR approved in 2007 unequivocally stated, the PPBS process was fully utilized within the SDR - planning and was compatible with the MTEF (Mid/Medium Term Expenditure Forecast) framework established by the ministry of finances.<sup>3</sup> The budget projections of the SDR share the negative features of the budgets of the preceding period and reveals merely general figures under the categories of personnel, operation and maintenance, and capital costs with no further details about the nature and purpose of defence spending.<sup>4</sup>

The climax of the budgetary appropriations (planned and expended) falls in the year of 2007 reaching its historical maximum of nearly 1.5 billion GEL (898 million USD).<sup>5</sup> Similar to previous years' financial practice, the figures of the initially planned defence budget significantly differ from the final ones and provide no meaningful insight about the financial spending priorities, largely replicating the activity chart of previous budgets (see Table 14. below).

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<sup>1</sup> "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia," para. 92.

<sup>2</sup> "Reform of Georgia's Defence Sector," 2-3.

<sup>3</sup> "Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified," 82.

<sup>4</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 29.

<sup>5</sup> "XE Currency Charts (USD/GEL)," *Www.xe.com*, accessed May 9, 2015, <http://www.xe.com/currencycharts/?from=USD&to=GEL&view=10Y>.

**Table 14. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2007 (in GEL)<sup>1</sup>**

Planned Budget – 513.270.000			Budget Expended
Amended	<b>Final planned</b>	Under category “Functional”	1 <sup>st</sup> Correction 1.494.553.400
518.696.600	<b>1.494.526.4000</b>	1.500.211.700	<b>Expended</b> <b>1.494.535.300</b>
722.549.100 were devoted for “capital costs” usually associated with infrastructure works and procurement, and 529.606.100 for “other items and services” with no further clarification.			<b>422.252.000</b> - “other items and services” <b>841.636.000</b> - “capital costs” <b>150.355.900</b> – “salaries”
No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc			No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services etc.

The report on implementation of budgetary appropriations for this year briefly sketches out the activities performed within four major defence priorities and leaves an impression that the major bulk of efforts still was devoted to the extensive acquisition of NATO - standard equipment and ammunition (M4 rifles, communication devises and aviation upgrade), unit training for PK - missions (battalions and companies of 3<sup>rd</sup> infantry brigade) as well as to infrastructure renewal (bases in Gori, Senaki, Khoni, Kutaisi and Vashlijvari). Most interestingly, the draft of defence budget describes planning objectives in four - year perspective (2007 - 2010), which clearly has to be attributed to the growing effects of PPBS and the planning requirements of the MTEF supported by the law on defence planning.<sup>2</sup> However, the vague notion of a multi - year framework in the document with no detailed figures of spending in respective year shows the embryonic nature of the desired western - like financial planning. As the DCAF - report in 2007 bluntly states, no evidence was observed that defence funds were planned, managed or spent wisely. Further, the defence budget replicated the model of appropriations defined by the ministry of finances revealing less common features if any with western - type budgetary planning and programming.<sup>3</sup> No different picture is provided for 2008 (see Table 15. below).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “2007 State Budget,” 2007 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4588>; “2007 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2007 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4666>.

<sup>2</sup> “2007 State Budget.”

<sup>3</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 29–31.

<sup>4</sup> “2008 State Budget,” 2008 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4586>; “2008 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2008 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4664>.



**Table 15. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2008 (in GEL)**

<b>Planned Budget – 1.100.000.000</b>	<b>Budget Expended</b>
338.316.400 - “Salaries” 606.609.000 - “Items and services” 148.097.200 - “Non-financial actives”	
<b>Final amended</b>  1.547.383.400	1 <sup>st</sup> Correction 1.547.183.000  979.191.300 – “Items and services” 210.581.400 – “Non-financial actives” 343.047.700 – “Salaries”
	<b>Expended</b> <b>1.749.424.870</b>
358.579.800 (salaries), 884.380.000 (items and service) and 292.199.900 (non-financial actives)	<b>464.600.600 – “Items and services”</b> <b>1.284.824.270 – “Non-financial actives”</b>
No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services and Mod-JS-and subordinated legal entities	No detailed information on activities

Apparently, capital costs and salaries were merged with other costs under the category of “non - financial actives”, and the increased figure of the expended budget shows much of efforts to restore and rebuild military infrastructure damaged during the war in 2008. The textual part of the budget recognizes NATO - standardization in logistics and infrastructure as the top priority along the full implementation of PPBS as. The same tendencies are to observe in the next budgetary period of 2009-2010 (see Table 16. below).<sup>1</sup>

**Table 16. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2009-2010 (in GEL)**

	<b>Planned Budget</b>		<b>Budget Expended</b>	
<b>2009</b>	Planned 942.000.000	<b>Final corrected</b> <b>872.193.300</b>	Corrected 869.286.100	<b>Expended</b> <b>869.015.700</b>
	445.640.200 – “Salaries”	343.868.200 – “Salaries”	342.845.400	<b>342.839.400</b>
	304.914.900 – “Items and services”	352.914.900 – “Items and services”	“Salaries”	<b>“Salaries”</b>
	178.057.200 – “Non-financial actives”	153.057.200 – “Non-financial actives”	358.596.400 “Items and services”	<b>358.467.000 – “Items and services”</b>
			144.404.000 (non-financial actives)	<b>144.383.400 – “Non-financial actives”</b>

<sup>1</sup> “2009 State Budget,” 2009 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4584>; “2009 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2009 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4662>; “2010 State Budget,” 2010 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4582>; “2010 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2010 Zlis Saxelmzifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4660>.

<b>2010</b>	749.550.000	748.721.900,	748.721.900
	368.637.200- “Salaries” 324.761.600-“Items and services” 49.480.000 – “Non-fiscal actives”	338.721.400-“Salaries” 247.494.700 - “Items and services” 77.800.900 – “Non-fiscal actives”  No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services and Mod-JS-and subordinated legal entities	325.394.700 - “Salaries” 147.001.400 - “Items and services” 93.971.400 – “Non-fiscal actives”  No detailed information on activities under the categories of: Salaries, Transfers and Subsidies, Other Items and Services and Mod-JS-and subordinated legal entities

The only valuable information, we were able to extract from the budgetary appropriations of this year is that by 2009 Ministry of Defence had committed itself to a full adoption and implementation of PPBS within the mid - term planning period of 2009 - 2012. The budgetary implementation report of 2009 proves that and states, that new financial planning mechanisms are fully adopted and applied in practice.<sup>1</sup> If this is true, the next 2010 defence budget had to be developed in accordance with new procedures, ultimately resulting in a completely different picture and structure of the approved defence appropriations. However, the available evidence decisively refutes this assumption. Both planned and expended budgetary figures provide clear proof of the continuing old budgetary practices that disregard IPAP - commitments and also national legal requirements. The 2010 Budgetary reports not only still declare to institutionalize the PPBS, improve financial and procurement management and to develop PPBS - related manuals, but admit that 2010 - defence spending was only partially drafted along PPBS - lines.<sup>2</sup>

No visible innovations are to detect in the next 2011 defence budget with a total planned figure of 660 million GEL (corrected to 711.7 million GEL) and the expended fugue of 728.4 million GEL.<sup>3</sup> A traditional practice of highlighting nearly every activity within the defence as a major priority without any indication of concrete goals and respective spending figures is still preserved. The only noteworthy feature we were able to detect for this year, was, that the most of priority activities were directed towards improving training and education centers’ capacities (JCATS - simulation program in Krtsanisi, BCT in Khoni, National Defence Academy etc.) as well as programs and doctrines, instead of acquiring combat equipment and

<sup>1</sup> “2009 State Budget Implementation.”

<sup>2</sup> “2010 State Budget Implementation.”

<sup>3</sup> “2011 State Budget,” 2011 Zlis Saxelmezifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4580>; “2011 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2011 Zlis Saxelmezifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia), accessed May 5, 2015, available at <http://www.mof.ge/4652>.

ammunition. In line with that, the President Saakashvili admitted that: “In previous years we spent much more on arms than on training; now there will be much more training given and filling the arsenal will be a separate issue.”<sup>1</sup> Considering that a good planning implies a well-balanced acquisition process of military hardware accompanied by the necessary training process to get the mentioned hardware operational, President’s statement is a clear recognition of considerable deficits both in financial planning and acquisition.

Among the reviewed budgetary documents only the 2012 defence appropriations reveal some visible attempts to modify budgetary drafts in accordance with the programmatic model of PPBS. Substantial improvements are visible by structuring the budgetary draft in four major defence programs with respective program codes. Funding figures are also available, contrary to post - factum tradition of preceding years, and the level of general information provided speaks about the much greater degree of desired transparency (see the Table 17. below).<sup>2</sup>

**Table 17. Defence Budgetary Figures for 2012 (in GEL)<sup>3</sup>**

	<b>Planned</b>	<b>Expended</b>
<b>Programs (Total)</b>	675.700.000	730.604.600
1. Combat readiness	626.981.100	677.326.300
2. Military Education	19.799.600	13.812.300
3. Healthcare and Social Improvement	7.806.600	7.760.600
4. Defence Science Research	21.112.700	31.705.400

Though each program is described with the sufficient degree of depth, the program objectives, i.e. expected results remain vaguely formulated or cause uncertainties about the end - states of actions performed.

#### **7.3.4.2 Acknowledgment of the persisting Deficits**

The current version of Georgia’s Strategic Defense Review (SDR), issued in 2013 admits, that even though the PPBS - mechanisms have been in place since 2006, the MOD has not yet

<sup>1</sup> Kogan, “Armenia’s and Georgia’s Security Agenda,” 20.

<sup>2</sup> “2012 State Budget,” 2012 Zlis Saxelmezifo Biujeti (Ministry of Finances of Georgia, n.d.), available at <http://www.mof.ge/4578>; “2012 State Budget Implementation,” Sakartvelos 2012 Zlis Saxelmezifo Biujetis 12 Tvis Shesruleba (Ministry of Finances of Georgia, n.d.), available at <http://www.mof.ge/4644>.

<sup>3</sup> 2012 Exchange rate 1USD = 1.65 GEL from “XE Currency Charts (USD/GEL).”

managed to make a full transition to modern resource planning, supposedly due to the low qualification of MOD personnel.<sup>1</sup> After six years spent for making the system operational since 2007 the inability of Georgia's MOD to fully implement the system imply, that either there was no higher level of readiness to implement the system at all, or that the inherent intellectual deficits of MOD - personnel to master the (well – known) system were too difficult to overcome. The latter is, obviously, not true. The SDR suggests studying the whole defense system again to better address the PPBS control mechanisms of program implementation and procedures. Yet if the main cause of the program's delay was the lack of knowledge on the part of MOD personnel, as stressed before, the appeal to re - launch the revision of the entire system appears as nothing less as an attempt to mask the inherent unwillingness of the defense ministry to adopt new planning and budgeting procedures that would establish much higher standards of political and financial accountability, reduce the chance of ineffective practices, and initiate positive change in other state agencies.

NATO officials continue reiterating the need for improvement in financial planning, control and resource management.<sup>2</sup> Compared to the diplomatic language of the NATO - officials the message of *Building Integrity Report* is much more devastating, attesting to the Georgian MOD a “complete lack of a comprehensive system for acquisition, planning and financial management” over ten years with no adherence to international standards of accounting.<sup>3</sup> The Transparency International report in 2007 accuses the ministry of being least accessible ministry with classified information on procurement and “untargeted spending and misuse of public resources.”<sup>4</sup> In 2008, during the NGC - meeting as well as in 2009, NATO repeatedly asked Georgia to improve defence budget transparency and accountability.<sup>5</sup> In fact, it is surprising, how persistently Georgian authorities disregarded the national commitments (IPAP), legal requirements (Law on Defence Planning) and international recommendations (ISAB, NATO) over years, damaging by that their own credibility and the overall institutional capacity. The former deputy minister of defence, Nikoloz Vashakidze agrees to this statement and resolutely claims:

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<sup>1</sup> *Strategic Defence Review 2013–2016* (Tbilisi: Ministry of Defense of Georgia, 2013), 6; available at <http://www.mod.gov.ge/documents/yzqhgsgsreeng.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>3</sup> “Building Integrity Self Assessment,” 21–22.

<sup>4</sup> “Budgetary Priorities in Georgia: Expenditure Dynamics since the Rose Revolution” (Tbilisi: Transparency International Georgia, January 2007), 1, available at <http://transparency.ge/sites/default/files/Budgetary%20Priorities%20in%20Georgia.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Akubardia, “Security and Defence Policy Development,” 5; Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” para. 30.

*I can clearly say that the MOD never reached the needed degree of transparency. Even more, entire areas of activities had been classified to avoid public attention, and the damages of the short war in 2008 allowed minister Kezerashvili to write off many corruptions - deals signed in his time.<sup>1</sup>*

An important element of Georgian defence budgetary appropriations have always been the additional (external) sources of funding. For instance, in 2004 nearly 77.8 million GEL (42%) has been transferred from the presidential fund.<sup>2</sup> Further, a so called “army development fund” – a non commercial fund had been created, where private businesses made their donations.<sup>3</sup> Led by the defence minister (Irakli Okruashvili) himself and his head of the procurement department, the fund approved around seven million USD in the period of 2004 - 2005.<sup>4</sup> Since no information was made public about the purpose of fund’s spending, and nor the voluntary nature of donations seemed convincing, the overall degree of transparency of defence budgetary plans suffered severe deficits. In 2013 the Military Police investigated 53 corruption cases as compared to 16 in 2012, and Inspectorate General inspected multiple violations and abuses of illegal acquisition, procurement at inflated prices, embezzlement and inappropriate high bonuses.<sup>5</sup> Other sources rightly question the practice of not auditing the ministry of defence since 2006.<sup>6</sup> Thus, even though the ministry admitted in 2013 the urgent need of creating an audit - department and to improve procurement monitoring functions, with no coherent approach from the rest of the government and especially the parliament, the likelihood of preserving old bad practices still remain high.<sup>7</sup>

It seems that the change of the defence leadership in 2012 brought the clear acknowledgment of actions needed. For instance, flawed budgetary procedures in the past had been clearly recognized.<sup>8</sup> The corrected SDR - 2013 also highlighted the need to improve parliamentary accountability by means of regular reports, yet it falls short of providing clear procedural suggestions.<sup>9</sup> It does not say anything about the fact that some elements of defense planning could be easily made public without any extensive effort. The Defense Planning Guidance and the summary of Multi - Year Programs constitute a fairly small part of the PPBS.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi.

<sup>2</sup> “2004 State Budget.”

<sup>3</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 28.

<sup>4</sup> Lohm, “It’s Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution,” 34.

<sup>5</sup> “Building Integrity Self Assessment,” 1, 13, 14.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 20; Akubardia, “Overview of the Legislation: Facilitating the Civil Democratic Oversight of Armed Forces in Georgia,” 32.

<sup>7</sup> “Building Integrity Self Assessment,” 1–3.

<sup>8</sup> “Modern Armed Forces.”

<sup>9</sup> “Strategic Defence Review 2013-2016,” 9.

However, once they were made public, they would greatly enhance defense planning transparency, as well as the involvement of a broader public in the discussion, thus generating a better political deliberation. To support our findings, we also refer to the budget transparency index, and the anti - corruption index established by the Transparency International for Georgia. In 2011, the defense budget's transparency level was assessed as moderate to low.<sup>1</sup> The report marked in 2012 Georgia's transition to high anti - corruption - index category for defense budgets due to serious shortfalls, risk, and bad practices detected in defense acquisition and personnel promotion. The provisions of the statement of the December meeting of NATO foreign ministers in 2008, that called on Georgia to undertake "lessons - learned process from the recent conflict" and also urged the Georgian government to continue reforms in military personnel management, transparency of the defense budget, and other areas, can serve as additional and very valuable indication of fields, where significant problems had been externally detected.<sup>2</sup> As for the issue of transparency to the general public, the MOD ranked at the worst level in 2010, and received an average rating in 2013.<sup>3</sup>

The IPAP 2004 - 2006 urged the Georgian side to improve public awareness in support of national reforms, and indeed some steps had been made to meet this objective.<sup>4</sup> Since the country eagerly declared its aspiration to join the Alliance, the requirement of a better public awareness of defence policy and reforms, theoretically, acquired higher relevance as compared to those countries that show little interest in membership. Further, we must distinguish two types of information to be made public in this regard. First, dealing with NATO itself and its activities, and the second, on processes and plans within the national defence transformation process. The first track shows fairly active engagement of the Georgian authorities with the wider public by organizing regular NATO - weeks and seminars, meetings between NATO - officials and representatives of local organizations.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Transparency of National Defence Budgets* (London: Transparency International UK, 2011), 22.

<sup>2</sup> "NATO-Chairman's Statement-Meeting of the NATO-Georgia Commission at the Level of Foreign Ministers Held at NATO Headquarters, Brussels."

<sup>3</sup> Ana Mdinaradze, *Monitoring of Public Info in Geo Ministries* (Tbilisi: Institute for Development of Freedom of Information, n.d.); available at <http://www.idfi.ge/?cat=researches&topic=40&lang=ka>. See also *2010 Statistical Results on the Provision of Public Information by 21 State Agencies* (Tbilisi: Institute for Development of Freedom of Information, December 14, 2010),; available at [http://www.opendata.ge/?lang=ka#!lang/ka/cat/statistic\\_of\\_project/topic/33](http://www.opendata.ge/?lang=ka#!lang/ka/cat/statistic_of_project/topic/33).

<sup>4</sup> "Georgia's Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006," para. 3.1.1, 3.1.2.

<sup>5</sup> NATO information centers were established in Kutaisi and Zugdidi, see in Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 8.

Opening the NATO - Liaison Office (NLO) in October 2010 served among others this purpose.<sup>1</sup> As for the second track of communication, the USAID funded report in 2014 describes in detail the nature and the entire history of process - development in this regard. It recognizes the active engagement of the ministry of defence with various NGOs while developing series of strategic level documents such as SDR, the Military Strategy, Minister's Vision and the Threat Assessment Document.<sup>2</sup>

The effort to institutionalize these relations has been also highlighted, as various memorandums had been initiated by the ministry to regulate the scope and character of the said cooperation. However, it also attests a clear signs of uncoordinated and willful approach to the issue from defence leadership, as three memorandums were signed in 2007, 2009 and 2013, each time coinciding with the change of defence leadership.<sup>3</sup> The first document specifies the areas of cooperation, and the second, similarly, lists the strategic and agency level planning documents that are to be developed in close contact with respective public - and non governmental organizations. It must be admitted, that almost all mentioned documents had been regularly sent to NGOs for respective evaluation, and the MOD resorted in 2010 to their expertise to run MOD - personnel through several educational courses. However, as report concluded, even despite the well established tradition of the Georgian defence and Security Conference (annual forum for regional security and defence issues), the institutional aspect of such cooperation remains underdeveloped due to the lack of regularity and the heavy dependence on political situation or the personal goodwill of officials, unable to turn this norm into routine practice.<sup>4</sup>

Even though the policy and planning documents had been offered to relevant public stakeholders as the area of the most wanted collaboration, their practical implementation, review and monitoring of the objectives achieved, clearly remained outside of ministry's focus, with rapidly declining interest to existing cooperation format during last couple of years till 2012.<sup>5</sup> As Gustav Vroemen, a NATO – IS official, puts it, similar to the improved practice of Georgian MOD to regularly update information on ISAF and the Georgian contingent in the mission, the Annual National Program (ANP) could also be made public

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<sup>1</sup> "Deepening Relations with Georgia," 8.

<sup>2</sup> "Georgia's Security Sector Review Project," 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 91–92.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 92–95.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

with some modification.<sup>1</sup> That would be a right step towards the enhanced participation of civil society in a wider discussion of defence policies and plans, currently entirely dependent on the goodwill of defence ministry's leadership. In line with our general findings, the IDFI (Institute for Development of Freedom of Information) study showed that the degree of access to public information within the MOD from 2012 to 2013 increased dramatically from 0% to 86%, which can only be attributed to the government change in Georgia and the respective replacement of defence minister.<sup>2</sup>

Concluding this section we can draw following general observations. The requirement of establishing modern western financial planning mechanisms, though acknowledged and frequently declared by Georgian officials as about to be established, turned to become a hollow promise throughout the period 2004 - 2014. Although the MOD - personnel went through the extensive training program and the initial objective was to produce the PPBS - based defence budget by 2007, the declared policy never materialized till 2012, the year, which first time shows clearly recognizable signs of program - based approach to budgetary planning. Some key elements of a new resource and financial planning such as DMB and MT were created, yet as the USAID sponsored report concludes, they never became fully operational allowing almost all important decisions to bypass the existing expertise and prescribed formal procedures.<sup>3</sup> The ministry of defence lacked completely the internal financial monitoring and audit system, able to check periodically the scale, with which the planned objectives were met. Most information on defence budgetary implementation was provided by figures containing in the general state budget documents, placed at the ministry of finances' webpage. The planned defence budgets in turn, reveal significant deficits in providing information on spending for concrete defence actions, as well as miss clear formulation of short - term objectives to achieve, not to speak about the mid - and long term actions, as required by the PPBS. Thus we have clear evidence of formal compliance, by which the old financial practices continued to dominate and significantly damaged the overall financial planning capacity, transparency, as well as the credibility of national authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>2</sup> Konstantine Janjgava and Goga Tushurashvili, "Accessibility of Public Information in Georgia - Information Bulletin 2012 - 2013," Sajaro Informaziis Xelmisazvdomoba Sakartveloshi - Sainformazio Biuleteni 2012 - 2013 (Tbilisi: Institute for Development of Freedom of Information, 2013), 49, available at <http://www.idfi.ge/uploadedFiles/files/Geo-2013%20angarishi%20opendata.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> "Georgia's Security Sector Review Project," 49.



### 7.3.5 Human Resources

Similar to the case of Armenia, Georgian first effort to “westernize” defence institutions, primarily concentrated on the ministry of defence, however, it rapidly expanded its scope and soon included the entire armed forces. We will review the process, which Georgian defence authorities initiated since 2004, and the policies and practices adopted to mirror standards of the NATO - human resource management model.

#### 7.3.5.1 Personnel Reshuffling – a constant Feature of the new Policy

The initial ISAB recommendations were largely in accordance with common requirements of the division of responsibility between the civilian Ministry of Defence and the General Staff, staffed by personnel with expertise in respective issue - areas.<sup>1</sup> The period after ousting President Shevardnadze’s government in 2003 led to a turbulent change among senior civilian and military personnel in various state - agencies with obvious lack of capacity for policy expertise and the overall competence.<sup>2</sup> A featuring element of the post - Shevardnadze era was that the personnel - turn over, actually, never stopped. They occurred with great speed and fanfare, endangering the general need for stable personnel policies and causing doubts about the timeframe and comprehensiveness of reforms.<sup>3</sup> From the very beginning of the regime change the ISAB - team seemed to be very concerned about the developing tendencies and specified in its recommendations that:

*There is, however, a clear and obvious need to put in place proper personnel development and employment procedures for officials and to reduce the frequency with which they are moved or replaced. Without the continuity that this would embed into the system, reform will proceed erratically and inefficiently, and the development of an efficient, dedicated and politically neutral civil service will be made more difficult to achieve.*<sup>4</sup>

Despite the fact that the sound personnel management (concepts, data - base, selection and other procedures) was among the top policy priorities to be implemented during 2005 - 2006, the total replacement of Shevardnadze - era officials led to a significant decrease of expertise and premature, ill - advised decisions that frustrated many western and NATO - officials.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lortkipanidze, “Chapter 11, The Georgian Security Sector: Initiatives and Activities,” 237, 239.

<sup>2</sup> *From Revolution to Reform: Georgia’s Struggle with Democratic Institution Building and Security Sector Reform*, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Lynch, “Chapter 12, Georgia: An Emerging Governance: Problems and Prospects,” 263.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, “ISAB REPORT 2006,” 6.

<sup>5</sup> Nixey, “The South Caucasus,” 128.

Probably, the best personification of such a corrupted policy of personnel - change is Irakli Okruashvili, a member of the Saakashvili's party (UNM – United National Movement), who after his defence ministerial appointment in 2004 dismissed almost all department heads, appointed by his predecessor Giorgi Baramidze (also a member of UNM), let many western - educated officers and staff - members to leave office and appointed his friend and acquaintances, later accused of embezzlement and abuse of office.<sup>1</sup> These were nothing else than the worrying signals about the absence of any intention to introduce clear personnel policies. From 2003 till 2006 the ministry of defence was reshuffled three times, leaving no chance for policy continuity and implementation, and was described by a western diplomat as a situation, where “as soon as we start to know who to talk to, this person has shifted position.”<sup>2</sup> Frequent personal shake - ups and a massive dismissal of military and civilian personnel, that accompanied the leadership change in the ministry, obviously, had to be attributed to the personal preferences and the desire of a full control and loyalty down to the lowest level. The former deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze provides a pretty radical assessment:

*The past experience showed unfortunately that the frequent change of the top-leadership (ministers) led to the willful and shocking chain-effect of the entire personnel-change. Five “aggressive defence” ministers played basically very destructive role for the entire process of defence reforms by upholding the tendency to deprive its personnel educated in NATO-centers to man appropriate positions. Many of them were even suspended or left the GAF, causing the immense waste of financial resources that had been provided by NATO-countries”<sup>3</sup>*

All this heavily affected the institutional capacity of a proper personnel management, hollowing the evaluation and promotion systems and causing heavy inconsistencies of career developments.<sup>4</sup> The only palpable changes developed slowly, as under the minister David Kezerashvili (in office from 2006 to 2008) the Dutch and British assistance teams were invited to devise the HRM - concept and a selection board had been put in place in 2006.<sup>5</sup>

The civilianization of ministry never proved to be a problem. By 2007 the majority (85%) of MOD - personnel were civilians.<sup>6</sup> Yet another objective that is the full professionalization of military revealed many ups and downs. In 2007 the NATO parliamentary delegation was

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<sup>1</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 54.

<sup>2</sup> Lohm, “It’s Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution,” 31.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi.

<sup>4</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 28.

<sup>5</sup> “Reform of Georgia’s Defence Sector,” 4.

<sup>6</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 27.

instructed by President Saakashvili that the military reform was aimed at full professionalization of army, which had to abolish conscription by 2009, according to MOD - sources and the SDR - 2007 document.<sup>1</sup> The Transparency International - report in 2007 claims, however, that the objective to make the army fully professional was identified for the year 2012, according to a MOD - spokesman.<sup>2</sup> The updated SDR made public in 2013 does not specify the date of full transition to a contract based system, nor the Minister's Vision 2013 - 2014 does it. As a matter of fact, the ratio of professional military servants in GAF reached 70% under the minister Irakli Alasania, who expected the complete professionalization of army by 2017.<sup>3</sup> The frequent change of the plans, objectives and dates of army professionalization supports the claim that the mechanisms of force and resource planning had never been properly applied, and, in fact, were made contingent on personal preferences of each new minister appointed. Even worse, many of the educated officers in force and resource planning had been either dismissed or put in other less relevant positions.<sup>4</sup>

### **7.3.5.2 Leadership Change and the Credibility of Policy – Commitments**

The whole process, which started by the IPAP 2004 - 2006 document and committed Georgian side to adopt a new HRM - system for both civilian and military personnel, resulted initially in the approval of the HRM - concept in 2006 and the approval of the subsequent policies and plans running throughout 2007 and 2008.<sup>5</sup> The period until 2008 is clearly recognized as the most fruitful time for the made progress. The pay by rank system was developed as well as some policy implementation plans that were put on hold after 2008.<sup>6</sup> Yet the full implementation to the level of daily routinization of practices never materialized. For instance, the Officers Evaluation System (OES), though drafted at concept level, faced significant problems in its further introduction down to unit (battalion and company) levels,

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<sup>1</sup> "17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 7; Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 17; Nichol, "Georgia (Republic) and NATO Enlargement: Issues and Implications,” March 7, 2008, 3; "Strategic Defence Review: Final Report 2007 Unclassified,” 84.

<sup>2</sup> "Reform of Georgia's Defence Sector,” 5.

<sup>3</sup> "Georgia and Armenia: 24-28 March 2014,” chap. II Georgia, para. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>5</sup> "Georgia's Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006,” sec. 2.2.2; "Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 93.

<sup>6</sup> "Georgia's Security Sector Review Project,” 50.

according to William Lahue.<sup>1</sup> In general, till 2012 every new minister and his team upheld the tradition of a high level authorization and disregarded the well - defined standing procedures in various functional areas.<sup>2</sup> It must be noted, though, that some signs of internal resistance and desire to abolish bad practices were clearly identifiable, as the newly appointed Chief of Staff Vladimir Chachibaya (graduated in U.S. War College) was pushing for more western standards and promotion of western educated competent cadre.<sup>3</sup> However he was soon replaced by an old soviet - school general, who in turn, was replaced by a young major Giorgi Kalandadze, soon promoted to the rank of general. This fact alone raises multiple questions about the continuity, consistency and the credibility of personnel management decisions within the ministry of defence. This and other instances heavily undermined the commitments of Georgian defence leadership made in the framework of NATO – integration. For instance, the change of the government in 2012 led to the arrest of the former defence minister Bacho Akhalaya and General Giorgi Kalandadze, confronted with charges “ranging from abuse of office to torture” and salary supplement approvals at single discretion of the minister without any objective justification.<sup>4</sup>

The improvement of the HRM - system was a permanent demand voiced by NATO.<sup>5</sup> Georgian side, consequently, responded with some initiatives that incorporated a deeper involvement from the NATO - side. For instance, in 2009 a Professional Development Program (PDP) was launched to train and educate civilian personnel of the MOD, firmly in line with ANP - objectives.<sup>6</sup> Further, the Promotion Board (PB) for military officers was established after Irakli Alasania was put in charge of the ministry in 2012.<sup>7</sup> Before him, the PBs though formally created, were in fact, heavily dependent on the approval of Selection Boards that in turn was delayed due to “high risk they posed to the single - handed type rule in the ministry”.<sup>8</sup> All these factors repeatedly caused the necessity to restart many policies at

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, NATO Liaison Office, Tbilisi.

<sup>2</sup> Fluri and Bucur-Marcu, *Partnership Action Plan for Defence Institution Building*, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton, “Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View,” 1.

<sup>4</sup> Lucio Malan, “Georgia’s Euro Atlantic Integration: Internal and External Challenges,” Draft Report, 057 CDS DG 13 E (NATO Parliamentary Assembly, March 22, 2013), 8, available at <http://www.nato-pa.int/Default.asp?CAT2=2027&CAT1=19&CAT0=576&SHORTCUT=3126&SEARCHWORDS=057,CDS DG>, “Buidling Integrity Self Assessment,” 1, 19, 20.

<sup>5</sup> Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” para. 30.

<sup>6</sup> Schmidt, “NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries,” 8.

<sup>7</sup> “Buidling Integrity Self Assessment,” 3.

<sup>8</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

functional level after the leadership's departure or the dismissal of a responsible individual that altogether seriously questioned the efficiency of the institution.<sup>1</sup> As stressed by Gustav Vroemen, the NATI – IS official, the frequent change of defence leadership and staff members causes an inherent difficulty to implement the plans and policies adopted, and turned the ministry very vulnerable to changes of political landscape (since 2004 minister changed eight times).<sup>2</sup> In fact, the longest serving minister had only two years in office “barely sufficient to get fully acquainted with the complex and complicated issues relating to defence reform.”<sup>3</sup> Given this, the role of continuous commitment of senior officials to agreed policy agenda and the respective transmission of commitments down to lower levels, becomes even more critical. As Gustav Vroemen argues:

*The best combination is senior and mid-level officials committed. However if the top leadership is not interested and is less involved, the role of lower levels increases dramatically. I could bring here the example of Minister Akhalaya, who was obviously less interested in NATO (supposedly due to other internal priorities), and his deputy Kharshiladze, who was overcommitted to implement Georgia's NATO-agenda and kept this fragile balance.*<sup>4</sup>

It seems that the tradition of a “volatile and potentially disturbing” MOD - leadership preserved over the entire period relevant to our research with an obviously long record of patronaging and making deals through informal personal relations with no reliance on written documents.<sup>5</sup> According to Tamar Karosanidze, a former deputy under the minister Irakli Alasania, “The most problematic issue was the full dependence of the ministry and people within it on the good will of the minister.”<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the NLO - Head William Lahue attested in 2014 the Georgian MOD a still existing imbalance between the right of authority and the understanding for responsibility:

*Top - level officials have to have a very limited ability to interfere and change the organizational system, and if yes, then very well defined. Lots of work has to be done in this regard, since some elements of a “strong hand” - rule is still visible.*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 136.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ; Novikova et al., *Security Sector Reform in Countries of Visegrad and Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Opportunities*, 41.

<sup>3</sup> Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” 31.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>5</sup> Lohm, “It's Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution,” 31, 34.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze, Ministry of Defence of Georgia, Tbilisi.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, NATO Liaison Office, Tbilisi.

Understandably, the due to persisting obvious wrongdoing on Georgian side the relationship to NATO could not remain unaffected, and as pointed by Gustav Vroemen, difficulties amounted to the top level as “it is well known that the chemistry between the Secretary General Scheffer and President Saakashvili did not work at all, that naturally, affected negatively the whole issue of NATO - Georgian cooperation.”<sup>1</sup>

### **7.3.6 Transformation through Socialization: military Training and Education, Participation in NATO - Operations**

At this point we turn our attention to the intensity of bilateral relations between Georgia and its NATO - counterparts in a seemingly less important field of training and education. The technical nature of the activities that mostly relate to field exercises and the development of doctrines and field manuals leave an impression of less dynamic processes. Yet the deeper look into the subject reveals multitude of strong connection lines existing at various levels that directly contribute to the establishment of a system, run largely in a western (NATO - like) manner. These connections refer to three basic domains: training, education and the participation in foreign (NATO, U.S.) missions. From the very beginning it must be noted that the former two, in fact, represent a component element of the latter. And the foreign deployment of Georgian troops under NATO/US - command used to be regarded by Georgian leadership as key factor enabling high chances of future NATO - membership. As Krisztian Meszaros put it:

*It is wrong to think that participation in ISAF operation is a ticket to NATO membership. Even between U.S. State Department and the Department of Defence there was a significant friction and discussion about the Georgian deployment in Afghanistan and its implication to membership plans.*<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the former Defence Minister Irakli Alasania admitted in 2013 that Georgian leadership had made mistake by thinking that the strong military cooperation would open the door of accession.<sup>3</sup> Hence we will look closer to the intensity of force deployment and training to identify, whether the dynamic was corresponding to key political events associated with Georgian membership - hopes.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Krisztian Meszaros, NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division (PASP-IS), Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Georgian Defence Minister - Irakli Alasania at NATO Defence Ministerial, Brussels.

As already illuminated in previous chapters, the initial training assistance to Georgian units started with U.S. - led GTEP (Georgia Training and Exercise Program) and SSOP (Sustainment and Stability Operations Program) programs, propelling soon the GAF to a serious player in U.S. led operation in Iraq. As Robert Hamilton, the former head of Cooperation Office in Tbilisi, stressed, the Georgian contingent performed full - scale combat operations and the control of the entire province with a high level of tactical skill.<sup>1</sup> The IPP as well as the bilateral cooperation plans with individual NATO - countries (predominantly the U.S.) allowed Georgia to participate in hundreds of PFP - and joint activities. NATO - Georgia Backgrounder provides a vivid picture of continuity of the joint exercises that dramatically intensified since 2002, and after the decision to join the ISAF - operation reached its peak, with no indication of rapid decline.<sup>2</sup> Joining ISAF strengthened the existing ties with U.S. - side as the major provider of tactical training and equipment. The U.S. Marine Force Europe begun to train and equip Georgian units in 2009 on a rotational basis, running almost in parallel with multinational PFP - exercises with over 1000 troops from 18 countries hosted by Georgia.<sup>3</sup> The exercises called “Cooperative Longbow 09” and “Cooperative Lancer 09” served the basic objective of increasing military interoperability of forces, and continued the early tradition of focusing on particular aspect of capability development, similar as in NATO - PFP air exercise “Cooperative Archer” in Georgia in 2007.<sup>4</sup>

### **7.3.6.1 The high Speed of bilateral Cooperation**

The outstanding role of the U.S. involvement in Georgian military and training program is undeniable and will be devoted a separate section within this chapter. At this stage we will draw an overall picture of the Georgian military education system, which we have partially covered in previous chapters while highlighting the interoperability issues and the content of foreign assistance. The heavy focus on tactical training of Georgian units found its reflection in the first IPAP document 2004, where the NCO - and commissioned officers’ education and

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, “Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View,” 1.

<sup>2</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 11.

<sup>3</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 44; Schmidt, “NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries,” 8.

<sup>4</sup> “4 – 8 May 2009 - Visit to Tbilisi, Georgia - PC Sub - Committee on NATO Partnerships,” para. 28; “NATO’s Relations with Georgia,” *Www.nato.int*, accessed October 30, 2013, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_38988.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_38988.htm).

the professional development program were given top priority.<sup>1</sup> The GTEP and SSOP basically embraced this approach and did not go beyond the line of tactical drilling designed for foreign operations. It was conducted under the Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR) and aimed at sustaining standard operating procedures (SOPs) with strong emphasis on intensive tactical training (100 days a year) and developing combat capabilities consisting of individual skills, marksmanship, squad and platoon tactics, land navigation, lifesaver, radio operator etc.<sup>2</sup> U.S. teams were also involved in training sergeants and professional recruits along German counterparts. As for the National Defence Academy, the initial four - year officers' education program, developed under the Turkish mentorship, was dismantled by minister Okruashvili, who preferred a short - term (one year) British - drafted program.<sup>3</sup> The Turkish sponsorship of the Academy before minister's decision to abandon it, unfolded along the lines of Turkish General Staff Academy, mirroring the steps done in Azerbaijan, and additionally covered the deployment of the Georgian peacekeeping platoon in Kosovo.<sup>4</sup> The language training represented another strong pillar of the Academy, with English, German and Turkish language courses provided in central facility, the Greek in Poti naval base (due to the transfer of missile boat "La Combattante II" and the training of 40 crew members), and other language courses on bilateral basis for NCO - category.<sup>5</sup>

Multiple uncoordinated assistance channels, the frequent change of the leadership and the respective amendments of educational programs created a certain chaotic environment, in which both educational standards and responsibilities seemed to be mixed up. As one Georgian artillery officer confessed:

*In Soviet times we had a doctrine. Of course it was fiction, but it still gave us something to relate to. Now everything is in chaos and no one says anything, because then they will be fired.*<sup>6</sup>

These words reveal the high degree of internal tensions existing within the GAF, and are clearly associated with the period of series of willful decisions made by the minister Irakli Okruashvili. The post - Okruashvili period after 2006 was also characterized by an intensive works aimed at building new and renovating old training facilities that significantly improved

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<sup>1</sup> "Georgia's Commitments under the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO - 2004-2006," para. 2.3.1.

<sup>2</sup> Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 62-63.

<sup>3</sup> Darchiashvili, *Security Sector Reform in Georgia 2004-2007*, 28.

<sup>4</sup> Cornell et al., *Regional Security in the South Caucasus*, 52, 63.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>6</sup> Lohm, "It's Not All Roses: Georgian Defence Reforms since the Rose Revolution," 33.



training and educational conditions of the GAF.<sup>1</sup> This aspect has been partially covered in the chapter dealing with interoperability and standards. As for the general NATO - approach to defence education and training in Georgia, several programs had been put in place. With the support of the Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes (briefly PFP - consortium) the Defence Education Enhancement Programme (DEEP) was developed, being primarily focused on curriculum development for the National Defence Academy and able to launch the Command and General Staff School by 2012.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the mountain training center in Sachkhere had been accredited by NATO as a Partnership Training and Education Center and offered training courses to militaries of allied and partner nations. Additionally, following the Georgian request in 2008 the Professional development Program (PDP) was launched in 2009 that provided educational opportunities abroad, mobile training teams and policy development advice in a broad variety of areas.<sup>3</sup>

#### **7.3.6.2 Dominance of U.S. – Assistance**

It can be said without exaggeration, that the U.S. - involvement in bilateral or NATO - led educational and training programs by far outweighed contributions of other nations. The GTEP (64 million USD) alone was able to run more than 2000 Georgian servicemen and 270 members of the mechanized armor company, trained in accordance with US - doctrines, subsequently sent to Iraq in 2005 and later in Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup> The continuation of the U.S. efforts was ensured by the follow - up SSOP (Sustainment and Stability Operations Program). During the 16 month period and with 60 million USD allocated, it allowed another 2000 Georgian infantry servicemen, reconnaissance, engineer and signal companies as well as general staff command and control elements and operational HQ - staff to complete full training.<sup>5</sup> In 2006 the SSOP was extended for another year and allocated additional 30 million USD, which made the entire U.S. effort for the period 2002 - 2006 look more than impressive, with 154 million USD allocated and more than 5000 Georgian personnel trained.<sup>6</sup> These two programs significantly increased the capabilities of the GAF and indeed constituted

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<sup>1</sup> “Viewing NATO from the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,” para. 98.

<sup>2</sup> “NATO-Georgia Relations,” Media Backgrounder (North Atlantic Treaty Organization, December 2013), 2, available at [http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2013\\_12/20131127\\_131201-MediaBackgrounder\\_Georgia\\_en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_12/20131127_131201-MediaBackgrounder_Georgia_en.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 9.

<sup>4</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 42–44.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

the core of the national army.<sup>1</sup> However, it must be also noted, that the turbulent personnel change in various echelons of the GAF took heavy toll on the military, as many of GTEP - trained servicemen did not continue their contract and left army in 2005.<sup>2</sup> This fact highlights a paradox dominating the Georgian reality that the programs regarded as highly valuable to increase the professionalism of GAF and bring Georgia closer to NATO, posed no significant obstacle for defence leadership to make counterproductive decisions, especially, with regard to personnel management policy, i.e. individuals trained under the mentioned programs.

After the brief Georgia - Russia war in 2008 the U.S. strengthened their approach by recognizing the primacy of educational assistance to Georgia. The testimony of the Assistance Secretary of Defence, Alexander Vershbow to the Senate Committee in August 2009 underlines the priority focus on intellectual issues such as training, doctrine, personnel management and others as the foundation for the future of the GAF to build on.<sup>3</sup> Alone the year 2011 exposed 63 training, educational and operational activities, and till April 2012 their number reached 23, apart from 13 Georgian requests that resulted in U.S. - transfers of equipment for modernization of training facilities.<sup>4</sup> Although the financial aspect of assistance had been reviewed in earlier sections of the paper, the U.S. congressional reports we refer to here, also illustrate the heavy emphasis on training and education support, by providing key financial figures that allow us to comprehend the size and importance of the assistance for Georgia and the U.S.. So, for instance, from 1992 throughout 2010 the overall military aid to Georgia accounted for nearly 896 million USD (three times more than for Armenia and two times more than for Azerbaijan), and the overall financial aid reached nearly 3.4 billion USD by 2014 (two times more than in Armenia, four times more than for Azerbaijan) with dramatic increase of financial support in 2008 (895.670.000 USD) and 2009 (423.870.00 USD) clearly to be attributed to the post war - recovery efforts.<sup>5</sup> Under the particular U.S. Peace and Security Assistance program the cumulative aid to Georgia accounted 542.3 million USD (three times more than for Armenia and Azerbaijan). The Georgian side tried to avoid the duplication of support objectives and therefore preferred to work with FMF and IMET programs instead of WIF (Warsaw Initiative Fund) that similarly were aimed at

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<sup>1</sup> Mihalka and Wilcox, "Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus," 29.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," 44.

<sup>3</sup> Mihalka and Wilcox, "Unintended Strategic Consequences of Security Assistance in the South Caucasus," 31.

<sup>4</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 47–48.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 45, 62, 64.

building institutions, policy, doctrines, curricula development, and personnel training.<sup>1</sup> By 2012 about 294 Georgian military students completed their respective courses under the U.S. - financial aid at cost of about 12 million USD (almost six times more than provided to Armenia or Azerbaijan).<sup>2</sup>

### **7.3.6.3 Meeting NATO in HQ and the Field: Sociological Effects of Identity Formation**

The sources that present the financial size as well as material and personal extent of American assistance to Georgia tell nothing else but the heavy strategic effort of the U.S. and NATO to form a military of a partner nation that would mirror western spirit and standards based on common functions and procedures. The GTEP and SSOP were very instrumental to build a core of the GAF run along U.S. model.<sup>3</sup> The ever intensified participation of Georgian units in U.S. and NATO - missions significantly increased the Georgian exposure to western military influence, especially in operational context. So for instance, in 1999 a company and a platoon were deployed under the German and Turkish unit commands in Kosovo.<sup>4</sup> Since 2003 Georgia gradually bolstered its presence in operation Iraqi Freedom from 69 to 850 in 2005 and ultimately to some 2000 servicemen in 2008 that made Georgia largest non NATO - contributor.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the initial 50 peacekeepers sent to Afghanistan were reinforced to 925 men by mid 2010 and the additional 749 troops sent in October 2012 made the total number of the deployed contingent close to 1600, turning Georgia again to a biggest non - NATO contributor.<sup>6</sup> The operational environment, which put Georgian servicemen in a close daily contact with U.S. and NATO - contingents, played a role of the cementing substance that glued together the tactical skills obtained during the pre - deployment with NATO/U.S. military planning and the general behavioral rules confronted with in Afghanistan. Thus, it is less surprising that foreign deployments significantly increased interoperability of the GAF, and the access to planning and working facilities within the Allied Command Operations (ACO) further nurtured the acceptance of higher planning standards of western militaries.<sup>7</sup> President Mikhail Saakashvili himself declared in 2010 during the meeting with MOD and

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<sup>1</sup> "NATO Partnerships," 33.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 49.

<sup>3</sup> "Georgia's Security Sector Review Project," 38.

<sup>4</sup> Schmidt, "NATO and the South Caucasus: An Analysis of Cooperative Activities within the IPAP Framework in the South Caucasus Partner Countries," 8.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests," 35-36.

<sup>6</sup> Nichol, "Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests," 6.

<sup>7</sup> "NATO-Georgia Relations," 11.

Joint Staff officials that the participation in ISAF in fact was a huge military school for Georgian units.<sup>1</sup> The operational practice also suggests that the U.S. combat commanders in Iraq often preferred to operate with Georgian units rather than with other coalition partners due to the absence of any caveats and the high level of tactical skills during actual combat operations.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, all this had to be, at least partially, attributed to a significant improvement of the national training and educational capacity that met NATO - standards. As Gustav Vroemen admits, the area of military education and training clearly exposed a major progress, especially in doctrine developments, language courses and military school curricula.<sup>3</sup> He is supported by the deputy Chief of General Staff, General Vladimir Chachibaya, who provided a startling insight of the ongoing processes on the ground:

*Even the single instance of doctrine development is a clear evidence of the mentioned NATO-behavioral impact on national representatives. Not only the whole body of Field Manuals (FMs) has been introduced or amended to western/NATO standards, but the new (totally different from Russian-soviet) meaning and the core idea of doctrine has been adopted, followed by a sweeping effect of military terminological innovations, Georgian army never experienced before. Eventually it led to a radical change in various military and combat procedures, where old Russian terms and standards do not apply or have no sense any longer.<sup>4</sup>*

The U.S. effort to support the transformation of the GAF, in fact, is openly formulated as the bilateral security collaboration aimed among others at reorganizing the Georgian military, so that they can operate with the U.S. and NATO forces and share western values.<sup>5</sup> Georgian side similarly stresses the importance of value - community. As early as 2006 the ISAB report attests a high degree of dedication to Georgian officials in various positions that drive the reform process, however, with the need to strengthen their ability with “an understanding of best modern practice in their particular fields.”<sup>6</sup> The Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili also shared this view and while responding to the U.S. State Secretary John Cerry in 2014 declared that the U.S. is considered by Georgia as the foremost partner and those two nations “are united first and foremost by shared values.”<sup>7</sup> The intensive communication unfolding via various official military and non - military channels make the socializing effects comprehensive (see Tables 18. and 19. below). As argued by Gustav

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<sup>1</sup> Kogan, “Armenia’s and Georgia’s Security Agenda,” 19.

<sup>2</sup> Novikova et al., *Security Sector Reform in Countries of Visegrad and Southern Caucasus: Challenges and Opportunities*, 50.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>4</sup> Interview Deputy Chief of General Staff of Georgian Armed Forces, Vladimir Chachibaya, Tbilisi, Ministry of Defence.

<sup>5</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 47.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, “ISAB REPORT 2006,” 6.

<sup>7</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Political Developments and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 1.

Vroemen, a NATO – IS official, recommendations and advices shared on different levels help Georgian partners “to device the logic and understanding that we all share at HQ and are critical in defining objectives, we all want to achieve.”<sup>1</sup> The objective is nothing else as “bringing Georgia closer to NATO-membership and to the family of western civilized nations.”<sup>2</sup> This view is broadly shared by NATO – as well as national representatives we have interviewed, as they all strongly believe that those people, who interact with NATO - counterparts and take part in various training or educational courses have major effect in changing policies, adopting common practices and language so familiar to NATO - members. For the purpose of visualization the frequency and the thematic area of bilateral contacts are presented by figures provided by the Georgian defence ministry (see below).<sup>3</sup>

**Table 18. Frequency and the Levels of NATO - GEO Meeting at NATO HQ**

Frequency	Format
2	Heads of the Government
2 +	ministerial visits in Brussels
2	ambassadors meetings
2	CHOD
1	MILREP
4	MCWG
2	MWP and 2 MIP
3	PDP
1-2	ISAF
4	NGC/ former PPC level for various issues

**Table 19. NATO - Course/Event Attendance**

Field Of Activity	Year						
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Assistance programs and courses provided/supported by NATO	162	192	207	225	134	150	152
NATO-Functional Events partner-nation (MOD) has participated in*	144	164	133	155	41	68	135
Number of NATO-led military training and exercises participated in	2	3	2	3	1	3	1
Number of personnel attended NATO-courses and retained in positions	24	59	42	103	66	45	58

\*- Events partner-nation has participated may include various issue based meetings (conferences, seminars, workshops etc.)

Apart from direct links to NATO HQ and staff (IS), the Georgian side took advantage of other formats that allowed Georgian decision - makers to broaden their search for political support. NATO Parliamentary Assembly is the foremost forum, where such efforts are being made and

<sup>1</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>2</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 37.

<sup>3</sup> “Timeline of GEO-NATO Meetings for 2011” (Ministry of Defence of Georgia, May 2, 2013).

via parliamentary representatives of member - states the spectrum of contacts, i.e. the chances for forming a pro - Georgian stance are higher. Georgian officials frequently stressed key role of NATO - PA in supporting Georgian aspiration and strengthening the cooperation with NATO.<sup>1</sup> Typically, before any important decision made by NATO (as in case of Bucharest Summit) Georgian side tried to secure strong support of the Assembly and usually got it with even stronger notion of solidarity as in case of the establishment of the Georgia - NATO Interparliamentary Council (GNIC).<sup>2</sup> Even more, Tbilisi managed to invite the North Atlantic Council (NAC), the highest decision - making body of the Alliance to have sessions in September 2008, November 2011 and June 2013.<sup>3</sup> Yet despite all wide - ranging activities and the seemingly deep dedication of Georgian leadership to NATO - membership some observers were less optimistic and predicted that “Georgian officials are unlikely to carry out complicated and painful reforms without external pressure and support (...) less likely, that reforms will be carries out thoroughly and in accordance with NATO and EU - standards.”<sup>4</sup> One such example can be brought in, as the NATO - IS rejected overoptimistic timetable of the SDR - Implementation Plan, and in course of series of working meetings made the Georgian side by November 2012 agree to a more realistic option.<sup>5</sup> The Georgian delegation was confronted to a similar logic, as it was forced to change its position to the draft of the Pay by Rank System by increasing the margins of expected costs for transitioning to a new system. These examples, according to Gustav Vroemen exemplify the relevance of the International Staff in certain issues, but it also proved to be very instrumental in addressing issues that Georgian delegation considered as very problematic. For instance the long standing problem of acquisition of western equipment was given a separate status in the PARP assessment document that brought it to the upfront of political discussion and ultimately caused allies to review their positions and look for assistance options.<sup>6</sup> The reviewed examples, once again, illustrate the critical importance of healthy communication lines between national representatives and NATO - officials that are instrumental in explaining both a particular nation’s concern as well as common NATO - interest.

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<sup>1</sup> “12 - 16 June 2006 - Joint Visit to Armenia and Georgia by the Sub - Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities and the Sub - Committee on Democratic Governance,” para. 37; Gomes Da Silva, “180 PCNP 09 E REV 1 - Georgia and NATO,” para. 38.

<sup>2</sup> “17-19 September 2007 - Visit to Georgia (Sub - Committees on East - West Economic Co - Operation and Convergence (ESCEW) and Future Security and Defence Capabilities (DSCFC)),” para. 45; Malan, “Georgia’s Euro Atlantic Integration: Internal and External Challenges,” 12.

<sup>3</sup> “Deepening Relations with Georgia,” 14.

<sup>4</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 130–131.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Gustav Vroemen, NATO-IS, Defence Policy and Planning Division, Brussels, NATO HQ.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

## 7.4 Concluding Findings

Georgia is obviously not the best example of a Weberian state, which is characterized by the prevalence of rational thinking over the instincts of the moment and the dominance of bureaucratic neutrality over increased “superexecutivism.”<sup>1</sup> Modernization is the key feature of Georgia’s transformation efforts. It replaces the essence of transformation by modernizing the external features of the national governmental structure, and avoids the need for deep - reaching democratic institutional reforms that challenge the position of the nation’s power authorities. This modernization pattern makes the preservation of bad practices - such as informal decision making, fluid roles, and leadership’s elitist behavior - still possible. As Till Bruckner aptly illustrates in the vivid example of the government action to construct camp - villages for refugees, the key feature of Georgian political decision - making is the informal nature of the procedures adopted by a close knit group of functionaries, who leave no trail of official records.<sup>2</sup> It is astounding how little prominence is assigned to formal procedures and norms within the entire process of political decision - making. We share Bruckner’s conclusion on the inherent contradiction in the Georgian government’s reality between having a well - prepared plan and the existing mode of action.<sup>3</sup> Understandably, having an actual planning capacity would require clearly established formal procedures that are accepted and followed by all participants within a given institution and between governmental institutions.

Evaluating Georgia’s performance in the political “basket” of activities, following conclusions can be made. Georgian officials constantly kept a high degree of political adherence to the strategic objective of NATO - membership throughout the research period. The relationship to the Alliance was always given the strategic importance and emphasized not only in strong public and official statements addressed to the foreign audience, but not less for the internal agenda consumption. From the very first steps of defence reforms, Georgia quickly introduced the civilian element of the ministry of defence as key structural body that firmly established strong control over the General Staff and military, and often, even undermined their authority. However, the parliamentary control of defence activities, plans and budgetary appropriations remained poor and till 2012 exposed no serious sign of improvement. Hence, the diplomatic adherence, civilian control of the military and the

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<sup>1</sup> Tatum, “Democratic Transition in Georgia,” 158–60.

<sup>2</sup> Bruckner, “Decision-Making and Georgia’s Perpetual Revolution,” 172.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

parliamentary control must be given statuses as “strong”, “strong“ and “no progress”. As the U.S. Congressional Report puts it with a lethal clarity:

*Many previously unrecognized or neglected deficiencies in the various required capacities of the Georgian Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence (came to light). In practically all areas, defence institutions, strategies, doctrines, and professional military education were found to be seriously lacking.<sup>1</sup>*

This horrifying conclusion made by the strongest and most committed partner of Georgia must be approached with some caution. Issue based areas of defence transformation, defined in our study as “functional areas”, reveal mixed picture of both energetic actions and the wide - spectrum approach to ensure reform - comprehensiveness, as well as the frequent revision of agreed objectives and subsequent setbacks. As Duncan Hiscock seem right to claim that, the nature of Georgian defence - reform actions was predestined by the domestic perception of the narrow window of opportunity and the small group of individuals involved in all relevant decisions made, that effectively caused the sketchy content of actions prepared in hurry, unclear roles assigned to institutions and the frequent practice of taking short - cuts by ignoring international “best practices”.<sup>2</sup> The swift legal amendments made it possible to introduce a western - like ministerial structure and the General Staff along the clear division of responsibilities among them. The subsequent adoption of the Law on Defence Planning ensured a clear hierarchy of the strategic level documents, their missions and shaped the fundamental structure of the national defence planning system. Yet the weakness of the parliament to initiate legal amendments to control and audit defence related activities, leaves the overall positive evaluation stuck “partial +”. Similar effects, though with much more negative touch of ambiguity, we observed in the domain of defence policy and planning. Though the overall impression is that formally a coherent body of policy and planning system is provided and all relevant documents are drafted and updated with some regularity, the frequent revision and the total disregard of policy objectives and planned actions render the existing formal framework as a hollow construct, with no effects on their practical implementation, thus receiving the status of “partial” evaluation.

Similar assessment can be made with regard to the field of human resource management, where respective policies had been long developed and staff members educated, however, few signs of policy implementation have been detected. In fact, the entire problem of policy -

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<sup>1</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 45.

<sup>2</sup> Hiscock, “Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts,” 134–135.



deficiencies and setbacks are directly linked to the volatile behavioral tradition of MOD - leadership, with some exceptions over the entire period of research. We don't agree to Robert Hamilton's statement that Georgia lacked a modern military bureaucracy with deficits ranging from strategic planning to the procedures of "handling classified material."<sup>1</sup> Contrary to that, the entire period of research reveals the constant capacity of the national defence bureaucracy to produce policies, concepts and norms largely meeting all western (NATO) requirements. Continuous educational assistance from NATO - members, ensured ever growing quality of the personnel. Yet the dominance and authoritarian style of management exercised by MOD - leadership, effectively disturbed and ignored the continuity of policy developments and their coherent implementation. The example of the Georgian SDR, which was thoroughly developed, but revised multiple times to the level of a complete irrelevance, is a vivid proof of our claim. Similarly, the control of defence budgetary spending was largely placed outside the institutional mechanisms under the exclusive right of view individuals that have believed to drive reforms, but were risking the collapse of the existing institutional foundation once leaving the scene.<sup>2</sup> With little, non - binding and sporadic efforts, to improve defence transparency by strengthening ties to civil society and other stakeholders, the Georgian MOD is still far from reaching its high transparency objectives that remain fully contingent on the individual good - will of each new defence minister.

Contrary to "no progress" in defence budget and transparency, we detected a significantly strong progress in areas relevant to the issue of a narrow military combat interoperability and standards. Whether the overall structure of the GAF and units, or the application of western operating procedures and use of equipment, Georgian army revealed a high speed of transformation and fairly strong ability to internalize NATO/U.S.- standards regarded as vital for joint operations, training and exercises with allied forces. The extensive foreign financial, material and educational support over the entire period of 2004 – 2012 significantly contributed to this progress, thus allowing us to assign evaluation status "strong" to GAF's performance in interoperability and participation NATO - led operations. The latter belongs to the ideational sphere of NATO - influence, where the most socialization effects unfold. Obviously, the operational environment during combat deployments poses the most potent framework, where the influence of NATO - procedures, both planning and combat operating are brought to the extremes. Thus, it was less surprising that the evidence collected in areas of

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton, "Georgian Military Reform—An Alternative View," 1.

<sup>2</sup> Hiscock, "Impatient Reformers and Reignited Conflicts," 135–136.

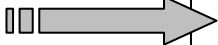


foreign assistance, training and education, suggested a growing progress (“partial+”) in performance, yet not to the level typical for participation in NATO - led operations that, in fact, incorporated the large part of training and field exercises during pre - deployment phases.

**Table 20. NATO - Influence in Georgia: Results**

<b>Georgia</b>	<b>Sectors</b>										
	<i>Political (aggregated)</i>			<i>Functional (aggregated)</i>					<i>Ideational (aggregated)</i>		
<i>Status of Commitment / Compliance</i>	Diplomatic / Rhetorical Adherence	Parliamentary Control	Civil. Control of the MOD	Normative (legal)	Interoperability /Standards	Defence Planning	Human Resources	Defence Budget /Public Transparency	Foreign Assistance	NATO-led Operations	Training and Education
Strong / partial+ / partial / no progress	strong	no progress	strong	partial +	strong	partial	partial	no progress	partial +	strong	partial +
	<b>Positive Progress</b>			<b>Partial Progress</b>					<b>Strong Positive Progress</b>		
<b>Status of NATO-Influence / National Compliance</b>	Strong signs of positive influence in <i>Political</i> and <i>Ideational</i> Dimension with partially positive effects in <i>Functional (Policy)</i> areas of defence										

The overall picture of Georgian defence transformation (Table 20.) renders a mixed feeling. It makes clear that the most troubled sector is the functional one with poor progress shown. Additionally, it suggest that the deficiencies in implementation of functional policies and especially the low level of defence (budget/public) transparency are directly tied to the inability of the national parliament to perform its control and supervisory functions. This linkage makes the following claim plausible, that the gap between the enthusiastic political declarations and poor implementation has to be attributed to the interests of domestic political agenda that were strong enough to obstruct Georgia’s international commitments and to cause a certain deviation from the objectives agreed with NATO. The most success is achieved in the political representation of the defence and security concerns abroad, as well as within the military domain of interoperability. These results seem also logical, since the strong rhetorical action in international negotiations as well as the massive involvement in military operations of the Alliance, leaved a solid impression of national credibility without compromising the actual objectives pursued in the domestic political agenda. Along the evaluation model generated, we are also able to offer a completed schematic picture of the interplay of incentives, gains/pay offs and national preferences (see Figure 8. below), we suggested in the earlier chapter of the paper that dealt with the concept of conditionality and compliance.

**Figure 8. Georgia: Interplay of Incentives, Preferences and Pay-Offs**

<b>Georgia</b>			
<b>Incentives/Relative Gains</b>	<b>Domestic Factors/Preferences</b>	<b>External Factors</b>	<b>Negative Pay Offs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong bilateral (U.S. others) relations and assistance</li> <li>• Practical benefits of force-interoperability (limited to military-technical aspect)</li> <li>• Support of defence reforms</li> <li>• Valuable NATO expertise in various policy fields of defence</li> <li>• Enhanced institutional capacity</li> <li>• Western-minded personnel</li> <li>• Strategic bargaining with Russia</li> <li>• Democratically run military</li> <li>• PfP-information share</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Territorial integrity</li> <li>Security</li> <li>Economic prosperity</li> <li>Effective control of power</li> <li>Weak democratic system</li> <li>Strong personal ties between key officials</li> <li>Weak public control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NATO-membership not guaranteed</li> <li>Tiredness of NATO enlargement</li> <li>No bilateral military assistance treaty with the U.S.</li> <li>Russian military presence in breakaway regions</li> <li>Armenia – member of the CSTO, i.e. military ally of Russia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No increased security guaranteed</li> <li>• No major military equipment</li> <li>• Russia’s continuing threat</li> <li>• Defence priorities transparent to potential enemies</li> <li>• Dependence on public support for defence spending priorities</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Balance / Imbalance of Incentives and Negative Pay Offs</b></p> <p>Though negative pay offs outweigh the positive ones on the whole, the selective or limited acceptance of some positive pay offs that do not cause any serious negative consequences (pay offs) had been be agreed upon.</p>		
<b>Behavioral Result under Limited Conditionality</b>			
	<p><b><u>Positive Effect</u></b></p>  <p>Compliance</p> <p><b>Partial Compliance</b></p>	<p><b>Negative Effect</b></p> <p>- non Compliance -</p>	

The Benefits of cooperation relate foremost to bilateral (U.S. dominated) cooperation and the practical military domain such as participation in NATO - led operations, training and exercises, where valuable skills, procedures and equipment is transferred to Georgia. This

view is strongly accepted by Bruce Bach, a former but most experienced NATO - IS official on Georgia issues (with decades of service), who highlights an important point of the Alliance behavior:

*I would say that the military dimension has been more productive, merely because of the progress possible through PARP, operations in ISAF and exercises which do not require all Allies to be convinced of the benefit.<sup>1</sup>*

In other areas however, Georgia faced various challenges and tried to show better picture as it was in reality. As argued by William Lahue, a head of NATO Office in Georgia:

*There were instances in Georgia in the past, where Georgian authorities tried to show better picture than it was in reality. The reason was simple – the structure of existing power-relationship at various levels of Georgian government and the ministry was put under serious risk and caused therefore significant resistance.<sup>2</sup>*

He also concludes that last years of President Saakashvili's rule showed no signs of continuous defence transformation. Here he is fully supported by the former deputy defence minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, who stresses key role the defence ministers and their preferences have played in avoiding the real - life implementation of made promises.<sup>3</sup> The limited effects of relative gains that by and large can't outbalance the imperatives of domestic and international agenda, is very indicative of the hollow nature of conditionality imposed over Georgia. Conversely, the heavy focus on rhetorical action, chosen by the Georgian government served the purpose political pressure and not least of masking the actual compliance - failure in several defence related policy areas. The ISAB report in 2006 was pressing for democratic standards, compatibility, legality and sustainability as key measurement criteria for success in defence transformation.<sup>4</sup> As it seems, only compatibility and legality matched the existing expectations, and contrary to early reiteration made by Georgian side, sustainability, predictability and continuity of reforms were least recognizable features of the entire process, ultimately compromising the political will and the ability of decisive implementation at practical level.

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, NATO Liaison Office, Tbilisi.

<sup>3</sup> Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Smith, and Werner, "ISAB REPORT 2006," 5.

## Chapter VIII: Comparative Summary

This chapter sums up the results of the single - case analyses and correlates them in an attempt to identify the divergence or, in contrary, a convergence of results according to sectors reviewed. While reviewing each case in depth, we already performed a significant part of comparison, that of result identification. Yet bringing them in a coherent comparative structure turns the study to a truly cross - case analysis, and allows to generate a much more comprehensive picture of research results. Thus it also makes it possible to identify tendencies within each sector that enable a better provision of explanations and underlying causes.

### 8.1 The Evidence of a Counterintuitive Paradox

Once single evaluation tables are put together (see the Table 21. below), the impression of a paradox, startling similarities in results and general tendencies in both cases cannot be avoided (see the table below).

**Table 21. NATO-Influence: A Cross - Case Comparison, Georgia and Armenia**

<b>NATO-Influence</b> (indicator-areas)	<b>Georgia</b> status of commitments/compliance <b>strong / partial /</b> <b>partial + /</b> <b>no progress</b>	<b>Armenia</b> status of commitments/compliance <b>strong / partial /</b> <b>partial + /</b> <b>no progress</b>
<b>Political (aggregated)</b>	<b>Positive Progress</b>	<b>Some Positive Progress</b>
Diplomatic/Rhetorical Adherence	strong	partial +
Parliamentary Control	no progress	no progress
Civil. Control of the MOD	strong	partial +
<b>Functional (aggregated)</b>	<b>Partial Progress</b>	<b>Little Progress</b>
Normative (legal)	partial +	partial
Standards - Interoperability	strong	partial
Defence Planning	partial	partial
Defence Budget-Transparency	no progress	no progress
Human Resources	partial	partial
<b>Ideational (aggregated)</b>	<b>Strong Positive Progress</b>	<b>Positive Progress</b>
Training and Education	partial +	partial
NATO-led Ops	strong	partial+
Foreign Assistance	partial +	partial
	<b>Status of NATO Influence/National Compliance</b>	
<b>Aggregated Result</b>	Strong signs of positive influence in <i>Political</i> and <i>Ideational</i> Dimension with partially positive effects in <i>Functional (Policy)</i> areas of defence	Some positive influence on <i>Political</i> and <i>Ideational</i> Dimension with little effects in <i>Functional (Policy)</i> areas of defence

Contrary to expectations (since Georgia eagerly wants to become a NATO - member, and Armenia not), the performance of defence institutions in both countries shows a great similarity in overall dynamics and, most importantly, the identical achievements in several key sectors across the areas (political, functional, ideational) of NATO - influence.

Within the political area of influence, both countries had done little to comply with the basic requirement of parliamentary control. Though Georgia's political engagement with the Alliance and respective political commitments showed by far greater intensity and scale, the comparison of evaluation - values, in fact, tell us that the difference between the national performances in the diplomatic - rhetorical adherence and the establishment of the civilian control over armed forces are not that significant (Armenia scoring just one level lower). In both sectors Armenia managed to uphold a progressively positive dynamics, falling short of being assessed as "strong" due to obvious limitations put on its strategic political objectives related to NATO, as contrary to Georgia's open desire to join the Alliance. This observation speaks in favor of the following conclusion:

*A greater scale of political commitments does not guarantee per se the higher degree of implementation effort, i.e. compliance. Conversely, the growing convergence of compliance - results achieved by "high" and "low" ambitious actors indicate the irrelevance of the commitment degree, as the only factor responsible for positive performance.*

Contrary to the general expectation that the more promise and commitment made, the more results will be achieved, Georgia rendered an outcome that falls not far from the result achieved by another nation that did not pursue the same strategic objective and did not embrace the same scale of commitments. Despite the existing limits of strategic choices, Armenia still accepted the opportunity of intensified cooperation with NATO and showed clear signs of positive development between 2004 and 2012.

The most problematic area that revealed serious challenges and setbacks for NATO to exert influence and initiate significant change is the functional area of defence. It is, in fact, an area where the adoption of various functional policies common to NATO - countries takes place while transforming defence. Similar to the political dimension of NATO - influence, we observe a significant convergence of performance - results between Armenia and Georgia that are assigned identical values in the sectors of defence planning, budgetary transparency and human resources. Only within the sectors of legal/normative influence and the application of

NATO - standards/Interoperability did Georgia show better results (“partial+”, and “strong”) than Armenia, which still received a positive (“partial”) evaluation. Whereas Georgia’s advantage in legal and interoperability issues can be easily explained and verified, as they relate to the formal, representative side of the external commitments made (laws adopted and NATO - operations participated), the obvious deficits in other key sectors have to be explained predominantly by internal, domestic causes as they mostly relate to the requirements of policy - internalization within the defence institutions. The western model of defence policy and planning had been formally adopted both in Armenia and Georgia, and key elements (drafting strategic documents, the SDR and interagency mode of work) of the authority division within the defence planning process between the respective MOD - and GS departments had been also approved. Nonetheless, a number of challenges associated with the proper implementation and utilization of policy and planning procedures, legal amendments, timely update of strategic documents and serious delays of agreed objectives (with NATO) cannot be overseen, that altogether point towards the inherent internal difficulties (intentional, organizational or capacity based) to master new policies and procedures.

In fact, Armenia was less sophisticated in applying proper (western) defence policy and planning procedures than Georgia, yet more steady and coherent in the implementing phase. In the Georgian case the frequent disregard of formally approved mechanisms and the change of plans already approved, rendered many policy reform initiatives as ineffective as in Armenia, with considerable gaps (“no progress”) in the budgetary planning and transparency in both case -countries. A similar observation can be made with regard to the progress achieved in human resource management. Georgia was much more advanced in formally adopting new HR - concepts and policies; however, with the frequent change of the MOD - leadership and the subsequent chain - effect of the policy - revision and personnel - reshuffling, the overall results (“partial”) reveal no progress - difference to the case of Armenia. Understandably, the larger scale of the Georgian involvement in NATO - led operations and the extent of the U.S. - assistance to the Georgian armed forces and the ministry of defence (see the Table 22. below), created conditions, in which Georgian representatives (military and civilian) were much more exposed to the professional influence of NATO - counterparts than in the Armenian case.

**Table 22. U.S. Security Funds Budgeted FY 1992-2008<sup>1</sup>**  
(In millions of USD, defence related highlighted)

Key security and defence related US-assistance programs	ARMENIA	GEORGIA
Law Enforcement	18.86	<b>48.125</b>
Non-proliferation of WMD & Disarmament	6.55	<b>10.41</b>
Foreign Military Financing -FMF	30.236	<b>113.87</b>
International Military Exchange and Training - IMET	4.692	<b>10.409</b>
Peacekeeping Operations	0	<b>15.54</b>
Anti-terrorism Assistance (ATA)	3.68	<b>12.84</b>
Humanitarian Demining	4.45	<b>12.67</b>
Sec. 1206: Counter-Terrorism & Train & Equip	0.0	<b>11.447</b>

As the table above exemplifies, the priority given to the assistance to Georgian military outweighs the resources devoted to Armenia by almost three times. Thus, it was not surprising that the overall evaluation of the Georgian performance within the ideational area of influence delivered better (more progress) results in all three sectors. The Armenian participation in NATO - led operations is explicitly limited to the peacekeeping brigade and the ability of its units to undergo joint training/exercises and perform combat operations with NATO (U.S.) - forces. The fears of the reduced combat readiness of units in case of the large restructuring, i.e. changing of “ways of doing business” while facing Azerbaijani enemy units on frontline, leaves the overwhelming majority of the armed forces unaffected by a large spectrum of new doctrines. Consequently, the strength of the professional influence and the socialization effects on Armenian military and civil servants are strongly conditioned within the margins of the peacekeeping brigade and by the context of foreign strategic deployments.

Contrary to that, the Georgian military embraced the largest possible extent of exposure to foreign (especially U.S.) assistance and mentorship, with all branches and services of the military and ministry of defence undergoing intensive educational as well operational dimensions of the socialization processes. Yet despite the comprehensive approach chosen, the Georgian defence authorities still faced certain difficulties in utilizing foreign assistance and adopting the western model of military education system. This eventually had to be attributed to a general problem of the frequent leadership change, personnel reshuffling and delays in policy - implementation. Throughout the study sufficient evidence has been collected to establish a direct link between the strength of ideational influence, professional socialization and the degree of political aspirations, i.e. strategic objectives of cooperation with NATO. As in the case of the political area of influence, the limitation of strategic national objectives, i.e. intentions of Armenia (approval of the merely cooperative framework

<sup>1</sup> Nichol, “Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests,” 41.



with NATO due to CSTO - membership) serves as the defining factor of the modest results and the low intensity of ideational influence, exerted by the Alliance.

## **8.2 So what with our Hypotheses?**

The paradox of findings we observe in our study runs against our hypothetical assumption, that the prevalence of external political objectives (incl. international commitments) over the internal political agenda supports the increased application of NATO - shared norms, values and practices by national institutions. The case of Georgia, where the NATO - membership had been raised to the top strategic objective, and the scale of external commitments was incomparably larger than in Armenia, showed clearly the weakness of this pre - formulated hypothetical linkage. Even though the overall results of evaluating NATO - influence in Georgia show some better progress (predominantly in sectors of the political and ideational influence), the key areas of the institutional performance requiring new policy adoption and internalization on routine basis showed the same shortfalls and challenges resulting in similar “progress scores” as in Armenia. This finding necessitates a further explanation of the strength of the “hidden” domestic political agenda in relation to defence institutions. Furthermore, a more cautious approach to the overall importance of foreign commitments must be adopted, since they might be formal and hollow, and, in fact, serve predominantly the declarative objective of masking and legitimizing the actual domestic behavior. As identified by some observers, there is a significant imbalance between the optimistic statements of South Caucasus countries’ official representatives, especially of Georgian politicians concerning the progress of achieving NATO - standards and the actual conditions of the military on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

### **8.2.1 Adoption of Norms and Practices - not always not every where**

The evidence collected supports also the general conclusion that both countries granted more attention to practical benefits of the military cooperation than the political domain of NATO - requirements. Even in the case of Georgia, where the political leadership unconditionally accepted a much stronger formulated requirement of the democratic governance of defence,

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<sup>1</sup> Malek, Shalamanov, and Labarre, “NATO and the South Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia on Different Tracks,” 49.

the practice, in fact, revealed a much heavier focus on the force - interoperability for NATO – operations, leaving the process of the democratic transformation of national defence institutions to the will of local authorities. This observation refutes the second hypothesis we've made in our theoretical part of the study, which assumes that “*cooperation mechanisms existing between NATO, Georgia and Armenia support the adoption of norms and practices of democratic control of armed forces, consequently, contributing to the increased level of institutional accountability rather than to the objective of military effectiveness.*” As we have seen, this assumption especially relevant to Georgia proved to be groundless. The institutional accountability of defence, evaluated across all areas of NATO - influence by the progress achieved in democratic control of armed forces, defence planning and transparency, rendered a least optimistic picture. Contrary to that, the most cooperation work (bi - and multilateral) and progress was easily to detect in the adoption of practical military standards and the improved combat interoperability. The benefits of cooperation relate foremost to the practical military domain such as participation in NATO - led operations and valuable expertise, predominantly provided by member - states and less by Alliance as organization. As the U.S. 2014 Budget Estimates make reference to U.S. Secretary of Defence Panetta's speech in June 2012 “building the capacity of defense ministries and other institutions, which have not been a main focus of our efforts, must become more prominent,” and the focus must be sharpened from partner's tactical interoperability to the increased ministerial and joint staff institutional capability by promoting democratic values and reforms and increasing transparency in governance.<sup>1</sup> The democratic requirements, key to NATO, are acknowledged but less implemented as institutional pillars of defence reform falling behind the imperative of enhancing fighting capabilities of armed forces. Consequently, it can be indicative either for the formal (hollow) nature of democratic requirements towards the country, or the inability of the Alliance to provide added value of the enhanced cooperation and the subsequent compliance in this respect. In line with this conclusion the Armenian first deputy minister Davit Tonoyan pointed towards the declining relevance of the PFP as a whole (close to ceasing its existence) and the increased role of the bilateral cooperation with NATO - countries (especially with U.S.) to Armenia, which is a strong evidence of benefit - based behavior. Furthermore, it makes it also plausible that the issue of general transformation of defence in accordance with NATO - standards is heavily dependent on the convergence of

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<sup>1</sup> “Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Estimates” (Defence Security Cooperation Agency, April 2013), 501–502, available at [http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2014/budget\\_justification/pdf/01\\_Operation\\_and\\_Maintenance/O\\_M\\_VOL\\_1\\_PART\\_1/DSCA\\_OP-5.pdf](http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2014/budget_justification/pdf/01_Operation_and_Maintenance/O_M_VOL_1_PART_1/DSCA_OP-5.pdf).

both political agendas, that of NATO and of a partner - country, according to Armenian defence advisor Mher Israelyan.<sup>1</sup> He goes on to stress that once the national political interests and other factors come together, the NATO – requirements, though important, still can be neglected.

## **8.2.2 The Comparison – an additional Argument for the Interest based State Behavior?**

The deficits in compliance, i.e. implementation and routinization of NATO - standards on institutional policies and procedures, have mainly to be attributed to different objectives of conflicting agendas, internal and external. As the tables of gains and negative pay - offs reveal, the option of full compliance does not provide results comparable with the domestic preferences (interests), and, in fact, has little effect in reducing the expected negative pay - offs of cooperation. If the modest evaluation of the progress achieved, i.e. influence exerted by NATO in Armenia was from the very beginning assumed, the analogous result of interplay between the gains, incentives and negative pay offs generated in case of Georgia, provides a powerful explanation for the national behavior resulting in a merely partial compliance due to the obvious imbalance between the gains and negative pay - offs, clearly in favor of the latter. The heavy weight of negative consequences caused by the option of full compliance in both case - countries in no way could be outbalanced by calculated positive pay - offs. Respectively, it is understandable, why such actions had been taken in Armenia and Georgia that selectively aimed at achieving only those pay - offs that could not seriously damage much bigger (domestic) interests and objectives. The made conclusion largely validates Joseph Grieco's view of limitations in international cooperation according to the concept of *Amended Prisoner's Dilemmas*.

We also agree with Richard Giragosyan's claim that governance in Armenia is characterized by the dominance of strong individuals over strong institutions.<sup>2</sup> As in case of Georgia an impression cannot be avoided about the existence of a significant gap between the formal structures and the mechanisms in place to regulate the processes and reality, i.e. actual routine way of doing business. The conflict in the Karabakh region indeed is a dominating factor,

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Mr. Mher Israelyan, Defence Advisor at Armenian Mission to NATO, Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Giragosian, Shiryev, and Kakachia, "Security Perceptions: The Views from Armenia, Azerbaijan & Georgia," 197.

keeping the focus of the overall defence transformation process very limited and upholding the existing informal linkages off record. According to Bruce Bach, the ongoing conflict makes Armenia's desire to transform the defence very limited, concentrating only on minor areas.<sup>1</sup> Together with the fear of losing monopoly over defence and security by power - holders it makes the access of a wider public to relevant information very difficult and weakens the monitoring function of societal and non - governmental organizations significantly.<sup>2</sup> From that angle the intensive use of language containing much of the "democratic principles" relevant to defence transformation can be merely explained as an attempt to provide a picture of the "democratic – responsible state" and "positive state-identity", as rightly pointed by Michela Telatin.<sup>3</sup> Armenia serves here as a telling example of that, the readiness to share the same language and enter certain commitments pertaining to institutional transformation does not guarantee their successive implementation. As stressed by Defence Advisor Mher Israelyan: "Existing commitments are by no way political or legal obligations, but rather a national will to achieve certain objectives and gain international support." This statement provides a clear picture of the national perception of external commitments that are legally not binding and serve largely the objective of international legitimization.

Similar observations can be made in the case of Georgia. The reasons have to be found in "too much concentration on the political and declarative decision - making, without meticulous work in practice," as put by the former deputy defence minister Tamar Karosanidze.<sup>4</sup> The impression of the formal implementation, i.e. masking of non - compliance indeed seems to be a featuring element of Georgia's behavior. As argued by another former deputy minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, some areas of defence reform activities carried the essence of the formal implementation before and after his service - period to avoid the necessity of the real - life action. Yet he also stresses the dominating role of defence ministers, their personalities, interests and preferences in strengthening or limiting such behavior.<sup>5</sup> In fact, as argued by William Lahue, the Head of the NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Tbilisi, last years before 2012 the process of defence transformation was simply stuck.<sup>6</sup> Key sectors (parliamentary

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with Bruce Bach, a former member of NATO IS (Defence Policy and Planning Division), Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Avagyan and Hiscock, "Security Sector Reform in Armenia," 41, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Telatin, "The Development-Security Nexus and Security Sector Reform," 100.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Deputy Defence Minister Tamar Karosanidze, Ministry of Defence of Georgia, Tbilisi.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with the former Deputy Defence Minister Nikoloz Vashakidze, Tbilisi.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with the Head of NATO Liaison Office (NLO) in Georgia William Lahue, NATO Liaison Office, Tbilisi.

control, defence planning, budgetary transparency and personnel management), where Armenia and Georgia show similar values (“no progress” or “partial”) of national performance, directly represent the major mechanisms of power control: political, financial and human. Thus, we can conclude with great certainty that in both countries the major interest of holding the strong grip of control on the mentioned mechanisms impeded the swift transformation of defence and therefore rendered partial or minimal effects of NATO - influence. Conclusions drawn from both cases confirm our early formulated hypothesis, which argued that the *“participation in NATO - institutional frameworks predominantly serves the purpose of legitimization of domestic actions and does not lead to imminent implementation.”* Indeed, both countries showed enough evidence to agree with that.

For additional explanation of the overall weakness of the Alliance to ensure Georgia’s compliance, as well as the unwillingness of the national authorities at ministerial and government level to speed up the reform process, we suggest following: NATO was exclusively perceived by Georgian officials as an organization for collective defence. Thus, security considerations lay at core of Georgia’s cost - benefit analysis and respective behavior. Since the US - Georgia Strategic Partnership Charter did not provide defence guarantees either; it seems not surprising that the Alliance’s approach to Georgia was determined by the balance of interests, as rightly put by Ahto Lobjakas.<sup>1</sup> Much of the evidence speaks in favor of the predominance of security considerations in both case - countries while making decisions on defence transformation or the cooperative approach to NATO. Our observations strengthen some authors’ claim that deficits in security arrangements and insecurity from external military pressures are one of the major underlying factors for national non - or partial compliance.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, we hold the hypothesis that *“international power relations and security interests by far determine the speed and depth of defence transformation as the political outcome of institutional compliance”* as valid.

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<sup>1</sup> Lobjakas, “NATO Lacks the Stomach for South Caucasus Fight,” 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cornell, “NATO’s Role in South Caucasus Regional Security,” 128; Socor, “NATO Prospects in the South Caucasus,” 3-4.

## Chapter IX: Conclusion

All the factors mentioned above are clear examples of the flawed theoretical assumption that the policy of conditionality will work once formal attributes and conditions for national compliance are established. As Stephen Krasner puts it, this account is wrong, since it fails to take into account the incentives for local leaders to impede better governance and does not explain explicitly the particular methods of the external contribution to local governance due to its rhetorical commitments to local ownership.<sup>1</sup> This claim is valid for both cases. Though formally less attributable to Georgia, it, in fact, exposes clear evidence of an existing gap between the formal claims of compliance by imitating the patterns of NATO countries and the actual mode of governing. Even if the capacity is the result of foreign assistance or training, it is far from clear, why this capacity would be dedicated to developing better practices of governance rather than to “self - serving behavior.”<sup>2</sup> The formal adherence to norms and codes of conduct does not result in their automatic implementation in real life, and might even serve the purpose of masking the actual behavior (violation of the norm), as in the case of many countries joining universal treaties. This particular aspect would require an additional analysis of the incentives and expected costs for a national government as a whole, and the government officials in particular.

The major question, formulated at the beginning our research endeavor was whether NATO - policy of conditionality had the ability to induce or enforce a policy change of a respective defence institution. As we've been able to see, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the balance of gains and negative pay - offs in the cases of Georgia and Armenia does not speak in favor of the former. Both countries had little motives and incentives to go beyond the minimum of domestic performance, since the rewards provided by NATO were indeed minimal, and due to the absence of any serious punishment mechanism from NATO – side, the minimum of compliance seemed to secure the rewards any way. At this point Alexandra Gheciu's claim, that there is a high likelihood to secure expected benefits with a minimum of domestic adaptation, seems very plausible and strongly confirmed.<sup>3</sup> Georgia simply failed on many instances to provide better results due to various political (internal) and personality -

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<sup>1</sup> Krasner, “International Support for State-Building: Flawed Consensus,” 66.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>3</sup> Gheciu, “Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization?,” 980.

related reasons, and Armenia, arguably, did not regard it as necessary to accelerate the speed of performance.

The argument, that the more NATO is strategically interested in a country, the less the candidates are placed under the scrutiny of conditionality, proves to be largely true for both countries, especially for Armenia. However, some unique features and nuances of the particular approach adopted towards Georgia should not be put off table. The logic of the stated assumption implies the opposite - that the lack of strategic interest in Georgia would cause higher degree of procedural scrutiny and the chance of sanctions. The evidence, however, speaks only to the strong political reflection of conditionality, which is the postponement of procedural guarantees of membership (the Membership Action Plan - MAP). On the other hand, the long - lasting deficits in key functional (policy) areas of defence reveal also clear deficits in the sanctioning mechanism of the Alliance, as well as a good awareness and understanding of this incapacity by national authorities in Armenia and Georgia.

With respect to how national policies are shaped towards the Alliance and what factors seem to play decisive role, the relevance of NATO as a regime must be touched upon again. In line with Stephen Krasner claim, NATO very well falls under the category of an international regime, which typically for all regimes exposes low evidence of punishing the bad behavior of its members and partner - nations. To a great extent this can be attributed to the inability of NATO – as organization to act independently from its member – states, especially the larger ones. The Alliance does not possess the quality of an independent agent to ensure compliance via sanctions or the threat of punishment. Its design, organizational structure and the mechanism of decision – making ensure a strong dependence on member – states and the preponderance of bilateral cooperation tracks. Thus, both Armenia and Georgia have pursued their interests in a very strategic, rational and calculative way to ensure and maximize benefits from the established cooperation mechanisms.

The adoption of new norms and practices offered by the Alliance via standards and policies had, in fact, little to do with the effectiveness of a particular cooperation mechanism, but rather with the strong commitment and will of national authorities to implement those norms and practices independently from external pressures. Given the low chance of sanctions from the NATO – side, the argument of “self – or interest driven” compliance becomes even stronger if not the only plausible one. This fact explains the selective approach of national

authorities (especially in Armenia) to adopt NATO – standards that are continuously reviewed as means of matching or enhancing particular national or institutional interests, and are in no way regarded as “universal goods”, even if their positive effects are formally acknowledged. Nonetheless, we see growing effects of professional socialization and ideational change, induced via multiple linkages and contacts that ensure steady application of mentioned policies, norms and standards. The speed of western norms’ internalization should not serve as an indicator for socialization impact in Armenia, not to speak about much “NATO – minded” Georgia. In contrary, we see in the retrospective a significant change of “mindset” of defence representatives. Although limited and channeled to the areas of practical needs, the cooperation mechanisms are still powerful enough to present the advantage, i.e. superiority of the western model – thinking and to ensure its recognition not only at the low tactical level of field training and exercise, but at the strategic level of policy and doctrine development. All our respondents, national and NATO – affiliated, agree with this claim, and more interestingly, share the same basic understanding of key NATO - messages, terms and benefits, as well as the limitations of cooperation process. Our observation allows us to conclude, that there is a significant convergence of views and arguments between national (Armenian, Georgian) and NATO representatives, which at least at mid – to high level of representation attests to a well advanced level of socialization and the started process of the successful identity change. Thus, the sobering results of defence transformation have little to do with this aspect of cooperation and must be explained exclusively in the domain of domestic political structure and interests.

NATO is clear in its strategic messaging about the requirements for aspirant members. Georgia has failed to apprehend these messages: to address the identity issues more seriously, to declare its policy priorities in response, and to internalize and routinize democratic institutional norms and standards. In the case of Armenia such messages were less formulated and often omitted in practice. Both case - countries adjusted their respective policies according to the existing cooperation and conditionality pattern in response to external pressures.<sup>1</sup> The results of this policy adjustment can also be seen in the mode of action the national authorities followed while negotiating with NATO officials. Out of five modes of behavior, two can be identified as most relevant in the Georgian case while applying Frank

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Tierney, review of Lisa L. Martin, *Democratic Commitments: Legislatures and International Cooperation*, in *The Journal of Politics* 64:3 (August 2002): 949.



Schimmelfennig's model of negotiation behavior: those of *rhetoric* and *strategic action*.<sup>1</sup> While pursuing strategic objectives of national security and territorial integrity, the Georgian government has relied intensively on rhetoric and superb bargaining to present the impression of compliance in order to increase its chance of acceptance by NATO members and/or to speed up the membership process through the imposition of political necessity. In contrary to this, Armenia did not require the adoption of such approach and remained pretty consequent in its limited acceptance of NATO's transformative influence.

Our findings would generally conform to Stephen Krasner's appeal for a greater authorization of external actors by granting more power of control, especially in the case of Georgia due to its formal desire for membership and full compliance. This would imply stricter rules of conditionality, better control mechanisms of commitment implementation, as well as better mechanisms for providing higher transparency and public control of policy formulation and implementation in particular. In turn, Armenia would require a radical change of strategic objectives towards NATO to be propelled onto a higher level of cooperation. In order to be successful, the concept of conditionality and compliance must heavily rely on a clear identification of "sticks" and "carrots," along with clear timeframes and credible measurement procedures, to avoid the risk of formal compliance that masks the actual behavior. The reward would clearly be the prospect of membership. The reward and incentive must provide higher pay - offs than the costs of domestic compliance (policy - internalization). Since it was not the case in both countries, compliance did not fully take place fully, resulting in a weak influence (conditionality) exerted by the Alliance, which clearly validates our major hypothesis. Conversely, the Alliance found it increasingly difficult to accept an aspirant - country as a member with significant deficits in common identity, which is based on the shared values of liberal democracy and the common norms of policy formulation/implementation. Since the timeframes for future membership were not defined and the existing mechanisms of conditionality do not account for the successful implementation of national commitments, the mechanisms of Membership Action Plan (MAP), a clear membership prospect as carrot and stick at the same time, seem to be the only viable tool that offers better prospects of successful transformation and a greater capacity to ensure Georgia's compliance with the Alliance's norms and procedures. As for Armenia the context of the strategic re - orientation (abandoning its alliance with Russia) plays a major role for creating general conditions for the enhanced national compliance.

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<sup>1</sup> Schimmelfennig, "NATO's Enlargement to the East."

# Annexes

## A.1 U.S. military Assistance Programs and Funding 2004 - 2012

(Aggregated data sources in thousands of USD)

Account	<sup>1</sup> FY2004	<sup>2</sup> FY2005	<sup>3</sup> FY2006	<sup>4</sup> FY2007	<sup>5</sup> FY2008	<sup>6</sup> FY2009	<sup>7</sup> FY2010	<sup>8</sup> FY2011	<sup>9</sup> FY2012
FMF	12.000.000	11.900.000	11.880.000	9.700.000	9.000.000	11.500.000	16.000.000	15.968.000	14.400.000
IMET	1.230.000	1.410.000	1.410.000 (1.275.000 expended)	1.160.000 (0.520.000 expended)	0.800.000	1.430.000	1.806.000	1.895.000	1.879.000
FSA	71.701.000	86.000.000	67.780.000	58.000.000		52.000.000 - estimate, no data on budgeting	----	----	----
Stab. Ops & SSR	----	----	----	21.710.000	15.961.000 - estimate, no data on budgeting	15.200.000 - estimate, no data on budgeting	----	----	----
NADR / Hum. Demining	1.500.000	3.000.000	2.520.000 (3.137.000 - expended)	1.750.000	0.700.000	----	NADR 1.300.000	NADR 2.575.000	NADR 2.025.000
NADR- Sm. Arm .Destruct.	----	----	----	5.115.000	5.570.000 (4.290.000- expended)	5.260.000	No further detailed data	No further detailed data	No further detailed data
PK-Ops	3.000.000	8.000.000	----	----	In Stab. Ops	In Stab. Ops	----	----	----
Warsaw Initiative	1.130.000	0.730.000	0.670.000	----	----	----	----	----	----
SOF Train & Equip	----	----	----	----	11.450.000	----	----	----	----
DOD Destr. & Dismantl.	----	----	----	34.650.000	66.670.000 (52.980.000- expended)	71.610.000 (75.010.000- expended)	----	----	----

<sup>1</sup> “Country Assessments and Performance Measures - Georgia,” January 2005; “FY 2004 - 2006 Europe and Eurasia,” 385.

<sup>2</sup> “FY 2005 Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Georgia,” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed June 24, 2014, available at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/65319.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65319.pdf); “FY 2005 - 2007 Europe and Eurasia,” 409–410.

<sup>3</sup> “FY 2006 Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Georgia,” *U.S. Department of State*, accessed June 24, 2014, available at [www.state.gov/documents/organization/93537.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/93537.pdf); “FY 2008 Congressional Budget Justification FOREIGN OPERATIONS” (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, 2007), 409, <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/84462.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “FY 2009 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations,” Request by Region - Europe and Eurasia (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, February 29, 2008), 34, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/101440.pdf>; “FY 2007 FSA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” 2, 7.

<sup>5</sup> “FY 2009 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations,” 34; “FY 2008 FSA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” 3, 15.

<sup>6</sup> “FY 2009 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations,” 34; “FY 2009 AEECA Funds Budgeted for U.S. Government Assistance to Eurasia,” 3, 14–15.

<sup>7</sup> “FY 2010 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, April 2011), available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/167515.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> “FY 2011 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia,” Fact Sheet (Office of the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, United States Department of State, April 2012), available at [www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/191920.htm](http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/191920.htm).

<sup>9</sup> “FY 2012 Foreign Operations Appropriated Assistance: Georgia.”

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