

IV Analysis and Conclusions

Though the national case-studies on civil-military relations cannot provide, with the exception of the Bulgarian and the Slovenian perspectives, for a comparative view, the initial analytic framework is sufficient to assess the progress and the deficiencies of the individual countries in establishing civil democratic control over their military. One may dispute which of the factors, outlining the analytic framework – the problems of transition, the post-Yugoslav conflicts and wars, the evolving Balkan regional security community, the transforming security and defence agenda of post-Cold War Europe or the Western support, is more influential in shaping the civil-military relations of the individual countries in South-East Europe. However, the combined influence of these five factors has produced a differentiated picture of the state of the issues in the individual countries.

In terms of the development of the civil-military relations in the individual countries of South-East Europe, their establishment on a democratic basis and the way these five above mentioned factors are reflected on the national processes, the following temporary and for the purposes of analysis groupings of countries are possible:

Albania, as a specific individual case, needing the support of the PfP, being a member of the PfP itself.

The Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, as a specific case due to the difficult war past and the just started process of transition to democracy.

Croatia and Macedonia as former Yugoslav republics, making difficult steps on their way to building democratic societies and proving as reliable PfP partners.

Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia as countries that have passed successfully the 'first generation of reforms'¹ and have the needed for their civil-military relations and the civilian democratic control over the armed forces the necessary legislative and institutional frameworks. They have covered also the larger part of the second generation reforms that makes them very much eligible for joining NATO from the point of view of this significant standard: the democratic control of the military.

Hungary, a member of the Alliance, though still having some similarities with the last group of countries has passed a longer journey and has made a breakthrough in the broader aspects of the security sector reform along the NATO requirements.

In the *Albanian case* one can witness the strong impact of the protracted democratic transition of the society on civil-military relations. A by-product of the slow evolution was personnel-selection, based on personal sympathies and political affiliations that actually were ruining army discipline and morale. The strong polarisation of the political forces in Albania, politicisation of the army and the involvement of the armed forces in political activities compromised the establishment of civil democratic control over the military. An over-concentration of prerogatives with the President further worsened the national civil-military attitudes. Diminishing confidence in the politicians has been a side-result of these developments. The interferences in politics by the military continued during the second phase of the reform of the Albanian defence establishment, which was a serious blow to the relations in a society with a significant deficit of democratic culture. The destruction

¹ Dr. Anthony Forster and Dr. Tim Edmunds of the Defence Studies Department, King's College London at the UK Joint Services Command and Staff College write in their research project papers within *The Transformation of Civil-Military Relations in Comparative Context* of first and second generation reform issues in the area of the democratic control of the armed forces (DCAF) in Central and Eastern Europe. The first generation issues include the drafting and approval of new constitutions, the allocation of clear lines of responsibilities, having democratic structures in place. The second generation of reforms are connected with the effective operation of institutions and procedures, the acquisition of shared norms and values of civilians and military, i.e. the changes are more of an attitudinal character.

of the army was another feature of this phase. Despite the mobilisation of the Albanian society and armed forces during the Kosovo crisis there still remain fundamental questions of how to guard the civilians from their guardians in a democratic context. The continuing Western support through NATO, the PfP and EU are indispensable in sustaining the efforts of national definition of the solutions in the civil-military relations.

Immense problems face the *Yugoslav society, armed forces and state* in transforming the civil-military relations and developing them on a democratic basis. What really still awaits the reform in Yugoslavia is not just “civilianising” the control of the armed forces, but making it democratic. FRY is just entering the period of transition. The internal deficiency of democracy is a basic feature of this process in Yugoslavia.

The study of Dr. Simic is an attempt to set the issue of civil-military relations in the newly democratising Yugoslav society, though there are still problems of terminology. The civilian-military relations, of whom Dr. Simic writes, are missing the civil element. Democratic control of civilians over the armed forces and the security institutions of FRY in general, as well as democracy in this country would remain unattainable unless honest, clear and looking to the future answers of certain questions are not given to the Yugoslav society and to the international expert and non-expert community. Which are these questions and, very probably, other important ones?

First, what is the territorial scope of the Yugoslav armed forces? How do Belgrade and its military leadership for defence planning contingencies perceive the Serbian forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, mainly in Republika Srpska? What happened to the armed forces of the republic of Serbian Krajina?

Second, what is the fate of the powerful paramilitary forces, active throughout the 1990s on the territory of former Yugoslavia?

Third, what is the fate of the Praetorian Guard that Milosevic brought up for his personal power?

Fourth, what was the technology of changing the multiethnic character of the Yugoslav People's Army or JNA into Vojska Jugoslavije or VJ, which became predominantly Serbian? What was the fate of the officers from the non-Serbian parts of former Yugoslavia and how was the dilemma of defecting to their new nation-states and loyalty to "Yugoslavianism" decided? Why did the former 'comrades of arms' from the JNA become enemies in wars? What was the role of the politicians and of the military in failing to produce a peaceful and democratic dissolution of the former federation and armed forces? What was the reason of the support that was given to the people's revolt in the autumn of 2000 in FRY by the armed forces, security service, the regular police and by powerful paramilitary police units? What was the difference with the situation in the beginning of the 1990s? Furthermore, what was the price of the contract of the leaders of the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) with the war criminals for supporting the people's protests in October 2000?

Then comes the question – was really the toppling down of Milosevic the result of a 'purely popular revolt' and what setbacks may Yugoslav democracy suffer from the obviously negotiated endorsement of the new Yugoslav President by the army and the security forces? What will be the fundament of the newly evolving civil-military relations and on whom the 'democratic control' will be dependent?

A final question here is what will be the fate of the people and non-governmental organisations that will start rising in Yugoslavia as autonomous sources of knowledge and analytic assessments that will dare ask the unpleasant questions of the bargain of the democratic forces with war criminals?

These uneasy questions need to be faced and answered courageously before the initiative of FRY's application to the PfP, suggested by Dr. Simic, becomes feasible. The Yugoslav government and its foreign partners need to see FRY as soon as possible as a member of the international community of democratic nations. FRY is an important actor in strengthening stability in South-East Europe. The key to this role is Serbian society itself and the right steps it will take in

democratising and coming to terms with the past decade on a fair and democratic basis.

Croatia still bears bitterness, reflecting the way the Yugoslav federation broke apart and the perceptions to the Serbian neighbour. This is why for long Croatia stayed out of the regional initiatives and efforts to improve the stability of the broader region.

In the beginning of the process of reforming the Croat civil-military relations it was the existence of regular and paramilitary formations that prevented the establishment of democratic control over the military. It was not possible to clearly define the meaning of 'military'. This has been a deficiency of the Croat civil-military relations that barred for some time the country's acceptance by the other democratic states of Europe.

Many issues, connected with the war of independence remain on the agenda of civil-military relations. The veterans' privileges, the war crimes, Croatian military participation in the war in Bosnia are still causes of potential political disagreements and tensions. Another worrying fact of Croatia's civil-military relations is that it is hard to say what is the real number of the military in the country.

Problems of the transition in the Croatian MoD persist, which is the reason for a continuing tense relationship with the Chief of the General Staff. Other issues as past sales of arms, drugs and war crimes still influence the work of the Ministry.

On a broader scale, the security and defence system of Croatia needs to clarify which are the fundamental national interests it is based on. Respectively, the defence planning process needs to find the right link to these interests.

The stabilising role of the international military presence for Croatian society and state is not doubted. However, persisting economic and social problems hamper the reform of the armed forces and the evolution of civil-military relations towards greater democratic civilian control over the military.

Macedonia was the last to join the dissolution of the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) and even participated in the wars against Slovenia and Croatia. On its side the YPA took along all movable armament and equipment from Macedonia, and what could not be moved – was destroyed, writes Prof. Vankovska.

The newly born Macedonian army had no internal contenders in terms of paramilitary forces. It was formed on the basis of the former Territorial Defence (TD) and the YPA.

Civil-military relations in Macedonia have been strongly dominated in the beginning of the 1990s by the 'ethnic composition of the military' issue. It appeared to be a long-term problem.

Having no armed forces of its own before, the Macedonian model of democratic control over the military was of a normative character, preceding the establishment of the very object of such a control. However, the initial deficiencies of the national model stem from the very normative model of separation of powers in Macedonia among the Parliament, the President and the Government. In addition, there still exists unclarity as to the Defence Minister's responsibilities.

Another deficiency of the existing civil-military relations in Macedonia is using the process of "civilianising" the MoD for purges by the authorities.

It is obvious from the study of the Macedonian national case by Prof. Biljana Vankovska that before coming to terms with itself it would be hard for Macedonia to come to terms with its neighbours Albania and Bulgaria. The latter is tacitly accused of rendering harm to the Macedonian armed forces by donating some 100 old tanks that are far from the best NATO standards. However, Bulgaria is not a NATO member and does not possess sophisticated new brands of tanks the Alliance has. Furthermore, Macedonia has accepted the donation without being forced to do it. Having some functional tanks, however, is better than having none. The Bulgarian side is trying to help the new armed forces of Macedonia to acquire also free NATO compatible radar communication system.

Prof. Vankovska writes that the fermentation of the relationship between the politics and the military has not yet reached its zenith since the political system and the military still go through serious mutations with an uncertain outcome on both sides. She adds that two contradicting factors have been shaping the mentality and the institutional identity of the Macedonian military for years: 'Yugo-nostalgia' and 'pro-Macedonianism'. The new Macedonian military had to abandon a messianic vision of being 'the ultimate defenders' of the constitutional order. A real problem of the young Macedonian armed forces, writes Prof. Vankovska, is that they are badly armed and poorly trained. This would hardly allow them to be effective if they will have to fulfil their external function and mission.

The presence of international military units is perceived, according to Prof. Vankovska as definitely putting additional problems to the civil-military relations. The reason is the addition of a 'non-national' component to the 'military' side of the relationship. It is true that the non-national element complicates the issue, on the one side, but on the other – it is a fundamental reason for the stability of the country and the broader geo-strategic area around Macedonia.

At the present moment the Macedonian state lacks a clear concept of national security as well as a working model of democratic control of the military. A continued and active participation in the PfP is an appropriate format of gradually dealing away with most of the deficiencies in that aspect.

Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia is very advanced on their way to membership in the Alliance and to achieving high standards of democratic control over their military.

The critical assessments of the respective national case studies, however, display the existence of certain deficiencies of the legislative and institutional framework of the civil-military relations, though they are defined from the point of view of higher standards of efficiency. Definitely, the right place of the General Staff – not as a separate institution of the armed forces, but as part of the system of the respective MoDs, is such an issue. The issues of the civilian expertise; the

improvement of the planning, programming and budgeting system (PPBS) of resource management; improving public relations of the MoDs; the education and training of the military and the civilian employees; adapting the military to modern society in the social, moral and legal aspects; the issue of expenditure on the account of joining NATO – these and probably some others, are on the agenda of improving in a structured way the civil-military relations in these countries. In the Bulgarian case there is an understanding that there are better possibilities for a really objective, profound and detailed parliamentary control over the armed forces and all services, related to security and defence. In the Slovenian case still the normative approach continues to dominate the process of developing civil-military relations and an improvement of the co-ordination of all national security institutions and the defence authorities is needed. In the case of Romania there is a national perception that the country is more advanced in its preparation for NATO membership than were the three new members at the moment invitation was extended. However, even in this case certain improvements are possible, for example, by improving the independent civil society expertise on the issues of security and defence of Romania.

Though the *Hungarian case* shows a real breakthrough in the area of civil-military relations, the young NATO nation shows a high level of self-critical assessment of its problems. Major Tibor Babos writes that to achieve an effective civilian oversight of the military Hungary has to adopt a new Constitution, based on democratic principles. This is one of the peculiarities of the Hungarian democratic transition. Hungary also needs, according to Babos to develop the existing National Security Council, now subordinate to the Prime Minister, so that it can bring together the ministers to form the national security policy, and give clear directions to the military.

Much is expected to be improved by the MoD of Hungary too: more public support may be achieved if the annual defence policy report is declassified; the duplication of the functions between the General Staff and the Ministry of Defence should be finally abolished; the number of the military officers, serving in the MoD should be further decreased; a rotation system of service in the General Staff and the MoD for military

officers may be experienced. More civilian experts on military issues are needed in Hungary. They will ensure a more effective civil democratic control over the armed forces. Obviously this last need requires an answer by an improved system of education in that field for civilians.

Some **conclusions** can be drawn from this study:

First, the people and the security expert community of the countries of South-East Europe should finally understand that establishing democratic control over the armed forces is not a problem of a single act but rather a process of making the military more accountable in a democratic framework. The five specific factors that are influencing the process of establishing the democratic control have produced, logically, differentiated results. The latter are most reflective of the specific transition process the respective country has experienced, its connection with the conflicts and the wars in the region, of the individual contribution to regional stability, regional security community building-up and shaping of the region as a normal part of the extending European Union and Euro-Atlantic civic and geo-strategic zone. It would be unfair to judge the Western support as differentiated: it has produced differentiated results, depending on the different national social, political and economic processes. The PfP countries of the region, these that are approaching the PfP programme and the contenders for NATO membership from South-East Europe will find more and more that the developing process as well as membership in NATO are also financially consuming and yet more economic than any other form of building the national security and defence.

Second, the establishment of civil-military relations in South-East Europe on a democratic basis does not mean a repetition of existing Western models. The bilateral and multilateral Western activity of promoting democratic defence management, transparency, professionalism, efficiency, interoperability and professionalism require on the recipient countries' side the formulation of not just specific military reform agendas, but of establishing national models of civil-military relations. These models should be capable of arranging in a priority order the tasks of the reform process, of continuously receiving the

extended Western support and doing all that in the context of the norms and principles of the democratic society. The issue of establishing democratic civil-military relations is a matter of national interest and formulating the national features of this process is really a problem of the national societies and political elites. Expectations that the practical mechanisms of the democratic control of the armed forces can be imported and installed from Brussels or Washington, D. C. is an unrealistic vision of the development of the national societies to a functioning democracy. The foreign or international support may be tailored to the individual circumstances and needs of the recipient country from the Balkans, but it is through a nationally conceived interest of democratic build-up that the democratic control of the military and the whole security sector reform can be successfully implemented. Having a national motivation of doing it would produce really national tasks from the issues of Modernisation, international compatibility within the PfP standards of forces, logistics, equipment and communication, of politically, legally and operationally standardised procedures of making the partnership effective or membership in NATO – possible. It is the task of the national parliaments, national civil societies and their institutions to guarantee the implementation of the requirements of the democratic control of the military.

In other words, the establishment of democratic control of the armed forces within democratic civil-military relations should be psychologically internalised and turned into a national issue, never forgetting that democracy evolves and the process of democratic control over the military evolves too.

A final, third conclusion of the study is that further and more comparatively based research of the issues of civil-military relations in South-East Europe is needed as a necessary part of the PfP activity in the region.