ORGANISING NATIONAL DEFENCES FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP

The Unexamined Dimension of Aspirants' Readiness for Entry

a REPORT by
the staff of the
Centre for European Security Studies

2001

HARMONIE PAPER 15

Organising National Defences for NATO Membership

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First published in November 2001 by
The Centre of European Security Studies (CESS)
Lutkenieuwstraat 31 A
9712 AW Groningen
The Netherlands
Director: Peter Volten

ISBN 90 76301 17 4

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

PREFACE

The terrorist attacks in America on 11 September 2001 and the retaliatory action started on 7 October 2001 have driven all other subjects to the margins of the international security agenda. Some matters cannot remain there for long, however. One is the question of further NATO enlargement. The topic is to be addressed at a Summit in Prague scheduled for November 2002. In the intervening period NATO's 19 nations have to decide to whom they will offer accession. (They have said they expect to invite 'at least one' new member.)

There are nine acknowledged aspirants, and the business of assessing their candidacies is underway. Some aspects of the would-be members' preparedness for entry have been well reviewed in appraisals recently published. By and large we know which have functioning market economies and law-governed democratic societies – or should have by late 2002 – and also which are clearly committed to the peaceful settlement of disputes and have resolved potentially troublesome differences with neighbours. Aspirants' records on respect for political freedom and human rights have also been well scrutinised.

As for military aspects of readiness for NATO, candidates' current *capabilities* are routinely documented through a Planning and Review Process (PARP) in which they participate. What is not explicitly examined in this official procedure, and has not featured prominently in independent commentary either, is the quality of would-be members' defence *organisation*. Yet an important dimension of preparedness is the individual aspirant's commitment to democratic control of its armed forces and its capacity to deliver a defence effort that is domestically acceptable, economically sustainable and strategically sound. Expressed concretely, serious candidates should be able to show that they are making now – and that structures and processes exist to ensure that they can make in future – military provision that fulfils these conditions.

The present study focuses on this unexamined (certainly under-examined) dimension of readiness for entry, as is explained in a brief Introduction (Chapter I). It is not a comprehensive evaluation of the nine would-be members' claims to consideration. Nor can it be a final appraisal, even on its own terms, because the Prague Summit is twelve months away and there is much that aspirants can do in the meantime to improve their credentials. In other words, this is an early *contribution* to the assessment exercise, but a necessary one, in our opinion.

The work is described, on the title page and elsewhere, as a Report. This is to highlight the fact that it has been written to inform policy, and that policy-makers – plus those who advise them – are the target readership. This in turn explains the absence of the copious citations, references and other scholarly small-print usually found in academic work. In an analytical undertaking of this kind it would have been difficult to include these anyhow. Though much of our material derives from the open literature and attributable

briefings, quite a lot has been made available by officials and local sources on more restrictive terms.

Needless to say, we are grateful to all who have contributed to our research, in whatever way and on whatever basis, while absolving them of all responsibility for the use we have made of their various inputs. It is we, as authors, who are to be held to account for the facts, judgements and opinion in the following pages.

Finally we have a practical debt to acknowledge about which we can be specific: it is to our colleague Joke Venema who prepared the text for publication.

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Groningen
12 October 2001

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NOTE

The aspirants' preparations for future NATO membership being a dynamic process, this Report is inevitably an indication of the state of affairs at a given moment in time – specifically end-September 2001. Furthermore the work is an independent contribution to discussions on the next round of enlargement. Its conclusions do not reflect the official Netherlands position on the issue of enlargement in general or preferences for specific candidates.

I. INTRODUCTION

At its Madrid Summit in mid-1997 NATO invited three states – Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary – to accede to the North Atlantic Treaty. The Three were duly admitted to the Organisation in March 1999, representing the 'first wave' of post-Cold War enlargement for NATO. They participated as full members in the following month's Washington Summit. At this event the now 19-member NATO considered the question of a 'second wave' of enlargement. It decided *not* to issue further invitations to would-be members at that stage. It did, though, reaffirm that 'the door was open' for future accessions, and established a process by which candidate countries might prepare themselves for admission – the Membership Action Plan (MAP) procedure.

Since April 1999 nine aspirants have been following the MAP course: Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (hereafter the Nine). As provided for in the MAP prospectus, each prepared in 1999/2000 an Annual National Programme (ANP) on its preparations and received feedback from NATO on the material submitted. The process was repeated in 2000/2001 and there is to be a third MAP 'round' in 2001/2002. However, the process of assessing candidacies is already underway, because the 19 member-states have promised to return to the further enlargement issue in November 2002 at a meeting of the North Atlantic Council at Heads of State and Government level – another Summit – to be held in Prague. At this event, they have said, an invitation to join will be extended to 'at least one' would-be member.

The present study is a *contribution* to the assessment exercise. It examines the past record, present position and potential performance of the Nine in a number of specific areas, as explained below.

1. Scope of the Study

The essence of the MAP-procedure is that it provides the opportunity for would-be NATO members to show that they have met a number of eligibility criteria and are capable of satisfying certain expectations and requirements. These candidacy conditions were first outlined in a 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* and elaborated in the 1999 MAP prospectus. They include:

- key eligibility criteria of a *politico-strategic* nature, namely a functioning democracy and market economy, a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes (and no

outstanding disagreements with neighbours), and a demonstrated commitment to respect for minority rights (plus political freedoms and human rights generally); and

- expectations and requirements of a *military* nature relating to (a) military capability (the would-be member's capacity to contribute to both NATO's peacetime order of battle and forces for actual operations) and (b) military organisation (embracing both the capacity to fashion an appropriate, affordable and domestically acceptable defence effort and a commitment to practise 'democratic-style civil-military relations' in running it).

The specific areas covered in the present inquiry derive from the second of these broad categories and from the 'organisation' element within it. To elaborate on this, the present text examines the immediate past record, current standing and potential position of the Nine in four areas:

- the promotion and practice of 'democratic-style *civil-military relations*';
- the encouragement of supportive *public attitudes* to NATO (the key to a 'domestically acceptable' defence effort);
- the implementation of *military education* reform (the key to preparation of the military profession for NATO membership); and
- the establishment of an effective *defence organisation* and decision-making processes (offering some assurance that a candidate country is making, and can continue to make, military provision appropriate to the strategic circumstances and affordable in the light of economic conditions).

In addition, there is some supplementary material on the commitments certain MAP-states have made in another context, viz. subscriptions to the 'catalogue' that has been prepared by the European Union (EU) listing forces available for military operations in support of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the nascent Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP). Further, in the treatment of the Baltic States, there are brief observations on how these aspirants are managing their relations with the Russian Federation.

For initial presentation of material on the major themes we have placed the countries in three broad categories.

- Countries which, on attaining independence, had to create national defence organisations from nothing. These *start-from-scratch countries* are (a) the three ex-Soviet republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and (b) two former Yugoslav republics (Macedonia and Slovenia).
- Countries which have experienced major disruptions in the organisation of their defences in the recent past. These *discontinuity cases* are Albania (where the watershed was the 1997 crisis) and Slovakia (affected by the separation of the Czech

and Slovak Republics – formerly Czechoslovakia – in 1993 *and* a major political upheaval in 1998).

and

- Countries which at the start of the 1990s inherited an overbearing totalitarian legacy and hence had to accomplish post-Cold War force reduction, rationalisation and restructuring of major proportions. These *legacy states* – Bulgaria and Romania – are also the largest MAP countries.

The rationale for such differentiation is self-evident. Under each of the thematic headings, the challenges for individual countries have been different depending on the 'category' into which they fall.

It will bear repeating that in assessing the Nine from the standpoint of preparedness for accession we have confined attention to the specific areas enumerated. *We have not sought to 'second guess' the entire MAP procedure, nor have we attempted a grand strategic cost-benefit calculation on either further enlargement generally or the overall merits and demerits of particular states' candidacies.*

We have, however, looked at the present position(s) of the 'second wave' aspirants (third quarter 2001) – and, where appropriate, anticipating the situation on the eve of the Prague Summit – in relation to the position(s) of the 'first wave' entrants. In other words our comparative assessment of the Nine is complemented by material on the Three – en route to accession, on accession, and post-accession – as a sort of benchmark. This exercise confirms the impression that NATO is taking a tougher line on (further) enlargement than it did in 1997-99. (Note that there is no material here on Croatia which declared itself a candidate country in 2001 and may, therefore, join the MAP procedure in its third cycle (2001/2002).)

2. Structure of the Study

The Report is divided into three Parts. In **Part A** there is a brief discussion of the bases on which NATO has said it will assess would-be members' claims to consideration for accession (Chapter II). This is followed by a Summary Overview of where the MAP-states now stand (end-September 2001) in relation to the organisational aspects of preparedness we have chosen to address (Chapter III).

Our individual country assessments – as at end-September 2001, after the second MAP 'round' but prior to the third – constitute **Part B**. They are grouped in four chapters, in accordance with the categories into which we have divided the Nine. Thus the Baltic States are the subject-matter of Chapter IV (written by Sander Huisman). The two ex-Yugoslav republics, Macedonia and Slovenia, are covered in Chapter V (written

by Margriet Drent, with Jos Boonstra's help). In Chapter VI we deal with the 'discontinuity cases': Albania (David Greenwood) and Slovakia (Peter Volten). In Chapter VII the 'legacy states' are analysed: first Bulgaria (by Greenwood), then Romania (by Volten). We draw attention to authorship here for two reasons: first, to underscore that this text is a collective effort; and, secondly, to explain why Chapters IV-VII are not completely uniform in style or emphasis.

In **Part C** we offer our conclusions and comparisons. The three newest NATO members are surveyed in Chapter VIII. A division of labour was practised in preparing this Chapter as it was in covering the MAP-states. Thus there are country-sections here on Poland (written by Sander Huisman), the Czech Republic (Peter Volten) and Hungary (the work of Margriet Drent, who also co-ordinated the whole). The country assessments of the Nine are brought together in Chapter IX. This is a reprise of the conclusions of Chapters IV-VII plus some cross-reference to the surveys in Chapter VIII. Last of all, there is an overall Conclusion (Chapter X). These two final Chapters – like the lead-in Chapters I-III – were drafted by David Greenwood.

PART A

THE ENLARGEMENT ISSUE

‘What village is this I have wandered into? Is there a castle here?’

‘Most certainly,’ replied the young man, slowly, ‘the castle of my lord the Count West-west.’

Franz Kafka, *The Castle*, Minerva (English) edition, 1992, p. 9

II. ASSESSING CANDIDATES FOR ACCESSION

1. Introduction

The process of gauging aspirants' claims to consideration for NATO accession is a matter of every existing member-state forming a view of the admissibility of each would-be member; and subsequent deliberation on candidates' merits – plus some bargaining – to decide whether one or more (or none) should be invited to formal entry talks. The corollary holds: there is no way that an aspirant can *qualify* for such an invitation, even though the MAP procedure has been represented as a pathway to NATO's 'open door'. The Organisation has set out its main expectations and requirements, including formal eligibility criteria. However, it reserves to itself the right to decide whether or not a candidate country meets these and whether or not, on that basis, the aspirant can enter the final accession process. This is fundamental.

2. What NATO expects and requires

The formal eligibility criteria were initially outlined in the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement*. According to this document they include the following.

- A functioning democratic political system and a market economy.
- Treatment of minority populations in accordance with OSCE guidelines.
- Resolution of all outstanding disputes with neighbours and a commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes generally.
- [The ability and willingness to make] a military contribution to the alliance and achieve interoperability with other members' forces.
- Democratic-style civil-military relations.

The language of this checklist is deliberately imprecise, to allow wide discretion in interpretation. Also, NATO has studiously ignored calls for exact statements of what it expects and requires under these headings (although an official has clarified what 'democratic-style civil-military relations' means).

In any event, these 'criteria' are in fact only pre-conditions for candidacy. The decision to invite an aspirant state to finalise accession is a *political* choice of the existing membership. The 1995 document is quite clear on this, as the following edited quotation shows.

> 'Decisions on enlargement will be for NATO itself…There is no fixed list of criteria…Enlargement will be decided on a case-by-case basis…Allies will decide by consensus whether to invite each [would-be member] to join *according to their judgement of whether doing so will contribute to security and stability in the North Atlantic area at the time such a decision is made*.' (Emphasis added.)

The italicised clause here confers total discretion. There are also some significant hostages to fortune in the formulation, notably the word 'stability' and the phrase 'at the time…' in the final lines. (Consider these in the context of a 2002 *démarche* by the Russians condemning further enlargement. That might sabotage any chance of admission for (say) the Baltic States, although the 19 would doubtless deny that they had been influenced by Moscow.) In practical terms this language absolves the present membership of any obligation to provide a detailed explanation of their choice or choices.

The freedom of manoeuvre that NATO thus gave itself in 1995 has not been affected by the MAP procedure which it instituted in 1999. Individual states' Annual National Programmes (ANPs) comprise five so-called Chapters covering:

I *Political/Economic* circumstances
II *Defence/Military* considerations
III *Resources* issues
IV *Security* status
V *Legal* matters

Appraisal by NATO is done according to this categorisation, taking into account – especially in relation to Chapter II – not only what the aspirant country describes in its ANP but also the content, and fulfilment, of its Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) submitted within the Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework. The MAP procedure thus fulfils a number of functions. In the first place, it embodies updated eligibility criteria, consistent but in some respects going beyond the prescriptions of the *Study on NATO Enlargement*. In the second place, it is a practical medium for telling participating states whether – and in what respects and to what extent – they appear to be meeting (or failing to meet) 'expectations and requirements'. In the third place, it helps in the planning of allied assistance to the MAP-states in remedying revealed shortcomings. However, *none of this affects the discretionary nature of the choice that the existing membership will eventually make about who will, and who will not, be invited to accede* (in November 2002, or whenever).

Put bluntly, no matter how diligent a candidate is in preparing for Prague, the 19 will act there 'according to their judgement' and will have uppermost in their minds the implications of their decision(s) for overall 'security and stability in the North Atlantic area at the time'.

In view of all this, it is interesting to note that in some NATO capitals – and here and there in the Brussels offices – the 'further enlargement' issue is perceived as a very simple matter. There are just three questions which the member-states have to address.

A Are *we* ready?
B Are *they* ready?
C Will admission of any given candidate make a clear *positive* contribution to 'security and stability in the North Atlantic area'?

The catch-all final question is sometimes expressed slightly differently in West European capitals and by Europeans in the NATO bureaucracy – incorporating a reference to '*European security*' (broadly defined).

This formulation of the decision problem puts in perspective the 1995 eligibility criteria and the post-1999 MAP procedure (plus all PfP-related activity). That entire obstacle course – which is partly how would-be members regard it – is concerned exclusively with the second question: are *they* ready? Yet that does not represent even half the battle, only one-third of it. Furthermore, from the aspirant's standpoint, there are tight limits to what can be done about Questions A and C. 'Are *we* ready?' is almost entirely a matter for the member-states. It is not *wholly* a matter for them, though, in the sense that there is a little scope for would-be member effort to persuade the 19 that they *should* be ready. The Nine have been doing precisely this: individually, and also collectively, at co-ordination meetings, the first of which was held in Vilnius in early 2000. Croatia joined the 'Vilnius-9' at a meeting in Tallinn (July 2001). Further gatherings are to be held in Sofia (October 2001), Bucharest (spring 2002) and again in Riga (summer 2002). So far as the catch-all question is concerned – 'the positive contribution' test – there is rather more scope here for an individual aspirant to convince the existing membership that it would be an asset to the Organisation rather than a liability; and all the candidate countries have been doing this also.

3. Organisation issues

However it is Question B, or part of it – the preparedness of the MAP-states in selected areas – that is the object of this inquiry. As noted in Chapter I, and leaving aside the (personnel and documentary) security conditions and legal matters that aspirants must address, NATO's expectations and requirements may be grouped under two headings.

- *Politico-strategic*: covering the first three items on the 1995 checklist summarised earlier plus additional considerations introduced in the 1999 MAP prospectus (like acceptance of NATO's Strategic Concept);
  and
- *Military*: covering the last two items on the 1995 list as extensively elaborated in the MAP procedure; and divisible into (a) considerations of military capability, viz. the would-be members capacity to contribute to NATO's peacetime order of battle and

forces for actual operations (including peace-support missions and other contingency tasks) and (b) considerations of military organisation viz. the demonstrable ability to fashion an appropriate, affordable and domestically acceptable defence effort and a commitment to practise 'democratic-style civil-military relations' in running it.

As further explained in Chapter I, the purpose of the present investigation is to illuminate the second element in the second of these groupings – the 'organisation' questions to which other studies of candidates' readiness typically pay scant attention. What are the matters on which a would-be member has to satisfy the assessors under this heading? What has a candidate to do to show that it is 'ready' on these counts? Four main issues invite attention.

What exactly practising '*democratic-style* ***civil-military relations***' means is something over which NATO has allowed a veil of ambiguity to lie. However, an official has sought to clarify 'what it means to achieve healthy civil-military relations and democratic control of the armed forces' (Marco Carnovale in *NATO Review*, 45, 2, 1995). More recently, a respected independent analyst has addressed the subject also (Jeffrey Simon in the US military journal Joint Forces Quarterly, Summer 2000 issue). These elaborations are *not* authoritative. They do, though, indicate the matters of interest to NATO. Combining them to yield a composite 'Carnovale-Simon test', an aspirant should be able to satisfy the 19 member-states that it has established:

- *a clear division of authority between the Head of State (typically a President) and the Head of Government (Prime Minister) and the latter's security-sector ministers* enshrined in a written constitution or public law (and designating who controls the military, promotes officers in peacetime, has emergency powers in crises and the authority to declare war);
- *peacetime governmental or executive oversight of general staffs and commanders through defence ministries*, with the ministry clearly responsible for all key choices about the size, shape, equipment and deployment of the armed forces (and accountable officials having the decisive voice);
- *legislative oversight of the defence organisation* – primarily but not exclusively exercised through 'the power of the purse' – which (a) goes beyond perfunctory (rubber-stamp) approval of what the executive proposes, and (b) engages, through committees, the main opposition parties, and (c) is supported by knowledgeable parliamentary staff and 'outside' expertise;
  and
- *a popular perception of civilian and democratic control of the armed forces*, with (a) military staffs clearly answerable to civilian office-holders (and not the 'law unto themselves' that they were inclined to be when the Soviet High Command called the shots in defence decision-making) and (b) those civilian office-holders themselves clearly accountable to the elected representatives of the society-at-large.

The last item of this demanding test is especially interesting, because it highlights the desirability of popular confidence in those to whom responsibility for safeguarding the state's and citizens' security has been entrusted.

The same item of this 'test' helps explain the NATO interest in ***public attitudes*** in candidate countries: to defence and the armed forces generally, NATO and the membership question particularly. It has been made clear to all aspirant states that there should be an informed national debate on their candidacy and that broad popular support for membership should be evident. Governments should also have taken steps to promote public awareness of the issues at stake. In short, the existing allies seek some assurance that membership itself, the fulfilment of membership obligations and the costs of membership are *acceptable* to a would-be member's population.

It is also clear that NATO attaches importance not only to preparing the public for membership but also to preparing the military profession for service in modern, interoperable armed forces functioning under civilian direction (and democratically accountable). Interoperability is, of course, an important part of the military capability assessment and as such receives considerable attention in 'readiness for entry' appraisals. The point here is that the interoperability of human capital – the individual members of the military profession – is crucial for successful integration as well. Candidate countries should therefore have sound ***military education*** systems in place, which usually means reformed systems, with provision for ensuring that their personnel 'speak the same language' as current member-states. This covers language training as such – especially English-language instruction – and education related to NATO's tactical doctrine, standard operating procedures, terminology and so on.

The fourth basis of assessment within the scope of this study is the effectiveness of the aspirant state's ***defence organisation*** and decision-making processes. What the 19 seek here is the assurance that a candidate country can make military provision – pre- and post-accession – that is *appropriate* to the strategic circumstances (including NATO membership) and *affordable* in the light of its likely economic circumstances in the short- and medium-term future (affecting the availability of resources for defence). The key question, therefore, is whether the Nine now have – and whether structures and processes exist to deliver in future – defence efforts which satisfy these conditions. It is in dealing with this issue particularly that the need arises to distinguish among the five 'start-from-scratch' countries, the two 'discontinuity cases' and the two large 'legacy states' (as explained in Chapter I).

Although arguably a 'capability' rather than an 'organisation' issue, it is noteworthy that, from the MAP feedback, one infers that a salient aspect of appropriate provision – in NATO's eyes – is the subscription of forces to current peace-support missions (broadly defined) and the capacity to contribute to future contingency operations (on a UN, OSCE, NATO or EU mandate). Therefore we allude to the Nine's present activities in this connection and to forces they have undertaken to make available

in future both to NATO and to the EU's recently-created 'catalogue' of forces for so-called Petersberg tasks.

Each of the MAP-state profiles which make up Part B of this work (Chapters IV-VII) addresses the four major themes just enumerated. The conclusions of these essays are summarised in Part C (Chapter IX). In that Chapter there is also some cross-reference to how NATO's newest members – the Three admitted in March 1999 – measured-up to the accession 'tests' when they were aspirants and have performed subsequently (the subject-matter of Chapter VIII). In the second chapter of this Part of the study we offer an initial conspectus of the current situation of the Nine (end-September 2001) on a *thematic* basis. This overview serves as a prologue to the national profiles and offers a concise general perspective complementary to the *country-by-country* material presented later.

III. ORGANISING NATIONAL DEFENCES: AN OVERVIEW

1. Introduction

At Washington in 1999 NATO opted *not* to announce a 'second wave' of post-Cold war enlargement there and then. Leading aspirants were commended for 'progress made' since the 1997 Madrid gathering and the Organisation reaffirmed that its door remained open to them (and, in principle, for others). But no new invitations to membership were issued. The MAP procedure was offered instead. The candidate countries accepted this. Since 1999 the would-be members have duly participated in the process – they had no alternative – and have completed two MAP 'rounds' of ANP submissions and feedback from NATO, the latter including comprehensive Progress Reports and a thorough debrief ('at 19+1' in NATO parlance). They have taken part clearly understanding that, while presented as the pathway to NATO's 'open door', the MAP process does not assure admission. As stated earlier, an aspirant cannot *qualify* for entry (in this manner or any other). For its part, the now 19-member NATO has honoured its undertaking to provide constructive commentary on the candidates' ANPs, formally and informally; and it has delivered practical help in membership preparations. All this, however, with no guarantee of an invitation to negotiate accession at Prague in November 2002 or, indeed, at any other time.

Thus it is conceivable that, in the Czech capital, the member-states could again choose not to initiate further enlargement. The 19 themselves may not be 'ready'. They may judge that none of the Nine is 'ready'. Or they may invoke the catch-all assessment condition and declare that heralding new admissions 'at this time' would not contribute to 'security and stability' in and around Europe. Issuing no new invitations remains a possibility, even though the North Atlantic Council has said that it *expects* to invite at least one aspirant to join. This 'minimal option' is generally construed as foreshadowing admission for Slovenia.

Three considerations keep the 'zero option' in play and explain why the 'minimal option' is the furthest the 19 have been prepared to go in anticipating Prague. The first of these is concern that further enlargement might do irreparable damage to relations with Russia. The second is a fear that ratification of new admissions might be problematical for some legislatures, including the Congress of the United States. The third is scepticism about the preparedness of 'second wave' aspirants, a sentiment conditioned by experience in assimilating the 'first wave' entrants that has bred a reluctance in some quarters to risk a repeat performance of the difficulties.

On the other hand, there is some support in member-states for all the nine current candidacies, with the possible exception(s) of Albania and Macedonia. Thus former German defence minister Volker Rühe favours extending invitations to Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and, possibly, Romania, while veteran US legislator Jesse Helms – until mid-2001 chair of the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations – has argued for the inclusion of all three Baltic States. Top statesmen have been positive about new accessions too – as President George W. Bush was on his June 2001 visit to Europe – though, normally, member-state *leaders* have chosen their words very carefully, avoiding what might later be considered as firm undertakings (which is what the US President did).

In addition, there is no doubt that another postponement of further enlargement – with the obligatory recognition of 'progress' and reiteration of the 'open door' formula – would prompt serious questions about NATO's good faith. So too would choice of the 'minimal option' (the token admission of Slovenia). The credibility gap that already separates some member-states' rhetoric and their enlargement-related action would certainly widen. Furthermore, in many, if not most, MAP-states there would be profound disillusion and also, perhaps, damaging political repercussions. On top of that, the image of a goal that recedes further the harder one strives to reach it would have a special resonance if, as expected, the 2002 Summit venue is the Castle in Kafka's city.

The central question, therefore, is: have the Nine indeed made the necessary determined and sustained effort to prepare themselves for membership; and which of them has done so well enough to be judged 'ready' for accession? So far as the 'organisation' topics covered by this investigation are concerned – and on the evidence of the 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 MAP cycles – the answer is that all have certainly made some effort. Not all, though, are 'ready' (in our judgement). Some of our individual national assessments are more positive than others. In each of the four areas of interest – civil-military relations, public attitudes, military education and defence organisation – we find some countries well prepared, others less so, while a number remain clearly ill prepared. Thus there are strong contenders for accession, weaker ones, and states which do not – for different reasons – reach a 'serious candidacy' threshold. Of one thing we are absolutely convinced, however. All are better prepared than they would have been without the discipline of the MAP procedure and better prepared than the 'first wave' accession countries were before Madrid.

2. Civil-military relations

For example, in the civil-military relations area, all the Nine have the constitutional and legal basis for civilian control and in the majority practice accords at least nominally with

the customary formal prescriptions. The obvious exception is *Albania*, where a form of personalised direction of military affairs is practised and the 'localism' endemic to the political culture of the society persists. Eccentric also – in a very different way – are *Estonia* and *Latvia*, where the role of military professionals at the defence ministry is virtually zero. *Slovenia* too has carried civilian direction of defence affairs to extreme lengths as, for its own reasons, has *Macedonia.* Elsewhere it is the 'clearly defined responsibilities' part of the Carnovale-Simon test that is problematical. In *Romania*, for example, there are in practice two executives for the security sector, one in the office of the President and one answerable to the Prime Minister; and they are sometimes at odds. Exactly where final civilian authority lies is ambiguous in other countries too (though a number have new legislation in the pipeline to clarify the position).

The principal phenomenon observed in this context, however, is diversity in the effectiveness – or pervasiveness – of civilian direction. This is typically manifest in skirmishes, battles, even turf wars involving the (usually) politically-headed and (often) largely civilian-staffed Ministry of Defence (MoD) on the one hand, the Chief of Defence (CHOD)-led and (usually) exclusively uniformed General Staff (GS) on the other. Among the top brass in a number of countries there are still those who regard running the armed forces – once the very broadest strategic direction has been given – as the exclusive business of men in uniform (and usually it is males, suitably bemedalled). What we would call civilian control, they would call unwonted civilian interference. Thus even where nominally the military are clearly subordinate to civilian authority, they may have the balance of effective power in many fields, from policy-making and planning to budget execution. Thus in *Bulgaria* and *Slovakia* – and *Romania* too – it is not easy to gauge exactly how far real power has shifted from the GS to the MoD with democratisation, or whether the balance is now 'right' (whatever 'right' means). In the Bulgarian case, for example, there is a suspicion that the GS sought to frustrate the MoD in implementing that country's initial post-1999 reform blueprint and that elements within it oppose the more radical revision now contemplated. In *Albania* the problem is a palpable lack of mutual respect between the politicians and the generals. The latter clearly resent the intervention of 'teachers, physicians, theatre artists and archaeologists' in military affairs. In the newly-independent MAP-states the challenge is rather different: getting the MoD-GS relationship 'right' in what are infant – perhaps now adolescent – organisations. On the whole, the *Baltic States* appear to us to be working this out in a thoughtful way. *Slovenia* and *Macedonia* simply allow the GS very little say.

All the newly-independent countries are 'working it out' in the matter of democratic control. There are satisfactory formal arrangements for legislative oversight in all of them. Practice differs. In *Estonia* and *Lithuania* the legislature's role is not particularly well developed, whereas in *Latvia*: 'the role of the parliament is paramount and its committees determine everything' a source says. In *Macedonia* the legislative power is 'not obviously active' but 'generally disposed to support the government's

proposals rather than criticising them' (we are told). In nearby *Slovenia* the situation is slightly different. The elected representatives exercise strict nominal control, especially on the budget and long-term funding provision, but not effective oversight overall.

The states where recent 'discontinuities' have occurred – *Slovakia* and *Albania* – present contrasting images too. Having experienced a noxious brand of democratic centralism in the first post-independence years, the Slovaks understandably attach great importance to accountability and transparency. They have generally satisfactory legislative oversight arrangements. The Albanians do not. Oversight is perfunctory: Parliament 'pretends' to hold the executive accountable. In Bratislava the post-1998 government has even co-opted parliamentarians into the decision-making process on its reform agenda. In Tirana that would be unthinkable.

Curiously, contrast characterises conditions in the 'legacy' states as well. In *Romania*, the complication is the 'two executives': one accountable to – and increasingly attentive to – the legislature, the other not. In *Bulgaria*, parliamentary oversight is exercised with apparent diligence, but not very energetically and not very professionally.

A problem common to all MAP-states is the lack of military knowledge and of broader security understanding among both elected representatives and their (usually very small) parliamentary staffs. Steps are being taken to remedy this in some places. For example, the Centre for European Security Studies has a training programme underway for parliamentarians and staffers in South-East Europe. Generally, though, few legislatures are sufficiently well-informed to hold administrations to account effectively. Where parliaments do have influence it is where they can tap 'outside' expertise, in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) active in the security area, academic institutions and so on: in short, where there is a broadly-based national 'security community'. Such communities exist in all the MAP-states, but they are bigger (and better) in some than others. They have real impact in only a few.

Important, too, in the democratic control context are the print and broadcast media. They can both put the tough questions about defence to the authorities and convey the answers – plus, of course, straightforward information – to society-at-large. Among countries fairly well served in this respect are *Bulgaria*, *Latvia*, *Macedonia*, *Romania* and *Slovakia*. The Macedonian case is interesting because there the broadsheet *Word of the Army* is published every month as a supplement to the country's biggest newspaper *Vecher*.

On the question of popular confidence in security-sector organisation, direct evidence is hard to find. It is fair to assume, however, that it is a function of the authorities' commitment to transparency and accountability. The strength of this varies and has odd features in some places. For instance, in *Bulgaria* the Kostov administration (1997-2001) took the national 'security community' into its confidence when finalising its military reform prospectus and when preparing a draft White Paper. However, it placed few details of the eventual force structure plan in the public domain; and the much-

heralded Defence White Paper had still not appeared by the time Kostov's party suffered electoral defeat (June 2001). Needless to say, such unnecessary and dysfunctional secretiveness is found elsewhere as well. It is present in its most acute form in *Albania*.

3. Public attitudes

Information on public attitudes – to NATO generally and on the membership issue particularly – is very patchy in our profiles. We have been able to obtain good local input from two or three countries, not-so-good material from others, and virtually none from several. Having said that, some of the fragments of information gathered are interesting.

- In the *Baltic States* popular support for NATO membership is high or moderately high in Estonia and Latvia, but not in Lithuania. In all three countries it is less than elite support. There are, moreover, some intriguing snippets of data. Thus in a late 2000 poll one-third of Latvia's Russian minority was in favour of the country's accession (despite intense anti-enlargement propaganda from the Russian Federation).
- In *Slovenia*, a May 2001 poll registered just over 50 per cent of respondents as supporting the country's candidacy. The 'pro' count has fluctuated around that level since 1998. However, surveys over the years have shown a marked aversion on the part of the Slovenes to the idea of membership-related expense; and the political parties think that accession calls for a referendum.
- Prior to the 2001 turmoil, the authorities in *Macedonia* claimed near-unanimous support for NATO membership – but did not publish their officially-collected poll figures. Independent observers guess that maybe 80-90 per cent of the country's population actually oppose membership. We lack reliable data; and in any event sentiment in the country may have shifted during 2001.
- For *Albania*, we have unearthed a 1996 sample of 1000 young Albanians which shows an astonishing 90 per cent approval of the membership goal – but we have found nothing more up to date than that. Albanian officials say that such a degree of unanimity is general now. Independent observers do not dispute it. NATO Secretary-General Robertson accepts it (Speech in Tirana, 17 May 2001). Yet verifiable evidence appears to be non-existent or at least not in the public domain.
- Opinion in *Slovakia* is divided, as it always has been. Fewer than 50 per cent of the population supports the NATO membership drive. A public awareness campaign is being conducted, but success is not assured. The conduct of a pre-accession referendum has been canvassed; but knowledgeable observers think it unlikely that there will be one.

- Opinion in *Bulgaria* has become more favourable to NATO membership lately. Support has grown despite the country's recent burdens – the cost of sanctions and an obstructed Danube, NATO shells in Sofia's suburbs, and so on – and a reliable poll records 70 per cent 'for' joining the Organisation (December 2000). Another survey suggests that there is a basic popular understanding of the issues that the country's candidacy raises.
- A recent attitude survey in *Romania* registered 85 per cent of respondents as 'for' the country's integration into NATO (Metro Media Transylvania, March 2001). This is a higher positive count than at any time since mid-1997 (when the same polling organisation reported 82 per cent of its sample 'in favour of' accession). Enthusiasm for NATO slumped in 1999, almost certainly because of the Kosovo-related bombing campaign, but rose again through 2000.

It is noteworthy that, on this evidence, popular support for NATO membership is relatively low in the two countries widely regarded as likely front-runners for accession invitations at Prague 2002 – namely Slovakia and Slovenia – but it is relatively high in a number of countries generally thought of as having weaker claims to consideration.

4. Military education

Attention to the content of armed forces' education – especially at institutes of higher studies – is the key to the intellectual and practical preparation of the military profession for NATO membership. We are talking about 'speaking the same language' here; and as already indicated this covers not only instruction in foreign tongues but also becoming acquainted with unfamiliar (even alien) concepts, terminology and practices. Most MAP-states understand this and have made dispositions accordingly or are well advanced in the process of doing so.

A good case in point is *Bulgaria*, which has opted to place both specialist training for NATO-related appointments and English-language training in a dedicated Interoperability Centre at its main instructional facility. Synergy results, because the language of instruction in the specialist training is English. This is an imaginative approach. So is that of the *Baltic States* who do advanced staff officer training – within the framework of their trilateral co-operation – at the Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL) where, again, the language of instruction is English. Perhaps learning the BALTDEFCOL lesson, *Romania* too is setting-up regional (or sub-regional) facilities, including a staff officers' school and a resources management training establishment. The latter offers courses modelled on those provided by the US Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California – once a favourite 'study abroad' choice for officers from MAP-

states (for obvious reasons) – and, once more, teaching is in English. (Its Romanian graduates are already playing an important part in managing their country's long-delayed military rationalisation.)

Other noteworthy features of military education reform are that major improvements in NCO training have been made (or are being made) in both *Bulgaria* and *Romania*, where they will no doubt help these 'legacy' states realise plans to shrink their still-overblown officer corps. Bulgaria is also rationalising military specialist training generally. The *Baltic States* too have made (or are making) similar provision. They also have plans for better reservist training. There are problem-areas too, however. The system in *Albania* is in poor shape, as it is in *Macedonia*. *Slovenia* has lost faith in its civilian-based system and is contemplating scrapping it. Our information on *Slovakia* is that the control of military education is still an issue – another instance of MoD-GS 'turf' warfare – and that this continues to delay a much-needed overhaul of the system. (The Czech Republic still has this problem as well, with the Military Academy in Brno in occasional dispute with the GS Academy at Vyskov.)

5. Defence organisation

It is principally in relation to the MAP-states' defence organisations – and the assessment of (as applicable) reduction, rationalisation and restructuring – that our three-way differentiation of the Nine has to be applied, distinguishing among (1) the newly-independent start-from-scratch states, (2) the 'discontinuity' cases and (3) the two largest countries which inherited an overbearing Cold War legacy. To repeat an earlier formulation, we are interested in discovering whether the countries in each category now have – and whether structures and processes exist to deliver in future – appropriate and affordable defence efforts.

Start-from-scratch states

This is a group of five small (or very small) countries. The *Baltic States* had the benefit of much outside advice and concrete assistance post-independence; and they opted for trilateral co-operation in several areas. As a result, while their defence capabilities are modest – collectively as well as individually – the whole undoubtedly adds up to more than the sum of individual parts would have done. Moreover, these countries make good use of reserve forces for territorial defence, pending the arrival of reinforcements from neighbours or friends further afield, as the Northern Europeans' favoured 'total defence' approach requires. They have decided to make national 'BALTBAT' units – in effect feeder units for *the* BALTBAT – the core of national ground forces' provision, thereby

linking the unilateral and trilateral dimensions of force structuring. As for the future, each practises systematic planning, programming and budgeting after a fashion: *Lithuania* appears to have the best thought-out arrangements. Target defence/GNP proportions are a favourite planning guideline (and 2 per cent the favourite figure).

Both Macedonia and Slovenia necessarily went their own way in making post-independence provision. Prior to the 2001 upheaval *Macedonia* was implementing a reorganisation plan for its armed forces. The country envisaged fielding around 15,000 troops (in future – half regular, half conscript) in units tailored for contingency operations. Equipment having been a problem in the past – Bulgarian and other hand-me-downs notwithstanding – US and German assistance had been promised. This forward planning is now 'on hold'. *Slovenia* is reorganising too, partly in response to MAP feedback. It unveiled a long-term programme 2000-2010 at the beginning of 2000. This envisaged a (mobilised) end-strength of 47,000 in 2010. However, the country has revised its ideas since. It now wants to be able to field 30,000 on mobilisation, by 2003. The country is shrinking its already small active forces (around 8000 in mid-2001) in the process. The target date for preparation of a single motorised infantry unit for multinational operations has been advanced, but a question-mark hangs over the rest of the revised prospectus, because future funding is uncertain. Part of the problem here is that the Slovenes get a lot less defence for their money than any other MAP-state (on our calculations). That Slovenia is widely regarded as a strong candidate for Prague 2002 – and the aspirant of choice should the 'minimal' option be selected – is therefore emphatically not because of military merit.

The 'discontinuity' cases

Another country which (finally) produced a 'new model' force structure plan in 2000 is *Albania*. The force level target is around 30,000 regulars – troops plus civilians – which is about two-thirds the present count. (The mobilisable strength target is 120,000, about one-half the present figure.) The bad news is that the plan comes with a decade-long implementation schedule, in which there is little equipment acquisition until the later 2000s, and there are doubts as to whether even this is practicable. The better news is that in parallel with the scheme a planning, programming and budgeting system is being installed which should in due course improve resource allocation and resource-use. The best news is that new arrangements for managing actual spending are to be introduced also. These are geared, in an official briefer's elegant formulation, to ensuring [budget] 'execution in full conformity with the [stipulated] destination of the money'.

Much money allegedly went astray in *Slovakia* in the Meciar years. Since 1998 the suspicion of gross misuse of funds has thankfully subsided. Procedures to facilitate more efficient resource-use have been adopted also. As for settling the shape and size of the country's forces – with NATO membership in mind – a new prospectus was due to appear as this text went to press (October 2001). Based on a *Military Strategy* document

approved in May 2001, it is expected to foreshadow a better-directed and better-balanced defence effort but force modernisation is likely to be postponed until the mid-2000s. The objective is 'to establish, by 2010, an effective but affordable Armed Force organised and equipped to comply with the *Military Strategy*, modernised to be interoperable with NATO forces and supported [effectively and efficiently].'

The two largest countries

Attention to 'the three r's' – reduction, rationalisation and restructuring – has been required most in the biggest of the MAP-states, Bulgaria and Romania. As explained already, each country entered its post-totalitarian period with a large military establishment, a force structure geared to robust national defence and manoeuvre warfare, plus a high command accustomed to freedom from civilian interference (once party and presidential guidelines had been laid down). Each also had a complex web of intelligence and security services answerable to who knows whom.

Bulgaria cut its force level sharply when the Cold War ended. Necessary rationalisation of the armed forces and root-and-branch reconstruction did not begin in earnest, however, until after 1997. This is not the place for details. Suffice it to say that through the mid-1990s the Bulgarians refused to redefine commitments in line with the few resources a sick economy could muster for defence. The result was a progressive deterioration in the state of the military (however assessed). Bulgaria has had largely 'hollow' forces for years. Since 1997 the economy has stabilised, the nonsense of fairyland planning has been ended, and the country's *Plan 2004* has been embarked upon and was undergoing refinement when the June 2001 election took place. The 'revised version' – which the new government appears disposed to accept – should deliver a sound and sustainable defence effort for the later 2000s. The original blueprint was based on shrinking the national order of battle by more than one-third, to a regular troop strength of 45,000 (and a mobilisable strength of up to 250,000) and configuring the force for post-Cold War missions. This was to be done without reducing the number of front-line combat units. If the Bulgarians can strip out obsolescent equipment, abandon redundant facilities and release additional resources for necessary modernisation, this goal should be attainable (but the reserve forces target will have to fall, reducing wartime strength to just over 100,000).

Romania has been wrestling with 'the three r's' for years. They have not yet got it 'right' – because until very recently there appeared to be a chronic inability in Bucharest to agree what 'right' might be, and then do something about it. However, all the indications are that the new leadership at the defence ministry is determined to cure 'the Romanian disease', manifest also in the long-running saga of economic reform, including the closure (or rather non-closure) of loss-making state enterprises: namely an unwillingness at the top to make unpalatable choices and a remarkable capacity on the part of the bureaucracy to delay (even prevent) implementation of decisions when made.

An acute form of the Bulgarian affliction of the 1990s, this ailment has to date prevented serious security-sector reform in the country. Exacerbating factors have been the 'two executives' problem noted earlier and a web of vested interests. The answer now being elaborated looks like a variant of the Bulgarian remedy: shrink the force, reconfigure, strip out the obsolete/redundant assets, sack superfluous top brass, streamline and rejuvenate the bureaucracy and move on. The danger is that the inertia to be overcome in Romania, not to mention the weight of those vested interests, could frustrate the present administration's admirably good intentions. Having said that, if Romania can indeed 'move on' – as Bulgaria has clearly begun to do – by late 2002 it could conceivably have made up the ground recently lost to its South-East European neighbour in preparedness for NATO membership.

6. Conclusion

It is clear from the foregoing paragraphs that, even confining attention to a restricted list of military organisation issues, the MAP-states display a bewildering variety of characteristics. These are elaborated in the country profiles of Part C (Chapters IV-VII) which follow.

PART B

THE MAP-STATES; COUNTRY ASSESSMENTS (END-SEPTEMBER 2001)

‘It isn’t only through the servants themselves that I have a connexion with the Castle, for apart from that I hope and trust that what I’m doing is being noticed by someone up there….and that finally whoever is noticing me may perhaps arrive at a more favourable opinion of me than [of] the others’.

Kafka, *The Castle*, Minerva (English) edition, 1992, p. 208 (in the section ‘Olga’s plans’ of Chapter 15).

IV. 'START FROM SCRATCH' COUNTRIES: (1) THE BALTIC STATES

1. Introduction

For analytical and presentational convenience we have assigned the nine MAP-states to three categories. In this Chapter and the next we deal with the 'start from scratch' countries in our typology: the three (former Soviet) Baltic republics, and the two countries of the former Yugoslav Federation. The Baltic States have a combined population of just over 7.5 million: Estonia is home to fewer than 1.5 million (28 per cent of them are ethnic Russians), Latvia has almost 2.5 million (32 per cent of whom are ethnic Russians, and over 10 per cent other nationalities), while Lithuania's population is around 3.7 million (8 per cent of whom are ethnic Russians). In making their defence dispositions after independence the trio thus possessed, individually, a limited capacity for organising *national* defences and raising *national* armed forces. Not surprisingly, therefore, in military provision they opted for intensive *trilateral* co-operation wherever possible. As a result they now conduct joint training and they have combined their capabilities in some fields to form joint units.

The three countries' foreign and security policies are not identical, however, because each has its own pattern of links with other states. Estonia has strong ties with Finland. Lithuania has a close and complex relationship with Poland. Latvia has no dominant (non-Baltic) ally and so depends more than the other two on tripartite co-operation (military and political). Estonia stands apart because it is the only Baltic State on the 'fast track' to EU membership. Because of its small Russian minority and its border with Poland, Lithuania thinks it might be the first and only Baltic State to be admitted into NATO. During the Soviet era each of the trio had a different military importance for Moscow and this still conditions the relationship of each with Russia. Lithuania was of relatively minor importance: neighbouring Kaliningrad – Lithuania's only border with Russia today – was the focal point of Moscow's interest. Latvia on the other hand hosted the headquarters of the Soviet Russian Baltic Military District and the Skundra radar site – a location mentioned in East-West arms control accords and hence something Moscow could hold onto for a longer period, until 1998 – which, together with its large Russian minority, makes the country of special concern to Russia. Estonia had stationed forces but their withdrawal meant the end of the projection of Russian military influence, even though Moscow is still trying to set the mind of the country's large Russian minority.

Differences of policy emphasis on these counts have not stopped the three integrating and co-ordinating their national defences, however. Their pioneering vehicle for multinational effort was, of course, the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT). Conceived as a

peacekeeping force – with UN missions in mind – this was formally proposed in late 1993. Work on its formation began in the following year, with help from Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (and material aid from others). The unit is a combined motorised infantry battalion consisting of an HQ (at Adazi in Latvia), three rifle companies (ESTCOY, LATCOY and LITCOY) and a logistics company plus battalion staff. It is geographically dispersed, with each rifle company located at its national training centre. There has been some criticism of the formation. A point emphasised by foreign instructors in the contributing countries is the absence of a common Baltic States doctrine and tactics based on realistic personnel, equipment and training standards. Also, the battalion as a whole has never been deployed on a mission due to lack of finances and logistic support, and therefore sustainability. However, in 2001 the three States seem to have re-committed themselves to the BALTBAT. Current thinking focuses on 'growing' the set-up. It is being upgraded from a solely peacekeeping battalion to a multi-role infantry battalion with integrated anti–tank and fire support (mortar) platoons. This involves establishing national infantry battalions, trained to NATO standards, with the capacity to perform in a national defence role as much as in peace support operations. The idea is that once each country has trained its national 'BALTBAT', it will be possible to sustain participation in international missions by *roulement* on a semi-annual basis. Each State will be able to assign a company of its national 'BALTBAT', along with the agreed staff and support elements, to *the* BALTBAT. In due course it might be possible to contemplate creating a Baltic Reaction Brigade (BALTBRIG, presumably).

In addition to the BALTBAT there exist now the BALTRON and BALTNET. BALTRON is the Baltic Naval Squadron for mine clearance, search and rescue activities, and 'low intensity conflict' tasks (which will be ready for NATO-led operations from end-2001). The three countries have made available two vessels each year to BALTRON. As a co-ordinator of assistance provided by other sponsors (primarily the US and the Nordic countries), Germany (who donated several minesweepers and minehunters to Estonia and Lithuania) has assumed a leading role in BALTRON. The squadron has participated in many exercises and minesweeping manoeuvres in the Baltic Sea. BALTNET is the Baltic Air Surveillance Network, consisting of communication lines, air surveillance radars and the Baltic Regional Air-space Co-ordination Centre (RASCC) located at Karmelava in Lithuania, soon to be linked to NATO's Integrated Air Defence System.

There is also a Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL) located at Tartu in Estonia. Since 1999 this has offered a one-year course for senior staff officers, covering operations and tactics, logistics, political science and strategy, staff duties, 'total defence' and military technology. The curriculum is modelled on that of the NATO Defence College in Rome. The language of instruction is English. Graduates are prepared for national and international staff appointments, and long term planning positions in the MoD or General Staff. A source of tension here is the difficulty to integrate the

BALTDEFCOL graduates back into their national military commands, as they are often better qualified than their superiors. (Each country also has a national academy. Among other things, these provide basic English language training.) In 2001 two other courses have started at the BALTDEFCOL: the Civil Servant Course (residential and distance-learning periods for officials from the Ministries of Defence and Interior of the three countries); and the Colonel's Course (advanced education for field grade officers with clear leadership and management potential). Other College initiatives to enhance the three states' interoperability and compatibility are the provision of guidance to the national Military Academies and the development of a common operations manual for use by all three states. To complete the enumeration of Trilateral co-operation, in addition to these main undertakings there is a small Baltic Medical Unit (BALTMED) plus a joint information system (BALTCCIS), and a joint logistics system is 'in development' (BALTLOG). Another acronym, BALTPERS, is in use too, for co-ordinated personnel planning arrangements.

All these 'BALT-' projects are aided through the Baltic Security Assistance Group (BALTSEA), which co-ordinates bilateral assistance to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In addition, the heads of the three states' volunteer defence organisations have recently signed a co-operation agreement (Riga, March 2001) covering joint training and the exchange of literature plus military and sporting competitions. Moreover, in an attempt to raise the co-operation to a new level the Baltic governments have set up a working group to explore the possibilities for joint procurement. (However, joint defence planning is not on the agenda). Finally, it is appropriate to note that NATO connections extend beyond those cited already. For instance, personnel from the Baltics' ground forces serve with the Danish-German-Polish Multinational Corps-NorthEast (MNC-NE); and national units have done duty in a variety of peace support operations since the mid-1990s.

The extent of the Baltic States' tripartite co-operation raises the question: could NATO realistically offer an invitation to negotiate accession to one (or two) but not the other(s)? Arguably not. At the same time the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement* stated quite categorically that enlargement 'is on a case-by-case basis…' and new members 'should not be admitted or excluded *on the basis of belonging to some group or category*' (emphasis added). Clearly there is a dilemma here better reflected upon after the three states have been considered *individually*. What is worth registering, however, is that those who support the Baltic candidates for 'second wave' enlargement generally argue that the three should be invited all at once (and there is no doubt that this would be the best option from a military standpoint).

2. Estonia

The main goals of Estonia's foreign policy – to achieve membership of the EU and NATO – have been unchanged since independence. Every government of Estonia has cherished these goals, including the current coalition. All opposition parties support them. The next elections will be held in 2003. Even if the largest opposition party of Estonia were to win, there would be no major change in foreign and security policy priorities. (In May 2000, a NATO support group was formed in the legislature, which includes parliamentarians of the governing parties and the opposition.) Having said that, there is a security dimension to domestic policy, because of the large Russian minority (28 per cent of the total population). However, the government's integration policy aims to help all non-Estonians to participate in Estonian society by teaching them the official state language. In addition, conscripts of non-Estonian origin have instruction. The number of native speakers is estimated at approximately 70 per cent of the population. Surveys show that non-Estonians' knowledge is increasing. Since 1996 the number of non-Estonians who have absolutely no knowledge of the official language has decreased by one-third, and the number speaking Estonian fluently has increased by 70 per cent. Reflecting the progress of Estonia's democratisation in general and its minority integration programmes in particular, on 20 June 2001 the head of the OSCE mission in Estonia said that it may soon be possible to end the Organisation's work there.

Regarding relations with Russia itself, Estonia has no explicit *Ostpolitik*. It sees Russia as an unstable actor in the region (the only one) but does not anticipate any overt military threat. Regarding Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), the country operates within the framework of the OSCE-based Vienna Documents. This means that – apart from the provision of information – Russia is every year invited to conduct inspections and to send observers, but the Russians are not keen to participate. Estonia also has a tripartite border co-operation arrangement with Finland and Russia covering crisis management, environmental protection, and illegal trafficking. As for sources of friction, apart from Moscow's attempts to manipulate Russian minority opinion, Estonia's main complaint is that Russia still has not shown any interest in ratifying the border agreement. There is also unfinished business with respect to implementation of the CFE Treaty (as revised and amended), affecting all the Baltic States. Neither of these looms large in policy calculations. (However, as a future policy option – if they have all acceded to NATO – the three should seriously contemplate joining the CFE Treaty to assuage Russia's security concerns.)

As stated at the outset, gaining entry to NATO and the EU are *the* priorities. In the NATO context that means showing that Estonia is 'ready' for accession in all respects, including the military organisation issues that are the focus of this study.

2.1 Civil-military relations

Regarding *divisions of authority and executive direction*, many of Estonia's defence establishment insiders say that the division of roles between the President and the government is unclear. The crux of the problem is paragraph 127 of the Constitution, which does not give a good definition of responsibilities. The command chain is uncertain, necessitating a *modus vivendi* between the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Defence Forces. According to the Constitution the President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF) and the Chief of Defence Forces (CHOD) is subordinate to him. The Defence Minister, who has executive powers, is a political figure who until recently did not have a superior-subordinate relationship to the CHOD, wherein lay the potential for conflict between them until a mid-2000 understanding. The Chief of the General Staff is answerable to the CHOD. In this relationship, political offices and the Prime Minister are out of play. In 2001 the division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the EDF, with the possible merging of functions, will be continued. Also the practical influence of the presidency will be diminished. With the recently elected President Arnold Ruutel replacing the *pater patria* Lennart Meri, who had a firm grasp over the chain of command, it might become easier to attain this objective.

A Peacetime State Defence Law (accepted in 1995) defines the roles of the President of the Republic, Government, MoD, Estonian Bank and the CHOD. According to that statute, the President proposes to Parliament (a) whom to appoint as the CHOD and (b) whether to announce a war situation, mobilisation, demobilisation or a state of emergency. The government’s role is to prepare the formal documents setting out the main guidelines of defence policy, and to run the defence organisation through the MoD. The Ministry administers the Defence Forces, Defence League (a voluntary organisation which in wartime will be activated into land defence formations), defence districts, and commissions of military service. The Defence Forces, Defence League and other defence institutions are subordinated to the CHOD.

The relationship between the MoD and the General Staff (GS) is sometimes affected by a struggle over roles. According to the MoD the GS has no legal ground to claim more authority than they have, but it is clear that there is no unequivocal division line between the two. The Ministry does the strategic planning. The GS performs military operational and tactical planning, but the MoD checks whether its work follows and fulfils ANP goals and other requirements. Still, there is close co-operation between the MoD and the J5 (planning within GS), and there are regular meetings between the MoD and the GS. Across a broad range of business – budget, ANP-writing, and much else – not only the MoD and the GS but also the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance are involved. The MoD is staffed almost exclusively by civilian officials, which is clearly a misconception of civilian control over the military (a similar situation exists

within the Latvian MoD). There are only 2-3 serving officers (in the defence attaché bureau).

In the area of *legislative oversight* key documents – drafted by the MoD, and reviewed by the CHOD and the GS – must be approved by the legislature. The defence of Estonia is regulated also by a provision promulgating the *Main Goals of State Defence Policy* (approved by Parliament in 1996); the *National Military Strategy* (agreed 28 February 2001); the *National Security Concept* of the Republic of Estonia (approved on 6 March 2001); and the *Security Policy Goals* of the Republic of Estonia (re-approved also on 6 March 2001).

Procedures are well established. Every plenary working week there are briefings at which the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence and the Commander or the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces answer the questions of the members of the *Riigikogu* (the briefing is televised). Laws are adopted, the commander or the commander-in-chief are appointed to office, and the defence budget is passed at the *Riigikogu*. The national defence committee meets three times a week. The chairman of the committee (who comes from the opposition party People's Union) knows the top army commanders personally. Members often visit units in the field.

Because independent Estonia's society is only 10 years old defence expertise among elected representatives is not very widespread. The number of qualified individuals is relatively high among staffers; but though knowledgeable, they are not very influential. But parliamentarians do have opportunities to enhance their knowledge, e.g. by attending State Defence Courses and joining the Defence League. Furthermore, courses are organised – about security policy, defence priorities, planning, and border and civilian defence – by the NATO support group within the parliament. Instruction is available also for journalists, at universities, in (local) governmental institutions and state security structures. Recent political, military, financial and other issues – and material on the defence system as a whole – are covered in the one-week State Defence course. Access to 'outside' expertise is limited for legislators, however. There are only a few independent institutes and individuals that pay attention to security affairs. There are the Institute for International and Social Sciences, the Estonian Academy of Sciences and the Forum Baltica. The Estonian Foreign Policy Institute has been established only recently. Within BALTDEFCOL there is a Centre for Baltic Defence Studies (run by General Ants Laaneots). The executive branch is better served. The MoD and GS occasionally bring foreign advisers into the planning process. Outsiders sometimes assist in policy-making as well: for example the International Defence Advisory Board established some years ago under the chairmanship of the British General Gary Johnson (a former NATO Commander AFNORTH).

As for the *popular perception of civilian and democratic control*, officially the origin of the Estonian military dates back to 1918 (following the principle of juridical continuance), but in reality the armed forces are approximately 10 years old, since the

traditions were broken by the 50 years of Soviet occupation. Hence the popular attitude towards the military is ambivalent. During and immediately after Soviet rule, it was one of antipathy, even hostility. This general sentiment was hard to overcome when the national defence forces were built up again. This explains a paradox. NATO membership has always been highly supported by Estonian society, while the need for armed forces took a long time to be understood. The stereotypes of the Soviet military persisted. Fortunately, recent polls show that the Defence Forces now occupy a high position (ranked 4th) in the list of most-trusted national institutions (March 2001).

Confidence in the forces is helped by their public duties and by public information efforts. The military assists in crisis situations (like forest fires and snowstorms). Military officers from the Defence League visit schools to brief about the daily work of the armed forces. There are so-called State Defence classes established in 46 high schools as a voluntary subject of study. (The idea here is to promote the Defence League and to increase the willingness to serve in volunteer forces.) What does not advance popular understanding is the fact that in the media there are few journalists specialised on security and defence issues. Still, alternative opinions are aired on defence and security matters. These might concern the funding of defence, the all-volunteer army question, or more specific issues. A few years ago a top journalist was appointed as the Chief Press Officer of the General Staff.

2.2 Public attitudes

An opinion poll conducted by a private firm in June 2001 shows native Estonians' support for NATO membership at 61 per cent, a small but steady growth since October 2000 (when it was 56 per cent); but it has somewhat diminished among non-Estonians. Among the younger Estonian and non-Estonian population the support is higher than the overall average. As noted earlier, the military is the fourth most trusted institution in the list of eleven state institutions: only the Border Guard, the President and the Church are trusted more. The armed forces are more popular even than the Estonian National Bank, the Courts, the Defence League (ranked 7th), the police, the media, the government and the parliament. (Poll data of February 2001.)

The current government is promoting popular awareness of defence issues. There are public NATO Information Centres in Estonia. Key politicians and state officials participate in State Defence courses and also in the Reserve Officers' course. They support the voluntary Defence League as well. In society-at-large the attention paid to NATO (and EU) membership is high, mainly because these have been foreign policy priorities of Estonia for a long time and the Euro-Atlantic structures are the context in which people see the country's future identity. Although support for EU membership is lower than for NATO, Estonia's success in EU accession talks – it is a 'fast track'

candidate for entry and making good progress in negotiations on the *acquis* – has added national pride to Estonians' sense of identity, especially compared with Latvia and Lithuania. The lower support for EU membership might be explained by the 'threat' posed to the ultimate liberalism Estonia has possessed until now; EU rules are something Estonians are afraid of.

2.3 Military education

English language training is one of the priorities of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF). Currently basic teaching is done in Estonia. Individuals are sent to foreign countries for higher instruction and specific professional English (e.g. Air Force courses, Naval courses, and staff officer courses). As the Estonian capability to teach English is increasing, more training in future will be done in Estonia. There is bilateral co-operation with the US, the UK, Canada and the Netherlands. Within the defence organisation the effect has been good. Estonia is able to find suitable persons for more and more professional training places abroad. The MoD has had good foreign language skills from the beginning.

Education and training generally has a very high priority in plans for 2001-2004. A system will be established which enables standardisation of officers' training, training in other branches than infantry, training of officers for battalion and brigade command and staff appointments, and training of up to 3000 conscripts per year at the end of the period. A major change will be made in reserve training: personnel will be trained as complete units, instead of individuals. Staff-level education will be centred on the BALTDEFCOL, and the basic and higher officers courses at the Academy of the EDF. This is co-located with the BALTDEFCOL in Tartu. Starting from 2003 the main effort will be directed towards further development of the NCO school.

There are some notable differences between Estonia's military education system and those of Latvia and Lithuania. The latter have modelled theirs on British and American practice, Estonia has implemented the Finnish model. This emphasises operational training for battle readiness and total defence (as in Finland), and not so much interoperability and peace missions (though some attention is paid to procedures). Estonia has excellent contacts and co-operation with Finland (and Sweden). Surprisingly, there is hardly any exchange of know-how, tactics or curricula with the two other Baltic States. At the BALTDEFCOL instructors have noted the differences (in training and education background) between Estonian participants and the others. These differences disappear quickly, but the BALTDEFCOL would like to see 'equalisation' earlier. Another difference between Estonia and the other two countries is the absence of provision of civil courses at the Estonian Academy. Civilians at the MoD currently go abroad for their education.

2.4 Defence organisation

According to its third Annual National Programme, which was submitted to NATO on 24 September 2001, Estonia plans to have an infantry brigade and the ESTBAT (the Estonian Rapid Reaction Battalion, for international missions) in place by 2005 and will appoint an operational commander. The formation of three reserve-based light infantry brigades started already in 2000. Key tasks have been distributed among the forces: the land forces will train the basic military troops, the navy will ensure mine warfare capability, the air force will guarantee airspace surveillance and the Defence League will prepare the territorial defence structure. In procurement the emphasis lies on anti-aircraft and anti-tank warfare, communication and air surveillance. Whilst the first two ANPs focused on setting operational aims and planning, the ANP for 2002 deals with a structural analysis of the defence forces.

Partnership Goals now enter the Estonian defence planning process. The state budget is now a goal-oriented budget, streamlining resources management. Several assistance programmes continue: to equip the 30,000-strong reserve force, to modernise its annual conscript training equipment and to make the forces NBC capable. According to development plans, Estonia will focus on infrastructure projects and on raising its host nation support (HNS) capabilities. Declared priorities for restructuring and reform in 2001 were:

- Continuation of the reform of the structure of the National Defence System and approval of the EDF Wartime Structure and, based on that, development of the EDF Readiness and Training Programme – including the establishment of the rapid reaction capability.
- Further development of selected military capabilities, focusing on NATO interoperability, the Air Surveillance System, the quality of the preparation of EDF wartime units and the combat potential of the Army.
- Development of infrastructure, with special emphasis on training areas and ranges, depots and communications facilities of strategic importance.

The Government of Estonia has decided to raise military spending to 2 per cent of GDP by the year 2002. The schedule for increasing expenditures is the following: from 1.6 per cent of GDP in 2000, to 1.8 per cent in 2001 and 2 per cent in 2002. The increase within the MoD budget will be focused on (a) the establishment of an adequate infrastructure for military training and (b) the quality of life of personnel. The establishment of infrastructure should be completed by 2003, after which the focus of investments will be on equipment. Latvia and Lithuania follow a similar pattern in defence expenditures.

For the medium term (to 2006) Estonia has set the following goals for the country's defence development: the completion of structural reform; further professionalisation of the Navy and the Air Force; continuation of the formation of three light infantry brigades; further development of mine warfare, air-defence and air-

surveillance capabilities; and the improvement of rapid reaction capabilities. There have been discussions since the early 1990s about whether Estonia should have an all-volunteer army. This discussion has ended for now. The state defence concepts say Estonia needs a 'total defence' system; and that means conscripts and major forces in reserve, to be mobilised in wartime. In any event Estonia could not afford an all-volunteer force which would require a doubling of the defence budget at least. In addition, conscripts and reserve forces provide Estonia with a much bigger defence capability. However, some sources have mentioned that a wholly professional army might not be excluded in the future (after NATO membership?).

Estonia has declared two MCM vessels, one light infantry company and one platoon available for international operations in the future. This covers both NATO and EU missions. If these forces are already on an EU mission, there will be no troops for any NATO mission(s) arising at the same time. Today Estonia offers mostly specialised forces for contingency operations. Personnel are detached to the Peacekeeping Centre to prepare for missions.

2.5 Assessment

Since 1991 Estonia has conscientiously developed its armed forces, and at the same time worked with Latvia and Lithuania towards the creation of interoperable units and a modest defence capability. There is a national consensus on the aims of defence policy. The country has more or less solved its domestic 'Russian question' and managed the relationship with Russia itself skilfully. On the military organisation subjects that are the main concern of this study, our principal observations are the following.

- Within the *civil-military relations* sphere some 'division of authority' issues arise but are being tackled. Executive branch direction of the military is assured: the MoD is almost exclusively staffed with civilian officials (but many lack defence expertise). Legislative oversight is pervasive but formal, largely because few MPs have sufficient knowledge on security and defence affairs and 'outside' expertise is minimal.
- The *public attitude* towards the armed forces is supportive. The proportion of the population favouring NATO membership is high, over 60 per cent. Among the younger generation (the younger Russians as well) the figure is higher than the overall average. The government actively promotes awareness of security and defence issues.
- *Military education* is one of the priorities in the medium-term development of the armed forces. The focus is on standardisation of officers' training but NCO training is receiving attention too. There are no courses for civil servants.

- Estonia is steadily improving its *defence organisation* and the capabilities of its armed forces. Key recent and planned future developments are as follows: the GS has been reorganised into a Joint Staff, the Supreme Command will be reformed with new legislation; the formation of three reserve-based light infantry brigades has started; the ESTBAT, the rapid reaction battalion, is being developed and will provide a contingent for international missions; infrastructure is being further developed.

In sum, we think that Estonia *is* 'ready' (well prepared for NATO membership) from the military organisation standpoint – and, indeed, generally.

3. Latvia

Latvia is reasonably ready also, at least in relation to NATO's declared eligibility criteria. This is the judgement of a recent RAND Corporation study on *NATO Enlargement 2000-2015* which assessed aspirants' standings on this basis. Of the MAP-states, Latvia ranked equal third (alongside Lithuania, but behind Estonia and Slovenia). On the American think-tank's 1-10 scale for its 'overall assessment' Latvia and its southern neighbour 'scored' 6.7; Estonia's rating was 8.9 and Slovenia's an astonishing 10.0 (see Chapter V below); next in line, at 6.2, was Slovakia. Regrettably, Latvia also ranks high on indices of corruption. A World Bank report puts the country in the top three of the world's most corrupt states.

Political and popular preparedness is not an issue. There are six main political groupings in the Latvian parliament. All support the country's quest for accession to the EU, and almost all favour joining NATO. The Equal Rights coalition is the only group that is ambivalent about NATO membership. Among the population at large there is no clear majority for EU membership, but most citizens do favour entry into NATO. As noted earlier, there is external support for the country's candidacy also – as there is for the other Baltic States – but in Latvia's case, because nearly one-third of the population is Russian speaking and almost 30 per cent are non-citizens, there is concern in some quarters about the Riga-Moscow relationship. One reason is that while much of the 40 per cent of Russian foreign trade with the EU passes through the Latvian port of Ventspils, Russia is objecting to the high taxation levels on its goods – particularly on oil and gas.

The Russian Duma still has not ratified its border agreement with Latvia. Many other agreements in the social and economic areas are not signed either. The main cause of tension with the eastern neighbour, however, is the consistent Russian accusation that Latvia violates the human rights of Russians settled in Latvia during 1945-1991. After the

OSCE and the Council of Europe backed Latvia – whose 'concession' was a liberal naturalisation law – Russia now insists that naturalisation is too slow (people have to show their knowledge of the Latvian constitution, history, language and sing the national hymn). There is some basis for this criticism: nearly 30 per cent of Latvia's population is still without citizenship; almost all are Russians who came to Latvia during 1940-1991 (Russians who lived in Latvia before 1945 or were born after 1991 *do* have Latvian citizenship). Non-citizens cannot apply for certain government jobs, need a visa to enter the EU, are not allowed to vote, have limited rights to social benefits and so on. Only after pressure from the EU did Latvia liberalise its very strict language law, but prejudice still prevails. Many parts of Latvia's laws are still not compatible with universal human and minority rights. Even though Latvia has signed the 'Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities', it still has not ratified the code. On 1 October 2001 Rolf Ekeus, the OSCE High Commissioner for Minority Issues, stated that whilst Latvia has made progress, he wondered whether this has been sufficient. Latvia has no reason to be complacent, he said.

The continuing problems with the Russian minority – along with corruption – are clearly potential obstacles to NATO membership, the RAND Corporation's assessment notwithstanding. In the subject-areas on which this study concentrates, however, the basis of the US think-tank's judgement is more apparent.

3.1 Civil-military relations

In the defence area, as elsewhere, there is a clear and unequivocal *division of roles and responsibilities* among the President, the Prime Minister, the government (executive) and parliament of Latvia. The President is the supreme commander of the National Armed Forces (NAF), heads the National Security Council, appoints the Commander-in-Chief of the NAF in wartime, and declares a state of war (on the basis of a decision adopted by the parliament). The Commander of the NAF is directly answerable to the Minister of Defence, and is responsible for the operational leadership of the NAF, on the basis of (civilian) political direction. The National Security Council is an advisory body consisting of the President, the Chairman of the parliament, the chairmen of the Defence and Security Committees of the parliament, and the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Interior.

Latvia's MoD was set up in 1991 in accordance – it was asserted – with western practice. Yet Latvia's system means that there is only one uniformed officer in the MoD, the secretary responsible for NATO integration (created only in 1999). This is a reflection of the misconception that civilian control means *no* military in the MoD. The result is a shortage of professional military knowledge there. Latvian exiles (many retired from the Pentagon) supposedly provide this; and a US military liaison team is also assisting. But

work done in the MoD is not up to the standards of most NATO countries. In this respect, Latvia – like Estonia – clearly fails one element in the 'Carnovale-Simon test' for effective democratic-style civil-military relations.

Formally, though, all is in order. The General Staff (GS) is the working tool of the Commander, who reports to the Minister of Defence, who is a political appointee. The minister in turns reports to the government, and the President, who is (symbolically) Commander-in-Chief. More generally, the minister implements the general direction of Latvia's military policy as determined by the government. The Commander is charged with the technical aspects of this. Planning is on three levels: the MoD – strategic, GS – operational, headquarters in the field – tactical. The minister decides on the main priorities. According to the GS, however, the lack of military expertise in the MoD hampers co-ordination between the two. They say that the division of responsibilities is unclear, with the MoD constantly trespassing in the operational planning area. (In 2004 the GS will turn into a Joint Staff, to be more effective; but that may not end this turf warfare.)

The *legislature* plays a prominent part in defence affairs. A Latvian source says that 'the role of the parliament is paramount and its committees determine everything'. The same source also notes, however, that expertise is limited and its exercise 'very haphazard'. Over the years, though, expertise has grown (one of the key committee's members is a former CHOD), due in no small measure to outside pressures, including the requirement to deal with well-educated young men and women in the MoD. Some parliamentarians have had training in NATO countries. Parliament also involves outside expertise. The committees meet every week, but there are not many questions in parliament itself related to security and defence. The committees liaise with the armed forces as well. The provision of information from the MoD to the parliament is more than sufficient. It includes a formal *Report* which is in many ways a model 'White Paper'. In addition, a huge amount of documents on various topics (e.g. civil-military relations, environmental issues, budget, conscription, military reform, and public relations) is generally available on the ministry's website (www.mod.lv) which is the most transparent and complete of all Baltic MoDs' and MFAs' sites.

There is a well-founded *popular perception of civilian and democratic control* in Latvia. Since 1998 there has been stability in defence's top management, with only one minister, who has implemented a range of military reforms. These have been supported by the necessary laws; and the benefits are being increasingly felt both in the armed forces and throughout society. As a result there is public confidence in the management of Latvia's security. Indeed, the MoD is second only to the Ministry of Culture in enjoying the esteem of the public, while the NAF's rating – though below that of the media and the church – is well above that of the politicians. Considerable mass media attention is attracted by the forces, not least because of their efforts in disposal of the

many land- and sea-mines that have been inherited from both World Wars and the Soviet era.

The army is still recruited largely from the lower income groups, especially from the countryside where much of the economy is depressed. However, a new feature is that many sign-up before they are called-up; and avoidance of military service has dropped. Students are exempt from military service, but the voluntary student reserve programme is now popular as is voluntary military training in schools. In fact, the MoD cannot keep up with this volunteer service demand.

That said, outside expertise to inform the legislature and the public – and encourage popular debate – is limited. The main NGOs active in the security area are the Latvian Institute of International Affairs, the Baltic Center for Strategic Studies, the Latvian Intelligentsia Association, the Latvian Atlantic Treaty Association and the Atlantic Youth Club. The latter two stage NATO information events on a regular basis (with the financial help of the MFA). There are also individual political scientists and sociologists that take an interest in defence affairs. The NGOs and academic experts are used by the mass media to discuss current issues. Regarding special interest groups, these have had little impact on the government in shaping its main foreign and security policy goals. However, NGOs propagating human rights have influenced the government and lawmakers in the sense that plans for alternative military service are being drawn up. The broadcast media report extensively on defence and security issues, especially the big questions – NATO enlargement, relations with Russia, and anything to do with when Latvia might join the EU and NATO. Coverage includes many interviews with visiting foreign politicians. Evening TV news bulletins always give room for foreign news. The print media have a critical bent. Even the anti-NATO voices of the former communists are given space on the editorial and viewpoints pages. Compared to newspaper staffs, the majority of TV reporters are young and lack experience in security affairs. Therefore the MFA is providing basic education for them (and for reporters from the Russian minority). Also the University of Latvia provides a course in Strategic Studies, in which many journalists and officials from the MoD and MFA are participating.

3.2 Public attitudes

With regard to NATO, public awareness is very high. A recent opinion poll – conducted by a private research firm at the end of August 2001 – showed that support for NATO membership has fallen since October 2000 when support was almost 70 per cent. Now the figure is around 54 per cent, and opposition around 32 per cent, while 15 per cent had no opinion. Among Latvian citizens the support is 59 per cent, and among non-citizens this figure is 18 per cent (with 49 per cent against, compared with 57 per cent in 2000). The country is under the influence of enormous anti-NATO propaganda in the local

Russian press and from Russia itself. (A point to note is that those who were against NATO were so because they thought this would mean war with Russia and they would have to fight their kin in Russia. They could quickly change their minds if it could be explained that this is a misconception.) The younger Russian generation seems not to worry about NATO membership, their support is as high as that of the young Latvian population. In order to provide a counterweight to Russia's anti-NATO propaganda the Latvian government has recently started an information campaign (in the Russian language) aimed at the Russian population.

3.3 Military education

On gaining independence from the (then) Soviet Union, Latvia had to create a defence organisation and armed forces from virtually nothing. The learning process was very painful and difficult. This held true for the MoD, for the National Armed Forces (NAF) – and for relations between the MoD and the NAF – and also for the Home Guard (which *was* established already). The difficulties encountered can be illustrated with a single example: the Latvian military language had been forgotten and had to be re-invented, while catching up on advances in military terminology which had bypassed the native tongue. The established military vocabulary and ingrained military thinking were Russian. Not surprisingly, therefore, the military mindset was Russian. Very soon after, another challenge presented itself: the need for English-language competence. Through most of the 1990s this was low. Since 1999 things have improved. A lot of teaching now takes place in-house (under the supervision of the British, who have assumed responsibility for this). One of Latvia's MAP goals is that every captain will have good English by 2003, and the armed forces are meeting the schedule. Latvian units have been taking part in NATO exercises for some time, so the top echelon at least knows the English language quite well.

Latvia has one 'home' institute where officers are trained – the National Defence Academy (NDA) – established in 1992. Currently the NDA provides courses for company and platoon commanders, and some short qualifications courses. In September 2001, the academy will take a first cohort of university graduates (four years) who, after one-year's military training, will become lieutenants. They must then serve for at least five years. After a certain period of time, they can become captains, by undergoing a special captain’s course at the academy (for company commanders). The aim is to have a *highly* educated officer class. A staff officers course and an advanced officers course will be implemented in 2002 and 2003 respectively.

Majors and above get their further education overseas or at BALTDEFCOL (one-year course) where the language of instruction is English. The NDA is also co-operating with Latvian civilian universities, to provide technical and maritime education. Civilians

working at the MoD have the possibility to follow courses at the NDA or at BALTDEFCOL. Since the beginning of 2001 Latvia has had an NCO school, where corporals and sergeants are trained. One feature of Latvia's adoption of British models of military reform and modernisation is that the school is placing leadership responsibility in the hands of senior NCOs. To gain admission, one must have completed one year's service in the armed forces.

3.4 Defence organisation

The development of the MoD and the NAF can be divided into three periods: 1991-1993, 1993-98, and post-1998.

- The period 1991-93 can be characterised as confused. There was no military-in-being. The public did not understand why money should be spent on an army in a time of extreme economic hardship, and distrusted the armed forces as a result of the experience of the preceding 50 years. The MoD had inflated ideas about the appropriate shape and size of the NAF.
- The mid-1990s were a period of stagnation. Little headway was made in the development of either the MoD or the NAF, except that corruption became apparent (as it did elsewhere in the public sector).
- The third and present period began in 1998, when the MoD sold military assets inherited from the Soviet era (real estate, materiel) and with this money began to fund improvements in the NAF. The breakthrough occurred in 1999 which saw a hefty rise in military expenditure, the end of the long-running squabble between the politicians and the MoD/NAF about the size of the defence budget.

The background to the breakthrough was that in the elections of October 1998 the two big populist parties were disbanded, and Latvia got a 'normal' parliament where six main political forces were represented. No less important, the political elite realised that Latvia lagged behind Lithuania and Estonia in allocating resources to defence, jeopardising the country's prospects of joining NATO.

Since 1999 the defence budget has risen at an annual rate of 30 per cent and the intention is to attain a spending level equal to 2 per cent of GDP in 2003. On 5 April 2001 Latvia's parliament approved an increase of the defence budget to 1.75 per cent of GDP in 2002 and set the 2 per cent target for 2003 (the Law on the Funding for Defence). By 2008, defence spending is expected to triple. Of the defence budget for 2002 42 per cent will be used for personnel and other running costs, and 30 per cent for investments. A large part will be spent on a three dimensional long-range radar, and on the health care of new recruits. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, the defence budget has been supplemented with a 'new risk' section (with additional funds). Latvia's third Annual National Programme continues along the lines of that for 2000/2001 but the

portion of the budget for improvements in infrastructure and combat capability is greater and existing laws will be amended to enable the country to host visiting NATO forces. As in Estonia, Latvia will also conduct a review of the force structure in 2002.

The first annual defence report or White Paper was for the year 2000. The document detailed the international situation, described the defence system and reform plans for the next 12 years, discussed international defence co-operation (especially between the Baltic states), and outlined the military budget and financial priorities. It also recorded the evaluation of foreign experts of the Latvian defence effort, and included material on the armed forces and society. A similar report for 2001 appeared shortly before this text went to press. Both publications testify to the MoD's desire to make clear – to politicians, service personnel and the public – where defence money is being spent, and why.

Latvia's planning apparatus rests on the usual hierarchy of documents: a 1995 *Security Concept* revised in 1997, and a basic *Law on National Security*, adopted by the parliament in December 2000, which among other things enhances the leading role of the parliament in policy formulation. An updated *National Defence Concept* was passed by the parliament on 20 September 2001. The concept continues to be a hybrid: a territorial defence model, with provision for forces available for international peacekeeping and support operations. These texts underpin various plans on state defence, national security, the development of the NAF, economic mobilisation, the use of conscript forces, and civilian defence: 12-year (long-term), 4-year (mid-term) and 1-year (short-term) plans. Mid-term priorities are:

- peacetime organisation, C3 systems and the 'total defence' planning system;
- development of the mobilisation system by forming the first three mobile reserve battalions;
- development of a peacetime and wartime logistics system;
- formation of the LATBAT (to be fully operational by the year 2003);
- equipping two training centres and 3 mobile reserve battalions; and
- implementing Partnership Goals in accordance with these other plans and priorities.

The current short-term priority tasks include: to elaborate and introduce a new Command and Control system; to reorganise the National Guard; and to improve the Baltic States military co-operation (the Latvians call this Baltification).

On the medium-term agenda the LATBAT item calls for elaboration. This national 'BALTBAT' is a regular fighting battalion consisting of (a) two professional companies that can be offered to BALTBAT and (b) two conscript companies whose soldiers go to the reserves at the end of their active service duty (joining the mobile reserve battalions). The formation of the first LATBAT company has begun in accordance with the plan. The unit will have NATO standard individual equipment, arms and other munitions. It will be the core of Latvia's future force structure, *on present*

plans. Obviously, though, NATO membership could change mission priorities and hence the shape and size of the NAF.

Personnel planning arrangements are also being put in place with various schemes and programmes developed with foreign expertise and MoD staff trained in Canada, Sweden, USA, and elsewhere. Not everybody is happy with the changes, because there is now the real possibility of losing one's job for not being up to standard. Moreover, competition is rising because of good pay. Overall personnel policy though is only now being implemented in a modern and systematic manner, but the goals are very high. It is being done on a Baltic regional level, with even an offshoot involving the Nordic countries. There is another Baltic co-operation acronym for this, i.e. BALTPERS, coined by Norway and Sweden. The Nordic offshoot is NORDPERS, which also involves the Finns. Regarding all-volunteer forces, Latvia most probably will always have a conscript army, except that some parts will be manned by career personnel (e.g. radar surveillance). The navy is almost fully professional, except for some conscripts (to uphold the link to the people and from whom the navy can select the best to offer them a full career in the service). In an interview with the *Diena* daily on 1 October 2001 Minister of Defence Girts Valdis Kristovskis said that a discussion on future professionalisation will only be useful ten years from now; it is not a realistic option at present. He agreed that the system of conscription should be improved, responding to criticism coming from the army and society on the working circumstances and everyday life of conscripts.

Latvia has made it very clear that only those units declared to NATO will be entered in the 'catalogue' of forces available for EU-led contingency operations; but NATO will have some additional special units placed at its disposal, such as divers. The country will continue to develop specialised units available for either NATO or EU duty.

3.5 Assessment

Latvia is perhaps the most 'Baltic' of the three Baltic States, for the simple reason that it is much more dedicated towards Baltic co-operation than Estonia or Lithuania. These two have a more pragmatic approach towards the various forms of co-operation, especially the political ones, whilst Latvia perceives co-operation with its neighbours as an end. The country puts NATO membership as a higher goal, however, and has been a keen participant in the MAP process.

- With regard to democratic *civil-military relations* all Latvia's legislation is in place and there is a clear division of roles and responsibilities. However, Riga obviously misunderstands civilian/executive control: within the MoD there are only civilians working, which is dysfunctional. The country does understand legislative oversight. Elected representatives play a big, but sometimes haphazard, role in defence affairs. Over the years, though, expertise has grown within the parliamentary defence

committee, which has an excellent relationship with the armed forces. The same applies to the public at large, who rate the defence establishment highly.

- Support for NATO membership is high among Latvia's Latvians: nearly 60 per cent according to a poll conducted at the end of August 2001. Among the Russian population the proportion is only 18 per cent. However, a majority of younger Latvians and Russians are in favour of NATO membership. Recognising the interest in *public attitudes* evident from MAP feedback, and in order to provide a counterweight to anti-NATO propaganda, the Latvian government is running an information campaign aimed at the Russian minority. The result is that support among this group is currently growing faster than among the Latvian population.
- Reform of *military education* is receiving considerable attention from the Latvian authorities. The country has a new NCO school. In September 2001 its National Defence Academy will start a course for university graduates, who will become lieutenants and can later qualify to become captains (and company commanders); and a staff officers' course and an advanced officers course will start there in 2002 and 2003. This is a coherent sequence of officer education 'at home'. For higher training, of course, Latvian officers go to the BALTDEFCOL and in some cases abroad.
- The country also has a sound *defence organisation* (apart from that military under-representation in the MoD). It is on course to raise the proportion of GDP allotted to defence to 2 per cent by 2003; and it has scheduled capability improvements in line with that. The enhancements are obviously modest by other MAP-state standards. They are none the less worthwhile. As for the future capacity to deliver appropriate and affordable provision, it is encouraging that Latvia now has a well-conceived planning process (to short-term, medium-term and longer-term horizons).

The bottom-line here is that – in the areas to which we have directed attention in this study – Latvia has made serious preparations in support of its NATO membership candidacy. In these areas we think the country is ready for accession, notwithstanding some worries about the attitude of the sizeable Russian minority (and its treatment).

4. Lithuania

Disappointment with the country's economic performance and distrust of the old politics of established parties precipitated popular unrest in Lithuania in 2000. The result was a political realignment centred on two new parties: former presidential candidate Paulauskas' New Union and the Liberal Union of ex-Prime Minister Paksas. Campaigning as a bloc, New Policy, the two swept to victory in an October 2000

election. Paksas formed a government (with two smaller parties). Paulauskas took the chair of the *Seimas* (parliament). The new administration reinvigorated the country's negotiations for EU entry (to the extent that 'slow stream' Lithuania has overtaken 'fast track' neighbour Poland in the entry negotiations process) *and* the effort to secure for Lithuania an invitation to negotiate NATO accession (by, among other things, quickly reaffirming its predecessor's pledge to spend 1.95 per cent of GDP on defence). More controversially, Foreign Minister Valionis took over the levers of external policy personally, even replacing the highly-regarded chief negotiator for both NATO and the EU. There has since been a rift in the New Policy bloc (20 June 2001), but the new coalition is keen to maintain the momentum of both the EU negotiations and NATO membership preparations.

Before the October 2000 ballot, Lithuania had taken steps to place itself in the front rank of 'second wave' NATO accession candidates by hosting, in Vilnius, a meeting of all nine MAP-states (May 2000). The attendees – now sometimes called the Vilnius-9 – exchanged notes on their first MAP 'round' experiences and agreed to continue to mix self-differentiation in the membership preparation process with further liaison. Bringing the Nine together in this way was not the first noteworthy Lithuanian initiative in security-related co-operation. The country took advantage, in 1994, of a Danish offer of participation in two peacekeeping-related projects. This provided Lithuania with an opportunity to practically integrate troops into the forces of a NATO state. This raised the country's profile in the West. More concretely, it led to the *Seimas* authorising the sending of Lithuanian troops abroad (summer 1994). Lithuania was the first Baltic State to take part in peace support operations. Estonia followed in mid-1995 and Latvia in 1996.

More generally, Lithuania has managed its relations with neighbouring countries most skilfully since independence. It has built a 'strategic relationship' with Poland. It has co-operated with Latvia and Estonia in the BALT-ventures (and others). It has maintained contact with Belarus despite the authoritarian regime in Minsk. Lithuania wants Belarus to take measures to guarantee democratic development. At the same time it does not want its neighbour to be isolated, since this would hinder further democratisation. As for Russia, Vilnius seeks to enhance Moscow's involvement in Baltic Sea regional co-operation through the EU's Northern Dimension, while under OSCE arrangements Lithuania exchanges information and visits. The constructive approach pays dividends: in March 2001 Lithuania's president Valdas Adamkus paid a visit to his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, and elicited the pledge that each country has the 'right to choose' on security issues. This was interpreted as 'Russia recognises Lithuania's right to choose NATO membership'.

Special attention has been paid – and is being paid – to Kaliningrad, the Russian enclave that is sandwiched between Lithuania and Poland. Already in 1993 the Lithuanian and Russian government signed an agreement about (military) transit through

Lithuania. This removed Lithuanian fears and brought stability in the relationship. There are now consultations, meetings and information-sharing at the municipal, regional, parliamentary, governmental, ministerial and state levels (with Poland involved on an ad hoc basis). Accusations made towards Russia by the *Washington Post* in January 2001 about the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad were quickly downplayed by Lithuanian politicians as not logical and not realistic. Although they asked the Kremlin for clarification, their approach is symptomatic of the pragmatic and sound relationship with Russia. On 13 June 2001, a joint inter-parliamentary forum was created. The local officials of Kaliningrad have clearly stated that they do *not* see Lithuanian accession to NATO as a threat to Kaliningrad. However, the issue of Russian military transit (particularly hazardous chemical waste) over Lithuanian territory could pose a dilemma for Vilnius and Brussels.

Meanwhile, Lithuania continues its NATO membership preparations. It regards itself as 'ready' – certainly to begin the formal accession process – even now (late-2001), and expects to be even further advanced by the time the North Atlantic Council convenes in Prague to review candidacies (November 2002).

4.1 Civil-military relations

Most elements in the 'Carnovale-Simon' test for democratic-style civil-military relations pose no problems for Lithuania. The organisation of the armed forces and their development programmes and allocations are approved by the legislature. The national defence policy and the defence budget are announced publicly. The *Seimas* exercises control as established by law. The government, the minister of defence and the commander of the armed forces are responsible to it. The commander of the armed forces is subordinated to the minister of defence, who is a civilian. Fundamental issues on national defence are discussed and co-ordinated by a State Defence Council, headed by the president.

All this is clear. However, the president *and* the parliament make decisions on mobilisation, declaration of a state of war, deployment of the armed forces and defence against armed aggression. Moreover, some statutes say decisions on sending Lithuanian military units to carry out peace operations abroad are taken by the parliament, while others say the president makes decisions on deployment of the armed forces in peacetime. There is potential for trouble here. This is may be why Lithuania has recently established a single National Security Authority (NSA). This has a full co-ordinating responsibility over state security issues. The NSA includes representatives from a range of government institutions, primarily to help horizontal co-operation between these actors.

The Defence Staff (= General Staff) is integrated into the MoD and falls under the authority of the Minister of Defence. It does operational planning. The MoD performs

strategic planning. Unlike in Estonia and Latvia, in the Lithuanian MoD and Defence Staff civilians and military work together on duties assigned according to speciality and responsibility.

If civilian control is thus assured, so too is broader democratic control. A NATO Commission was set up in June 1999 in the *Seimas*. Its tasks are: to ensure co-ordination of the parliamentary work with regard to NATO integration matters; to reinforce parliamentary control over NATO integration; to broaden the awareness of the population on issues of national security, defence and NATO integration; to initiate and draft laws and amendments aimed at regulating the legal issues related to national security, defence and NATO integration; to monitor implementation of laws, resolutions and the enlargement reports; and to develop and strengthen relations with the parliaments of the NATO member-states and aspirant countries.

There are also standing committees with security responsibilities: a Defence Committee, National Security Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee. These hold regular co-ordination and information meetings – also involving the NATO Commission – with the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs on the progress of the membership preparation process. The MoD and MFA are called to the *Seimas* after each important meeting at NATO in Brussels to report, and the Vice-Ministers have daily contacts with members. In May 2001, on the eve of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly meeting in Vilnius, eleven political parties – coalition parties, main opposition parties, and the smaller parties – signed an agreement *On Lithuania's Defence Policy in 2001-2004*. The document supports the allocation of 2 per cent of GDP to defence, and reflects the commitment of all political parties to NATO entry.

These institutional arrangements are all well and good. However, the body of experience on security and defence affairs within the parliament was reduced after the elections of October 2000 (when the two new political parties won a majority of the seats). As a result there are now parliamentarians who complain (for example) that they cannot see whether the defence budget is well spent (even though the MoD is the most transparent of all government institutions, according to an opinion poll). Yet we know that some members of the defence committee do have experience (as previous ministers and chairmen of parliament). Moreover, we know that the parliamentary committees can and do use the expertise of institutes and NGOs. In short, there is some uncertainty as to whether the prerequisites for *effective* legislative oversight exist.

As regards the popular perception of civilian and democratic control, before the present Minister of Defence (Linas Linkevicius) was appointed, the rating of the armed forces by the public was very low. The previous minister simply did not pay attention to public information issues. The new minister recognised their importance and quickly appointed a spokesman and established a PR department. We expect, therefore, to see an increase in popular understanding of national security matters and a growth in public confidence in the military organisation. The media will help. Newspapers, radio and

television provide information and analysis on EU and NATO issues several times a week. Also, the relation between the academic community and the military is good, as there are many joint activities. In addition, NGOs are becoming more involved (and involve the public) in security and defence issues. A Council of Foreign Relations binds together all non-governmental bodies interested in foreign, defence and security affairs.

4.2 Public attitudes

According to a poll conducted by the non-governmental Institute of Civic Thought and the *Atgimimas* weekly in February 2001, a majority of Lithuania's political elite supports NATO membership (76 per cent for: 7 per cent against). Joining would, respondents thought: enhance security (68 per cent), attract investment (25 per cent), boost economic growth (20 per cent), guarantee political and economic stability (16 per cent). For a long time popular support for NATO membership was low. In a poll conducted in May 2001 the support was 45 per cent, and the opposition was 31 per cent. However, public support for joining NATO soared after the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001. In a telephone survey conducted by a private firm it jumped to 63 per cent, while 25 per cent opposed membership and 16 per cent were undecided.

Reasons for the difference between the elite and popular polls pre-September – and in particular for the low public proportion – probably include the previous neglect of PR, Russian propaganda and straight misinformation. More detailed attitude survey data show that in Lithuania NATO membership is mostly supported by men, people between 15-29 years old (also from the Russian minority), ethnic Lithuanians, people with higher education diplomas, students, the urban population, and people with a monthly income of USD 100 or higher. Among those not approving of NATO membership are 30-49 year olds (who had secure employment and medical care in the USSR), ethnic Russians, the rural population and people with the lowest incomes. The highest number of undecided voters are among ethnic Poles, women, pensioners and the unemployed.

In the autumn of 1999 Lithuania launched and has since been implementing a *Public Information Programme on Overall Security and NATO Integration*. This has provided NATO integration information booklets plus information films; and it engages well-known persons and young artists as presenters. The focus is on the political and security aspects of membership, not on military aspects. Complementing this effort, contacts between the Parliamentary Commission on NATO Affairs, foreign embassies, national minorities, NGOs and media are also used in the work of informing the public on NATO issues. The government also works in co-operation with the NATO Office of Information and Press and the Contact Point Embassy in Vilnius, as well as bilaterally with many embassies of NATO countries. One cautionary note is in order, however, on

all this NATO is still perceived as a collective *defence* organisation, and not a collective *security* organisation whose main tasks nowadays are contingency operations.

4.3 Military education

The main facts about Lithuania's military education provision are simply stated. A centralised training and doctrine management system covers training of all conscripts and professional military service personnel in accordance with standardised programmes. The responsibilities of the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) cover:

- standard basic military training at Rukla;
- training of NCOs and sergeants at the NCO School in Kaunas;
- officer training at the Military Academy in Vilnius; and
- the upgrading of qualifications of commanders and specialists at an Advanced Training Centre.

Foreign support is provided mainly by the United Kingdom, Germany and the USA. For senior/staff officer training, of course, Lithuania uses the BALTDEFCOL.

The Military Academy was established in 1994. It is modelled on the US Military Academy (West Point). A major revision is being introduced in its core curricula: three civil academic programmes (political sciences, management, and transport engineering) and a military programme. Graduates earn a bachelor degree. The Academy also offers courses for MoD civil servants (short-term); reserve officers (voluntary three-year programme for civilian university graduates, who then become reserve lieutenants); and captain courses (six months, for Military Academy graduates with at least 3 years experience). Foreign language courses are given at three levels (in Estonia and Latvia only the first two levels are offered). A graduate of the Lithuanian Academy is able to communicate in English at least at intermediate level. Special attention is being paid to preparation for humanitarian assistance and peace support operations.

4.4 Defence organisation

Lithuanian expatriates have had a profound impact on the development of the defence organisation. Most came to Vilnius after the elections of 1996. Among them were several former senior US officers, who took high posts in the defence establishment. The result was introduction of a different administrative culture and novel approaches. Several US models were successfully integrated into Lithuania's armed forces, such as the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC).

Lithuanian defence *policy* sets two major peacetime objectives: (1) to prepare the country for defence and (2) to prepare Lithuania to meet its international commitments to

collective defence and support of peacekeeping operations. The development of the national defence *system* has two corresponding components. These are (a) development of capabilities for the nation's defence and (b) development of capabilities that are interoperable with, or can function as a constituent part of, a NATO force.

For short-term defence planning and financing procedures, the MoD is introducing a Planning, Programming and Budgeting System (PPBS). This provides for evaluation of performance against agreed objectives and should ensure that defence programmes are constructed on a realistic basis. The full introduction of the PPBS is a staged process. The key elements of the system will be in place by the end of 2002.

- A Ministerial Defence Guidance document – prepared every year in the autumn for a three-year period – marks the beginning of each PPBS cycle. This defines development priorities, shows personnel dynamics and gives a defence expenditure forecast. Guidelines for the periods 2000-2002 and 2001-2003 have already been produced.
- Programming focuses on the following functions: Ground Forces, National Volunteer Defence Forces, Air Forces, Naval Forces, Logistics, Military Training, Centralised agencies, Civil defence, and National Defence System administration. The objectives and tasks of each have been approved. Resources and performance criteria are set for each cycle.
- There follows a Programme Review to finalise coherent and affordable defence programmes.

The outcome is agreed by the Minister of Defence and forms the basis of a Budget Estimate for government and parliamentary approval.

Long-term planning is based on the usual hierarchy of documents to which post-Communist states attach such great importance: the *National Security Strategy* (developing principles laid down in a Law on the Basics of National Security); the *Military Defence Strategy* (latest version approved 2 October 2000) which builds upon a National Security Concept; and a *Defence Planning Assumptions and Target Force Structure* paper (targets to a 10-year-distant horizon). The *Long-range state security strengthening programme* is a set of outline 10-year development plans (of which the update for the period 2001-2012 was completed in the first half of 2001). To make the key policy choices, Lithuania's MoD has established a Defence Resources Board. The Minister of Defence always takes the final decision, but the Board provides a forum in which senior management (both military and civilian) can give advice.

The force structure choices that Lithuania has made for its programmes-in-being put the emphasis on quality, mobility and deployability, and on NATO interoperable units. Thus the country aims to have a *battalion* fully prepared for NATO operations by 2002 and a rapid reaction *brigade* by 2006. Lithuania is now also able – with Estonia and Latvia – to deploy a joint battalion (BALTBAT) and a naval MCM squadron (BALTRON). The country's other armed forces are for territorial defence. This plan

strikes a sustainable balance between resources and capabilities. Lithuania will pledge the same forces to the EU Headline Goal as it declares to NATO. On raising forces, there were some discussions about prospects for an all-volunteer army. This debate has been suspended until the end of 2002, when Lithuania expects to have received an invitation for NATO membership. Sources within the military and polity have not ruled out a future professional army. In a recent review (end-September 2001) of Lithuania's armed forces reform, a NATO commission showed overall satisfaction. The only criticism was on unclear command and control structures. The proposals focused on lowering the military reserves, improving facilities for host nation support and increasing the maintenance for Lithuania's peacekeepers.

On resources for defence, Lithuania has been continuously increasing defence allocations; in 1997 they amounted to 0.9 per cent of GDP, in 1999 1.5 per cent and in 2000 1.7 per cent. In a *Law on the Funding Strategy for the National Defence* the expenditure level for 2001 was set at 1.95-2.0 per cent of GDP. Through the later 2000s Lithuania plans to assign 30-33 per cent of its defence budget for capital investment (up to 15 per cent for construction and up to 20 per cent for procurement). The country's latest Annual National Programme (the third in the MAP cycle), submitted to NATO on 1 October 2001, shows that in 2002 preparations for membership will be a logical continuation of the preceding two ANPs, with explicit new attention to raising public support.

4.5 Assessment

If NATO *is* going to approach 'second wave' enlargement strictly on a case-by-case basis, member-states will register that, of the three Baltic States, Lithuania has the best relationship with Russia (and a well-conceived policy towards Kaliningrad) and is the country that induced President Putin to concede each state's right to choose its security arrangements. They will note also that Lithuania is the largest of the Baltic republics, and hence the one able to contribute most in terms of military capability. As for military organisation, what we have found is this.

- Necessary legislation with regard to democratic *civil-military relations* has been put in place; and in practice divisions of authority, civilian control of the armed forces and democratic oversight of the defence organisation are well established. Legislative oversight could probably be more effective: the constraint is that some parliamentarians have little knowledge of defence affairs. Public confidence in the country's armed forces could be higher; but the country is improving information channels to inform the public about the military.
- Data on *public attitudes* indicate that after the terrorist attacks on the USA on 11 September 2001 popular support for NATO membership soared towards 63 per cent

(while only 25 per cent were against). Elite opinion is more supportive of the candidacy.

- Lithuania's *military education* system – regulated by a centralised training and doctrine organisation – is comprehensive and coherent. It incorporates provision for language training adequate for the country's needs.
- The *defence organisation* has been streamlined in recent years. It now incorporates arrangements for consistent short-term, medium-term and longer-term planning together with a formal PPBS set-up. The currently-planned defence effort appears to meet the 'appropriate and affordable' test: it gives priority to development of interoperable forces; and with funding at 2 per cent of Lithuania's growing GDP it should be sustainable.

On this evidence, Lithuania is somewhat better prepared for NATO membership than the other Baltic States in the areas of interest upon which our analysis has focused.

5. Concluding observations

On any reckoning the Baltic States are small states, individually *very* small states. However, although 'starting from scratch' they have made their defence dispositions wisely, both individually and jointly. Their defence efforts are modest, necessarily; but each has made rudimentary provision for national defence while focusing on trilateral co-operation. The achievements under the latter heading are well-known. Some of the pay-offs, however, are not so widely appreciated. Thus already in 1999 – five years after the start of BALTBAT – the project had led to 2000 soldiers serving within NATO-host formations for at least six months each. This adds up to 15-30 per cent of the peacetime strengths of the regular armies. In addition to providing practical training in international co-operation, BALTBAT led also to an accelerated development of internal decision-making, legal and bureaucratic procedures. Similar benefits have accrued from the BALTRON and BALTNET arrangements, while the BALTDEFCOL has permitted joint education fully compatible with NATO standards.

In fact, smallness has been advantageous in at least one respect. Precisely because of the small size of the armed forces of the three Baltic States virtually all front-line units have actively taken part in international exercises or peace support operations; and virtually all career officers have received training in the West or at BALTDEFCOL. From improved language proficiency to greater operational experience, the gains are self-evident. The gap in professional competence between the armed forces of the three countries and those of NATO members is therefore diminishing rapidly. In this sense, the Baltic States are probably more 'ready' than most other MAP-states to take a place in

NATO; and, in view of their trilateral co-operation, it would be advantageous if they could do that *en bloc*.

V. 'START FROM SCRATCH' COUNTRIES: (2) SLOVENIA AND MACEDONIA

1. Introduction

The two other countries in our 'start from scratch' category – Slovenia and Macedonia – emerged from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Macedonia gained its independence peacefully in January 1991. Slovenia broke away from the Federation and declared its independence on 25 June 1991 and won the subsequent Ten-Day war with the Yugoslav National Army (YNA). However, at a common Yugoslav-background all similarity between the two countries stops. The high level of socio-economic development and quick political consolidation of the ethnically homogeneous Slovenia contrasts sharply with Macedonia's less-developed, multi-ethnic and multicultural make-up and fragile political system. The following assessments reflect this.

2. Slovenia

Slovenia expected to be part of the 'first wave' of enlargement and feels it already fulfilled eligibility criteria in 1997. Indeed many Slovenes feel that the country's 'rejection' at Madrid was based on purely external political reasons. However, a growing number of commentators recognise shortcomings in Slovenia itself. They note that the modernisation and restructuring of the armed forces began too late and did not proceed fast enough; that the country had shown a lack of commitment to efforts for peace and stability in the South-East European region; and that the diplomatic campaign to make the Slovenian case in 1997 was not conducted well due to a lack of clear guidelines from the government and a sense of complacency in the country. Following that experience Slovenian politicians now want to make sure they have everything in place so that NATO will not be in a position to reject their country a second time. The question is: have they done that in key areas? We address this, after some general observations.

Slovenia inherited its political system from former Yugoslavia. Its constitution and electoral legislation are geared towards formation of strong, stable coalition governments. Since 1992, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) – consisting of liberal reform communists with Janus Drnovsek as its leader – has been at the centre of the political system. Also, Milan Kucan has been President of Slovenia since 1990: before

that he had been leader of the League of Communists of Slovenia since 1985. Drnovsek has announced that he will resign as Prime Minister in spring 2002 and that he will run for President in that year's presidential elections. Since Kucan has served the maximum number of terms and cannot run again, Drnovsek stands a good chance of being elected. Continuity in politics can on the one hand be an advantage, but on the other hand it can lead to *stasis* and ineffectiveness. Consensus politics in Slovenia have increasingly meant slow and difficult decision-making. There has been one notable break in the continuity. The government elected in 1997 received a vote of no confidence on 8 April 2000 after the Slovene People's Party (SLS) left the LDS-led coalition. A new (caretaker) government headed by Andrej Bajuk – the first new Prime Minister since 1992 – took office. However, general elections in November 2000 again resulted in a four-party coalition lead by Janus Drnovsek. For the first time in Slovenia's short independent history his government now has a commanding two-thirds majority in parliament. The LDS alone has around 40 per cent of the seats in the legislature.

At the time of independence, as the export base of the old Yugoslavia, Slovenia was relatively wealthy; and after 1991 it managed to switch trade rapidly to the West. But despite a headstart and good growth figures (around 4 per cent annually) of late the country has fallen behind on basic reform and its protectionist attitude has inhibited foreign direct investment. Slovenia is still by far the richest of the post-communist countries but, in relative terms, has fallen back. An EU report released in November 2000 said that Slovenia still has a lot to do in streamlining the state administration, further liberalising the economy, privatising banks and insurance companies, accelerating the denationalisation process and reforming the judiciary.

In the security policy domain, Slovenia was among the first states to join NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) in March 1994. In May 1995 the country submitted its first Individual Partnership Programme (IPP). Three years later a *National Strategy for the Integration of the Republic Slovenia in NATO* was accepted. In this the long-term interests and goals of foreign and security policy are set out and full membership of NATO is declared as Slovenia's most important strategic goal. The text says that the country has a lot to offer. Slovenian membership would do away with a territorial discontiguity of the Alliance since it would link Italy and Hungary. Slovenia's forces have specialised knowledge to offer, particularly in mountain warfare skills. However, broader political interests – 'joining the European mainstream' – underlay, and still sustain, the quest for NATO membership. Another argument is now heard in Ljubljana as well: that Slovenia, with its stable democratic and economic development, is a role model for South-East Europe and as such can contribute to the stability of the region. In the first years after independence Slovenia preferred to distance itself from South-East European security politics. After some external encouragement, and somewhat cautiously, it is now engaging itself in the neighbourhood. It has taken up an active role in the Stability Pact for South-East Europe and contributes to SFOR (modestly) and KFOR (minimally). On

the basis of such engagement the Slovenian leadership would presumably now claim that – in the language of the catch-all condition in NATO's accession criteria – early admission of their country would make a positive contribution to 'security and stability' in and around Europe. It would certainly not offend anyone.

2.1 Civil-military relations

As for NATO's other expectations and requirements – and our particular areas of interest – first, Slovenia has made the proper constitutional and legislative provisions for democratic-style civil-military relations. It has depoliticised the armed forces and civilianised the defence ministry. Democratic civilian control is the norm; but there are idiosyncrasies – legislative, organisational and political – in Slovenian practice.

Slovenia's key legal provisions are typical for parliamentary democracies. The Constitution (1991), the Defence Law (1994) and some other laws provide a sound basis for democratic arrangements specifying clearly where authority lies. Parliament decides on key issues of national security: it adopts the budget, declares war and proclaims general mobilisation, upon proposal of the government. (It has an opposition-chaired committee on defence.) The government co-ordinates, organises and leads the military and civil defence through the defence minister, who is responsible for directing all such activities in the country. The President of the Republic as titular Supreme Commander gives consent to the government's defence preparedness plans and authorises mobilisation in case of aggression (if Parliament cannot assemble). The Prime Minister has only a very marginal role in the defence and security area. The General Staff of the Slovene armed forces is an integral part of the Defence Ministry and its Chief of Staff is directly answerable to the Minister.

Regarding civilian (executive branch) direction, Slovenia has actually benefited from its background. The doctrine of total defence implemented in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) from the 1960s required a considerable number of civilian defence officials at many different levels. For this, programmes of national defence studies were created in 1975 at five universities of which one was located in Ljubljana. By 1990, this University had produced over 200 defence specialists with Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees. This pool of 'experts' has made an important contribution to the civilianisation – even over-civilianisation – of defence in independent Slovenia.

For their part, the professional military *as an institution* are declared apolitical and reportedly hardly influence policy decisions, even when the issue concerns their corporate interests. In practice, however, *individual* political appointees were very common in the earlier years after independence, to the detriment of more qualified and experienced candidates. And still now complaints are voiced about this practice. From recent studies, however, it appears that the value-orientation of the individual in the military is comparable

to that found in Slovenian society, with the maintenance of international peace and further democratisation as the most important goals. Thus it is not military obstructionism that has held up reforms in civil-military relations in Slovenia. The main problems between the military establishment and the democratic institutions have been caused by political elite-manoeuvring for predominance and influence on the armed forces.

The *cause célèbre* in this context was the mid-1990s Janša affair, centred on this Defence Minister who persistently frustrated defence reform, regularly misused the authority of his office in the matter of appointments (and much else) and came into conflict with the presidency over his management style. The episode is noteworthy also for yielding insights into the murky world of intelligence and security services. Bringing the latter under proper democratic control seems urgent in Slovenia. In the country's brief history incidents involving them have embarrassed – and led to the resignation of – a number of Ministers. Besides the Janša-affair, Interior Minister Ivo Bizjak resigned in 1994 when it was discovered that the internal security service had been involved in illegal break-ins, not only in Slovenia but also in Austria. In 1998, Defence Minister Tit Turnsek had to quit because of further evidence of intelligence personnel acting illegally (this time setting up a listening-post inside Croatia). He was replaced by Alojz Krapez, who would also be gone by the end of 1998. (Krapez stumbled over the more mundane matter of giving the rank of second-lieutenant to the wife of a political friend).

On the core issue of civilian control of the *armed forces*, however, various discussions in Slovenia have shaped our impression that there is an imbalance in favour of the civilians. Reflexes after breaking away from Yugoslavia and the inherited weak military caused an overcivilianisation of the defence apparatus; and one commentator sees the need to 'militarise the military'. A lack of military culture and professionalism has resulted (among other things) in an emasculation of the General Staff which even in technical-military matters is overruled by the Ministry of Defence.

As for legislative oversight, here we find the zeal for a parliamentary democracy has led to the exercise of very strict nominal control. Budgetary control is far-reaching: not only does Parliament decide on the budget and on funding for long-term defence plans, it also sets budgets for each project within those plans. Yet NATO has criticised the lack of transparency and detail of the Slovenian defence budget, suggesting that in practice oversight may not be so effective. Due to the authoritarian leadership style of the Minister of Defence in the early years of Slovenian independence, the ability of the Parliament to hold the government fully accountable is indeed ill developed. Confirming this, opposition political parties complain about the lack of transparency in arms procurement decisions, having no say in important personnel appointments and insufficient information on the defence budget and on defence laws. Elected representatives also express concern about the absence of effective oversight of the Slovenian intelligence agencies.

Insufficient knowledge has also undermined the effectiveness of the defence committee's work. This has been improving in recent years. However, budget-control is still

difficult because the administration has no institutionalised system that guides defence planning and expenditures while transparency is blurred because additional funds for the Slovenian Armed Forces (SAF) modernisation are not part of the defence budget. (In 2000, a project group for defence planning was established with the aim to approach defence planning more realistically and to link the planning process to future operational requirements of the SAF.) Currently, the quality and level of expertise in the defence committee is very varied. Nor can the legislators tap a strong 'security community' in the country. There is one educational and one academic research institution with competence in defence studies. Since independence, the Slovene defence establishment has grown in size, but these institutions have not. However, the visibility of defence studies is increasing and the nature of public discussion is moving away from general questions of national security to more specific issues.

Regarding public confidence in civil-military arrangements, within the former Yugoslav Federation, and particularly in the later 1980s, Slovenian civil society showed an explicit sensitivity to military interference in the civil sphere. The atmosphere seems to have changed now that the armed forces are Slovenian, not Yugoslav. Also, parts of the elite – and opinion-leaders who were very active in the years up to independence and shortly after – have grown passive. Slovenian civil society is therefore fairly weak and inactive today. This may be because former civic leaders, strong and influential before independence, acquired high-ranking positions in the new state and their successors have yet to emerge. Relevant too is the fact that *trust* in the armed forces is now high due to the success of the army in the Ten-Day War and the SAF representing a symbol of independence and national pride. On the other hand, the *social prestige* of the military profession is not very high. Nor are many young people interested in a career in security and defence either as a civilian or in uniform.

2.2 Public attitudes

There is a broad consensus among Slovenian political parties on the issue of NATO-membership. Only the United List of Social-Democrats (ZLSD) and the Slovenian National Party (SNS) are sceptical: because of uncertainty about national obligations as a member and the expected costs (Social-Democrats) and expense plus potential loss of sovereignty (SNS). During the Kosovo Campaign the SNS advocated a neutral Slovenia. On specific issues, the NATO request in mid-October 1998 for access and use of Slovenian airspace in the case of an intervention in Kosovo caused consternation. Still, the issue of the Slovenian refusal to support a UN-initiative *World without Nuclear Weapons* received much more attention in the media, partly, no doubt, because it touched another membership-related matter. This was a remarkable refusal since Slovenia was among a group of states that had initiated the resolution. During a visit to the United

States, however, the Slovenian delegation was told that its support was not 'appropriate' since the initiative ran counter to US defence doctrine. The government was heavily criticised for its swift shift in policy and questions were raised as to whether Slovenia would accept nuclear weapons on its territory if asked to do so.

From 1994 until mid-1997 polls showed a continuing rise in public support for Slovenian membership of NATO. After the Madrid decision not to invite Slovenia to join, however, public enthusiasm waned. The proportion of respondents 'for' NATO fell from 62.4 per cent in a March 1997 survey to 55.4 per cent in an October/November 1997 poll. Curiously, opposition did not increase, but the proportion of 'undecided' respondents grew (from 19.4 per cent in March to 26.6 per cent in October/November). These data are from the Public Opinion Research Centre at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Social Sciences, some of whose later polling results are tabulated below. Through 1998-2000 the 'for' proportion stayed over 50 per cent but dipped below that level in January and September 2001. The low percentage from January can be explained by the depleted uranium affair, while that in September is probably related to NATO invoking Article V of its Treaty after the 11 September terrorist attacks on the United States. The Slovenes see an eventual NATO-membership mostly as a contributing factor to a sustained socio-economic development of their country and this last development was a sharp reminder of military obligations. A more continuing factor affecting the low 'pro' values in these surveys is that the Slovene public is not ready to bear the increased defence expenditures membership might entail. In a 1999 poll only 8.4 per cent of respondents favoured an increased defence budget, while 41.4 per cent wanted to leave it at current levels and 32 per cent supported a reduction.

Question: Do you agree with the aims of Slovenia to become a NATO member?

	March '97 %	Oct/Nov '97 %	May '99 %	May '00 %	Nov. '00 %	January '01 %	May '01 %	Sept. '01 %
Agree	62.4	55.4	50.9	58.3	51.6	49.6	53.9	49.7
Disagree	18.2	18.4	30.7	25.9	27.6	31.6	31.5	30.9
Do not know	19.4	26.6	18.3	15.7	20.8	18.8	14.7	19.4

Public support for NATO membership does not reflect the overall consensus among the political parties. Aware of this, in April 2001 the Slovenian government launched a public information campaign. The target audience is not only the domestic public but also opinion and decision makers in NATO member countries. For the domestic audience the key message is that Slovenian membership would 'consolidate national security and guarantee a stable development of the whole society.' Some of the arguments also stress the positive effects for the national economy and for scientific and technological

development, thereby increasing the country's attractiveness for foreign investors. The strategy involves spreading information on web sites and in publications (e.g. the Slovene Army Magazine), organising round tables, conducting opinion polls and intensifying media relations. It has to be said also that elite support is not unconditional. All major political parties *want a referendum to be held* on the membership question. According to a 1999 public opinion poll so do 76.7 per cent of the population. As in ('first wave') Hungary and, just possibly, ('second wave') Slovakia, it seems certain that Slovenia will opt for a plebiscite, if and when an invitation to accede is forthcoming.

2.3 Military education

Preparing the armed forces for (possible) NATO membership is in hand also, within Slovenia's 'start from scratch' military education system. Because the Slovenes were under-represented in the former Yugoslav officer corps, the post-independence Slovene Armed Forces (SAF) could draw from only a small pool of well-qualified uniformed military professionals. Moreover, this pool was halved because several officers of Slovenian origin openly supported the federal side at the time of the Ten-Day War and were not invited to join the Slovenian armed forces. In short, the country had a daunting training task. Yet Slovenia had never had a military academy on its soil. Additionally, when the defence institutions – especially the top of the Ministry of Defence – were first formed, the qualifications and knowledge of nominees for positions counted for less than political affiliation or loyalty to the new leadership. Slovenia still lacks *well-trained* personnel, both military and civilians.

In 1992 the build-up of a quite unique military education system began. It was decided to break with the Yugoslav system and incorporate military education into the public education system. Officers are recruited among graduates of Slovenian Universities: they get military instruction during a one-year supplementary course at the Officers' School of the Ministry of Defence. One of the goals when setting up the system was to ensure that personnel are able to move easily between civilian and military employment. The officer corps would thereby be prevented from ever becoming isolated from the rest of society. After the one-year course – actually more like 6 months – additional periodical courses in specialised subjects are offered. The Command and Staff School offers specific courses in Civil-Military Relations, Peacekeeping and Peace Support Operations Management and in the implementation of NATO standards. A Non-Commissioned Officer School was also created at the beginning of 1992. In 1995 substantial changes were introduced in rank-and-file military training. These led to the Training Centre of the Ministry of Defence being transformed into the Military Education Centre (MEC) which became the basic educational institution of the armed forces. The Command and Staff School, Officer Training School, NCO School and Mountain School too were brought together within the

MEC. Part of the structure is a separate School of Foreign languages. (The Mountain Warfare School is open to troops from NATO countries.)

Some SAF personnel take training abroad. Around 80 per cent of current staff officers posted to key functions in the MoD and GS have attended specific training in foreign countries. Domestic resources augment official provision as well. A number of courses for civilian defence experts destined for the MoD, officer candidates and senior officers are provided by the Defence Studies programme at the University of Ljubljana. This is the only university in Slovenia which offers graduate and postgraduate studies in the subject-area. The staff teach at the MEC regularly.

The Slovenian system has many merits: civilian-based military education is beneficial from a civil-military relations perspective and it is cost-effective. However, in a country that lacks military expertise and military tradition it inhibits the creation of military professionalism and *esprit de corps*. Relevant here is the fact that the backgrounds of the officers enrolling into the MEC are enormously varied. There are officers from the former Yugoslav National Army (YNA), from the Territorial Defence (TD) Forces, former YNA and TD reserve officers, civilians from different walks of life, officers from the militia or police forces and Defence Studies graduates. Hence, stepping away from the civilian-based approach is under consideration. Creating a Military Academy might not be feasible considering the very conscious choice of the Slovenes after independence not to have this kind of institution, but a more integrated and coherent *military* education system for armed forces personnel is contemplated.

At the level of basic instruction, the training of conscript soldiers lasts 7 months. In practice, on average out of 227 days available only 110 days are spent on operational training. This is too short for anything but basic training for territorial defence. The physical condition of the conscripts is poor and they lack the skills to handle military equipment. As a consequence, the quality of the reserve structure of the SAF has gone down since 1991. It does not help that there is a relatively poor response from the reserve units to call-ups for rare, too short and insufficiently intensive refresher training. The combat readiness of the reserve formations is therefore questionable.

2.4 Defence Organisation

The Slovenian Territorial Defence Force (TD) prevailed in the short conflict (Ten-Day War) for independence, but its restructuring was not begun until 1994. A new military doctrine – *Military Defence Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia*, taking into account NATO interoperability – was written in 1998. This envisaged forces restructured by 2010 into a Rapid Reaction Force, Main Defence Force and reservist-manned Support Defence Force – with the Rapid Reaction Force organised as a multipurpose brigade, equipped and trained (a) to operate on the entire territory of Slovenia and (b) to participate in

humanitarian activities and peace support operations. In future (no time-path is available) this Force should consist exclusively of professionals. The Main Defence Force is the largest part of the SAF, with a mixture of professionals, conscripts and reservists. There exists also a *Basic Long Term Programme for Developing and Equipping the Slovenian Armed Forces (2000-2010)* approved by Parliament on 29 February 2000. However, this text lacks detail and is not specific about implementation. A supposedly overarching *National Security Strategy* document was approved by parliament in June 2001; but the text largely reiterates the guidelines formulated in 1998.

Within the defence apparatus, as already noted, the General Staff (GS) is fully integrated into the Defence Ministry and the Chief of Defence is answerable to the Minister. But the set-up has problems. The MoD has too many military directorates, which leaves the GS with too few competencies. Besides, poor communication and unclear delegation have led to duplication of tasks. There is also poor co-ordination of the work of military headquarters and the MoD. Slovenia is therefore planning a reorganisation of the administration of the Defence Ministry and the armed forces to improve its structure and efficiency. This should yield a clearer definition of the responsibilities of the Minister of Defence and the Head of the GS in the area of defence planning. The headquarters of the SAF – and the national administration for crisis management and rescue operations – are to remain within the MoD, but individual offices are to merge into larger units, such as a defence policy office and an office of defence administration. This restructuring, and a more rational distribution of tasks among the new organisational units, should result in a better co-ordination of activities.

So far as fighting forces are concerned, Slovenia is having trouble in restructuring. It will have to reduce the number of troops to be realistically able to increase their standards and efficiency. A further personnel reduction is projected. In 2000, the peacetime strength was 8,200 (4,900 professionals and 3,300 conscripts) with a wartime mobilisation strength of 74,000. While mobilisation strength was originally planned to fall to 47,000 by 2010, plans were then made to go to the number of 35,000 and under the latest plan of September 2001 it will drop to 30,000 by 2004. The number of career personnel in relation to conscripts is planned to rise. However, the scope and pace of professionalisation have not been defined. Recently it was decided that the number of personnel in the SAF headquarters will also be reduced with operational tasks handed over to subordinate command units (hereby responding to criticism of having an over-centralised chain of command).

At the moment, Slovenia does not have a single unit prepared for international operations, although the manning and equipping of the 10th Motorised Battalion for this role has been underway since 1998. In the *Basic Long-Term Programme* the target date for completing this unit's preparations was set at 2004. However, the Annual National Programme of Slovenia for 2001/2002 mentions that the 'in-service' date has been

advanced to end-2002. In addition, we learned that a second unit, the 20th Motorised Battalion, is to be built-up thereafter. (We suspect a sharp 'wake-up' call from NATO.)

The combat readiness of the SAF as a whole is inadequate. President Milan Kucan's review of the latest annual Combat Preparedness Report was highly critical. Inappropriate recruitment policies (political party affiliation takes precedence over professionalism), conceptual problems in defining the role of the armed forces and the consequent delay in drafting the *Security Strategy* document are cited by the Slovenes themselves as the main causes. We would add inadequate training, lack of appropriate equipment and weapons plus low manning levels. Insufficient provision for too many tasks and too ambitious a posture are the root causes. On top of that personnel policy regulations in the security sector are 'inappropriate' in the sense that there is no comprehensive and formalised evaluation, selection and promotion system. Personal and professional qualities count for less than suitable connections. Also, equipment deficiencies are evident even at the basic level (lack of protective helmets, bulletproof vests, entrenchment shovels and first-aid kits). Reserve force members are especially poorly equipped. Incompetence and *misallocation* of funds by the GS are responsible.

Shortage of funds is the typical explanation for the slowness and ineffectiveness of reforms, and the resultant deficient combat readiness of Slovenia's armed forces. Defence Minister Anton Grizold and Chief of Staff Ladislav Lipic are accordingly pressing government and parliament for more money. However, in many cases, funds allocated to the SAF have not even been used completely, often because information about the resources available for a certain period have been made known very late. They have also been poorly used. This points to flaws in resource allocation and financial management which extra cash alone will not cure.

Despite these problems, Slovenia is nevertheless – at least nominally – involved in various multilateral arrangements. It is a partner in the Central European Nations Co-operation in Peace Support Operations (CENCOOP), and the Italian-Hungarian-Slovenian multinational light land force (MLF). It supports the UN Standby High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) with observer status and the Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe (MPFSEE), also as an observer. It has a few troops serving with KFOR and SFOR, and Defence Minister Grizold announced in June 2001 that Slovenia plans to offer an additional infantry platoon to SFOR: Slovenia would then have about 140 military and police personnel in KFOR and SFOR combined. Considering the modest size of Slovenia's forces, such contributions are commendable. At the same time other small states – and significantly less prosperous ones – manage to make more substantial provision for contingency warfare capabilities. (Estonia and Latvia come to mind). For Slovenia, though, it seems that until very recently the aspiration to field a battalion-size unit was too demanding. Moreover, for the time being, its troops abroad are not logistically self-sufficient. The specialised knowledge Slovenia has to offer through its Mountain Brigade cannot be used for missions abroad since it is manned solely by

conscripts. For future joint European missions, Slovenia has offered a few motorised infantry, a military police squad, a medical unit, and an aviation transport unit plus officers to work at the headquarters.

Although improved resource allocation and better financial management are clearly called for in Slovenia, whether the country will be able to implement force developments is going to depend also on the country's ability and willingness to earmark sufficient funds for defence. The economy has been slowing down lately. Moreover, there is opposition within parliament (and the population) to any increase in the defence budget. So future funding is not assured. The recently introduced biennial parliamentary approval of the budget will make plans for 2001-2003 financially sustainable. Longer term programmes, however, are still at risk.

Having said that, there remains a huge unanswered question about the economics of Slovenia's defences. According to the statistics of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), in 1999 Slovenia spent about the same on its armed forces as Slovakia. With the money the Slovak Republic maintained – after a fashion – over 36,000-strong armed forces (*peacetime active* force size). Slovenia could field only 9,000 or so (*active* forces, again). Such a discrepancy in force level per unit of resource would usually be attributable to the state with the smaller manpower count having considerably more (and/or better) equipment – a highly *capital*-intensive defence effort in the economist's parlance. In the case of Slovenia that is manifestly not the explanation. The country has a one-ship navy (a fast patrol boat), and a very small air arm (with no front-line combat aircraft), while the ground forces are poorly equipped and are not being expensively re-equipped.

Hence the 'huge unanswered question' is: where does Slovenia's defence money go? 'Waste and mismanagement' is one possible answer. Fraud is another. The high cost of paying regular personnel in a (relatively) high-income market economy is probably part of the explanation. Expenditures on infrastructure and communications must enter the reckoning too. Still, local studies show, there are apparently insufficient funds for first-aid kits and entrenchment shovels.

This is not the place to pursue the matter further. However, two points must be made. First, the mystery is one that would repay investigation; and NATO might be well advised to do that before Slovenia's case comes up at Prague. (Would the Organisation wish to admit a 'free rider' by default?) Secondly, the uncritical use of 'defence expenditure per troop' – total spending divided by active force size – in assessing military capacity needs to be exposed for the nonsense that it is. It is as a proxy for capital-intensity that the ratio is usually – and legitimately – employed. To use it as a measure of the 'modernity' of Slovenia's armed forces is, however, preposterous. Yet that is precisely what the RAND Corporation's recent assessment of the MAP-states' preparedness does. This leads to Slovenia being the only 'second wave' aspirant accorded a 'High' rating on *military* criteria, which in turn propels the country to the top of the MAP states' league on

the study's overall assessment. Slovenia's 'high per-troop defence spending suggests a military that could easily fit into NATO' its authors say. As erroneous inference from dubious quantitative analysis that statement would merit a 'High' rating too, if it were not in a class of its own.

2.5 Assessment

Our own assessment is that, whatever strengths Slovenia may have in the politico-economic area, the country is close to falling below the 'serious candidacy' threshold on military 'organisation' tests. It lacks the present ability and the structural capacity to deliver in future an appropriate, affordable and acceptable defence effort, according to the evidence we have seen. What would be appropriate is regarded as not affordable. What is acceptably affordable to Slovenian society is a less than adequate effort, even for a small state (using only 1.2 per cent of GDP in 2000). Also, Slovenia does not get particularly good marks in the 'Carnovale-Simon' test on democratic-style civil-military relations.

- Slovenia has the institutional and legal framework for 'democratic-style' *civil-military relations*. However, legislative oversight of the armed forces is barely satisfactory, civilian control is practised in a way that amounts to intrusive supervision; more attention needs to be paid to making internal security forces accountable; and the division of responsibilities in the security area is unclear.
- Recent surveys of *public attitudes* suggest that some 50-60 per cent of the population support NATO-membership, although almost all political parties are behind the candidacy. However, neither the population nor the parties likes spending on defence and security. It is almost certain that a referendum will be held if and when Slovenia gets an invitation to join, with a vote in favour the likeliest outcome.
- The *military education* system – last reformed in 1995 – is sound, but it is not breeding a necessary sense of professionalism and cohesion among the SAF. Nor is it delivering enough well-trained personnel (military or civilian).
- The country's *defence organisation* is flawed: reform has been slow and remains incomplete. There are MoD-GS problems in communication and division of competencies plus deficiencies in resource allocation and resources management. A force structure plan looks in trouble although, for appearance's sake, the protracted preparation of units for contingency operations has been accelerated.

This is anything but a ringing endorsement of Slovenia's candidacy, so far as our areas of interest are concerned. However, we recognise that, in an overall assessment, the country's relatively strong economy and development to a consolidated democracy – and its expressed determination to adapt to European standards in all aspects of governance – may commend it to NATO. That Slovenia's admission would evoke no protest – from Russia, for example – also counts in the country's favour.

3. Macedonia

At the time of writing (end-September 2001) Macedonia is in a condition of precarious stability after months on the verge of civil war. Any conclusions drawn here are therefore subject to considerable uncertainty and what we can say might well be overtaken by events. This profile must be read with that in mind.

The Republic of Macedonia – or The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) – aspires to eventual membership of both NATO and the European Union (EU). However, although taking part in the MAP procedure, it is not in practice a serious contender for 'second wave' accession. Nor is it yet on the EU membership track, although on 9 April 2001 the country became the first South-East European state to sign a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU.

From the EU's standpoint the country fulfils neither the political nor the economic criteria for near-future entry. Since the Union's eligibility tests under these headings are more or less the same as NATO's, it is worth nothing what the European Commission said in its most recent Report on Progress towards Accession (November 2000). In its political assessment, the essential message was that Macedonia is in the process of moving 'towards democracy'. Its economic judgement was that the Republic is edging 'towards a market economy'. Moreover, events in 2001 have probably set Macedonia back several years in preparing for membership. Having finally reached good economic growth figures (6 per cent in 2000) a slowdown is expected in 2001 to low or no growth. No less important, the country's interethnic balance – so praised by the West since Macedonian independence – has been shown to be very fragile.

As for the defence considerations that also enter NATO's evaluation of readiness for entry, we have seen no analysis-in-depth. There is no lack of circumstantial evidence, however. Recent operations have revealed the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM) as ill-prepared, ill-trained and ill-equipped. This is almost beside the point, though, because we understand that, because of events since March 2001, Macedonia has more or less given up hope of a positive outcome in the next enlargement-round. Formally, however, the Republic has not given up on its long-term commitment to integrate into Euro-Atlantic structures. Officially the aspiration is undiminished, and still in early 2001 the Macedonians said they value their participation in the MAP process. Of late, however, there is a growing resentment towards a peace perceived to have been forced on the ethnic Slav Macedonians and the role played by NATO. What these anti-NATO sentiments mean in practice for the Republic of Macedonia's quest for membership is unclear at this stage.

Until the 2001 emergency supervened the MAP discipline had certainly prompted necessary preparatory effort in Skopje. Thus a new Defence Law was adopted in

September 2000 which clearly defines the role of the armed forces and establishes a precise division between the civilian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the General Staff (GS). Its implementation, though, will take time. Moreover, this legislative preparation is the least of the problems that Macedonia must address. Besides military inadequacies, political, economic and social conditions must now be serious impediments to future membership.

'Military inadequacies' must be seen in perspective, however. Macedonia is not only a small and impoverished country, it is also a new state. In May 1992 the Yugoslav Army (YNA) left the newly-independent territory. Its units took most of their equipment with them and destroyed what they could not transport. This left Macedonia totally helpless, militarily; and the country had to build up a new army from scratch. Of course a lot of ex-YNA officers of Macedonian origin returned to Macedonia: jobless, and disillusioned. Some found employment in the ARM. Still, the organisation and building of the force – and, very soon after, reorganisation and reforms because of a shift in thinking towards NATO membership – proved to be extremely difficult for a country in an unfriendly environment and with a chronic lack of means. Now it has problems of a different sort: counting the costs of war and reorganising to meet the requirements of a new political environment. It is none the less instructive – and necessary for the completeness of this study – to mark where Macedonia stood, on the eve of the recent turmoil, in its NATO membership preparations (in our areas of interest).

3.1 Civil-military relations

The template of Macedonia's civil-military relations was set in 1991 when Macedonia did not even have armed forces. Without any experience, expertise or any kind of tradition to fall back on a more or less random choice was made from the models available. On the basis of its selection, however, official publications say that the important conditions have been created for a true and realistic civil and democratic control of the armed forces. In fact, clear divisions of authority and clear civilian direction of the military have not been established – at least not in ways that would satisfy the 'Carnovale-Simon test' – as will be made clear presently.

On the face of it, legislative oversight *is* provided for, in the sense that the Macedonian Assembly has a strong position in the constitution. No other branch of power can dissolve the Assembly and call for new elections but the Assembly itself. In practice, however, the legislature is not active in exercising democratic control of the armed forces. In this area, the executive power makes the decisions and the Assembly is generally disposed to support the government's proposals. The main reason for this seems to be the strong contacts between the ARM and the dominant Internal Macedonian

Revolutionary Organisation – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE).

The body in the unicameral parliament which nominally 'considers questions regarding defence of the Republic and civil protection and other questions concerning the internal policy and defence' is the *Committee on Internal Policy and Defence*. It consists of a Chairperson, eight members from the Assembly and three expert-members. Members of the Committee are not only identified by party-affiliation but also by ethnicity. Two Albanians normally serve on it. Under the provisions of the mid-2001 Framework Agreement this practice will be formalised. Besides overseeing 'protection of the state order' the Committee's remit extends to looking into issues of 'citizenship, census, granting amnesty and pardon and the judiciary, and the public prosecutor's office'. Nine MPs in total to oversee such a vast area of policies is clearly inadequate; but the wide remit reflects the interconnectedness of defence and internal relations in Macedonia. Considering defence responsibilities strictly defined, moreover, we are told that plans are being developed and executed to improve consultation and defence budget scrutiny, and the Committee *is* briefed by the Minister of Defence.

Nevertheless 'the executive power makes the decisions' (as just noted). Until 1999 this meant President Gligorov. Civilian control over the national security system was 'personalised' – much as in Albania – and depended more on Gligorov's authority than on constitutional mechanisms. He worked through the National Security Council (NSC) – of which more later – but the NSC was under the decisive influence of the President. The defence budget was also *de facto* controlled by him. Mostly, initial defence allocations were not sufficient to cover defence expenditures but supplementary allocations were approved by the Gligorov-dominated cabinet.

Under successor President Boris Trajkovski – who lacks charisma and experience in comparison with his predecessor and does not have the same knowledge of defence matters – things have not been much different, except that Prime Minister Georgievski has steadily gained influence at the expense of the presidency. Trajkovski too has worked through the NSC – which consists of the President (chair), the Prime Minister, the President of the Assembly and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Interior – and it has continued to function in an *ad hoc* and intransparent manner. Moreover, it has so far failed to invite any ethnic Albanians to attend its meetings. The same applies to the advisory committee, which supplanted the Council in May 2001 (on formation of a 'national unity' government). Presumably this will change under the revised arrangements on equitable representation as provided for in the Framework Document signed in August 2001.

This pattern of executive direction is possible because neither the Constitution nor the Defence Law has clearly delineated the competencies and responsibilities between the President (as Commander-in-Chief) and the Government. Reflecting that ambiguity, Prime Minister Georgievski has been more assertive latterly. Thus in the matter of

proclaiming states of emergency, President Gligorov acted, twice, in 1999; but it was Prime Minister Georgievski who acted in May 2001. A further complication is that because of the state's difficult internal ethnic relations it has opted to have a strong police force (which is almost better trained and equipped than the ARM). Thus situations arise in which it is unclear whether 'proper authority' lies with the Defence Minister or the Interior Minister.

At the societal level, obviously, ethnic-military relations are more important than civil-military relations. The Republic's Albanians are not keen on joining the ARM; and many Macedonian Slav officers do not regret this fact. As for interaction between government officials and civil-society organisations in the field of defence and security, there is hardly any. Civil society in Macedonia is weak, though a number of NGOs have sprung up in the areas of human rights and interethnic relations (mainly internationally sponsored). Independent expertise in defence issues is virtually non-existent, except for one or two individual experts at Universities in Skopje.

3.2 Public attitudes

The Macedonian public is informed on military affairs in the monthly magazine *Defence* and the newspaper *The Word of the Army*. The latter is published every month together with Macedonia's biggest newspaper *Vecher*. It is, therefore, widely disseminated. Even so, until recently there was not much interest in the ARM among the people. Obviously, this has changed due to recent events.

It is very difficult to discover what is the general attitude of the Macedonian population towards NATO membership. The main reason for this is that only a few polls have been taken and the results have been kept secret by the government. The Macedonian Mission at NATO claims that before the recent crisis around 85 per cent of the population was *in favour of* joining; and the government in Skopje similarly claims that almost every Macedonian supports the candidacy. Also, it is the one subject that every political party apparently agrees on. Because of this elite consensus, though, every dissonant voice is seen as traitorous. Perhaps there is a silent – or silenced – majority that opposes accession. Some commentators hold this view. We have noted one who thought, in 1999, that between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of the Macedonian population was *against* future NATO-membership. Given that we are talking here about the peak of the Kosovo crisis and conflict, this proposition is not absurd. Most Macedonians disagreed with NATO's intervention and the bombardment of their fellow Slavs; the country hosted more than 400,000 Kosovo Albanian refugees, causing a severe damage to the economy for which Macedonia has not been fully compensated. NATO itself reports that support for membership dropped significantly in this period. More recently, in an early March

2001 poll, over 50 per cent of respondents felt that the presence of NATO troops in the region did *not* contribute to the prevention of military conflicts.

Until recently the Macedonian population appears to have had no strong views about the ARM. Their armed forces had no combat experience and were poorly equipped in comparison with the former YNA. This uninterested attitude changed when the border crisis arose, and the ARM saw action for the first time. The armed forces are very popular among Macedonian Slavs just now. Of course the Republic's Albanians do not share this attitude.

Through mid-2001, radicalisation among both Macedonian Slavs and Albanians took place. The storming of the parliament building by Slavs (June 2001) indicated this, as did the formation of irregular paramilitary groups by nationalist Macedonians. At least four such groups may exist, with a combined total of an estimated 3,000 well-armed members. Under strong Western urging a Framework Document was signed on 13 August 2001 as part of a peace plan in which cessation of hostilities, decentralisation of government, political re-balancing and cultural issues must be arranged. The peace plan provides for 'a voluntary disarmament of the ethnic Albanian armed groups', but does not mention a disarmament of the ethnic Slav paramilitary groups. The necessary constitutional amendments met with delays in the Macedonian parliament and the resistance within the ethnic Macedonian part of government, parliament and population against the peace plan – which they believe may lead to a division of Macedonian territory – is growing. At the time of writing international pressure is mounting, but there is no certainty whatsoever that peace is sustainable.

The recent crisis and the role of NATO and the international community in it make it hazardous to generalise about Macedonian public attitudes in our area of interest. What we do know is that Macedonian public opinion is hardening in opposition to the peace agreement and during the crisis Macedonian-language media increasingly fanned anti-NATO sentiments. While on the other hand, according to UNHCR, many of the 35,000 ethnic Albanian refugees that returned to their homes in the period from 13 August to early September reportedly stated that their confidence in NATO had led them to return. It could very well be that the country now comprises (a) an ethnic Macedonian population that is against NATO membership but pro-ARM and (b) an ethnic Albanian population that is in favour of NATO membership for Macedonia but anti-ARM.

3.3 Military education

When Macedonia gained independence a military education system had to be developed from scratch. The old SFRY had no military educational institutes on Macedonian territory. It was important to the new state to create something. It did so; and currently it

is still more important that there *are* national facilities than that these institution should teach according to 'the NATO-standard' (whatever that means).

The Macedonian 'Military Defence Educational and Training Centre' (Goce Delchev) started in 1995. At first the Centre was affiliated with the University and graduated students received a university-degree as well as the rank of second lieutenant. Also postgraduate specialisation studies up to the degree of Doctor in Sciences were possible. Nowadays the establishment is completely subordinate to the Ministry of Defence. Analysts see this development as a retrograde step from both a civil-military relations and an educational standpoint. Moreover some would shut down the institution – at least temporarily – because the small Macedonian Army has a surfeit of high-ranking officers, but finds it difficult to attract new soldiers. Another problem for the institution is the low percentage of ethnic Albanian students. Since Albanian young people reject the ARM it cannot apply the 'national key'. Applied in Yugoslavia before 1991, this is a quota arrangement designed to make sure that every ethnic group is represented in the army. In principle, Macedonia wants to uphold this 'national key' with regard to its Albanian minority. After implementing the Framework Document of the peace plan this will be mandatory by law.

We have not been able to examine the full portfolio of courses taught at the Goce Delchev Centre. However, so far as the all-important matter of language training is concerned – for any aspirant to NATO membership – we do know that instruction is available. In the later 1990s the Ministry of Defence claimed knowledge of English generally to be 'far better than before', especially among young officers; and its 1998 White Paper cites figures on levels of competence and training opportunities taken up. We do not have up-to-date statistics.

3.4 Defence organisation

As noted earlier 'military inadequacies' were revealed during the fighting with Albanian insurgents in the northern mountainous part of Macedonia from March 2001. The ARM high command will doubtless draw conclusions to add to the 'lessons learned' in the ARM's limited participation in international operations and exercises. (The ARM has no forces abroad in international peace operations at present (mid-2001). The exercise *Medceur 2001* was the latest international exercise 'in the spirit of the Partnership for Peace' in which the ARM participated.)

Independent opinion on the ARM is that it is small in size, poorly equipped and poorly trained. History helps explain this. The Yugoslav army withdrew from Macedonia in April 1992 comparatively easily, believing that Macedonia would soon ask for military protection. Even so, no serious military equipment was left and the troops withdrew after removing everything possible from their barracks (even light bulbs). Due to the UN

embargo with regard to import of arms to the entire territory of Yugoslavia – Macedonia was in fact the only republic of the former Yugoslavia that strictly respected this embargo – its small initial force of some 14,000 soldiers could be armed only lightly. Also, a policy not to insist on a share of the common assets of the SFRY was adopted so as not to antagonise Serbia and to facilitate a clean break. This left Macedonia with a defence concept that was – considering its economic weakness, the Yugoslav wars that were waged in its vicinity and the initial hostile environment of the so called 'four wolves' (Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Serbia) – the only concept it could espouse. Macedonia had to opt for *defence by military weakness*: it could not hope to compete militarily with its neighbours.

Thus in 1992 the infant ARM was practically without arms except the poor stocks of civil and territorial defence units. The defence budget was comparatively small, less than that of the internal security forces. (The police force (around 9,000 men) was the only efficient protection force available. The armed forces' task was to guard the state borders of Macedonia, but the police did the job, using special paramilitary units equipped with a few helicopters.) In its formative phase, the ARM had no difficulty attracting officers. In the YNA, Macedonians were relatively over-represented and often exceeded their allotment. Thus Macedonia could recruit 10 generals and some 2,400 commissioned and non-commissioned officers. The majority – and most conscripts – were Macedonians. (The percentage of Albanian conscripts was reportedly 7.5 per cent.) A small defence ministry had to be set up and staffed also: as it was, with some able people but virtually no Albanian people. All post-1992 governments had some Albanian representation, although generally in minor positions (for example 'Assistant Ministers', without offices or staff) and never involving posts in the Defence or Foreign Ministries, or in the key Interior Ministry which most observers see as the source of all real power in Macedonia. Arms were harder to come by: but, after the 1997 Albanian uprising weapons seized from Albanian stores began to find their way to Macedonia and other small arms transfers reportedly accelerated in 1997-8.

In short, these were years of improvisation, initially. However, in 1998 Macedonia developed plans for 1999-2007 with the aim to establish a 'proper' – affordable and effective – force structure. The country wants to respond to the imperatives of necessary professionalisation within its armed forces in which, because of resource constraints, there will have to be conscripts for as far ahead as one can see.

The peacetime military strength is currently 11,850. In the latest reorganisation plan – presented in May 2000 – this is planned to rise to between 14,000 and 16,000 (including civilians), with half of the personnel professionals. Mobilisation strength is planned to go *down* from 131,000 to approximately 60,000. The force structure will comprise Rapid Reaction, Strategic Reserve and Support Forces – all 'in line with NATO standards' (meaning minimally capable of operating with member-states' forces). Special priority is given to a new Border Brigade and the First Infantry Brigade (within the Rapid

Reaction Force). Border security is a priority task of the armed forces just now and longer-term plans to transfer this task back to the police are unlikely to materialise in the near future. The affordability of these plans is questionable because budgetary projections are based on an annual GDP growth of 5.2 per cent. This figure is unrealistic (low or no growth is predicted for 2001).

Resource constraints also limit what Macedonia can contemplate in the area of force modernisation. As noted earlier the Macedonian armed forces were built up out of nothing. One of their problems has always been the acquisition of equipment with few or no funds. As a result the current inventory comprises items of different age, military purpose and country of origin, which creates huge problems. Most armaments have in fact been donated by different countries and this equipment was often obsolescent when given. Some observers think Macedonia has been regarded as a dumping-ground for old and useless arms that are expensive to maintain. This is an accusation that would seem to apply to Bulgaria's 1999 gift of 150 T-55 tanks, of which only 104 were serviceable. Other countries that have provided second-hand items are Greece, Germany (old East-German material), Italy, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Randomly accepted materiel led to a confusion in the build up of units: received armaments determined unit structure. The latest 'donation' came from the Ukraine early in the recent crisis. Later it turned out that the old Mi-24D gunships were no gift: the bill followed. More usefully the United States announced on 29 March 2001 that it would provide $13.6 million in military assistance in 2001. Half of this aid will consist of trucks, howitzers and machine guns. The other half will be spent mostly on training military personnel. Germany too has promised military aid, to the value of DM 5 million. Abnormal times call for abnormal measures: through mid-2001 the Macedonian government gathered equipment at an unprecedented pace: attack helicopters, transport helicopters, training aircraft, anti-aircraft guns and surveillance radars. There are reports of other procurements as well. If all this has to be paid for it will place a heavy burden on the distressed Macedonian economy.

Poor equipment, chronic lack of funds for up-to-date training – and incompetence within the ranks of the ARM – have affected combat readiness. It is clear that the ARM was not prepared for the type of conflict that erupted in northern Macedonia. Some commentators note inadequate intelligence preparation, partly attributable to the fact that many high-ranking officers were retired during the last few years in order to preserve the peace in the coalition government. Prior to its engagement in 2001 the ARM’s only recent operation was to secure the corridor used by hundreds of thousands of civilian refugees from Kosovo on their way to Albania in spring 1999.

Turning, finally, to the question whether Macedonia has the 'structure and processes to deliver in future' an appropriate and affordable defence effort (see Chapter II), we can record that on the eve of the 2001 turmoil the MoD was rearranging itself, and

revamping its programming and budgeting, to do precisely that. The reorganisation is now 'on hold' (we understand).

3.5 Assessment

We conclude, therefore, that so far as can be ascertained Macedonia remains in principle willing, but in practice not able, to contemplate accession to NATO in the near future. That was a distant prospect in our opinion even before the recent crisis, because of 'military inadequacies' and, most important, political instability.

Looking into the specific categories that we have examined, our summary assessment is the following.

- Regarding democratic-style *civil-military relations*, there are a number of ambiguities in the Constitution and Defence Law. Although the Assembly and its Defence Committee has a strong mandate to perform legislative oversight of the armed forces, in practice the executive calls the shots. Civilian oversight is, however, not institutionalised at all. Its exercise is personal (as has been explained). Civil-military relations are thereby held hostage to democratic consolidation in Macedonia and a maturing of its political culture.
- On *public attitudes* the evidence is fragmentary and ambivalent. Since 1999 support for NATO membership among the Macedonian Slavs probably declined while support among ethnic Albanians increased. Since the crisis in 2001 this tendency, we sense intuitively, will have increased. NATO membership is probably not now supported by a majority of the Slav population, though most probably ethnic Albanians favour membership.
- Like the ARM itself, an independent *military education* system had to be developed from scratch. In 1995 Macedonia established facilities which appear to function effectively enough. However it has proved impossible to reach the quotum for Albanian enrolment.
- Under the *defence organisation* heading our judgement is that, if institutional reform were possible and the implementation of plans for 1999-2007 realisable, Macedonia would be in fair shape. Unfortunately, neither condition applies.

That Macedonian officials regard the country's NATO candidacy as in limbo at present is hardly surprising.

4. Concluding comment

For several reasons, most observers would have placed *Macedonia* below the ‘serious candidacy’ threshold for ‘second wave’ NATO accession even if the country had not

fallen victim in the first half of 2001 to the Balkan peninsula's potent 'liberation' virus. The country is facing a prolonged NATO and international presence on its soil with Operation 'Essential Harvest' followed by Operation 'Amber Fox'. For several reasons, *Slovenia* has been regarded – not only recently but ever since 1997 – as a very serious candidate indeed, a country which narrowly missed 'first wave' accession and is a leading contender (if not *the* leading contender) for an invitation to negotiate membership in 2002. It is, for example, the country (almost) invariably mentioned when the 'minimal option' – just one invitation in Prague – is discussed.

Our analysis confirms the weakness of Skopje's claim. More interestingly, it queries the strength of Ljubljana's. In terms of military 'organisation' – and military capability too – Slovenia is no more 'ready' for NATO accession than half-a-dozen other MAP-states.

VI. THE 'DISCONTINUITY' CASES: ALBANIA AND SLOVAKIA

1. Introduction

The five countries profiled in the two preceding chapters were designated 'start from scratch' states. Two other countries inherited some military apparatus from an *ancien regime* but nevertheless had to make new beginnings in the mid-1990s.

On the dissolution of the unitary Czech and Slovak Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia) in 1993, the divorce settlement gave the Slovaks one-third of the predecessor-state's armed forces and equipment, much of its infrastructure (and a lot of its troubled defence-related industry). Their new state did not, however, have a Defence Ministry or a General Staff, lacked some key military-educational facilities and also had no established arrangements for the legislative oversight of security policy and provision. The challenge for Slovakia was to fill these lacunae.

For the second 'discontinuity' case, Albania, the task was very different. Here initial post-Communist reform of an existing apparatus produced a refashioned organisation and remodelled armed forces. However, when a nationwide political crisis – almost a civil war – convulsed the country in 1997, these structures in effect collapsed and had to be rebuilt.

The 'post-shock' experiences of the two states are vastly different too. Through the middle-1990s, Slovakia patiently developed its independent defence capacity and, as one of the Visegrad group of countries, seemed at one stage a front-runner for 'first-wave' NATO accession. It became 'the favourite which disqualified itself' because of the Meciar regime's ambivalence about international policy priorities and authoritarian approach to domestic governance. In the post-Meciar years, since 1998 – another 'discontinuity' in the national experience – the country is trying earnestly to make up lost ground. After making very little headway in 1999/2000, it is now broadly succeeding and has crafted a new forward programme.

After the traumas of 1997, Albania went through an initial phase of obligatory purges and wholesale personnel changes, then embarked on creating 'new model' armed forces within a more robust constitutional framework. Despite much outside help, however, it has made only modest headway in putting in place a sound organisation, reforming decision-making processes and developing coherent plans which have some chance of being realised.

2. Albania

Both before and since the 1997 watershed – and following decades of self-imposed isolation – Albanian governments have consistently declared interest in 'entering the European mainstream' including European security arrangements. Thus Albania joined the North Atlantic Co-operation Council – now the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) – in 1992 and was one of the first countries to enter the Partnership for Peace (PfP) scheme, in February 1994, at which time it declared NATO membership to be its ultimate strategic goal. Through the mid-1990s it reorganised its armed forces, sent numerous officers to Western military institutions, and took part in several PfP exercises. It also made facilities available to support UN and NATO-led operations in former Yugoslavia, as it has continued to do. Thus during the 1998/99 Kosovo crisis and conflict the country provided invaluable logistical support, and accommodated a huge influx of refugees; and it currently hosts the Headquarters of Communication Zone West which supports KFOR. Moreover, it has played a conservative role in relation to all that has transpired in 2001 in Southern Serbia and Macedonia. That may change, but the Macedonian crisis was the first ethnic conflict in South-Eastern Europe where the insurgents were not backed by their 'home' country. This suggests that the leadership in Tirana has little, if any, interest in territorial aggrandisement.

For its commitment and co-operation Albania has been rewarded. When the country experienced its political crisis in early 1997 – prompted by the collapse of fraudulent pyramid investment schemes and resulting in not only a total collapse of state authority but also the threat of violent domestic revolution – the outside world responded with humanitarian assistance, delivered with the protection of an Italian-led multinational force (in Operation Alba). When a new government took office in mid-1997 – faced with the daunting task of rebuilding state institutions, including the military – the outside world provided economic aid and help with political reconstruction. As part of the latter, NATO developed – within the PfP framework – a tailored assistance effort focused on rebuilding the armed forces. This encompassed help in (a) establishing the conceptual framework for 'new model' armed forces, (b) starting a structural reorganisation of the military and (c) managing such specific problems as ammunition storage and ordnance disposal plus the security of depots (following the wholesale looting of stores that had taken place at the height of the crisis). Special attention has continued since that 'first aid' effort, using the machinery of a (unique) NATO liaison office in Tirana, Task Area Teams and bilateral programmes.

Perhaps because of this attention, domestic support for NATO membership is reportedly high. However, this does not make Albania a leading candidate for 'second wave' accession. For one thing the country has not yet got its 'new model' armed forces in place, within a proven framework of democratic control mechanisms. Nor is the military

education system as it should be. Moreover, these are not trivial matters given the Albanian experience in the 1990s (see below).

More fundamentally, the country is the most economically backward of the Nine. Statistically this is the case, with GDP per head less than half that of the next poorest MAP state and only one-third that of the poorest present NATO member (Turkey). It is apparent also in the state of infrastructure, the quality of services, the underdevelopment of the financial sector, plus the condition and performance of industrial enterprises (many still state-owned). Also, Albania has some way to go in its democratic development. Corruption and criminality are endemic. Public administration is a shambles. The judicial system remains still 'corrupt, incompetent and non-independent' (according to a local source). There is no hard evidence that the political culture of the state has undergone decisive transformation (of which more later).

2.1 Civil-Military Relations

The recent history of civil-military relations in Albania is instructive. Put briefly, *before 1997* the country claimed firm civilian control of the armed forces, whose loyalty was to the state. Furthermore, lines of authority were defined in the Constitution, and supposedly respected. The build-up to the events of early 1997, the events themselves and the aftermath all demonstrated the emptiness of these assertions. *Since 1997*, as noted earlier, Albania has been in a process of internationally-assisted rehabilitation, which has included NATO-aided rebuilding of the military. As this proceeds, the 'old' claims – civilian control, even democratic control, of the 'new model' forces, clear lines of authority and so on – are being made afresh. The question is: should we take them at face value or could they again turn out to be a facade?

Among those in formal contact with Albania – through the NATO assistance effort and the MAP procedures, for example – the 'face value' interpretation prevails. The most critical official comment we have seen is that solid democratic control as provided for in the 1998 Constitution, including legislative oversight of the security sector and budget transparency, require 'on-going attention'. If that is diplomatic understatement, all well and good. If it is as complacent as it sounds, some cautionary notes are in order.

The essential point is that the Albanian understanding of 'civilian control' owes more to recent history than democratic theory. In the Communist era it meant *Party* control or even *individual* direction by the leader (Enver Hoxha's style). In the immediate post-communist period it meant a watered-down version of the same thing. Control over the military – in the matter of appointments, strategic direction and policy formulation – was certainly in civilian hands. It was applied, however, through the exercise of *personal* power by the defence minister. Nor did this change after the events of February-March

1997. That violence was followed in July by the 'Kalashnikov' election. Victory went to the Socialists who had provoked the earlier anarchy (and looting). The post of defence minister went to Sabit Brokaj, who had organised and led the armed rebellion. Brokaj then used the office as a *private* power-base, in the customary manner.

To cite one example. At the height of the crisis the Albanian military had not acted against the insurgents – not even to defend their installations – and the Albanian navy simply fled to Italy. Nevertheless, on taking office Brokaj conducted a purge of the forces (against Western advice, incidentally). He dismissed numerous able – but allegedly 'disloyal' – officers, including many trained abroad or with experience gained in NATO (PfP) exercises. Among those dismissed were 38 high-ranking officers (generals, colonels and lieutenant-colonels). Selected stalwarts of the old communist and secret service *nomenklatura* moved in. It was this new team which now began to construct the 'new model' military (with Western support, as noted). Where the replacements came from is a revelation. In Albania 'localism' permeates national politics. In any organisation the make-up of the staff invariably reflects the region or ethnic affiliation of its top office-holder. Thus, with a single exception, after the July 1997 ballot all the ministerial new blood came from a zone between Vlora and Gjirokastra in the south. In Defence Minister Brokaj's domain, after his purge, *all* the directors of the ministry, unit commanders and senior officers posted-in were from his own district, Vlora. Of nine newly-appointed Military Attaches, *all* were from Vlora itself or the Minister's own little village. 'Localism' is part and parcel of the national political *culture*. (In the final 30 years of communist rule, by the way, Vlora had provided 90 per cent of Albania's military and secret service leaders.)

In view of the foregoing, it is clear that establishing 'solid democratic control as provided for in the 1998 Constitution' may require rather more than 'on-going attention'. In fact, even in official briefings, Albanian spokespersons are more forthright than this. They say only that the country has 'implemented *some of the basic features* of a democratic, transparent and civilian-controlled defence planning system' and recognise that '*much more* is needed to be done' (MoD speaker, June 2000). Independent observers use stronger language.

The same holds when one focuses on the 'democratic' dimension proper, looking at legislative supervision. This is perfunctory, as candid Albanian officials acknowledge. They say that Parliament is 'only pretending' to exercise oversight. There are monthly committee meetings; but the legislature generally gives 'rubber-stamp approval' on security-related issues. Again, independent observers are even more dismissive. Thus one critic notes that 'the National Security Strategy was endorsed [January 2000] without any discussion or consensus'. Another says that even specialist committees 'have traditionally not been seriously involved in overseeing the activity of the armed forces' and that most 'reforms and measures ... have been approved without any prior discussion.' A factor here is that the Socialists have had a comfortable majority in the legislature and it has been

'easy' to pass any of the government's programmes. It looks as though this state of affairs will continue following the Socialists' success in the June/July 2001 election. On the other hand Albanian officials also say they enjoy 'good interaction' with the small community of individual experts and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) active in the security area. It is our own experience also that there *is* an active 'security community' in the country but it is very small indeed and not particularly influential.

2.2 Public attitudes

On the wider question of 'public awareness' in the security area – and public attitudes to NATO and NATO membership – we have found no solid quantitative evidence (e.g. up-to-date attitude surveys and public opinion polls). We are told, however, that support for NATO membership is 'extremely high' and, indeed, that the Albanian people are 'convinced' that the country will be invited to negotiate accession at Prague 2002.

The claim of generally positive attitudes is plausible. We know that popular support for membership was high five years ago. A 1996 poll *among young people* found that 90 per cent of respondents were in favour of the country's candidacy. Since then, no prominent Albanian politician or public figure has made any statement seriously critical of NATO (which may explain why there are no up-to-date opinion surveys). That is because NATO has continued to help Albania's rehabilitation, was perceived as the Albanians' ally in the 1998/99 Kosovo crisis and conflict, and appears to be regarded as a constructive player in the holding operation now going on pending final(?) resolution of that province's status (otherwise, presumably, there would be serious dissent over Albania's functioning as a rear area for KFOR). However, attitudes could change: if outside oversight of the Macedonian settlement is perceived as pro-Slav; or if the 'Greater Albania' question comes to the fore again.

2.3 Military education reform

Public awareness of European security issues and a generally supportive public attitude to accession are one facet of readiness for NATO membership. The professional preparedness of the military is another. This takes us into the realm of military education and the reform agenda there.

Military education has undergone one transformation in the last decade and is undergoing another. In the first half of the 1990s, the five communist-era institutions were deliberately shut down for three years (1992-94). Staffs were instructed to change all the curricula, strip out the communist ideology and develop courses more compatible with Western practice. In the meantime, selected personnel were sent to Western schools,

courses, seminars and workshops. Leading host countries were Austria, Germany, Italy and The Netherlands plus, of course, both Turkey and the United States. The remodelled system was put in place with much help from the Germans – who had a liaison officer at the military schools from 1996 – and included, among many other things, reorganisation of both the Military Academy of Ground Forces and the Academy of Defence. However, this system was no sooner up and running than the 1997 crisis and regime change intervened. The Brokaj purge squandered a lot of the investment in overseas training; and the new military leadership chose to review its predecessors' provision.

Where exactly Albania now stands in the post-1997 transformation is a matter on which we find conflicting evidence. There has been further syllabus revision and, as before, Germany has played a leading role in this. It can be assumed, therefore, that curriculum reform has been thorough and orthodox. Regarding institutions, however, officials admit that the top Academy of Defence is 'not working'. Nor is there at present a functioning NCO academy. Moreover, the recently-appointed head of the Training, Education and Doctrine command tells us that he has 'much to change'. Clearly one cannot say *Alles in Ordnung* yet.

In the matter of language training, Albania has reportedly set itself an important goal: that by 2002 every serving officer should have *some* English-language competence and that enough personnel should be sufficiently fluent to function in NATO environments. Instruction is being provided almost exclusively in Albania. Unfortunately, the target is unlikely to be met. On specialist and higher training, because of the inadequacies of the domestic system, Albania is again sending large numbers of personnel abroad for instruction. The problem is that, following their period away, many do not want to return to their military career. According to one source, in 2000 there were 200 officers under training overseas and 'we do not know how many of them will return' said *Mbrojta* (Defence) magazine.

2.4 Defence organisation

In view of earlier argument, in Albania we do not attach too much importance to appearances. This is a country where there is a special resonance to the observation that 'organisation charts show how things would work, if it were not for the personalities involved' (Anon.). That said, there has been a nominal reorganisation of the *structures* for the higher management of Albania's defences: and 'very confusing' it has been, says one top official. On the core matter of the relationship between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the General Staff (GS), in Albania these are now part of the same overall organisation and the GS is formally subordinate to the Minister. However, the Ministry and the Staff remain 'administratively divided'; and they are regularly at odds on such matters as setting policy priorities. There is also virtually no mutual respect between the

two. 'The civilian leaders in the defence ministry play an unfair game with staff nominations, the readiness of the armed forces fell because of politics, and there is corruption in the defence bodies', according to a recent book (Elmaz Heri, *Gjykimi: Kolonelit* (The Colonels' Trial), Tirana 2001, pp. 8-9). Others cite the lack of 'necessary education in the field of security and defence issues' among politicians and are scathing about the 'many teachers, physicians, theatre artists and archaeologists' in both the Democratic and Socialist parties.

Be that as it may, in January 2000 Albania adopted a new force structure plan. Based on approved texts, in the post-communist manner, the government announced that the armed forces shall consist of active, reserve and territorial forces, with a mobilisable strength – including civilians – of around 120,000 (previously 230,000). The active component will number 31,000 (previously 43,000). It will consist of:

Officers	4000
NCOs	4500
Civilians	2500
Enlisted	19000
Reservists	1000
	31000

The line item ‘Reservists’ refers to training ‘slots’: at any one time there will be this number of reservists – including students from the different Academies – serving temporarily with the regular forces.

There is a 10-year implementation plan for the prescribed restructuring. In the first half of its term (2000-2004) any investment is to be directed to improving the troops’ living conditions or facilitating the reorganisation itself. In the second half (2005-2009) the emphasis should shift to equipment acquisition for force modernisation. At least that is the announced timetable. A certain scepticism is in order, however, because the powers-that-be in Tirana have already concluded that a 31,000-strong active force is much larger than can be reasonably manned, equipped, trained and kept ready under expected defence budgets. The January 2000 plan is therefore under review.

The fundamental problem is the lack of a multi-year planning, programming and budgeting process to link defence priorities to resources over time. Albania is ‘working for’ such a system, with American help; but for the time being the government relies on annual methods. Even these are flawed, though, because the GS does planning and what is called programming, while the MoD’s Finance Directorate is responsible for budgeting. Moreover, the perpetually cash-strapped Finance Ministry has recently provided funding for only around 40-60 per cent of the armed forces’ requirements and needs. There are inadequacies in manpower management too. A military informant reports that ‘a comprehensive personnel planning [system] to assess, train and retain a

quality force, including timely retirement, for all rank levels, is not yet in place'; nor does the country have a 'sound planning, posting and promotion policy'. On a positive note, however, Albanian budgeting professionals say that at least they can now ensure budget 'execution in full conformity with the (stipulated) destination of the money' and that there is a functioning 'State Control Organisation' (audit office).

2.5 Assessment

Albania was not visited for the purposes of this inquiry. We did, however, obtain local input from Albania's representatives at NATO and well-informed contacts. This underlies the following summary assessment.

- One cannot say that Albania clearly practises 'democratic-style' *civil-military relations*. Neither its arrangements for structural civilian control of the military nor its broader democratic control mechanisms are up to standard. Given the political culture in the society it may be many years before they are. Legislative oversight appears to be lacking altogether.
- One can say that, at present, *public attitudes* towards NATO membership appear to be positive (or not obviously negative). Evidence is sparse, however, and the supportive opinions may not be robust.
- The country's *military education* system is in the midst of its second transformation in a decade. There are serious gaps in provision and syllabuses. Communist ideology was dumped in the first reconstruction. Given the 1997 experience, we need to know whether the architects of the second have appreciated that professional preparation for a career in the Albanian armed forces of the future should incorporate education in both democratic values and the military virtues as understood elsewhere (e.g. in the mature democracies).
- The higher *defence organisation* in Albania has undergone its own transformation since 1997. On paper, it looks in better shape than before. Only time will tell how the new set-up actually works. As of end-September 2001, decision-making processes remain seriously flawed. An early-2000 move towards an appropriate and affordable force structure for the country is in difficulties. It is hard to muster confidence in the Albanians' ability to revise it satisfactorily, especially since the tension between the professional military and the political leadership is palpable. One consequence is that necessary force modernisation must now be more than half-a-decade distant.

Thus our assessment is that – in the areas we have looked at most closely and, indeed, elsewhere – Albania clearly falls well below the 'serious candidacy' threshold. Moreover, in our judgement, it may be several years before the country reaches this level.

3. Slovakia

Slovakia has actually had two 'discontinuities' in the last decade. The fundamental one occurred in 1993 on the break-up of the Czech and Slovak Republic (formerly Czechoslovakia). The second happened in late 1998 when the Meciar era of ambivalent external relations and authoritarian internal rule finally ended. The political situation has been stable since 1998. However, there is much popular resentment at the Dzurinda government's unfulfilled promises. In foreign policy the government has not honoured its pledge of gaining entry to the European Union (EU) and NATO as a delayed, but special, follow-on to the first three Visegrad accessions. Dissatisfaction also stems from (re-imposed) visa obligations for the EU and Russia. More significantly, though, is the high unemployment rate of around 20 per cent. Even though Dzurinda has managed to keep left and right in his coalition together and to turn the economy around after the 'robbing' years of Meciar, his party – the Democratic Union – can only count on about 10 per cent of the votes today (end September-2001) compared to the 28 per cent it had in 1998.

An important uncertainty surrounding support for NATO membership is the outcome of the autumn 2002 elections and the subsequent forming of a new government. The present coalition can, currently, count on some 25-30 per cent support, Meciar's HZDS on 25-27 per cent and the new party Direction (SMER) – established by former SDL member Ficu – on some 20 per cent. Electoral arithmetic is complex and any coalition seems possible at the time of writing, but the continuation of the present one is unlikely. If the voters remain seriously dissatisfied with the current government and will not make the effort to vote as massively as in 1998, Meciar's hard(er) core and Ficu's SMER – a wild card – will gain ground and a cleavage of Slovakia might (re-)occur. In such circumstances the HZDS might revert to its 'footnote policy': membership as a goal, *but*… . Ficu's supporters are unpredictable, as he is, taking the middle ground on practically every single issue, while most HZDS voters oppose NATO membership explicitly. A possible, but at present very remote, danger is that one of the parties might urge a referendum on NATO membership. If someone would, the record of the seven previous plebiscites is devastating. None has met the validity requirement of a 50 per cent turn-out. Even if that threshold were met, the number of votes against NATO membership might surpass those in favour.

Be that as it may the political parties remain nominally keen to join NATO. Even the HZDS (Meciar's Movement of a Democratic Slovakia) voted in favour of the new *Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic*, adopted on 27 March 2001, in which NATO membership as a goal is asserted repeatedly (for the first time in such a document). This must be considered an important signal from the HZDS. Only SNS, the ultra-nationalist Slovak Nationalist Party, remains opposed, although spokesman Sitek – a former Minister of Defence – has moved towards the 'Western defence option' by publicly

saying that he supports a Slovak contribution to a European Defence Force. (In private, he has gone further, saying that he would support Slovak entry in NATO, but could not admit it in public.) Thus, there is overwhelming support at the political level. This is of crucial importance for civil-military relations in general, and for the impact of civilian oversight and guidance in the run-up to the 2002 elections and the Prague summit. The MoFA and MoD are working on the assumption that membership is the only policy course to follow. They know they have the support of the governing elites, while other party elites are moving toward support. Their core task, of course, is to persuade NATO's 19 member states that the Slovak Republic is indeed 'ready' for accession. Providing reassurance that the country practices 'democratic-style' civil-military relations is part of that job.

3.1 Civil-military relations

Democratic-style government was emphatically not the Meciar method, but the constitutional and legal provisions stood the test. The position and power of the President of the Slovak Republic have been defined in Chapter VI (*Executive Powers*) of the 1992 Constitution together with those of the government (as the executive). The President is the supreme commander of the armed forces and he is entitled to declare the state of war, following the advice of either the government or parliament. In these areas, the executive power of the President was limited by constitutional law in 1999, while the Constitutional Court has clarified ambiguities in some articles of the Constitution, e.g. as to the competence of the President and the Prime Minister. Similarly, the Constitutional Court has solved some differences of interpretation about the roles of parliament and parliamentary bodies, thereby strengthening the model of a parliamentary democracy. Since 1993, there have been no conflicts between the President and Parliament, but frictions between him and the Prime Minister or ministries have occurred, e.g. the presidential right to refuse the nomination of a cabinet member or the chief of the secret service. There has been some tension between the Presidential Office and MoFA lately, as to the competence of formally presenting Slovak foreign policy. However, these frictions have not necessitated a Constitutional Court ruling.

Parliament exercises its oversight of the armed forces mainly through the Council of Defence and Security. It exercises budget authority, and the main security and defence documents – like the *Security Strategy* – must be approved by its plenary. During Meciar's rule, the MoD was led by a representative of the Slovak National Party. This meant that parliament was minimally informed and that there was little to be informed about. Approval of the (meagre) documents was a rubber-stamp exercise and 'debate' was sometimes not even held in public. Most importantly, the MoD approach to security policy was still rooted in Cold War, or conventional, military thinking. Security was

defined in terms of military threats. Slovakia was still caught somewhere between NATO and a militarily strong Russian Federation whose vital interests should be respected. In fact, the national concern was not so much *security*, but a rather narrowly defined *defence* problem. Defence and security were almost synonyms, and, since the military professionals remained the predominant policy experts, military-operational considerations tended to be elevated to the status of 'state' concern. Executive and parliamentary oversight of the General Staff (GS) and the services was therefore ineffective and lacked direction. Military planners were left free to decide priorities. As a consequence, no significant measures were taken, no realistic planning and budgeting was done and the run-down of the armed forces was slow and uneven, leaving the older, high-ranking officers untouched. The lack of policy direction, political quarrels, reduced defence budgets, deteriorating socio-economic living conditions – and the contending views on NATO membership – all contributed to dividing the military and (to a certain degree) to politicisation of the military. The existence of different views and groups in the officer corps, and attempts to draw the military into the various political camps, created tensions within the MoD and hampered the professionalisation of the new defence organisation. The absence of reform was brought about by the difficult circumstances imposed upon the military, as well. The most trusted state institution – together with the Catholic church – suffered from political games as much as from its own reluctance to rationalise the defence structures.

Things have changed for the better since 1998, and in a really big way since Jozef Stank became Minister of Defence. There is now clear policy direction; and parliament is well-informed and actively involved in policy formation developed in logical sequences. These points will bear elaboration. In the first place, the present government is determined to act decisively and move to NATO. Under its predecessor, the MoD was headed by the nationalist Sitek, a situation far from conducive to an international outlook, much less a NATO orientation. The military were divided themselves as to what direction to take and how best to plan. Dissenting views were risky and fear for one's career impeded initiatives and even seriously restrained the freedom to venture a view. At the same time, the 'old time boys network' remained largely in place, including less competent – often older – officers at relatively high positions in planning and policy. The GS was able to keep a high profile and to largely maintain its unchallenged role in planning and personnel management. Its headquarters in Trençin – more than 100 kilometres from Bratislava – were not integrated at all in the structure of the defence organisation. The GS has now been brought to the premises of the MoD in Bratislava and is being integrated in the MoD structure.

In the second place, the changes made by the post-1998 government are clearly reflected in *Security Strategy*, a text adopted by the National Council (parliament) in March 2001 with 104 votes (out of 150). Briefly summarised, this excellent, modern-styled and analytically comprehensive document foreshadows an all-out effort on the part

of the political leadership to integrate successfully and meaningfully into NATO while recognising very realistically the difficulties that have to be overcome and the severely limited financial resources available for adjusting and improving the armed forces. The document represents a sea-change in thinking and goes far beyond traditional views on security in terms of military threats. It distinguishes between 'vital' and 'important' interests and ranks the risks to be accepted accordingly. *Security Strategy* fully recognises the importance of a sound *Ostpolitik* and the crucial role of diplomacy in security policy and in shaping a stable Europe.

The third significant development in this sequence is that *Security Strategy* has been followed up by the more detailed and concrete *Defence Strategy* and *Military Strategy*. These were published in the first half of 2001 and discussed with the Council of Defence and Security in parliament. The three documents form the basis for *Slovak Armed Forces 2010,* a plan to be sent to parliament in October 2001 following more or less informal discussion between the MoD and the Council until formal submission. *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* will contain more detailed plans than the previous documents, but it will not be different in content. The prospectus is set to take effect at once; and that is why the MoD has sought consent in the Council during the actual process of decision-making for long-term, realistic and thoughtful defence planning. National consensus is considered crucial (a) for a credible and sustained military commitment to NATO as well as (b) for a robust foundation of the will and determination to implement the – painful and unpopular – measures envisaged. The logical sequence of studies and steps in the decision-making process should commit the political forces, whatever the outcome of the next elections will be. The involvement of the legislature is a remarkable accomplishment and should help to erase the ignorance of a number of parliamentarians. Special briefings for those who are less familiar with defence matters, including for the rising political star, Ficu, have been held and, reportedly, have been helpful in broadening and deepening support for the current plans and NATO accession.

The activity of the first months of 2001 took place largely outside the public eye and received little attention in the media. In part, this was due to the circumstances; it can also be partly ascribed to the general lack of knowledge about security and defence. Expertise is very much limited to the professionals working in the ministries. A community of security specialists outside the government hardly exists. The experts from NGOs and academic institutions by and large are pro-NATO, but none has really developed options for defence policy. There is a lack of well-informed debate among these analysts, while coverage in the media is often tainted by the party orientation of the journalists. Thus, discussion and decision-making within official channels are to a great extent disconnected from debate on security and defence outside which has remained diffuse. The state of the debate among the public-at-large corresponds – not surprisingly – with that among the 'security community'. It has been incidental and spasmodic, having neither impact on public opinion nor influence on the decision-makers. If this

could be called a 'democratic deficit', the reason for it lies mainly in the configuration and attitudes of the national elites who make the strategic decisions. Political power in Slovakia is highly concentrated in the hands of the politicians and change depends more on elites than on popular participation in politics.

3.2 Public attitudes

Fewer than 50 per cent of the Slovak population supports the drive for NATO membership (mid-2001). This has prompted a 'public awareness campaign' which was also urged by NATO. It rests in the hands of an interdepartmental committee, chaired by the Head of the Policy and Planning Department of MoFA. Polls are being conducted – by IVO, the Public Information Institute – as informational input for the strategy. NGOs and experts are asked to participate in the campaign. Officials and parliamentarians are on the road to get the message out. TV debates are being held.

There are at least two caveats to be entered about this intensive and costly effort. One is the danger of the counterproductive image of a propaganda campaign, using an elite group of speakers. The other is related to this style and concerns the likely response of the audience to 'being told from above' what to think. Information leaflets are easily perceived as an attempt to brainwash society. The hierarchical relations in society reminiscent of Hungarian rule still impact on the fragmented, class-conscious groups in society. Ordinary people maintain a deep mistrust towards those 'above' them: politicians, intellectuals, and bureaucrats alike. Whatever these say is suspect. Moreover, the Cold War image of NATO persists, especially since the Organisation is not seen as a constructive element in the new Europe (because of the Kosovo-related bombing of Serbia, for example). Thus the 'public awareness campaign' should not be seen as a short-term endeavour. A change of hearts and minds in Slovakia regarding NATO may be a matter of a generation.

This has to be viewed against the background of the Slovaks having a strong sense of self-esteem and a perception of being important in the international arena (or, perhaps, a strong desire to be seen as such). Independence and sovereignty, finally gained in 1993, had been preceded by a long history of subservience to the Hungarians and Czechs. The present mood is that the new Slovakia should defer to no-one, least of all immediate neighbours. A graphic expression of this sentiment is that 80 per cent of Slovaks oppose giving official status to the Hungarian minority's native language. Also many attributed Slovakia's failure to gain 'first wave' accession to NATO not to their government's non-compliance with democratic norms but to Western indifference.

This is not to say that the Slovaks look eastward. Fewer than 7 per cent want to have (stronger) ties with Russia. But it is not for the West – or NATO – to tell the Slovaks what is good for them; and nationalist leaders find fertile ground when they

allude to the unacceptability of the West – or anyone else – telling Slovakia what to do. As noted earlier, the policy elites follow the logic of Slovakian interests in NATO, both as an independent security value and as a first symbolic, but essential, step towards the major Western institutions. By the same token, the 'public awareness campaign' appears to alleviate criticism and to help fostering a popular majority in favour of NATO membership. At the same time, there remains a certain volatility in *societal* perceptions and preferences. To return to the 2002 election theme, the risks are high in an ideological and personality-driven campaign. In that sense, Meciar remains the most destabilising political factor in a Slovakia that is undoubtedly moving to the West, filling up, in a natural way, the empty quarter of the Visegrad region. Geopolitical, politico-economic, and social-humanitarian logic will eventually prevail, but can be stalled by figures like Meciar and by ardent nationalists, thus triggering a negative verdict on the Slovak (political) preparedness for NATO membership. Meciar's reign has not been forgotten.

3.3 Military education

Military education is regarded in Slovakia, as elsewhere, as a sacred domain of the professional soldier, a crucial instrument to build *esprit de corps* and to establish a professional group identity. Moreover, while the professional military are temperamentally inclined to emphasise operational and technical training, the legacy of the Soviet system has made things worse: there is a clear overemphasis on operational art and combat management (taking 75 per cent of the time, including physical training, at Slovakia's main facilities). Social sciences, international relations or security studies appear in only a relative small proportion of courses (some 4-5 per cent of hours), although attention to leadership and management is improving. Where instructors exist, attention is also paid to military sociology and politics. Unfortunately, few tutors are available and no use is made of civil educational institutions.

Language training has been enormously intensified, however, in particular after strong insistence from NATO in the MAP exercise. Many of Slovakia's more senior officers still have problems to understand and speak English, but the lower ranks have improved their skills greatly. The young cadets are the most promising category; among them are English speakers of outstanding quality. Other reforms will be necessary in order to make Slovak officers 'speak' a new language which actually reflects a new mind-set. Most importantly, successful implementation of the key policy documents will require a changed approach and a prompt introduction of appropriate courses at the Military Academies in Liptovsky Mikulas (army and air force) and Kosice (air force). Courses should teach modern ways of planning, awareness of political-economic priorities and affordability, NATO's procedures, civil-military relations, and a thorough knowledge of history and current international (European) relations. Up until now, these

subjects have been neglected and are only part of future reform as set out in *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*.

Many officers have been trained abroad and this is likely to continue. However, upon return to Slovakia these officers have not always been used in an optimal way. On the contrary, many have been assigned to duties unrelated to their foreign training and experience or even sidelined and told to wait for their pension. Reportedly, State Secretary Pivarci had to intervene personally in order to assign the present Chief of the Air Force after the latter's return from the US Air Force Academy rather than seeing him waiting to be retired. Notwithstanding the fact that most senior officers in key posts of the MoD and GS *at this moment* have enjoyed high-level (foreign) training, human resource management has been hostage to quarrels between various departments at the MoD and between them and the GS. The staff has been able to dominate educational policy-making, impeding change. The military academies and their staff were not or were insufficiently consulted and their decisions often overruled. Moreover, the quality of teachers has raised questions and still does. A sustained effort to train the trainers would be helpful and management could eradicate the present system of arbitrary assignments of sometimes good, even excellent, candidates and at other times unqualified persons. Even though the political interference of the past has been officially denounced, it remains to be seen how well the 1999 *Concept* of military education has been introduced and brought into practice by competent faculty and staff at the academies. There are not enough officers with training in the West who could be used to share their knowledge for courses on civil-military relations and other politically essential subjects; and, as noted, if they are available, they might not be used in the right, efficient way. In any case, the overloaded faculty staffs may have to be reduced along with the rest in order to change high staff: student ratios.

Under *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*, military education will be subject to significant reform and brought in line with career planning. This whole area of responsibility is under a DG for Social and Personnel Management, currently Dr. Kisova. The GS is considered to be the ‘consumer’ or ‘customer’. However, the ‘customer’ acts in concert with the two services; the army and the air force. Neither one wants to give up its own military academy. Although *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* foresees co-location of the two academies, each service wants to maintain the autonomy it enjoys in Liptovsky Mikulas and Kosice respectively. So, the objective to create one National Defence University has already been disputed and the co-location of the services’ education centres is likely to be reconsidered in 2004/2005. Until then, the two academies will share three faculties divided over both locations: the faculties of Management of the Army, Management of the Air Force, Security and Defence. The curriculum is said to be modelled according to NATO educational standards and civilians are eligible to enter the academies. Since the immediate need is for competent, educated senior officers, the two academies will also provide courses for mid-level education. The emphasis in these courses is put on the

requirements of the new functions the officers are going to take up. However, it remains unclear who will be in charge of this. As with the high-level provision, the 'authority' to organise and supervise the education is 'not yet decided'. Obviously, a major problem in putting together a modern, reformed curriculum for mid-level and high-level education will be to find the right instructors and to break the vicious circle of the replacement of old trainers by still older ones.

In order to attract young officers and NCOs, MoD will offer to graduates – from universities and high schools, respectively – a one-year course of military training before entering the ranks. The training at the military academy will be considered as a Masters Programme for university graduates; recruits from high school and one-year military training will be NCOs eligible for the rank of officer. Joining the armed forces will no longer be a matter of a life-long career, but will be opened up for contracts of varying duration. During the fulfilment of the contract, promotion will be based on performance evaluation; for career officers, the 'up-or-go' criterion will apply. It must be noted that the GS remains responsible for the selection of officers to be promoted. The number of high-ranking officers will be fixed at a much lower level than the present, thus allowing younger, better-educated officers to pursue their career rather than being blocked by the older generation. High-ranking officers will be subjected to an inquiry regarding (a) their age, (b) evaluation of performance, and (c) correspondence between their present rank and function. (There are at present numerous colonels taking functional positions of a captain and even lieutenant.) Budgetary provisions are being made to support this policy of involuntary retirement and, at the same time, attracting young officers and NCOs. For example, a policy for required housing facilities, including the financing of either the mortgage or part of the rent, is being designed.

3.4 Defence organisation

Both at the MoFA and MoD, all our interlocutors see it as the main challenge to put the *Security Strategy* now into reality, despite likely opposition and, even more compelling, a shortage of capable, reform-minded and determined people throughout the defence organisation. The first steps at the political level have been successfully taken; and with great determination. The Party of the Democratic Left (SLD) bypassed its best qualified candidate, Tuchyna, after doubts expressed within the coalition about his status as a 'civilian'. (Tuchyna had been Chief of the General Staff before becoming an MP.) The present minister, Stank, appointed in December 2000, has shown resolution in establishing civilian leadership. He has appointed two civilian State Secretaries, one of them a former Director-General for NATO Integration at the MoFA. The nomination of a non-party man met opposition from the coalition parties, but Stank insisted on having an expert running the negotiations with NATO. Similar high-level appointments have been

made elsewhere at the Director-General level, for Plans and Policy and for International Relations, respectively. The DG for International Affairs was recalled from London where he was Ambassador. Some new faces are already seen at the level of Director too.

The first reorganisation in early 2001 will have to be followed by others. Even though the GS has now moved from Trençin to the compounds of the MoD in Bratislava, one cannot conclude yet that it has been fully integrated in the ministry. A lack of a clear division of responsibilities will undoubtedly lead to duplication of work with the DGs (in particular the DG for Plans and Policy) and, worse, to continuing rivalry and struggles over competence involving State Secretary Pivarci (a life-long professional officer, yet the nominee of the Christian Democratic Party). But Stank has proved to be a 'tough minister'. He has given Pivarci full responsibility as his first deputy with ministerial authority during his absence. In the preparation of the *Military Strategy*, the State Secretary held the chair and, significantly, the Chief of the General Staff was subordinated to him. The officers at the working level from both the DG Plans and Policy and the GS are selected with great care and they actually form a team of capable and 'reform-minded' colleagues. Another sensitive area – personnel policy and education management – has been entrusted to another civilian, Dr Kisova. In general, a 'critical mass' of competent and willing office-holders is clearly emerging and the political leadership seems determined to use this asset for change, while removing superfluous and/or incompetent personnel. Many officers already have been discharged.

Further reorganisation will involve cuts in the strength of departments as well as personnel changes. Both measures will be problematic. First, heads of departments will have to choose for quality rather than rank. Heads of departments already conduct six-month evaluations and – in case of incompetence – replace the serving officer. Many of the 'old generation' of military officers are likely to fail the test. Younger, better educated majors and lieutenant-colonels are waiting to take over from many of the extravagant numbers of over 100 colonels and hundreds of lieutenant-colonels. Second, this policy – together with the need to cut back on staff – will create social problems. When less capable personnel are transferred, the question comes up where to put them. The option of pensioning is an expensive one. However, the political leadership is firm on rundown and strengthening competence. Once *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* is adopted by parliament in October 2001, Stank intends to complete the reduction of no less than 30 per cent of the MoD and GS personnel. Budgetary room has been created for the financial consequences. Resistance in the higher echelons of the military will be fierce. Over the years they have been successful in resisting 'attacks' on their positions, while continuing to plan unrealistically and spend unwisely. Job cuts in the defence organisation outside Bratislava – both in the military academies and the barracks – are bound to follow action in the capital.

The main challenge of implementing the *Security Strategy* will be reorganisation at all levels to make sure that the policy changes have an impact. In this respect, the two

documents to support the *Security Strategy* are *Defence Strategy* (approved by the government in February 2001) and *Military Strategy* (approved in May 2001). The first was more or less a repetition of the *Security Strategy.* The second, as already noted, was drafted under the personal leadership of the State Secretary. *Military Strategy* is considered of key importance in that its aim is to translate the risks and threats identified in the *Security Strategy* into an effective and credible defence policy, culminating in *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*. Several Western officers, serving as advisers to the MoD, are being consulted in this strategic review process. A main concern – at least identified by civil servants at MoFA – is whether this exercise actually leads to a change in strategic thinking. For the first time, the Slovak Republic can shape its own defence effort, independently. This is a challenge for everybody. That is why the MoD leadership has done its utmost to involve the parties and the political establishment in the process leading to *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*: to show them that money is to be well spent and that planning will be used to maximise output. Prioritisation and an overhaul of the flawed planning system are crucial. Output-oriented thinking must take over the minds of GS officers accustomed to an input-oriented approach. This is generally seen as a long learning process.

Although time is pressing, Stank has refused to hurry the preparation of S*lovak Armed Forces 2010*. Only quality, he argues, can convince (a) the domestic audience to spend on defence and (b) NATO to seriously consider Slovak membership. Accordingly, Slovakia asks for time to implement the *Military Strategy* and will urge NATO to assess its candidacy on the basis of progress made along the road to 2010. Slovakia is not 'ready' right now, but it is on the right course. ("Many European allies are not quite ready either," is what one hears sometimes in Bratislava.)

All the same, MoD has worked hard to complete *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* in order to meet its October 2001 deadline. The political leadership established groups of combined planners from the GS and DGs of the MoD. The experts were divided in four teams: (1) Force requirements; (2) Personnel and Leader Development; (3) Training Issues and Doctrine; and (4) Logistics. A fifth team was responsible for integration of their work. A Steering Committee – consisting of the political leaders, the Chief of the General Staff and the DGs – met the teams every month to evaluate work-in-progress. Thus, leadership and competence were combined in a relatively small group, avoiding bureaucratic inertia and possible obstruction. The objective is "to establish, by 2010, an effective but affordable Armed Force organised and equipped to comply with the *Military Strategy*, modernised to be interoperable with NATO military organisations, and supported by effective and efficient supporting activities."

Of paramount importance is the fact that *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* fully recognises the prioritisation and objectives laid down in *Military Strategy*. That document states the limitations and the basic approach relevant to organising the armed forces for national defence and NATO responsibilities. Slovakia must accept 'well-reasoned risks in

the current environment of relative peace and stability in order to fund and build the *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*, a thoroughly professional and modern force for the future.' The force structure must be affordable and capable of meeting known and emerging threats as a member of NATO. Funds must be allocated to mission-oriented plans and the commanders of mission-oriented units must be held accountable. The units with the highest state of readiness and performance will receive priority in the allocation of resources and training assets. Decentralised, individual leadership is important, but all units and their commanders must understand that those (priority) units with the highest readiness postures will be maintained at that level of readiness. 'Tiered readiness' is seen as the most efficient means to ensure the highest performance given the limited resources available. Slovakia will have to accept, at least for the time being, that some risks must be taken as to missions and units that have been assigned a lower priority. Funding across-the-board and stretching limited resources over too many 'paper units' belong to the past. A fundamental choice has also been made as regards the emphasis to be placed on the investment in human capacity-building in relation to investment in materiel and infrastructure. The transition to a more professional, western-style personnel structure is seen as the most critical component of the modernisation of the armed forces, its highly motivated, well-trained, educated and disciplined personnel as the most significant resource and asset. This emphasis will be maintained through all stages of the reform.

Further, the planners say they will take into account some of the prescriptions put forward in the MAP exchanges with NATO, like language training and the implementation of the 'public awareness campaign'. Moreover, priority in the near term will be placed on NATO interoperability and compatibility. Slovakia will also strengthen its capacity to offer Host-Nation Support. Materiel resources will be tailored to the needs of (a) territorial defence and (b) support for potential NATO operations. Existing inventories will be reviewed for consolidation, reduction, elimination and disposal. Similarly, mobilisation stocks will be reduced to provide savings to fund higher-priority programmes. Resources for improving materiel readiness will increase gradually over time, to reach the required level by the middle years of the planning period. Thus, some tough choices have been made and, in spite of significant annual increases of the defence budget since 1998 and those foreseen up to 2010, the plans show a welcome sense of reality. One manifestation is the decision to forgo early modernisation and postpone significant acquisitions until the second planning period. Even then, funding for replacing (Warsaw Pact) equipment will not be at the expense of provision for human resources and (existing) materiel readiness.

Since independence, most of Slovakia's defence money has been allotted to personnel and operating costs. In 2000, only 2.3 per cent of the budget was spent on procurement. For 2001, the proportion is 10.8 per cent, to provide cash for goals adopted under MAP and modernisation of rapid reaction forces that can be assigned to international missions. *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* sets a very ambitious, overall

investment objective of no less than 25 per cent of the budgets up to 2010. Reduction of personnel continues, from 45,000 in 1999 to 30,000 in 2002, while the army's force structure is realistic (now). The air force, however, wants to buy a new subsonic combat aircraft, but no decision on either the purchase or its modalities has been made. The 50-60 fighters would cost some 3-4 times the entire annual defence budget and there is no way their acquisition can be realised within current projections. In this respect, State Secretary for Planning and Management Pivarci has clearly indicated that any purchase should be at least fully offset. There will be no additional money made available from the Slovak government. For the time being, the government has postponed a decision at least until a new concept for restructuring the air force has been developed in the *Armed Forces 2010*. This is probably going to be a long-term issue and is, under the present circumstances, almost a non-issue. Probably, the decision will be made only after Slovakia's entry into NATO. Recently, a report of General Martin, NATO's commander AIRNORTH, argued for the procurement of 18 multi-role aircraft to replace the current mix of obsolete aircraft. In this case as well, all depends on the expenditure possibilities.

The issue of modernisation illustrates the difficulty Slovakia faces in making choices and setting priorities. However, the present leadership of MoD appears to respect the most critical principle stated in *Defence Strategy*, namely proportionality or affordability. Acceptable risks must be taken in implementing the incremental approach to build a force that is sustainable under economic constraints, now and in the future. Threats that are not to be met by adequate forces constitute a risk that Slovakia is willing to take.

3.5 Assessment

After years of stagnation in foreign policy towards the west under the Meciar government, the present coalition launched a very determined policy regarding NATO membership, which is widely supported in parliament and by political elites. The challenge to be invited to join NATO at the Prague Summit is taken extremely seriously at all levels of government and underlined by clear political signals as well as action. Feedback from NATO in the MAP process has been helpful and followed by concrete measures to correct shortcomings.

- Changes in democratic-style *civil-military relations* compared to the previous government are most significant in the political sphere, particularly the favourable climate which allows pro-active guidance to the responsible ministries. There is broad political support for the *Security Strategy* – a comprehensive and clear document – and the military enjoy a very high level of trust among the population. Uncertainty exists, however, about the continuation of this favourable political 'window of opportunity' – seized by this coalition to prepare the way to Brussels – as regards the

election outcome in 2002. The aim, therefore, is to reach a 'point of no return' in the domestic political debate. In that respect, members of the parliamentary defence committee have been fully involved in work on *Slovak Armed Forces 2010* (to be completed in October 2001).

- At the same time, *public attitudes* to NATO are mixed and fewer than 50 per cent of Slovakia's population are in favour of membership. A 'public awareness campaign' has been launched, but its short-term success is not guaranteed. The Slovak population is sensitive to 'propaganda' and being told what to think (for deep-rooted cultural and historic reasons). Much will depend on whether or not NATO accession is going to be a (disputed) 2002 election issue.
- *Military education* reform is a long-term effort and little has been accomplished so far. Communication between Bratislava and the military academies has been insufficient and confusing. There is no guidance. Moreover, most available teachers are from the older generation. They lack insights and experience regarding the requirements for post-Cold War officers. The current curriculum strongly reflects the preparation of the Soviet-style operational soldier. Under current plans military education will be subject to significant reform and brought under the supervision of MoD. Moreover, the education capacity will be adjusted to the quantitative need and integrated in a centrally-directed career and promotion process.
- At this juncture, the role of the government in orchestrating reform of the *defence organisation* is of paramount importance. Since the appointment of minister Stank, civil control has been imposed with determination. Moreover, good substantive work and crucial decisions for reorganising the department are in rapid and, so it appears, sustained progress. At the working level competent officers from the MoD structure and GS are put together in teams while the priorities have been set and their pursuit is being closely watched by the political leadership of MoD. The *Military Strategy*, envisaged as the most concrete 'marching order' for the planners and the professional military, has been approved by the government. It forms the basis for the *Slovak Armed Forces 2010*. The new political team at the ministry has also (wisely) decided not to hurry at the expense of the quality of the decisions, witness the time taken for consideration of acquisition plans (e.g. the follow-on fighter aircraft). The emphasis is put on human resources and training plus solidifying the financial resources for proper, balanced defence expenditures in the future, including procurement after 2003.

In the overloaded process of change taking place, there is little attention paid to the potential contribution to future EU-led operations. Basically, the MoFA prefers to stay out of the 'debate' in Brussels, but says the country is ready to pledge the same forces to the EU catalogue as it assigns to NATO.

Slovakia was already well on its way to political stability and democratic-style governance when it belatedly took up the challenge of defence reform. It has made great

progress in a very short time in preparing the ground for a sustainable military contribution to NATO. What has been accomplished augurs well for the future. At the same time it has to be said that to date we have seen only promissory notes.

4. Concluding remarks

The contrast between the two ‘discontinuity’ cases in our categorisation could hardly be more stark. Albania does not reach our ‘serious candidacy’ threshold for NATO membership and we think it will be some time before the country does. Slovakia was a serious candidate as long ago as 1996/97 but then effectively disqualified itself. Now it is very much back in the running; and by late 2002 the country could be ‘ready’ for accession at least in the areas we have examined. If a good start can be made in 2001/2002 on fulfilling the promise of present programming, it will be 'ready' (in our judgement).

VII. THE LARGE 'LEGACY' STATES: BULGARIA AND ROMANIA

1. Introduction

The two remaining MAP-states – Bulgaria and Romania – stand apart from the other 'second wave' accession candidates because they are larger countries than the rest in terms of population and, also, the size of their armed forces. They stand apart also because each entered its post-totalitarian period with an extremely burdensome legacy: a bloated military establishment and surplus military-industrial capacity, a force structure geared to robust territorial defence plus some capacity for high-intensity manoeuvre warfare, and a high command accustomed to having its own way without civilian interference (once party and presidential guidelines had been laid down). Each also had a complex web of intelligence and security services answerable to who knows whom. It is these countries, therefore, that have had to pay most attention to 'the three r's' – reduction, rationalisation and restructuring – in relation to their defence organisations. It is in these countries also that the long-privileged professionals have often shown – and here and there still do show – the greatest resistance to imposition of democratic control of the military and other 'armed structures of the state'.

On the face of it, though, the differences between the pair – especially in relation to their European vocation – are at least as striking as the similarities. Regarding NATO membership, for instance, Bulgaria has significantly strengthened its claim to consideration in the last three or four years – for many reasons, soon to be enumerated – although the momentum of reform may have faltered in the aftermath of the mid-2001 election. Romania clearly did not advance its claim through the later 1990s, for many reasons, but has lately begun to do so. At the 1997 Madrid Summit Romania's candidacy had strong support, Bulgaria's very little. At the 1999 Washington Summit, if invitations to negotiate 'second wave' accession had been on the agenda, the two countries had more or less equal chances of being nominated. At Prague 2002, unless unforeseen circumstances arise, Bulgaria could be well supported in its bid for an invitation to entry (as it should be, largely on account of the constructive role the country has played in the South-East European sub-region since the mid-1990s). Romania may well be among the less well-supported candidates, if *proven* preparedness for entry is what counts; but the country might find favour if *promised* military transformation is taken into consideration.

Whatever the odds, one thing this Chapter shows clearly. The 'legacy' states are worth the most serious consideration. Moreover, we note that, if they do not get this, there is a danger of far-reaching political repercussions (especially, perhaps, in Romania).

2. Bulgaria

In the build-up to the Washington Summit, the Bulgarians pushed their candidacy with great vigour and some imagination. In return they received polite commendation for the 'progress made …' since Madrid 1997, but that was all. Since Washington, both domestic and international developments have served to strengthen their country's claim to serious consideration in Prague.

Generally speaking, *domestic* factors now count in Bulgaria's favour. The macro-economy has been stabilised, thanks largely to a successful Currency Board arrangement. Structural economic reform, including privatisation, has acquired a momentum it previously lacked. The internal political scene is less volatile than hitherto. This is true despite the rapid rise to prominence of the Simeon II Movement in the months leading up to the June 2001 parliamentary election and the 'royalists' remarkable success at the ballot-box. The appeal of the Movement's candidates was to popular dissatisfaction with the 'old politics' of established parties rather than to revolutionary fervour. Their electoral success was attributable to protest at the pain of the defeated Kostov government's reforms rather than rejection of that administration's priorities. In fact, so far as security issues are concerned – including the quest for NATO (and EU) membership – the new Simeon-led government has taken up where the Kostov-led team left off.

This makes sense because, in the *international* arena, Bulgaria has won considerable goodwill in recent years. It was a staunch supporter of NATO throughout the 1999 Kosovo conflict. It has been a good neighbour to Macedonia lately. Most important, the country has played a consistently constructive role in the international security politics of South-East Europe generally. It pioneered, and has since shown solid commitment to, the Southeast European Defence Ministerial (SEDM) process. The same applies to the Multinational Peace Force South-East Europe venture (MPFSEE/SEEBRIG), headquartered in Plovdiv. It has also supported the moves – reflected in an April 2001 agreement – to create a Black Sea Naval Task Force (BLACKSEAFOR). In addition, the country is involved in several activities under the aegis of the Stability Pact and has been responsible for some initiatives of its own in that context.

No less significant, Bulgaria's own defence transformation is now underway. Its basis is the Kostov administration's generally well-conceived *Plan 2004* (now in the final stages of a revision begun by Kostov's team and continued by their successors). This prescribes force reductions and restructuring in the short term; but foresees funds for force modernisation after 2007. The blueprint came in for some criticism in the early months of 2001, from both NATO and domestic constituencies, but the reformers' resolution did not waver. They confronted their (generally conservative) home-based

challengers and saw most of them off. They responded to their NATO critics by undertaking to review the original policy prospectus (a process already well advanced before the June ballot and continued since).

This does not mean that Bulgaria's NATO candidacy is an open-and-shut case. According to the European Commission – looking at two areas which also feature among NATO's pre-conditions for entry – the country does not have a fully-functioning market economy yet, nor are its democratic credentials as good as they could be. In NATO's view, though, Bulgaria *is* now a 'law-governed democratic state' but there are many military inadequacies to address. Early in 2001, (then) Defence Minister Boyko Noev said that 'it will be very difficult to dismiss the Bulgarian Army as unfit for NATO' at Prague 2002; but that is not what they think in Brussels and Mons. Nor for that matter is it the opinion of some knowledgeable domestic commentators.

In fact, Bulgaria's is a curious case. For a number of MAP-states – the Baltics spring to mind – one can imagine a situation in Prague where satisfactory 'scores' against the detailed eligibility criteria are offset by caution regarding the catch-all condition: the resultant decision would be *rejection* on the grounds that admission 'at this time' *would not* contribute positively to Euro-Atlantic 'security and stability'. So far as Bulgaria is concerned the opposite may be true. One can imagine less than satisfactory marks on several specific tests being offset by a member-states' judgement-call in favour of *acceptance* because, despite failings, the country's admission *would* enhance 'security and stability', especially in South-Eastern Europe.

2.1 Civil-military relations

There are four elements in 'the Carnovale-Simon test' for 'democratic-style civil-military relations' (set out in Chapter II): constitutional clarity about lines of authority, civilian control of the armed forces, democratic control of the defence organisation (essentially effective legislative oversight) and popular confidence in the subordination and accountability of the military.

Constitutional clarity is not an issue in Bulgaria. The responsibilities of the President vis-à-vis the Prime Minister, and the executive branch of government generally, are unambiguously determined and legally underpinned. So too are their respective powers. A strong President might, in certain circumstances, trespass on the territory of a weak Premier, and vice versa; but that is just about the worst one can imagine. (There is certainly nothing like the 'two executives' problem which afflicts Romania – and, of course, France.)

Bulgaria practises *civilian* control. It has a civilian defence minister (and deputy ministers); and civilian officials as well as uniformed officers work side-by-side in the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The top military figure – the Chief of the General Staff –

heads the General Staff (GS) which, through him, is answerable to the Defence Minister. As in many other MAP-states, there are tensions in MoD-GS relations. The two do not always speak with one voice. There are bureaucratic 'turf battles' from time to time (though fewer than there used to be). However, this does not alter the fact that the military are clearly subordinate to the civil power.

Bulgaria professes to have the machinery for *democratic* control in place as well. In terms of constitutional form and legal arrangements it has. Whether 'control' is effectively exercised is a more open question. For instance, there is appropriate formal provision for legislative oversight of defence affairs. The National Assembly is not, however, a particularly diligent overseer. In-depth discussion on defence matters is limited to scrutiny of an abbreviated budget and specific issues arising in the armed forces (typically raised during parliamentary Question Time each Friday). There is an active all-party Parliamentary Committee which keeps its eye on the MoD. But this is a watchdog whose bark is worse than its bite. (We note, though, that new Chairman Stanimir Ilchev shows signs of being more energetic than his predecessors, especially in keeping NATO membership preparations under review.)

Over the years, elected representatives in Bulgaria have found it hard to keep the security sector under really close surveillance anyway, because the authorities' commitment to domestic transparency has been less than wholehearted. Recent governments have not been held accountable *in detail* for either their actions (policy accountability) or their spending (financial accountability) because they have not routinely published *details*. Thus a long-promised Defence White Paper has yet to appear in print, though there were consultations on the content of such a policy statement in late 2000 and early 2001 (a series of Roundtables, reports of which were posted on the MoD's website) and openness to representations was something of a hallmark of the Kostov administration (1997-2001). This caution about publishing facts and figures – especially figures – is expected to recede as time goes by, not least because Sofia is leading a campaign to promote international transparency in defence budgets and budgeting among all South-East European states.

Making up for official reticence, to some degree, there *is* an extensive wider 'security community' in the country. In fact there are a lot of NGOs active in the security area. To be sure, many are an individual, business cards and notepaper. A few, though, do substantial work. For example, the rationale and main features of Bulgaria's post-1998 defence reshaping were first set out in an NGO publication, written by analysts Velizar Shalamanov and Todor Tagarev (who went on to be, respectively, Deputy Defence Minister and top planner (and later armaments director) in the Kostov government). Also, good work has been done at academic institutions, notably the National and Regional Security Department at Sofia's University of National and World Economy. In addition, the country's print and broadcast media provide fair coverage of security matters, led by

Bulgarian TV and the newspaper *Trud,* and serviced by a state-owned but politically neutral press agency.

2.2 Public attitudes

Despite their caution about publicising military facts and figures the ruling circles in Bulgaria do recognise the importance of a supportive public when there is an enterprise like thorough-going defence reform to realise and a goal like NATO membership to attain. Thus the wider 'security community' was consulted on reform priorities (during the later 1990s) and there was some dissemination of information about the adopted reform agenda (albeit lacking detail). Furthermore, a public awareness campaign is being mounted in support of the quest for NATO membership. That effort will continue, we understand, into 2002.

Public attitudes to NATO generally and membership especially have not, however, been consistently and solidly supportive over the years. There are deep-seated reasons for this, like the sense in some quarters that good relations, and trade, with Russia are important to Bulgaria. Opinion is also subject to short-term influences, as when NATO was bombing Serbia and stray ordnance fell within Bulgaria's borders and even in Sofia's suburbs. Leadership counts for something, though. There is evidence that popular sentiment is gradually moving into line with official priorities. This is what recent attitude survey data suggest, as the reputable pollster's figures tabulated at the end of this paragraph clearly indicate. The progression recorded here between mid-1999 and end-2000 is from just over 50 per cent support (fully or 'on balance') to over 70 per cent – and, if the numbers are right, indicates the complete disappearance of the 'Don't Knows'. This suggests that there is no lack of public awareness of the membership question.

Question: Do you support Bulgarian membership in NATO?

	May 1999	May 2000	December 2000
	%	%	%
Fully support	27.1	37.2	40.5
Support	24.8	26.7	32.1
Oppose	15.5	20.1	17.4
Seriously oppose	18.2	15.2	10.0

We have gathered other data on public attitudes, too much to present in full here. However it is interesting to cite another December 2000 survey which indicates, among other things, an evident understanding among the Bulgarian population of the issues at stake in NATO membership and of the arrangements in which the country would become

involved as part of the joint defence. This poll asked respondents to state their approval (or otherwise) of specified 'activities'. The results are tabulated here.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the following activities?

	Approve %	Disapprove %	Can't assess %
Participation of Bulgarian forces in allied defence	40.7	36.6	22.7
Stationing of NATO forces in Bulgaria	30.0	48.4	21.6
Conduct of NATO exercise in Bulgaria	37.6	44.1	18.3
NATO flights over Bulgarian territory	41.6	43.6	21.0
Increasing the defence budget	51.4	26.7	21.9
Bulgaria participation in UN peacekeeping	52.4	36.6	22.7

The distribution of responses in the table contains few surprises, except perhaps the more than 50 per cent approval of higher defence spending. In some respects the pattern is reminiscent of Norwegian and Danish sentiment, e.g. regarding 'no foreign bases in peacetime'.

Fragments of data from other polls are of interest. For instance, there is a constituency for 'neutrality' – presumably meaning non-alignment – in Bulgaria, amounting to around one-sixth of the population (if the sample surveys are accurate). However, fewer than 10 per cent of Bulgarians nowadays regard a defence agreement with Russia as a feasible 'external political guarantee' for the country's security. As for attitudes to the nation's armed forces, all the indications are that the military are held in relatively high regard. More than 70 per cent of respondents to one survey 'had confidence' in the forces. In another, over 60 per cent gave the military an 'approval' rating, a proportion exceeded only by the President. (In this poll the 'scores' of some other national institutions were much lower, viz. Government – 36 per cent, Parliament – 20 per cent, the Judiciary – 19 per cent.)

2.3 Military education

The MoD has had to educate the military too about present-day security realities, the necessity for reform and the case for NATO membership. It has done so fairly effectively. In 2000 'the top brass was finally won over for the cause of reform' (according to Defence Minister Noev); and sceptics about accession to NATO have probably been 'won over' also (especially now that this policy objective enjoys all-party support).

On the national military education *system*, there are several points of interest. First, there has been structural reform, cutting the number of schools and strengthening in particular the Rakovsky Defence College in Sofia. Secondly, there has been curriculum reform, which has included (for example) final excision of Cold War scenarios from professional training syllabuses. Thirdly, some specific new departures have been made, as part of the NATO-membership preparation process.

To elaborate on the last item here, a major move has been the creation of an *Interoperability Centre* at the Rakovsky establishment. Among other things, this Centre is

- overseeing language training and testing (to STANAG 6001);
- organising and conducting intensive specialised training not only on 'technical' topics but also on national and regional security, defence planning, leadership, and so on (with command and staff training mainly in English);
  and
- targeting nominees for posts with multinational forces and Bulgaria's overseas representation plus personnel serving in units prepared for interoperability with others (Rapid Reaction Forces, Peacekeeping Forces, Forces declared as available for NATO and for future EU-led contingency operations).

This is an imaginative set-up, though the quality of instruction (and graduated students) still leaves a lot to be desired, we understand.

Regarding the present state of play in reform of regular officers, NCO and rank-and-file education and training arrangements, this remains 'work in progress'. There is a plan to transform the National Military Academy in Veliko Tirnovo into three centres for specialised instruction: Land Forces (to be established in 2002), Air Forces (2002), Navy (2004). In addition a new Centre for the Training of Sergeants is to be set up. This last initiative should meet the criticism of provision for NCO training which, we understand, was a headline feature of the NATO response to Bulgaria following the second MAP cycle (2000/2001).

2.4 Defence organisation

The blueprint for defence reform to which Bulgaria is currently working was formally adopted in 1999, when the National Assembly approved the *Military Doctrine of the Republic of Bulgaria*. Embodied in the text of that document – hidden, some might say – are the key paragraphs, quoted here in full (with original paragraph numbering):

93. The military strategic environment, the goals in the sphere of defence, the new missions and requirements for the Armed Forces – as well as the resources of the country – define the need for an optimisation of the structure of the Armed Forces, so that their manpower does not exceed 45,000 people in peace time. The transformation is done through a *Plan for the Organisational Development of the Armed Forces by the Year 2004*. The mobilisation plans of the Armed Forces incorporate the possibility of an increase in personnel up to 250,000 people.
94. The troops and assets are trained to carry out tasks independently and within the framework of multinational forces of a temporary or permanent character.
95. In the training of troops and headquarters, simulations and computer-assisted forms of training are used together with traditional methods. A priority in their training is given foreign language learning to a level reaching NATO standards.
96. The recruitment and modernisation of the Armed Forces with contemporary samples of armament and equipment is done through special programmes, taking into account the requirements for interoperability with NATO and in compliance with the resource capacities of the country.

The above is the official translation. Note that it uses the present tense for what were at the time only intended actions. The plan mentioned in the first paragraph is that generally known as *Plan 2004* (and alluded to here already). This prospectus is now (end-September 2001) in the final stages of review, as will be explained presently.

The datum plan involves big force reductions – which have begun – and fundamental restructuring – also started – but the result should be much greater real combat capability. At the beginning of 2001, the strength of the Bulgarian armed forces was around 70,000; but their military worth – apart from a few 'shop window' units – was pitifully low. To give a graphic illustration, it was claimed that the country could deploy only one serviceable MiG-29 fighter because, according to analyst Vasil Lyvtsankov, 'we have only two engines which we keep moving from plane to plane', (*Trud*, 30 January 2001).

It was precisely to address such problems that *Plan 2004* was devised as a coherent blueprint for an *appropriate* and *affordable* national defence effort. Its implementation – and that of the 'revised version' nearing completion as this text goes to press – will entail the transformation of the Bulgarian armed forces from an over-sized organisation optimised for all-round territorial defence and other Cold War missions, and burdened with obsolete weapons and equipment plus redundant infrastructure, to a

slimline force optimised for post-Cold War missions and NATO membership, stripped of obsolete/redundant assets, well trained and (in due course) satisfactorily equipped. The question is: will implementation proceed as envisaged? The *Plan* has come under challenge from several directions in the last couple of years.

First, domestic opponents fought a rearguard action in 1999-2000; and some may not have given up the attempt to sabotage the scheme. We are talking here of a number of senior officers and officials plus a few analysts who still believe that Bulgaria needs to maintain a completely independent capacity to defend the national territory against invasion from any point of the compass and must pay attention to the 'correlation of forces' vis-à-vis Turkey in particular. It is easy to refer disparagingly to such opposition. However it should be borne in mind that, in Bulgaria as elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, there are many officers who find suspect (even immoral) the notion that the state should be without forces designed to repel large-scale aggression, if only for a limited period. Among other things, these people pose the pertinent question: what if the quest for NATO membership fails?

Secondly, perhaps animated by this concern, some 'revisionists' emerged in the early months of 2001. They included the Chief of the General Staff himself (Air Force General Mikhov) who pronounced that Bulgaria needs a 65,000-strong active force (not the 45,000 prescribed in the 1999 *Military Doctrine*). It is not clear what prompted this apparent insubordination. Some observers think General Mikhov was a lukewarm supporter of *Plan 2004* from the outset and with elections in prospect judged it opportune to suggest a less radical down-sizing. This is consistent with media reports appearing since the June ballot which suggest that the General may have pressed his case with the new administration. In fact, the Chief's argument is a complete non-starter, because the tenor of external comment on the prospectus is that, in important respects, it does not go far enough or fast enough; and, in view of their source, the 'revised version' is going to take account of *these* views.

An early external comment was the Robertson letter, an informal communication from NATO's Secretary-General to (then) Prime Minister Kostov in late 2000. This drew attention to shortcomings in the initial implementation of *Plan 2004* and also criticised the (then) apparent lack of broad public and parliamentary support. Its main message, though, appears to have been that Bulgaria should accelerate its reduction, rationalisation and restructuring efforts in a number of directions.

This is also what NATO's formal comments on Bulgaria's preparedness for membership urge. The main points arising from these evaluations are the following.

- That reform is proceeding in 'the right direction' is *not in dispute*. Nor are the basic premises of *Plan 2004*: force reduction and restructuring plus some interoperability enhancement first, equipment modernisation later. (What Bulgaria has to offer in the way of Host Nation Support (HNS) – for exercises and operations – is assessed positively too.)

- *Reservations* are expressed about two funding issues. First, while budgetary projections look satisfactory, some scrutineers doubt whether sufficient resources have been allocated to implement fully both planned restructuring and essential modernisation. They think programme adjustments may be necessary at some stage and would like to see contingency plans for that eventuality. Second, in the personnel area, these critics think that what Bulgaria envisages may require extra money beyond the amount currently planned.
- There is a longer list of *serious shortcomings* in Bulgarian provision – present and prospective – which need to be addressed more energetically.
  (a) *the 'hollow forces' problem*. There are manning problems throughout the armed forces and conspicuous shortfalls in operational training and readiness.
  (b) *the obsolescence and redundancy problem*. There is a deadweight burden of obsolete equipment in the armed forces' inventories plus a lot of redundant infrastructure.
  (c) *the interoperability problem*. Except for a few showpiece units, the level of interoperability with NATO forces is still low.
  (The wisdom of some expressed intentions about longer-run modernisation has been called into question also. So has the envisaged size of Bulgaria's reserve forces even after restructuring: the mobilisation strength target of nearly 250,000 is considered beyond the country's capacity.)

This listing is the basis of the comment earlier in this Chapter on misplaced (Ministerial) complacency about Bulgaria's military preparedness for NATO membership.

The 'hollow forces' phenomenon is undeniable. It is, of course, precisely what *Plan 2004* was crafted to correct. In the short run, however, activity levels – exercises for ground forces, flying hours for front-line aircrew, training days at sea for the navy – are going to remain below efficient thresholds, so NATO would like them raised. More important, Brussels would like the revision of the plan to provide solid reassurance that 'hollowness' is not going to be perpetuated. Questions arising here include the following. Although the armour inventory is scheduled to be shrunk by nearly 50 per cent, does Bulgaria really need a future force with 700-plus tanks and around 1800 other armoured combat vehicles? Does the country need to keep over 1300 artillery pieces? Does it make sense to try to retain all the navy's surface combatant ships? With only 20-25 per cent serviceability in air force equipment today, should the country not be contemplating bigger cuts in the front-line force?

Some of these questions crop up, in a slightly different guise, when equipment disposal plans are examined. Is it wise to plan retention of so much useless weaponry? How much does it cost to keep items minimally serviceable and maintain the guarded depots? There are counterpart questions relating to infrastructure. Why does the Army want to keep so much real estate? Why does it run pig farms, whose meat is more expensive than that obtainable on the open market? What sort of urgency is suggested by

the official intimation that fewer than two-thirds of redundant properties will have been released *by the end of 2006*? The bottom-line here is: Bulgaria would be well advised to reexamine the scope of military activities, reconsider stockholding practices and revise its asset sale timetable(s).

As for interoperability, the implicit message in NATO's MAP feedback is that with the money saved by not retaining and maintaining obsolete materiel in store (and using proceeds from the sale of land and buildings) much could be done to make more front-line units at least minimally capable of working with member-states' and others' forces. That would yield immediate benefits: Bulgaria would be able to contribute more to current missions (like SFOR and KFOR) to which the country makes very modest subscriptions indeed. Beyond the short run, it would enable Bulgaria to bear a share of the burden of future deployments more commensurate with its capacity to contribute.

It is largely in response to these 'serious shortcomings' that a review of *Plan 2004* was begun by the Kostov administration in response to (second-cycle) MAP feedback and has been continued by the new team at the Bulgarian MoD, Defence Minister Nikolai Svinarov and Deputy Minister Radi Naidenov (Shalamanov's replacement). We expect this exercise, first, to confirm personnel rundown more or less as envisaged in the previous government's projection reproduced below.

MANPOWER RUNDOWN TIMETABLE, 2001-2007
(including civilians) (000s)

	2001	**2007**
MoD	0.6	0.5
Sub to MoD	6.8	4.4
General Staff[1]	8.2	3.3
Central Logistics	8.7	4.3
Land Forces	38.3	22.9
Air Force	17.0	10.1
Navy	6.0	4.4
	85.6	49.9

Secondly, we expect the 'revised version' to address the much-criticised retention of obsolete equipment. In fact we predict that it will do this in a quite dramatic way, by foreshadowing significantly lower 2004 target levels than the 1999 prospectus for inventories of certain categories of major equipment, including main battle tanks, artillery pieces of a calibre greater than 100mm and armoured combat vehicles (ACVs). In round figures, we think the projected numbers may be as set out in the final column here.

[1] 'General Staff' includes personnel in central services subordinate to the GS rather than under single-service direction.

MAJOR EQUIPMENT HOLDINGS 2000-2004

	Holding 2000	Plan 2004 2004	Review 2004
Main battle tanks	1425	750	400
Artillery (100mm plus)	1725	1365	950
ACVs	1800	1800	1350

This represents a decisive response to the 'misallocation of resources' criticism and to the reservations about funding that NATO has expressed.

The main conclusion we draw from this summary overview of the present situation (end-September 2001) is that the obligation to ensure that, pre- and post-accession, Bulgaria can mount an appropriate, affordable and acceptable defence effort is one that the country clearly takes seriously and intends to fulfil. By way of supplementary comment, we also expect the Bulgarians' revised forward planning to tackle *rank inflation*. At present, critics say, the Bulgarian army has 50-60 generals (roughly one per 600-700 soldiers), while the navy has 7 admirals (one for every warship capable of putting to sea). The rundown in progress allegedly involves some 'gift promotions' as well. The intention, we understand, is to progressively reduce the ratio of senior officers (Major and above) to junior officers *from* its current 54 : 46 (per cent) *to* 45 : 55 by 2004 and 40 : 60 by 2007. Defence Minister Svinarov has also said that the NATO criticism of an over-ambitious mobilisation strength target is being addressed: he favours a figure of around 100,000 (as opposed to the 'up to 250,000' in the 1999 *Military Doctrine* text).

Finally, speaking directly to the all-important question of the defence organisation's structural capacity for coherent defence planning, programming and budgeting (plus budget execution), it is enough to compare Bulgaria's recent experience – as illustrated in the preceding paragraphs – with the situation in the mid-1990s. Then the GS entered unrealistic bids for funds, the MoD axed them, the government trimmed them further, parliament voted money but the cash did not always find its way to its intended destination. Furthermore, substantial in-year budget amendments were commonplace and, because of chronic inflation, funds received were anyhow never sufficient to pay for whatever they had been allocated to finance. Clearly, these days are over. No less important, decision-making processes have now been reformed to ensure that there is no prospect of a return to the pantomime planning of the earlier period. If there is a reservation to be entered on this point, it is related to the politicians who have taken charge at the MoD following the June 2001 election. The architects of Bulgaria's bold reforms have now left office (Shalamanov) or been replaced (Tagarev). The MoD is now headed by a lawyer without defence experience whose key deputy previously

worked at the MFA. However, early indications are that the new leadership is proceeding along essentially the same path as before.

2.5 Assessment

Because of this, because a fundamentally sound but (soon to be) realistically revised *Plan 2004* remains the blueprint for structural reform, and also because of Bulgaria's constructive role in South-Eastern Europe's international security politics – for all these reasons the country believes it has a strong claim to consideration for 'second wave' NATO accession. In the areas we have looked at there is a basis for this conviction.

- The country's *civil-military relations* are on a satisfactory footing, despite residual MoD-GS tensions and deficient legislative oversight of defence.
- *Public attitudes* are acknowledged to be important. On the basis of end-2000 poll data, they are clearly supportive vis-à-vis NATO. There is also evidence of popular understanding of what NATO membership entails.
- In the *military education* field much worthwhile reform has been carried through already. There is more to come.
  and
- The challenge of reducing, rationalising and restructuring the Bulgarian armed forces has been taken up. These processes are underway; and Sofia has reacted to constructive comment on the shortcomings in initial plans and projections.

It follows that, if all goes well – if there is indeed policy continuity under Nikolai Svinarov and Radi Naidenov – Bulgaria's forces should emerge leaner, but fitter. Also, progressively more units should be able to pass fitness-for-role tests to qualify for inclusion in multinational 'packages' for future contingency operations. Thus our overall assessment of the country's progress towards fulfilling NATO-membership conditions – in our areas of interest – is that at end-September 2001 Bulgaria is well prepared for accession, needing only to address the 'shortcomings' NATO has noted. The country is doing that, though it will be a couple of years before the improvement shows. Thus Bulgaria is a glass seven-eighths full or a glass one-eighth empty, depending on your perspective.

3. Romania

One could argue that Romania should have been accepted as a member of NATO in the first wave of post-Cold War enlargement. As a matter of fact, a significant number of

NATO member states did so. The new government of President Constantinescu had done its utmost and credibly erased the record of lukewarm policies of its predecessor. It had rapidly established good relations with Hungary, solved irritant border disputes with Ukraine, nominated an ethnic Hungarian as minister for minorities and declared war on corruption. It had made a promising start all round, in fact. Psychologically, therefore, NATO's rejection at Madrid left a scar in Romania's fledgling democratic conscience, fuelling doubts about the standards for democracy and transparency as practised in the West.

Bucharest is a western-oriented capital and the home of the government, the elites and intelligentsia. Although the countryside is far less inclined to join the unknown, somewhat threatening Western society, Romanians consider themselves as sharing the values of democracy and tolerance with NATO countries, having the instruments of a market economy in place and being an island of stability in the restive region. All of this is disputable, but many Romanians assert it with confidence and determination. Moreover, they hold their military in high regard and expect this most trusted state institution to meet the same respect. In terms of military-operational capabilities, it was very difficult to believe that in 1997 the Polish, Czech and Hungarian armed forces were better. In any case the country expects a fairer deal in 2002.

The Constantinescu government did not live up to its promising start. The constant decrease in the standard of living, the social costs of the economic reform, the permanent squabbling among the members of the coalition, the rather widespread perception of a corrupt and inefficient government, all led to a dramatic drop in its popularity. The coalition partners were unable to compromise over most issues, instead making their case by threatening to quit. President Constantinencu did not communicate well either, and was unable to give leadership. (Nobody, not even his closest advisers, knew about his decision not to seek a second term, which he took only a few months before the elections in 2000.) Nor did he want a strong prime minister next to him and appointed inexperienced (academic) colleagues like Ciorbea, who used to argue endlessly but took no decisions. Constantinescu fired 3 PMs, but refused to consider a strong personality like Dudu Ionescu, for example, who served first as Deputy-Minister of Defence and later as Minister of Interior. Corruption in the government's own ranks was not curtailed as in the case of the notoriously corrupt Minister of Agriculture, Muresan, known as 'doing nothing for nothing'. In general, the political elite in government was eager to enrich itself and had no scruples about using its power for personal gain.

The political malaise of the Christian Democrats was also demonstrated in the run-up to the elections. The party congress was again unable to agree on a strong leader like Dudu Ionescu (who is now the deputy-chairman). Interestingly, Ion Iliescu, the smart and seasoned politician, had explicitly encouraged the Christian-Democratic Congress to come out strongly and make a good appearance at the elections. He clearly understands that he needs a strong opposition to challenge and be challenged by and to accentuate his

own and his party's profile. The Christian Democrats – the major party responsible for past failure – would be a good sparring partner and preferable to the growing nationalist party of Vadim Tudor. Worse still, without other alternatives, Tudor might become his major opponent.

The political bill of bad government was presented in the elections of 26 November 2000 and led to the total disappearance of its main party. Support for the Christian-Democrats dropped below the electoral threshold. The Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PSDR) of former President Ion Iliescu came back to power, winning 47 percent of the votes. Other former coalition parties all scored under 10 per cent. The right-wing Greater Romania Party of the (extreme) nationalist, Tudor, won 26 per cent, making it the second largest party. The Romanian people thus expressed their dissatisfaction with the economic, social and political state of affairs. But the elections also reflected the moral and ideological outlook of the country. On 10 December 2000, the second round of the presidential elections was held. Iliescu won comfortably with 67 per cent, as compared with 33 per cent for Tudor. But only half of the electorate cast their ballot. In order to avoid a possible repetition of the squabbling in a coalition government with one or more democratic parties – and to prevent the danger of too strong an influence of the nationalists – Iliescu decided to form a minority government with Adrian Nastase as Prime Minister.

The new government launched a determined campaign to secure NATO accession in 2002. The most powerful indications in that respect are a 35 per cent increase of the defence budget, specifically meant to support military reform, and the new *Declaration for Romania's integration into NATO* (signed by all parliamentary parties on 7 March 2001). At the same time, Defence Minister Ioan Pascu has warned against too high expectations in the short run. Moreover, he has said, the development of a new multi-year planning process and budgeting system is still in an early stage and Romania is not yet in a position to present clear-cut ideas of what it can offer NATO militarily. The country has other claims to serious consideration, however, notably its regional policy. It supported NATO during the Yugoslav crisis and the western embargo – and during the 1999 Kosovo campaign – at a price amounting to billions of dollars. Romania participated with 600 fully self-supported and transported troops in the intervention in Albania (1997). It continues to give special attention to its role in the neighbourhood through both diplomacy and defence co-operation. Some arrangements have been especially promising in this respect. One is the Multinational Peace Force South Eastern Europe (MPFSEE/SEEBRIG). Another is the Regional Defence Resource Management training centre in Brasov, created to serve seven countries in the region (eventually).

At the national level, Romania has been engaged in the creation of mission-specific differentiated structures for its surveillance and early warning capacity and its rapid reaction forces. Since the setting up of the Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) on 1 March 1997, the focus of mission-objectives has shifted towards contributing to crisis

management operations in a multinational environment. The RRF constitutes the nucleus of future force structures, designed to fulfil a pivotal role both in the general national defence concept and in provision for peace support operations.

One cannot say that nothing at all was achieved under previous governments in defence reform. Rather, changes were haphazard and slow. There was restructuring between 1992 and 1996. It saw elimination of regiment-division echelons and their reorganisation into a battalion-brigade-army corps structure. Rundown in 1994 permitted elimination of the army echelon as well. Then a new framework-document was drawn up (*The Army 2000)*. This shaped the programmes and annual orders of the Supreme Council of Defence. Most restructuring between 1997 and 2000 was made according to such orders. Looking ahead, new structures were added to the Defence Policy Department to facilitate Euro-Atlantic integration preparedness, defence policy planning, and the management of civil-military relations. The General Staff and the services were also reshaped in accordance with NATO practice.

Restructuring is, however, not the same as *reform*. On the whole, genuine reform of the Romanian armed forces did not take place. The restructuring still left huge, unaffordable forces of 300,000 men. Downsizing was an inevitable and painful operation, forcefully urged by Degeratu, Chief of the General Staff under Minister Babiuc from 1997-1999. His objective – to establish a force of 140,000 (112,000 soldiers and 28,000 civilians) – is still valid as the planning target. Degeratu also ended the preoccupation with large-scale and unrealistic acquisition programmes and focused on air defence and communication as part of the campaign to strengthen NATO interoperability and host-nation support. He also started to use foreign-trained officers more efficiently. Still, genuine reform – expressed in clear laws and guidance, pursued with real determination – was not undertaken. Romania's *National Security Strategy* and the *White Paper of the Government – Romanian Army 2010* were adopted by the Constantinescu government in 1999 to guide change, but the documents did not pass in parliament until 2000 due to the bickering and fighting among the coalition partners. In sum, little of real substance was accomplished by the previous government (or for that matter, by the first Iliescu government). Expectations are higher now in our fields of interest and in general.

3.1 Civil-military relations

In Romania, the problems with initiation, implementation and management of governmental decisions and laws start at the very top. The new President and government will have to lead forcefully if significant military reform is now to take place. This may not be easy, given the continuing mysteries of Romanian politics and the enigmatic personalities of the past involved. The legacy of communist leadership is not completely erased. A first impediment is that, in practice, there are two executives, for there is a huge

overlap of responsibilities and activities between the President and the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister and his government are directly answerable to Parliament; but the President and his counsellors – forming a sort of upper-level, second government – stay at arms length of Parliament. According to the Constitution, the President chairs government meetings on foreign and security policy. According to Iliescu, he can (or will require to) be invited to chair other meetings of strategic interest as well. In the field of internal and international security, the President chairs the National Supreme Defence Council (NSDC), which reports to Parliament only once a year. The Council plays a central role in the preparation of the main security documents and actually approves them as *binding* decisions, thus being *de facto* the most important participant in the decision-making process. The secret services are also part of the NSDC structure. Their Directors are appointed by the President. A presidential Counsellor runs the NSDC on a day-to-day basis as its Secretary. Thus, the NSDC structure and position reflect a strong, built-in tendency toward a (possibly authoritarian) presidential political system in a formally parliamentary-constitutional democracy.

This 'two government' structure is basically still in place. In spite of a draft law intended to bring the position of the NSDC in line with the constitution, there is no discernible departure from the established practice and no reason to expect one. The main problem for the President, as the most important player in foreign and security policy, is that he has no other instrument than the NSDC. A solution would be to go back to a situation in which the President clearly instructs individual ministers who, in turn, defend their policy in parliament. This would resolve ambiguity about the role of the Chief of the General Staff and the chiefs of the intelligence services who are advisory members of the NSDC. There would be no objection to having the secret services under the direct control of the President. But these need to be clearly separated from other intelligence and security services under the ministries of Defence and Interior. Now, it is an opaque and generally distrusted arrangement.

Few in the government appear to be aware of this 'democratic deficit' that could be implicitly or explicitly abused in national decision-making. Some, like the Counsellor/Secretary of the NSDC, Ioan Talpes, simply deny the 'two executives' phenomenon. For them, the NSDC is a mere consulting body where no binding decisions are taken. Actually, the Chief of the General Staff and other government officials do have 'advisory' status and ministers 'consult' with the President. However, advisers like Degeratu, former Chief of the General Staff, use direct access to the President to further swift decision-making. Degeratu did this in the Yugoslav crisis. There is no reason why other matters deserving 'swift' decision-making should not be similarly short-circuited. This set-up is likely not only to deny transparency and accountability of decisions, but also to complicate the position and authority of ministers, even though it is they who are answerable to Parliament. For example, the supposedly lukewarm enthusiasm for NATO membership of the current President, his entourage and part of the PSDR is likely to

affect the power and ability of the responsible ministers to carry out a policy formally dedicated to that goal. Reforms in the MoD and armed forces might be hampered and delayed by a lack of clear direction. Arrangements are bound to lead to bureaucratic inertia, even gridlock, in both decision-making and implementation. And they actually have, as will be argued below.

Another concern in Romanian politics is the gap between the political leadership in office and the serving administration/bureaucracy proper. The latter is characterised by an inability to take responsibility and initiative. Often, line officers and civil servants merely report endlessly and superficially to the upper echelons as proof of their conscientiousness. This strong legacy of the past is devastating. It produces crippled governance and executive paralysis. In the case of the Constantinescu government, things were made even worse by lack of clear political decisions and guidance from the top. Moreover, the career officers and civil servants in the bureaucracy felt threatened (rightly) by the significant number of political appointees in the administration. This resulted in resistance in addition to inertia. The attempt to get the administrators to co-operate by promotions, higher pay or other ruses did not make the bureaucracy more effective and efficient; rather, the 'favour-for-favour' tactics resulted in a more expensive executive with ever more chiefs and fewer Indians. Since this practice was widely followed at the regional and local levels, the population at large openly observed these practices and came to understand what kind of political leadership it did *not* want after the 2000 elections. The major point, however, is that the necessary separation of decision-making and policy execution has become a structural problem; a legacy not weakened, possibly even reinforced, under the governments since the Revolution. There is a built-in inability of the political leadership to *control and direct* the administrative part of the executives, both central and local. The present government faces the same challenge.

At the legislature level 'proper procedures' for the allocation of resources and for parliamentary oversight of defence are in place. The extent to which they function is a different question. The main bodies of the Parliament exercising control are two 'committees for defence, public order, and national security' – one in the Senate, the other in the Chamber of Deputies. They are composed of parliamentarians with an interest and a certain expertise in the field, supported by a few experts and consultants. There are three occasions on which the two committees work together: hearings for the nominations of Cabinet members designated to run the military; approval of the budget; and approval of military exercises on national territory. Hearings are the principal instrument for exercising control.

The efficacy of democratic control by legislative oversight is considerably reduced by built-in limitations (as well as economic austerity). The main constraint is the fact that the budget report of the two defence committees is not discussed directly in the plenary, but sent to the finance and budget committees first. In most cases, this means

cuts not always related to genuine defence and security concerns. Moreover, the original proposals come from the government itself – more precisely from the General Staff – and they are not always transparent. Even the defence committees are therefore constrained in their work and sometimes unable to provide the finance and budget committees with relevant information before the latter vote on the proposals. Members of the defence committees are allowed to defend submissions again before the plenary of the two chambers. However, given resource limitations, they are unable to obtain more than the government says is available and the entire discussion turns to priorities. These ought to be debated of course; but, under these circumstances, too many 'deals' are made on the basis of personal contacts rather than through institutional choice. There is a lack of structural transparency; too much depends on 'old boy' networks.

A further obstacle to *effective* legislative oversight is the lack of independent expertise. The main reasons for this are (a) the still generalised lack of recognition that such expertise is needed and (b) the lack of sufficient means to support research and analysis. Consequently, the commissions are too dependent on the government's good faith in providing information and on mostly former officers as their staffers. As a matter of fact, there has been a trend towards extending the control of the executive over the military to the detriment of parliamentary control. This is partly due to the powerlessness of the quarrelling parliamentary defence committee itself, but also a result of the imperfect system for providing information. Expertise can only be maintained through a regular and up-to-date flow of reliable and detailed information. But the defence committee lacks the authority to summon governmental experts and its individual members rely on personal initiatives and contacts rather than on bi-partisan, established procedures for information gathering.

This is not to say that there has been no improvement at all over the years. Gradually, the army has become a more open institution and elements of civil society do have some access to information through the MoD's public relations department and direct contacts. Academic expertise in security, defence and international relations includes (government supported) think-tanks such as the Institute for Political Studies of Defence and Military History, the Centre for Euro-Atlantic Studies of the University of Bucharest, and the Romanian Institute for International Studies "Nicolae Titulescu". There are also several NGOs dealing with security issues, including the Manfred Wörner Euro-Atlantic Association, the EURISC Foundation, the Romanian Academic Society, the Institute for Political and Economic Research, and the IDEA Foundation. The independence of these institutions in terms of finances and human resources varies and their capacity is limited. Their involvement remains dubious and their influence uncertain. The existence of the informal networks also intervenes in this semi- and non-governmental area of security and defence matters.

Generally, institutional 'outside' expertise is simply not taken into consideration by decision-makers. Only a few individuals, mainly through personal contacts, have some

influence. In addition, the quality and experience – and, above all, up-to-date background on the issues at stake – of the non-official security community are meagre. There is no rotation of experts from academia to government and back. Rather, the governmental security elites circulate. So genuine dialogue on security and defence issues is non-existent; often non-official involvement is as polarised as in the political arena itself. Among those in the media having an interest in security and defence issues, the level of expertise is also low.

3.2 Public attitudes

Public support for NATO accession is always said to be high; in the run-up to Madrid the West was told that 90 per cent of the public was in favour of membership. In fact, polls and surveys tell a more diverse story. Examples are:

April 1999: between 52.2 per cent (Centre for Metropolitan and Regional Sociology) and 56.9 per cent (Institute for Marketing and Polls) of those sampled declared that they are in favour of Romania's accession into NATO, as compared with 82 per cent in March 1997 (Metro Media Transylvania) and 67 per cent in December 1998 (Centre for Metropolitan and Regional Sociology);

May 1999: out of those questioned, 56 per cent have a good opinion about NATO; 69 per cent do not want NATO aircraft to use Romania's airspace, and 78 per cent do not agree with NATO troops' stationing on the national territory (Opinion Poll Barometer, Metro Media Transylvania);

May 2000: asked about the usefulness of Romania's accession into NATO, 62 per cent said "yes", 13 per cent said "no". (Opinion Poll Barometer, Metro Media Transylvania);

November 2000: asked about the usefulness of Romania's accession into NATO, 62 per cent said "yes," 16 per cent said "no". (Opinion Poll Barometer, Centre for Metropolitan and Regional Sociology);

March 2001: 85 per cent of those interviewed are for Romania's integration into NATO; 80 per cent consider that Romania's unsuccessful attempts in this respect up till now are due to unfulfilled criteria set by NATO, whereas 5 per cent point as a cause to the U.S. (Metro Media Transylvania).

The post-2000 election surge in support indicated by the last two items here is particularly noteworthy.

Only the March 1997 and March 2001 surveys in this listing showed support for NATO accession on the scale that is officially claimed. Moreover, when the general question is supplemented by inquiries about some of the consequences – like exercises on Romanian territory or the defence of the new allies – enthusiasm decreases. In fact, the image of NATO has consistently been presented as 'good' (and 'beneficial' to Romania

and its armed forces) and that seems to be the general, albeit largely superficial view. What NATO actually is has not been clearly conveyed. Ordinary people take for granted what the opinion leaders say; few know more than that it is a defence organisation and represents a way to move to the west. For many, NATO is a symbol of international recognition and the internationalisation of Romania itself.

The latter point is crucial. Romania's position in the former Warsaw Pact was isolated and the fact that it followed an independent course of Moscow – recognised by the west on several occasions by visits of De Gaulle or Nixon – is seen as something both valuable and quite rightly valued. Whatever the meaning of the collective defence organisation is today, for many Romanians the psychological significance of being part of an important western institution dwarfs the security considerations. Being pro-western or pro-European is part of a sought-after identity. At the same time, isolation, as well as the history of disputed territory and rival ethnic claims, have fostered a strong national identity. The security of that Romanian identity and valuable independence is as real as the desire to 'return to Europe'. In that sense, the electorate and, by the same token, the mainstream politicians face *dual identities* based on both (a) western-directed internationalism and (b) inward-looking nationalism. It is also in that sense that NATO's refusal of Romanian membership in the first wave has weakened the position of the adherents of western-style reform and encouraged factional disputes and national feelings. These dual identities are subject to very different debates on security: one of sharing security with other states and one of sharing security with 'genuine' Romanians. Each meaning of security challenges the other.

The point is not whether the nationalists or (former) secret service officers are right or wrong; they are dead wrong in frustrating democratic transition and prolonging people's fear for the state as a police state. The point is that nationalists and others operate in a volatile and insecure domestic environment. Public attitudes are an easy target for manipulation whatever sort of security is ascendant. If NATO decides to put Romania 'on hold' for the second or third time, frustration will be universal and unanimous in the country. "After all the effort, what else should the Romanian government and people do to please the west that is constantly hardening and expanding what it expects from us" will be not only *leitmotiv*, but also the slogan for nationalist populists. Put differently, if the present government is unable to deliver, it will possibly face the same fate as its predecessor: political defeat and a transfer of power to the most appealing opposition at the time. That opposition could well be led by Tudor rather than by the small Democratic Party, let alone by the shattered Christian-Democratic party. Public attitudes to NATO in Romania are subject to manipulation and not based on deep convictions.

The dual identities mentioned – and associated political sensitivities – are apparent in the current leadership and the (culture-prone) division of responsibilities and popular images separating Iliescu and Nastase. The President represents the 'salvation' of

Romania and is the appealing leader for the people. He defends and strengthens national unity. Illustrative of Iliescu's instincts in this respect is his master coup in bringing back to Romania the former King Michael with all the honours and rights of a former head of state, while establishing full reconciliation between himself, the 'king' and the patriarch of the Romanian Church – the 'Holy Alliance' as it was dubbed. Therewith, Iliescu accomplished in five months what the former government, including Christian-Democrats, had been unable to do in four years: namely to restore national self-esteem. Iliescu also represents the 'old guard' or hold-overs who cannot be simply kicked out for reasons linked to the past. This older generation still plays a significant role.

In this respect it is of paramount importance to understand the very different transition – revolution – in Romania from that in other CEE countries. In Romania, there was no alternative group or opposition as in Poland (Walesa and Solidarity) or Czechoslovakia (Havel and Charta '77). The new government after Ceausescu was composed of former-communists, including Iliescu, and the brand new opposition parties had no time to organise themselves before the first free elections. Iliescu still has his ties with the men of the 'first hour'. At the same time, he has used his four years out of office to familiarise himself with international views on Romanian politics and reform. He now understands much better the need to reconcile national (public) attitudes and international requirements.

The Prime Minister, Nastase, is part of that balance. He presents the 'new Romania' to the west and inserts the elements of modernisation and reform into the Romanian polity and society. Nastase represents the business-like, pro-western forces in the power equation. On taking office he immediately created posts in each ministry for dealing with (a) matters of European integration and (b) parliament and public relations. The official usually has the position of State (deputy) Minister. In the case of the MoD, one of the three State Ministers is for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Defence Policy, a second heads the new Department of Legislative Harmonisation and Public Relations. The parliamentarian Defence Committee now meets as many as 3-4 times a week in some periods, often in the presence of State Secretary Sorin Encutescu. The determined acceleration of the process of integration into NATO is strongly reflected in relations with this Committee which passed an impressive number of bills during the first half of 2001 (six in six months). Relations between the government and this committee – as well as the working relationship within the committee – have dramatically improved. Thus, Nastase's focus on modernisation, accompanied by solid and visible PR, has already left its mark on defence policy and organisation. Assuming that this energetic behaviour on the part of the government will continue, public attitudes towards NATO will remain very positive and public understanding of the Organisation and the membership issue should grow.

3.3 Military education

From preparing the Romanian public for NATO it is a short step to preparing the Romanian armed forces. There is no lack of official material claiming all manner of innovative change in this area (and in related areas of human resources management). Much of it, however, is suspect: either bearing the hallmarks of a training organisation's wish-list or expressed in such preposterous 'management speak' that we find it unfathomable. (What, for example, does one make of the assertion that it is intended to start recruiting and selecting personnel in accordance with the *military career as merchandise* concept? Or that education is to be reorganised around the *manager-military expert* concept?) We have not paid much attention to this but looked for concrete evidence of what is being done.

Reform of military education has suffered from a range of problems, most of them similar to those in other CEE countries: many (military) consider it of secondary importance compared to restructuring forces and modernising equipment; military-operational and doctrinal training is not seen as fundamentally different from the past; the older generation which make up the body of trainers at the military academies lack up-to-date knowledge and expertise; and resistance to change as well as in-fighting stand in the way of cogent, and consistently carried out, curriculum reform. It must be noted that Romanian military education is not Soviet-style training. It has always been characterised by a keen awareness of the social duties and professional requirements that go with forming the backbone of the national defence. The mission of the armed forces has been crystal clear, no matter how repressive the Ceausescu regime was. The military served the country as professionals, not as tools in the hands of political personalities. This was shown most strikingly in December 1989 when the army refused to rescue the old regime and acted for at least 24 hours as the only performing state institution, yet without any hint that it might be tempted to interfere in post-crisis politics. A basic understanding of professionalism and a profound awareness of their position in polity and society have been part of the upbringing of all officers. Furthermore, unlike their colleagues in the other CEE countries, the Romanian military have not been troubled by 'double' allegiance – national and socialist – nor by the unavoidable dilemmas Soviet tutelage implied.

What is new today is the participation in peace-keeping operations and co-operation with NATO in its out-of-area operations. It is noteworthy that the majority of the new educational facilities have been supported, if not directed, by western partners. In 1997 a reform of human resources management was undertaken 'in order to meet NATO standards and the imperative of upgrading military personnel'. Co-ordinated by a new Directorate for Human Resources Management, new selection, training, and promotion criteria for officer career management were established in accordance with NATO states' practice. With British and US assistance, a *National Defence Framework Action Plan for*

2000-2003 and a *Long Term Framework 2010* were established. Educational capacity is geared towards the need to field an army of 112,000 and to transform the present lopsided personnel pyramid into a functional structure. In 1998, a new concept of NCO selection, training, and employment was approved, and implementation began in September 1999. Under its guidelines NCOs must be graduates of NCO schools or academies and will serve under contract. This programme is supported by the United States, United Kingdom, France and The Netherlands. A NCO academy opened in late 1999 (with US Marine Corps instructors). Approximately 450 NCOs are scheduled to graduate annually. The Annual National Plan (ANP) 2001-2002, submitted to NATO in September 2001, foresees the fulfilment of the required number of NCO's (40,200) by the year 2005.

As for higher professional education, we are similarly confident about the seriousness with which Romania has addressed this recently, in the framework of regional co-operation. For instance, the country hosts a Regional Training Centre for staff officers, established in Bucharest within the Advanced Military Studies Academy. This was brought into existence with United Kingdom help. The Centre is open to civilians and representatives from NATO and PfP countries. All courses include English and instruction is conducted in English. The courses are designed for future postings at brigade and army corps level and corresponding levels at ministerial staffs. About 300 graduates have left the Centre. Romania also hosts a Regional Centre for Defence Resources Management, set up with U.S. support. Located at the Academy of Aviation and Anti-Aircraft Defence in Brasov – and devised in co-operation with the Defence Resources Management Programme at the US Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California – this Centre started to operate in 2000. It is a practical, "hands-on" training institution modelled on courses for American junior officers. It is teaching only Romanians at present but will in due course be open to leading staff and specialists from East Central and South Eastern Europe who have completed civilian or military university education. Its first Romanian graduates have been welcomed by State Secretary Maior as 'essential' for the recent introduction of the integrated management system. In general, the military educational establishments will be restructured and, according to the ANP 2001-2002, a National Defence University will be established in 2003 and the curriculum of existing military schools will be updated to reflect NATO training standards. Needless to say, training abroad is an invaluable asset for the Romanian military officers and civil servants who work on preparation for NATO membership. By now it is common practice that foreign-trained personnel return to a function where full use can be made of their capacities. Meanwhile, the English language training capacity has been increased by 30 per cent, totalling up to 532 students during the past year.

There are some genuinely Romanian institutions for higher education that deserve mentioning, notably the National Defence College, the School for Political and International Studies and a couple of one-year MA programmes at the University of

Bucharest. The first was established in the early 1990s. The courses are designed for military officers, high level civil servants of various ministries and parliamentarians. The second institution offers an excellent two-year postgraduate programme to students chosen through a highly competitive selection process. The third education programme offers one course in International Relations and one in South East European studies. Graduates invariably find their way into prestigious institutions, corporations and Romanian ministries. Both MoFA and MoD have recruited personnel from the School extensively and today one finds its alumni in demanding and highly responsible functions in the MoD, particularly in places where reform of the defence organisation is needed most.

3.4 Defence organisation

Minister Pascu has a Herculean task in front of him due to the lack of serious reform during the previous ten years. In particular, reform at the top and in the MoD is urgently needed. The absence of clear, unambiguous directives – and of open, direct communication within the Ministry and with the armed forces – has taken its toll. The apparatus is de-motivated, uncertain and fears for its future. (Of course, lack of resources has played a significant role in limiting the possibilities.) Not only is discontent widespread but a traditionally proud and highly-esteemed officer corps feels a certain injustice done to them. In this respect, a curious event was reported in 2000 shortly before the elections, when high-level officers – including the former Chief of the General Staff, Chelaru – met and held a ceremony to establish the National Association of Military Personnel in Romania. Their programme looked like that of a political party. It called for a revival of Romania, which stood now humiliated by the state of affairs, by disregarding national values, by the authorities displaying a lack of interest in defence, security, order and respect for the law and so on. These servicemen called on their colleagues not to remain indifferent, but to take political action. A strange happening and, whatever its lasting effect, testifying to the serious misgivings of professional soldiers. (Of course, the movement was forbidden by court. Romanian serving officers are not allowed to be an active party member as the participants undoubtedly knew beforehand. The legal system proved to work effectively and the political system correctly withstood the challenge of General Chelaru)

Damaged pride, low morale and a need for re-invigorated Romanian values are one thing and perhaps an emotional outcry. But, according to a professional survey taken in 2000 among MoD personnel at all levels, top of the list of grievances are (a) the lack of an appropriate legislative framework for carrying out reform and (b) the lack of coherence and the absence of co-ordination between the different levels of the defence organisation as a whole. There are no long-range decisions. Department heads find

themselves not consulted and entangled in turf wars and so on. With each new minister, the previous reform is cancelled. There is no continuity of a broad, strategic nature. Bureaucracy bedevils every layer down to the platoon commander who has to prepare reports of 'dubious usefulness'. Professionalism is being threatened by financial cuts and there is no explanation given; nor is any perspective offered as to changes for the better after the long-time suffering. To add insult to injury, the serving officer gets most of his information from the open press or from 'rumours' that tend to enhance personal insecurity rather than alleviating it. It is not surprising that the new leadership at MoD has immediately reacted to this by appointing a State Minister for internal relations.

This is just one of the many steps taken in the first months of the Nastase government which, as mentioned before, is determined to end the political and bureaucratic paralysis that has plagued the country for so long. Reform of the defence organisation as part of the pro-western modernisation drive is one of the short-term priorities. Indeed, there is not much time left to show the difference and to tackle a host of serious questions. Minister Pascu's own frank account of what has to be done in the area of civil-military relations is worth examining, as a few points may illustrate.

- Politicisation (or re-politicisation) of the military must be banned. This entails both greater professionalism and greater involvement of parliament. There should also be a strict division of labour between the professional military and the Ministry of Interior, the intelligence services and the police. Also, inappropriate involvement of civilian politicians in the selection and promotion process should be eliminated and the promotion of generals should be approved by the parliamentary defence committee as should the nomination of military attaches.
- Loss of professionalism within the officer corps should be countered by sound selection/promotion/retention policies. Redundant officers should be relieved on the basis of a thorough evaluation and their performance records. Promotion should follow the same strict rules and the way must be cleared for promising young officers through education and foreign training.
- Civilian expertise must be enhanced and expanded both in the MoD and in parliament and the imbalance in expertise between government and opposition should be corrected.

On the separation of the professional military from the other security services, the police has already been civilianised under the Ministry of Interior. It remains to be seen how the government solves the sensitive question of the intelligence services in relation to the NSDC and to the MoD. This obviously does not lie within the authority of the MoD. It is, however, telling that the Minister of Defence poses the problem so explicitly.

The other points have also been addressed by the new leadership. Civilianisation has been slow – some 20-25 per cent of the MoD personnel is civilian – but there is a greater commitment to train and recruit more civilians. The *de facto* ascendancy of the military in national defence policy-making over the last couple of years is, however,

being reversed. Pascu's move to centralise planning under a civilian State Secretary for defence planning, George Maior, rather than under the Chief of the General Staff, *who was until recently also a State Secretary*, may be one to applaud. It may finally lead to the introduction of a centralised planning and budgeting system under political control plus better priority-setting. The new programme and budget system has been introduced as a trial in 2001 and is expected to be fully operational in 2002. Moreover, such a system and capacity could improve policy implementation. This is the key. In the meantime, the Department of Euroatlantic Integration and Defence Policy (under Maior) has been strengthened in its civilian personnel – at the level of director and section head – as well as by military expertise, while its position *vis-à-vis* the GS has been clearly defined. Plans and strategies for procurement can and should be developed by the GS, but the prioritisation of the projects and the relationship between them and the budget are determined by Maior's Department. Projects that cannot be afforded will not be started. Improved communications and the badly needed information system enable the various departments to actually work together and avoid duplication. The authority of the department under civilian control – and its ability to have a broader, civilian *and* military view on defence policy – have already led to some crucial decisions to reform the defence organisation as well as to priority setting and more realistic planning coupled to committed financial resources. To underline all this, the Budget Branch of the GS has been transferred to Maior's department.

Before the recently-announced increase of the defence budget, Romania spent the smallest amount per capita and per individual soldier of all MAP states except Albania. The rundown of the army is, as everywhere else, necessary – but no problem in Romania from a *quantitative* standpoint. Already at this moment, the numbers are below the official target – set at 112,000 military and 28,000 civilians by 2005 – namely 105,000 military men. Moreover, another 4,000 officers and 2,000 civilians are expected to leave the army in 2001. The problem is precisely quality and balance in the ranks. In most cases the leaving military are from the lower ranks, perpetuating the problem of the inverse pyramid. When taking office, Pascu found an astonishing surplus of about 450 generals, 1,700 colonels, 3,800 lieutenant-colonels and 5,000 majors in the Romanian armed forces. (The previous government increased the number of generals from about 150.)

The readjustment of the reversed pyramid must be completed by 2003. It will cost $100 million. Impressive steps have been taken during the first 10 months of the present government. No less than 4,134 officers were discharged, out of which 44 were generals, 888 were colonels, 1,442 were lieutenant-colonels and 1,335 were majors. Meanwhile, a *Guide of Military Career* is to be introduced which addresses the problem of recruitment/promotion/retention. In order to fill the higher ranks with highly qualified officers in the near future, three target groups have been established in 2001. The primary objective is to be able to fulfil international responsibilities in peacekeeping operation

support. The first group of these selected 'best and brightest' consists of 120 officers, up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and NCOs. These men already have experience. The second group of about 200 are an augmentation force, while the third group start elementary training. This attempt to fill the ranks with well-trained officers is also meant to provide significant and robust support to NATO-led peace operations for which Romania has now earmarked some 1,350 military.

All these investments in human resources will cost money. The defence budget for 2001 has increased by 18 per cent over 2000, but with a provision that the Ministry of Finance will add another $250 million per year as a discretionary fund. Only if Defence can make clear the extra money is needed, and will be spent well, is it allowed to use the cash. No doubt, these funds will be extremely welcome for the social costs of resettling the thousands of redundant officers in the next three years. Here too, accomplishments must be noted. Up to September 2001, re-education and resettlement programmes for redundant military personnel have been attended by more than 2,000 persons of who hundreds have found new employment. At the same time, the present government has still to pay for arms projects planned in the early 1990s, some $125 million a year. These projects are the legacy of unrealistic planning for an army of a Cold War size and concern weapons systems like the TR 85 tanks, that are obsolete (again) by the time the upgrading of the last tank has been completed. Nonetheless, the legal contracts must be honoured and paid for. Other commitments like investments in radar and communication systems and air defence facilities interoperable with NATO forces account for another block of money. So, even with the 4-5 per cent yearly increase of the defence budget which is made contingent on the growth of the GNP, Romania will have no resources for any major acquisitions until (at least) 2004.

However daunting the task of Pascu's team is, the reform has got off to a flying start and a number of tough and thoughtful decisions have already been made. Priorities have been set and the ground is prepared for an appropriate and affordable defence effort for the future. The Nastase government has so far shown a degree of collegiality and team spirit unprecedented in modern Romania and is determined to pursue its trek to the west. Last but not least, it is willing to pick up the bill for NATO membership rather than uttering great, albeit vague, promises such as its predecessors (including Iliescu's first government) were prone to give.

3.5 Assessment

Romania made a great effort to secure an invitation to negotiate accession to NATO at Madrid 1997. Then, at Washington 1999, like others, it had to be satisfied with yet another reference to NATO's 'open door', a hint that it would be among the first for consideration in the next round, and the consolation prize of MAP-state 'status'. The

Constantinescu government failed to deliver to the Romanian people as well as to the west.

The second Iliescu government is determined not to make the same mistakes, domestically or internationally. The fundamental problem it faces, however, concerns precisely the tension between domestic legacies and international imperatives. The dual identity of Romania and the Romanians sets (1) the national identity built-up in isolation and self-esteem versus (2) the unavoidable, international road to modernity and integration. This alternative is a new one since 1989, when there was virtually no political opposition during the Revolution able to take over and lead on the road to modernity, democracy and a market economy. The legacy of the past dominated the first Iliescu administration, disabled the Constantinescu administration and is still felt in Iliescu's second term. Yet, the other identity has grown in the government ranks and presents itself clearly. Its failure to deliver could, however, reverse this trend and endanger the fledgling democracy in Romania with the resurgence of (extreme) nationalism. The west cannot solve this problem, but it – and NATO in the first instance – has to recognise what (for example) deciding on the 'zero option' in Prague would imply for the ongoing struggle for democracy and modernity in Romania.

Fortunately, after having lost ground to other MAP countries – in terms of membership preparedness – Romania is building a case now for 'second wave' accession.

- The country has formal mechanisms in place for 'democratic style' *civil-military relations*, though lines of authority are confused – the 'two executives' phenomenon – and the legislative oversight of the security sector has been emasculated (not least because of resource constraints). Also, old personal networks clearly operate within and around the formal structures of 'democratic control'. The ability to give clear policy directions and ensure implementation remains hampered by the incompetence and autonomous mode of operating within the administration and ministries, but this is being addressed now. There is no rotation of security experts between government and independent scholarly institutions and real dialogue on security and defence issues is non-existent.
- Official claims that 80-90 per cent of the Romanian population support the drive for NATO membership are suspect. Raw data indicate that *public attitudes* are rather volatile though, to be sure, in strong support now. Government effort to influence (even manipulate) these attitudes has been strong, but there has been little effort to solidify well-informed judgement. Public attitudes are an easy target for manipulation among a population searching for security in nationalist orientations as well as for security with the help of the outside world; deep-rooted sensitivities and widespread hardship have created a volatile, insecure domestic environment where, as noted, well-informed opinion is difficult to establish.
- In the field of *military education reform* there is no lack of 'brochure material' on what Romania plans to do. Concrete accomplishment is harder to identify. However,

there has been some: in NCO training (with Dutch help) and in provision of higher professional training in the framework of sub-regional co-operation. In general, education in the new area of peacekeeping support is heavily dependent on foreign assistance. Indigenous attempts to improve higher education are proceeding, however, notably in the National Defence College (which needs re-invigoration) and at the School for International Relations and Public Administration that has built an impressive record in training future civil servants.

- *Reform of the defence organisation* – embracing rationalisation and restructuring – is something the Romanians have been wrestling with for years resulting in discontent, estrangement and erosion of professionalism. There is a dispiriting record – as with the approach to privatisation, for example – of unwillingness or inability to make tough choices. Minister Pascu and his team have taken a whole range of serious and constructive measures with regard to both rationalisation and restructuring. The re-organised lines of communication and command in the MoD must ensure prioritisation, affordability and sustained implementation. The government as a whole backs the reform underway and has demonstrated its support by pledging significant financial resources and initial co-operation as regards a division of labour between the different branches of security policy. Funds have been allocated to solve the personnel 'pyramid' problem and honour standing procurement commitments of the past. Significant sums have been allocated to solve these problems by 2003. The process of discharging surplus officers has been firmly set in motion, while the social costs incurred are realistically reflected in the budget. It is expected that by 2004 these burdening legacies will be gone, enabling new acquisition programmes to proceed. Until then human resources development has absolute priority.

The ground is being prepared for an 'appropriate and affordable' defence effort. Romania should be able to deliver; *but if, and only if, the serious and hard work of 2000/2001 continues* in the coming period of preparations for Prague.

4. The 'legacy' states

To sum up on the late 2001 position of the two large South-East European 'legacy' states, it suffices to repeat the characterisation offered at the beginning of this Chapter. In 1997 Romania was regarded in some quarters as a strong contender for 'first wave' accession to NATO and reportedly had European support for its candidacy (led by France). Bulgaria was not so favoured, partly because of its still-unreformed armed forces, but mainly because the Bulgarian economy was in disarray (verging on meltdown). Since 1998 Bulgaria has greatly strengthened its claim to consideration, as has been explained,

especially in our areas of interest. Romania has not, for reasons also given in the preceding profile, but does now appear to be in earnest about putting in order the organisation of its defences. Thus we think that, in this area, Bulgaria is even now as good as 'ready' for 'second wave' accession and it is quite probable that Romania will be by late-2002.

PART C

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

> Kafka never wrote the concluding chapter. But he told me about it once when I asked him how the novel was to end. The ostensible Land Surveyor was to find partial satisfaction at least. He was not to relax in his struggle, but was to die worn out by it. Round his death-bed the villagers were to assemble, and from the Castle itself the word was to come that though [his] legal claim was not valid, yet, taking certain auxiliary circumstances into account, he was to be permitted to live and work there.
>
> Max Brod, Editor's Note to the first (German) edition of Kafka's *The Castle* (1926)**.**

VIII. THE 'FIRST WAVE' CANDIDATES; PREPAREDNESS AND PERFORMANCE

1. Introduction

Whether examined separately or taken together, there is something missing from the nine country profiles presented in Part B. It is a sense of what sort of accomplishment a high level of preparedness for NATO accession represents. That a country has a system of 'democratic-style civil-military relations' might be neither more nor less than should be expected after a decade of transition. To have established an organisation and decision-making processes to produce – and continue to deliver – an 'appropriate, affordable and domestically acceptable' post-Cold War defence effort might be a reason for exasperation (that it took so long), acclamation (because it has at last been done) or astonishment (that it has been done at all). It would be useful to have some standard to help decide which. It would also be instructive to know to what extent the post-1999 MAP process – national submissions, receipt of critical comment and suggestions for improvement – is responsible for a number of countries being more or less 'ready' for NATO membership. Perhaps they would have made preparations along the same lines anyway. Clearly it would be good to have reference points on these matters.

Fortunately, we have them. The accomplishment of the 'second wave' aspirants, in our areas of interest, can be considered alongside the preparations and performance of the 'first wave' entrants – the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. We can look at the Three in broadly the same way as we have examined the Nine – focusing on civil-military relations, public attitudes, military education and defence organisation – and draw conclusions. That is what this Chapter does. Its material puts the 2001 position of the MAP-states in perspective. At the same time it yields interesting conclusions about the enlargement process itself and the evolving 'rules of enlargement'.

2. Czech Republic

In Czechoslovakia, transition in 1989 took the form of a total replacement of the old regime. For the Czechs, their historically ingrained impulse for freedom and social progress was freed. Three years later, when Meciar and the victorious parties in Slovakia pushed their nationalistic views, the antagonised Czechs – first and foremost Vaclav Klaus – agreed to let their ‘little, stubborn and somewhat less gifted brother’ go it alone.

A *Czech* Republic would be in a better position to fulfil its European vocation anyway. Political stabilisation and democratic rule were achieved in a relatively short time and Klaus's 'Thatcherite' approach to economic development promised steady growth. Western perceptions of political and economic success were of paramount importance in the 1997 decision to invite the Czech Republic to join NATO.

The radical replacement of the old regime affected all governmental institutions and bureaucracies. For example, the Political Department in the armed forces was disbanded and serving officers either left or were screened and eventually told to leave. However, new faces did not guarantee institutional stability and good governance. As in the other CEE states, the Czech MoD lacked the experience and capacity to plan and structure the country's forces independently; and even in 2001 struggles to get it right. Political success went hand in hand with organisational failure, which still haunts the security sector in the Czech Republic.

2.1 Civil-military relations

Post-1989 political stabilisation was successfully enshrined in the Czechoslovak legal framework. A new military service law was adopted in 1990, a new military doctrine in 1991, as well as a plan *Aims of the Development of the Czechoslovak Army until 2005*. In 1993 the division of the Czech and Slovak assets went smoothly. After the split, eyes turned to the new Czech government to start security reforms in earnest.

The man in charge of the newly-created Czech MoD was Antonin Baudys, a civilian without military experience. He aimed to turn the ministry into a civilian institution and to reduce the role of the General Staff to its 'core task', namely managing troops. He also undertook a major examination of the officers as to their 'moral, physical and professional qualifications'. Less than half survived the screening. Meanwhile, many young officers left the armed forces voluntarily. Amidst this turmoil, Baudys proposed a semi-professional army with some 32,000 personnel, implying a further reduction of some 20,000. Klaus decided that the defence budget should not surpass 2.5 per cent of GNP. Although already thinking of NATO membership, the severe shortage of funds posed problems for the readiness of Czech forces. Force modernisation for compatibility with NATO was also clearly beyond the country's means.

Even though Baudys received much vocal support for his ambitious steps to reform the Czech military, the new state's problems, together with the prevailing view among policymakers that the country would be unable to defend its territory on its own, prevented military reform. Baudys' ultimate goal to have a fully professional army had to be shelved. He resigned in September 1994. All these negative factors contributed to a decrease in the prestige of the armed forces. In the mid-1990s fewer than 50 per cent of the population had confidence in the military and a mere 33 per cent thought that the

army actually supported the post-1989 political changes. About the same proportion believed the army sufficiently trained. Indeed, the situation *was* serious. In 1995-96 the army lacked almost one-third of professional platoon commanders and more than one-half of squad commanders. These posts had to be filled with conscripts. Recruitment of cadets was at an all-time low and absence without leave commonplace.

Not until 1997, were the *National Defence Doctrine* and *National Defence Strategy* adopted. Although NATO membership was said to be a policy priority, the government put together a group of deputies to promote the entry of the Czech Republic *less than one month* before the Madrid summit. An interdepartmental committee, including the Prime Minister, was only formed in June. Political parties did not focus on military and security matters until it became clear that NATO enlargement was imminent. During the 1996 election campaign, defence policy ranked as the 8th theme discussed, while NATO accession was absent from the top ten; in 1998, defence issues moved up to the 6th position and NATO enlargement appeared in the 8th spot. Politicians did little to secure public support for NATO accession. Even during the televised parliamentary debate in 1998, only a few deputies of the parties in favour showed up and the floor was handed over to the communist and republican deputies to voice their dissatisfaction with integration into NATO. Challenged about the government's inability to present pro-NATO arguments, Klaus said: "I am not interested…I do not see the point. I am absolutely sure they – the public – are sufficiently educated."

Preparation for NATO membership was sluggish before *and after* Madrid. Disputes between the MoD and the General Staff (GS) prevented efficient management. Staff cuts did take place, but proved to be a bone of contention. Redundant officers and severe shortages of NCOs plagued the organisation. English language training remained inadequate. In the military academies, English was not even made a compulsory subject. Planning was stalled. In the first cycle of the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP I) in 1996, the Czech Republic committed itself to meet 12 of 21 interoperability objectives suggested by NATO. Analysis in 1997 showed that the armed forces were behind in accomplishing six, and had hardly started to work on the other half. In short, it was fortunate for the Czechs that the actual enlargement decision was based on political rather than military criteria.

2.2 Public attitudes

Scant political attention to NATO membership and the lack of an informed, popular debate had their effect on public attitudes. Experts and journalists deplored this governmental failure. After sustained criticism, including some from NATO officials about poor public support, this eventually began to be seen as a serious shortcoming even by politicians. Therefore the MoD adopted a programme of information (in 1997). The

proportion of people in favour of NATO rose from just below 50 per cent to just over. Low public support was attributable to several things. First, the lack of interest of the political leaders who thought support would come automatically *after* membership. Second, the geographical position of the Czech Republic itself provided reassurance. Third, history played its role in that many Czechs have negative memories as to the reliability of western powers and their interest in the country. Fourth, military affairs are of little interest to the Czechs anyhow and there is, in light of the past record of the military, even anti-military sentiment. Finally, the Czech public is not so sure about the good things NATO is said to offer and sceptical about the price. The defence budget is always a vulnerable target in debates on resources. Moreover, the Czechs have reservations about sending troops in defence of other countries, acceptance of NATO troops on their territory, exercises by NATO forces in their Republic and regular flights over the country. In this situation it was up to NGOs to inspire a public debate. Before the 1997 Madrid Summit, they published more than the governmental agencies.

After Madrid a public opinion poll showed that the people's interest in the event was quite low. About 25 per cent of the respondents did not know what the fuss was all about, 28 per cent followed the proceedings just superficially, 37 per cent noticed the event only by chance and fewer than 10 per cent followed the meeting with (great) interest. The Czech authorities had won a big victory, about the value of which they still had to convince their own people. At the political level, though, Madrid led to direction for the transformation process in the armed forces and security policy-making. Pressure proved helpful in the legislative process as well and some draft bills were quickly adopted. Discussions about the ratification process – and a possible referendum – resulted in a more lively public debate. At last, the foreign and security orientation of the country engaged society-at-large.

2.3 Military education

Professionalism and personnel issues have arisen time and again since the mid-1990s but human resources management has not greatly improved. The exodus of young officers and those trained abroad has weakened the defence organisation. The GS is sceptical about an all-volunteer army and argues it will not be feasible before 2015. Personnel policy suffers from the lack of a concept, the slow progress of military reform and the occupation of high posts by older officers. The GS has neglected education arguing that there are enough problems to solve, while the MoD has been in conflict with the Military Academy in Brno about sustaining an advanced security policy and defence management course, the planning of a research centre and the supervision of officer education. There is animosity too between Brno and the GS Academy at Vyskov. English training has

improved, but only after strong insistence from NATO. Even so, the language skills of the officer corps are still generally regarded as insufficient.

Reform of the military education system to promote professionalism has been negligible. The military education establishment is oversized to such an extent that it could still educate the numbers of soldiers of Cold War days. Shadow or 'underwater' departments are three or five times as large as the official ones and employ Soviet-style instructors. Many redundant officers were 'promoted' as instructors. The curriculum still reflects the old training programme and the Chief of the General Staff, Jiri Sediviy, has actually complained that the schools still train military specialists that the armed forces do not need.

Despite widespread opposition within the armed forces to an all-volunteer army, professionalisation has significant support among the Czech public: one poll showed 48 per cent in favour of it and 35 per cent opposed. This is also connected with the desire of young male voters to get rid of conscription and not an indication that younger people would be seeking a career in the forces. Some positive developments can be noted too, however, like the three-month NCO courses offered by a British team at the Vyskov Military Academy. Professionalisation and training have been advanced also through the participation of Czech units in peacekeeping operations. It has even been argued that the army might be divided in two components – a conscripted home defence force and a professional one. However, the professionals already do their international job and the measure would simply codify the mismatch between their units and the weak territorial defence force.

2.4 Defence organisation

The limited political attention paid to defence and security has basically left the organisation on its own. Pressure from the parliamentary Defence Committee has been almost non-existent. Ministers of Defence have all lacked military understanding and the different governments as a whole have not cared about serious reform nor about strengthening their hold on the defence organisation. Only when criticism was circulated in the press, that security matters and NATO membership were considered as the exclusive business of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military, was a special interdepartmental committee formed. The ministries of Finance, Trade and Industry were put on this and would play a crucial role in decisions on modernisation of military equipment which, in turn, partially explain current budgetary problems (2000/2001).

Financial resources are obviously a major problem as everywhere else. The low esteem in which the military is held and neglect of security matters in general merely make it harder to obtain defence money which is simply seen as a burden. Moreover, the Czechs do not lack a sense of self-esteem *vis-à-vis* others (ask the Slovaks) and are

perhaps too confident in their indispensability (ask Vaclav Klaus). Sometimes one gets the impression that Czech membership should be seen as a sacrifice on the part of the Republic and a favour to NATO. However, the most serious factor in the Czech Republic is the almost total lack of reform of the security institutions and the inability to set defence priorities. As to the first point, the MoD has undergone re-organisation after re-organisation on paper, but nothing real has happened. The feud between the MoD and the GS appears endemic. Consensus is still needed in 2001 on a vision that will provide guidance and determine the appropriate approach to restoration of professionalism, investment in human resources and a realistic blueprint for modernisation. In all this, the political leadership across the Czech security community should be involved. *Quod non*.

On the face of it, decision-making has continued. However, proposals languish, for there is no instrument to implement a decision and opposing forces to any proposal are numerous. Military commanders point their fingers at the incompetent civilians at the MoD, but the inefficient spending and unrealistic plans of the GS and services show the same: there is no system in place. The *National Security Strategy*, only adopted in 1999, is a series of generalities and does not give concrete planning guidance. In fact, defence planning has become hostage to domestic industrial interests and victim of irrational considerations. Here the ministries of trade and industry come in the picture as well as the industrial groups involved – RDP and the Chemapol Group, each of them with special ties to the MoD and the Ministry of Interior respectively – leading to yet other frictions.

The major investment in the near future concerns the acquisition of 72 L-159 subsonic fighter aircraft, a decision taken by the Klaus government in 1997. The cost of the procurement is about $900 million, the complete defence budget of one year or 80 per cent of the defence investment budget for a number of years. It is symptomatic of the Czech malaise that when the Klaus government approved the contract with Aero Vodochody the Ministry of Defence had yet to design a proper long-term plan for modernisation. Moreover, military planners were not in favour of this modernised version of the L-39 and L-59 trainers. Nor was NATO happy with a plane that has a limited range and cannot fully participate in out-of-area operations. Still, in December 2000, the first two aircraft were delivered.

The purchase of the L-159 has been under heavy attack in the press on many counts: its range and other characteristics, its unaffordable price and operating costs, the non-purchase of flight simulators as well as the politics involved. An official says that those who planned the purchase "were trying to rescue the Czech aircraft industry, without taking any notice of the fact that we did not need so many aircraft for our defence." The point here, though, is what the story says about the MoD's planning departments. Yet, the ministry is determined to buy *another* – supersonic – aircraft. Again, NATO is not encouraging the purchase, fearing that it will ruin budgetary freedom and seriously hamper the transformation of the armed forces and their operational readiness. The ODS Chairman of the Defence and Security Committee, Petr

Necas, has vehemently opposed the procurement and urged his party to withdraw support. It remains to be seen whether the project can be financed by long-term governmental loans and the 150 per cent offset which Minister Vladimir Vetchy has said the government would require. At the same time, the furious reaction of Prime Minister Zeman to a suggestion by the American ambassador to take second-hand F-16s from the US, may be a sign of continuing determination of the Czech government.

Another doubtful modernisation project is the Czech upgrade of the country's Russian-made T-72 tanks. This also must be seen against the background of the interests of the Czech arms industry. NATO would like to see the Czechs set different priorities. Neither the L-159 aircraft project nor the T-72 programme is part of agreed Force Goals. However, the *Military Strategy*, adopted in 1999, explicitly states that the Czech arms industry must be maintained. Raw national interest seems to prevail.

Ministers have come and left and Deputy-Ministers have been fired at will, often as scapegoats for the shortcomings of the defence organisation. So did Minister Vetchy. In April 2001, he had to resign, but only after having shown his long awaited resolve by firing his Deputy some months earlier. But it seemed that the government was not waiting for a new struggle of competence at the MoD between the new minister, Turduk, and the General Staff and between the two 'clans' fighting each other from Prague and Brno. In May 2001, Prime Minister Zeman appointed General Jaroslav Skopek as 'Governmental Envoy' to Head a *Centre for Preparation of the Armed Forces Reform* in the Ministry of Defence. Skopek attracted some 20 highly capable planners and officers who had to prepare a report for the government in quick time. Their task was to define and plan the armed forces and their structures for 2006 having complete freedom in calculating a force cut to, if deemed necessary, 20,000-30,000 men. The Centre also had to define the necessary supporting assets and materiel inventory of a realistic and affordable force while staying within the range of 2 to 2.2 per cent of the GNP.

In fact, the new Minister, the GS, MoD Directorates and others – the heart of the bureaucracy – have been by-passed and the Centre has been asked to take a fresh, open-ended and open-minded look at the country's defences. Little protest is heard, for virtually everybody has had enough of failed reorganisation and endless personnel changes. Eight years have gone by since the 'velvet divorce' and the Ministry of Defence has been unable to rationalise and reform the defence organisation. Criticism from NATO, voiced among others by its Secretary-General in Prague in early 2001, might have contributed to this 'wake-up call' from the Prime Minister personally. It is not unthinkable that NATO officials and aspirant countries have pointed to the disservice the Czech Republic does to the MAP states in the run-up to 'second wave' enlargement. The Czech record had to be improved, at least in commitment.

Skopek's team completed its work in June 2001 and the government adopted the *Analysis of Required Capabilities, Target Structure and Composition of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic* on 29 August. The report admits a number of shortcomings

that are 'indicative of the absence of some needed and desired military capabilities.' The defence sector is said to be unable to plan effectively and to allocate resources to top-priority defence tasks. Force Goals were not fulfilled, training was insufficient and the high proportion of capital outlays, approximately 22 per cent in 2000, was regarded as 'untenable' in the medium term. The report notices the lack of balance between tasks and available resources and the absence of corrective measures leading to the binding nature of (industrially-driven) orders.

The authors thus touched upon some of the criticism raised in this section so far, perhaps most candidly as regards the country's experience as a full NATO member-state. One paragraph is worth quoting.

> A certain part of the general public, as well as some military professionals, still perceive membership of the Alliance as being merely appended to NATO, not as a qualitative change of the national defence concept. We have not yet fully succeeded to translate membership into the way people think, act, maintain their relations with others and perform their management tasks. In this respect, the Alliance is often viewed as a third party, not as an environment or entity of which we are an integral part.

However, beyond this diplomatically worded *mea culpa* there is *Nichts neues im Osten*. The *Analysis* simply enumerates all the familiar planning categories and force structure elements. It also calls for 'a change in thinking', but does not itself reflect movement in that direction. The indicated phases of reform are routine and lack substance as to the content of reform. Maybe the name of the first phase says it all: Preparation Phase – during which, among other things, priorities should be set and an intensive communication campaign to support reform should be started. Finally, this 'Preparation Phase' lasts until the end of March 2002 after which the time is deemed ripe for preparing drafts for things like legislative changes and implementation documents. We said above, that *vis-à-vis* NATO and the MAP states, 'the Czech record had to be improved, at least in commitment'. The latter part of that conclusion should perhaps have read 'and not only in commitment'.

2.5 Assessment

Pre-1997, the Czechs suffered from the lack of incentives. One can only speculate about what 'suggestions for improvement' from NATO might have produced, but the record shows that the Czech Republic does respond to criticism. Having said that, in Czech politics, security and defence policy ranks rather low and this has budgetary and other consequences.

- In the area of *civil-military relations*, well before Madrid the Czech Republic had the necessary legal provisions in place and a stable political environment. However,

regarding civilian direction of the armed forces there was, and still is, no clear division of labour between the political leadership and the GS. Moreover, Ministers of Defence can count on little enthusiasm or interest from their colleagues or from parliament and its Defence Committee. Even the issue of Czech accession to NATO was only a minor subject for discussion during the later 1990s. Little or nothing was done to raise public awareness on the issue. Nor was there much pressure on the defence organisation to show its seriousness by streamlining itself.

- Regarding *public attitudes*, the Czech people show moderate interest in NATO and only about 50 per cent support membership even now (late-2001). In general, defence issues are seen as secondary and the military as a state institution is held in low esteem. Defence expenditure is regarded as a deadweight burden more onerous as a member of NATO if military reform and modernisation are going to be seriously undertaken.
- *Military education* and reform have suffered from lack of attention as well as personnel problems. Too many diehards are still in service at the military academies. An ongoing competition between the MoD and the Military Academy in Brno has complicated reform there, while the input of the GS has been minimal. (Some modern-style instruction is provided by foreigners, however, and much is also learned through participation in peacekeeping operations.)
- The *defence organisation* has not only suffered from limited financial resources (especially in the recent recession), but also from the absence of pressure to undertake reform. Reorganisation upon reorganisation and endless personnel changes have plagued the MoD. Perhaps most importantly, the lack of proper defence planning and the high priority accorded to the Czech arms industry have made reform hostage to over-ambitious acquisition projects of dubious worth. Expenditure on education and training, personnel recruitment and retention, modernisation of the rest of the inventory have had to be forgone, and will remain low for the foreseeable future, to accommodate big-ticket procurement projects. In May 2001, the Prime Minister intervened and established a *Centre for the Preparation of the Armed Forces Reform.* The Centre seemed to have *carte blanche* in designing an appropriate and affordable force structure based on robust planning and budgetary procedures. For whatever reasons, the Centre has not done that but put the defence organisation back to square one by prescribing a reform ‘preparation phase’ well into 2002 while only noting, but not remedying, the most obvious shortcomings.

These summary observations on the Czech experience pre- and post-accession in our areas of interest are noteworthy for an obvious reason. The Czech Republic is now a NATO member-state of almost three years' standing. Yet by the norms set for the MAP states the country might well be regarded as still insufficiently prepared for membership in respect of its civil-military relations, public attitudes to security matters, military

education provision and especially the quality of its defence organisation and decision-making processes.

3. Hungary

In 1989 Hungary faced a Herculean task to radically reduce and redirect its inherited Soviet-style mass army. In the early 1990s the country was focused on political and economic reforms: the armed forces were predominantly viewed as financially burdening these priorities. Especially in this period force reductions and budget-cutting occurred randomly. Matters have improved since, but indiscriminate shrinking of the forces has resulted in 'hollow' units and driven many young officers and NCOs from service. The Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) numbered 150,000 in 1989 and will be less than 43,000 at end-2001. The defence budget as a portion of GDP was 2.8 per cent in 1989. It is 1.7 per cent in 2001.

Attempts at reforms of the armed forces were undertaken by successive governments from 1990 to 1994 (with the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) as the largest party) and from 1994-1998 (with a Socialist Party (MSP)-dominated government). None of these gained sufficient political support, or received enough funding, to be carried out in full.

Hungary focused increasingly on NATO membership from 1994 onwards when the Horn government realised that integration into the European Union was going to be more demanding than joining NATO. The condition of good neighbourly conduct led to the pre-Madrid signing of Basic Treaties with Slovakia (1995) and Romania (1996). The issue of the three million ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries had reappeared on the political agenda after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and has been a source of friction and potential conflict since. After NATO accession in 1999, though, unilateral Hungarian activism on behalf of ethnic Hungarians in neighbouring countries increased. Thus, the Hungarian Prime Minister linked the issue of ethnic Hungarians in Vojvodina with a settlement in Kosovo in the immediate aftermath of Operation Allied Force; and on 20 June 2001 Budapest introduced a 'Status Law' to support ethnic Hungarians in their home countries with, among other things, scholarships to study Hungarian and permits to work three months per year in Hungary. The 2001 Law has triggered angry reactions from Slovakia and Romania, accusing Hungary of meddling in their internal affairs. These examples raise the question whether Hungary's earlier resolution of bilateral disputes over ethnic minorities was tactical (and cynical) for external consumption to support the NATO candidacy.

It was not until the 1997 Madrid Summit that adaptation to NATO standards of interoperability and planning was to start in earnest. The (then) 16 member-states criticised the Hungarian defence planning and budgeting system, insufficient knowledge of English among the military, incomplete integration of the General Staff (GS) into the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and inadequate funding for defence. Hungary committed itself to resolve these issues in the period up to membership in 1999. The commitment was only partly honoured. (On resources, the pre-accession promise to raise the defence budget to 1.8 per cent of GDP in 2001 has not been fulfilled despite high economic growth figures. Depending on the method of calculation used, Hungary's defence budget is either slightly or substantially below the targeted level.)

In the period from 1999 to early 2000, mounting pressure by NATO to live up to other unfulfilled promises – and the revelation of the Kosovo-crisis that Hungary would be unable to mobilise sufficient operational units in case of a spillover of the crisis via Vojvodina – led to the most comprehensive reform plan yet, the *Strategic Review*. (The disproportionate time, costs and efforts involved in providing KFOR with 300 men also served as a wake-up call to the Hungarians.) After considerable delay – the opposition Socialist Party unexpectedly retracted an earlier agreement on the main issues – the Review was accepted by Parliament on 12 June 2001. The most important steps of the prospectus are (a) to reduce compulsory military service from 9 to 6 months; (b) to reintegrate the MoD and the GS (at last); (c) to shrink the Defence Staff and strengthen operational units and (d) to finally start a 10-year plan for force modernisation and restructuring.

At the time of writing (end-September 2001), Hungary has not succeeded in creating effective, modern, NATO-compatible and financially sustainable armed forces. In the other areas this study covers, deficiencies can be recorded as well. The post-*Strategic Review* reforms may remedy the situation. However, this agenda also leaves much to be desired in the sense that it is vulnerable to resource-constraints and lacks long-term strategic vision.

3.1 Civil-military Relations

The legal framework for democratic control of the armed forces has been in place since 1994 by multiple amendments to the Constitution and adoption of a Defence Act. Parliament has the authority to declare war and in the event of its inability to act the President of the Republic has this power. However, he has to act jointly with the Speaker of Parliament, the President of the Constitutional Court and the Prime Minister. During a crisis a National Defence Council (chaired by the President) decides on the operational deployment of the Hungarian Defence Forces (HDF) at home and abroad.

The Hungarian Constitution stipulates a very strong role in the Government for the Prime Minister. He is elected directly by Parliament and is not just *primus inter pares* in the council of ministers. Especially the incumbent Victor Orbán (who heads the FIDESZ-Smallholders Party coalition) has opted for a strong Prime Minister's Cabinet with a relatively large structure of supporting staff in all policy areas, most notably for foreign policy and defence. The senior national security advisor, currently Réka Szemerkenyi, now has State-Secretary status and is prominently involved in defining security and defence policy principles and the military doctrine. Moreover, she has a co-ordinating role in other defence-related matters. She heads a Secretariat of 30 whose input has made security policy-making and planning more coherent (but also created competence uncertainty and diffused the authority line).

The National Security Cabinet of the government comprises the Minister of Defence, Minister of Interior, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Justice, the senior national security advisor to the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister (PM). It is the important decision-making body in the policy-area and meets regularly. The PM has the last word in this forum.

A major obstacle to proper civilian direction of the armed forces in Hungary (à la Carnovale-Simon) has been a defence organisation in which the (re)integration of the GS in the MoD and subordination of the GS to the civilian leadership remains a main bone of contention. In the coalition negotiations after the 1998 ballot the FIDESZ-party's coalition-partner, the Smallholders, ended up with the MoD. Since then, the party has virtually disintegrated, leaving the Minister in a weak position. This has increased the hold of the Cabinet of the PM. With a further reorganisation in progress – a full integration of the GS into MoD structures is expected to be finalised by late 2001 – a weak political leadership of the Ministry is a liability, as is the lack of knowledgeable civilians at the highest levels. The much-criticised 'militarisation' of the MoD by the Socialist Horn government has not been remedied by the Orbán administration: four out of five persons in top positions have a military background.

The Hungarian Parliament has significant authority in exercising legislative oversight of the defence organisation. 'The Defence Committee is to continuously supervise the implementation of the tasks and the state of the armed forces and the use of the defence budget' (*Defence Act* 1993). However, lack of experience in security and defence matters among parliamentarians and a dearth of knowledgeable civilian staff has seriously hampered the working of the committee. Moreover, tight budgets have prevented the build-up of expert staff at the party level. Nor is there independent expertise capable of formulating alternatives to government policies. Parliamentary control therefore tends to be reactive, superficial and concentrates on identifying obvious mistakes and blunders. Committee members have also complained that information provision has not been satisfactory. In addition, there have been frequent cases in which

the Minister of Defence, called to appear before the Committee, has been unable to give satisfactory answers to queries.

Budgetary control by the Defence Committee is poorly exercised. Besides the limited expertise of all members, an uncritical attitude of ruling coalition MPs can be noted. However, their work is not made easier by the poor information provided. The draft annual budget has been difficult to assess because of a limited breakdown in items and sub-items (e.g. in a recent text the single line item 'Hungarian Home Defence Forces' made up two-thirds of the defence budget). And the structure of the budget differs from year to year, making comparisons almost impossible. There is evidence also of wilful manipulation by the (mainly military) staff responsible for budget preparation in order to direct discussion to minor matters. Procurement issues tend to attract more interest and *are* closely scrutinised. It is particularly in this field that 'negative' control is exercised – 'democratic control by scandals'.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the committee has gone up in recent years. With the change of government in 1998 membership was held in higher esteem by senior people and a number of more influential legislators joined it. Still, misunderstandings about the proper role of the legislature occur. In 1999 the fraction leader of the ruling party commented that 'the main duty of the Defence Committee is to carry out the government's programme'. Also the Orbán-government has cut Defence Committee sessions from weekly to three-weekly and the number of committee members is down to 21 from 24. Opposition parties are critical of these limitations. They reflect the strong hold of the government and the Prime Minister's Cabinet in particular.

The lack of civilians with knowledge in security and defence affairs is felt keenly in Hungary. Civilian control of the armed forces is hampered by this shortage in a very direct way. In recent years, the chances a booming economy offers turned away most young, talented people from specialising in security and defence. Very recently, because of the internationalisation of the field through NATO-membership, its attractiveness for civilians has increased somewhat. Nevertheless, some commentators say that it might take another 10 years before there is a critical mass of people knowledgeable in the field.

3.2 Public Attitudes

All political parties support NATO membership, but before 1997 popular support was only moderate. Figures from polls differ considerably. Surveys by the USIA Office of Research and Media Reaction in the mid-1990s showed well over 50 per cent of respondents 'for' NATO membership; but in 1996 Central and Eastern European Eurobarometer found only 32 per cent in favour while 22 per cent were undecided. Support rose in 1997: 47 per cent for NATO-membership, with 22 per cent undecided and 15 per cent against (poll before the Madrid Summit in July 1997).

However, on 16 November 1997, Hungary held a referendum. The question was: 'Do you agree that the Republic of Hungary should provide for the protection of the country by joining NATO?' An impressive 85 per cent answered 'yes'. (The turnout at the referendum was just under 50 per cent.) This result casts some doubt on the reliability and validity of opinion polls on NATO membership before an invitation is issued. Large segments of the population probably lose their doubts once their country is actually invited to join. (On the other hand, the Hungarian government did run a vigorous 'pro' campaign in the run-up to the plebiscite.)

The Hungarian armed forces in general enjoy low public esteem since they are regarded as having been willing accomplices in the domination of Hungary by the Soviet Union. Public trust has, however, gradually improved since the democratic transition, but a career in the military is rated very low. Not many people are willing to join the armed forces as an officer, let alone as NCOs or contract soldiers. Besides a low prestige of the profession, salaries are well below those offered in other branches of the economy. At the moment, one-third of contract soldier positions are unfilled.

3.3 Military Education

The Hungarian system of military education has been in a continuous reform process since 1990. From 1967 until 1989 senior officers were taught in the Soviet Union. All military education is now integrated into the national education system. Certificates from military educational institutes are recognised in society and graduates with technical specialisations are in high demand in the economy.

The military system is again being overhauled. This affects the National Defence University (Miklós Zríny National Defence University) – founded in 1996 out of the old Military Academy – as a part of the regular Hungarian education system with mixed military and civilian enrolment. The NDU offers a Masters-degree in Security and Defence Policy and Bachelor degrees in Military Sciences, Management and Organisation and military-technical degrees. An enormous change is that now some 60 per cent of the teachers at the NDU are military officers. In the curriculum, social sciences play a relatively large role. Since 2000, the Military Technical College has been integrated into the NDU. Military education currently absorbs 7 per cent of the defence budget. This proportion will fall. With a ratio of one teacher to only seven students, rationalisation is overdue. Secondary military education has been abolished; the current system starts from age 18. Some specific military specialisations are not offered in Hungary itself, but use is made of courses in allied countries.

The heavy workload for officers and NCOs in the period running up to membership in 1999 meant that they were simply not available for language training. Command of English is higher among the younger military, but they lack the experience

to work in a NATO environment. Development of English language training is a declared priority for Hungary, but it will take time before sufficient numbers are trained. At present, figures from the MoD say that 1,900 officers (out of 8,600) have command of English in word and writing at either the elementary or intermediate level.

3.4 Defence Organisation

When the first democratic elections were approaching in 1990 the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSP) – in anticipation of an election defeat – attempted to influence as many areas as possible by hurrying through a large number of reforms. Wrongly expecting to be able to win the presidential elections, the former communists tried to preserve their power base inside the armed forces by dividing the defence apparatus into two separate entities: a small MoD under the supervision of the PM and a large GS under control of the President. The 1990 elections resulted in a centre-right coalition government headed by Prime Minister József Antall of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF). As a result of a political deal by the coalition with the largest opposition party, the Free Democrats (SZDSZ), the parliament elected Arpád Göncz of SZDSZ as president. The political divisions between PM and President stood in the way of any meaningful reforms in the armed forces between 1990 and 1994. Most of the decisions necessitated a two-thirds majority and the opposition halted almost all plans.

In 1992, a Constitutional Court decision subordinated the GS to the MoD, but they remained separate organisations with various duplicated tasks. Civilian control was improved by the Court ruling, but the 300-strong MoD could not exercise sufficient control of the 3000 in the GS. After prolonged negotiations the required two-thirds majority for amendments to the *Act on National Defence* was achieved in 1993. However, the reintegration of the MoD and GS, foreseen in the Defence Act, was abandoned again when a socialist-liberal government took over power in 1994. Also, active and retired military were appointed to key positions in the MoD. Apart from the Minister and the political State-Secretary all the other five senior leadership positions were held by (ex-) military. This government, nevertheless, secured Hungary's invitation to NATO in 1997.

Domestically, though, in the later 1990s, there was a certain inertia ended only by the *Strategic Review* adopted in 2000 and 'ratified' – some aspects needed a two-thirds majority – in June 2001. As noted earlier, this foresees a 10-year modernisation and restructuring plan with three phases. In the first phase, taking three years, the main priorities are: improving NCO/officer ratios, improving the conditions of personnel and enhancing the capability to attract and retain personnel. The second phase is geared towards enhancing interoperability, improving material readiness, achieving high standards of unit training and acquiring urgently needed equipment. Major equipment

modernisation is postponed until the last four years of the plan. Especially the belated procurement is criticised by NATO. However, the Hungarian government first seeks to sustain and stabilise its human resources, without which later phases of the plan cannot be implemented. Although this makes sense, the phrase ‘too little and too late’ applies.

There is a broad consensus in Parliament for all-volunteer armed forces in due time. The opposition thinks this is feasible in 2 to 3 years, while the ruling coalition says 8 to 10 years. The *Strategic Review* does not make a relevant provision in plans or in the budget. The conspicuous omission, however, is that the 2000/2001 *Review* is not underpinned by a Security Strategy. A document exists in draft form, but confusion about competencies means no Ministry or office has taken it upon itself to have the text approved by Parliament. The *Strategic Review* shows a strong preoccupation with territorial defence: the Hungarians only pay lip service to out-of-area operations.

Finally, regarding Hungary's structural capacity for planning and programming, a new system started in 1997. However, procedures have not developed smoothly (which is why the PM's Cabinet now takes a prominent hand in decision-making).

3.5 Assessment

What has already been concluded by NATO, by many commentators and also by the Hungarians themselves can only be reiterated here: at the time of the membership invitation in 1997 the compatibility and interoperability of the HDF with NATO forces – in human and technical terms – was grossly overestimated. Although some deficiencies were to have been addressed in 1997-99, measures to remedy them have taken much longer than expected. Hungary promised to meet 14 of its initial 48 target force goals by its accession in March 1999 but one year later had completed only six and was still working on 40 others. Essentially, the country promised NATO-compatible forces by 2005. If the current *Strategic Review* is carried out as planned, this will not happen before 2010. The target to steadily raise the defence budget's portion of GDP by 0.1 per cent per year to reach 1.8 per cent in 2001 has not been met; (re)integrating the GS into the MoD was planned for 1999, but has yet to happen; a 'NATO standard' defence planning and budgeting system is not fully embedded and still runs parallel with the national one; and although English language proficiency is on the rise, it will be five to six years before it reaches satisfactory levels. This is a remarkable roll-call of shortfalls which, if recorded for a MAP-state, would be designated serious military inadequacies.

Hungary counters that it did not have MAP-like guidance and feedback from NATO when preparing for membership and highlights the budget-drain associated with its contributions to *Operation Allied Force* and to KFOR. This is true, but Hungary willingly committed itself to certain targets in 1997 and was unable to meet these primarily because of a lack of political commitment, and unwillingness to take harsh

measures and draw resources from other policy-areas while also gearing up for the now more urgent task of preparing for EU-membership. NATO's inability to sustain its leverage on 'first wave' entrants is clearly a matter worth reflecting on.

Drawing conclusions on the specific fields this study is looking into and making a summary assessment similar to those in part B above (for the MAP-states), we note the following:

- With all legislation properly in place in the area of democratic *civil-military relations* a closer look at practice reveals a number of problems.
  (a) The legacy of the Hungarian transition period which separated the MoD from the General Staff has not yet been remedied. During this eleven years separate civilian and military cultures have thrived. The announced reintegration for 1999 has been delayed by political bickering and it remains to be seen whether – as part of implementing the *Strategic Review* – it will now be successful.
  (b) The role and extent of influence of the Prime Minister in defence and security is dependent on leadership style. Viktor Orbán's newly-established Secretariat has since 1998 played a large initiating and co-ordinating role. Diverting the little civilian expertise available to such an office (officially out of the civilian control chain) instead of strengthening civilian influence within the MoD itself is unfortunate.
  (c) Parliamentary control of the defence organisation tends to be reactive, superficial and concentrates on identifying blunders (negative control). A slight improvement is reported in recent years. But better information provision by the MoD to Parliament – especially in budgetary matters – and more civilian expertise at the disposal of the parliamentary committee on defence are clearly required.
  (d) The lack of (independent) knowledgeable civilians is the main problem in the area of civil-military relations in Hungary. Most high-level MoD positions are still taken by (ex-)military and proper civilian direction is thereby frustrated (cf. (b) above.) The legislature is inadequately served too (cf. (c) above).
- On *public attitudes*, support for NATO membership was around 50 per cent in the years up to the invitation to join; the referendum of 1997 showed an overwhelming 85 per cent in favour of NATO-membership; circumstantial evidence, about Hungarian attitudes when NATO was bombing Serbia (and still), suggests that the 'pro-NATO' count is probably a lot lower than that now (2001).
- The *military education* system has been continuously restructured and rationalised since 1990. Civilian participation in the system is still low but slowly on the rise. In recent years Hungary has considerably increased the number of English language courses, but it will be some time before enough officers are proficient.
- As for Hungary's *defence organisation* for military provision, a 10-year modernisation and restructuring plan (2000-2010) is the key to finally getting it

'right' in Budapest. This prospectus postpones major procurement investments because it first wants to sustain and stabilise human resources. Yet, there is no security strategy document which outlines priorities for the HDF, so in this plan territorial defence tasks continue to get prominence. Although political parties support an all-volunteer force it is not a medium-term option.

Hungary's contribution to NATO will in the foreseeable future remain marginal. A limited defence lobby and low political priority for defence will continue to put pressure on funds allocated to defence. The current *Strategic Review* is a belated but essential step towards future delivery of military goods which Hungary invoiced years ago.

4. Poland

The historical background of Poland's accession to NATO in 1999 explains why the country is dedicated to NATO, and feels a responsibility towards Eastern neighbours which is unique for the region. For centuries Poland has been the battleground for other nations' wars or the stage for other powers' posturing. Only after the fall of Communism in 1989 did Poland regain its full sovereignty, putting the country in a position to develop its own independent foreign and security policies. Naturally the focus of these policies was NATO. In the light of history therefore no one was surprised when celebration greeted the invitation to entry offered at Madrid in July 1997.

As a member-state now, Poland is committed to building a stable region, and sees itself as the only player able to do so. The June 2001 visit by US President George W. Bush to Warsaw was appreciated by the Poles as recognition of their weight and position in the regional security constellation, but especially in NATO. As an expression of its seriousness of purpose in this (and other) respects, Poland acknowledges its military obligations. The most recent evidence of this is the adoption of a new *Programme for Modernisation* (of which more later).

4.1 Civil-military relations

Poland's constitution is not clear about the division of responsibilities between the President and the government in wartime. In this situation, the armed forces will be under the command of *someone* appointed by the President (on suggestion of the Prime Minister), implying that they could also appoint one of themselves. The question now is whether following the September 2001 parliamentary elections steps will be taken to resolve this ambiguity.

Concerning arrangements for peacetime governmental oversight, until 1999 there was an arm's length relationship between the MoD and the GS. Only after Poland became a NATO member was it settled that the GS is part of the MoD and falls under the authority of the Minister of Defence. The MoD does strategic planning, and the GS is responsible for national operational planning. Within the MoD only 20 per cent of the personnel are civilian, and within the GS only 15 per cent. The main reason for this is that governmental salaries are not competitive. The MoD urgently needs more civilian expertise in its central institutions, especially in key departments.

Legislative oversight of the defence organisation is exercised by the Defence Committee in parliament (Sejm) through its four permanent sub-committees: for the budget, NATO integration, social problems caused by restructuring and reform, and infrastructure. The committee has a lot of expertise, with many MPs having worked on defence, budgeting and administration for many years. When recent Minister of Defence Bronislaw Komorowski was chairman of the committee (1997-2000), he constantly urged the MoD to develop a modernisation and restructuring programme. The provision of information from the MoD to the Sejm improves each year. When MPs need documents they have easy access to them. The Sejm has its own bureau to analyse defence and security issues, and also regularly engages outside expertise and institutions.

There are very good relations between the polity and the military. The society also thinks highly of the military. It is ranked third in public opinion polls on trust in state institutions after public radio and public television. In the media the two biggest newspapers differ in their approach towards and reporting on the Polish armed forces. The *Gazeta Wyborcza* is the most popular newspaper, but does not have the most qualified journalists on security and defence issues. *Rzeczpospolita* is widely read among the 'decision making community' and has better informed and more objective reporters.

4.2 Public attitudes

Even though the level of support has been gradually decreasing since 1999, NATO is still supported by the majority of the Polish population. Opinion polls are conducted twice a year. In 1999 the pro-NATO count was around 75 - 80 per cent, in 2001 it fell below 70 per cent. (The public sees NATO as an organisation which has shifted its focus from collective defence (Article V missions) towards collective security and peace support operations.)

Citizens have an ambivalent view on the new restructuring and reform that is taking place within the armed forces. On the one hand they appreciate the rationale of the programme, to increase Poland's defence capability. On the other hand, since active duty personnel will be cut by 25 per cent (from 220,000 to 150,000), the social consequences will be enormous for many families and for regions where redundant bases are located.

4.3 Military education

Poland has four military academies (the National Defence Academy, and a Medical, a Naval and a Technical Academy), four officers' colleges and several warrant officers colleges and NCO schools. This amount of education facilities will be slimmed down in the *Programme for Modernisation*: there are currently around 22,000 lecturers employed. Training of NCOs will become a priority, and the expectation is to train 2,500 per year. The ultimate goal is to provide continuous training throughout the military professional's career.

The Polish National Defence Academy (NDA) provides courses to military personnel (command and staff officers) and civil servants. Because of the lack of expertise among civil servants – especially on NATO integration issues – the NDA has developed two programmes for civil servants: the National Defence Course (for national administration, government and parliament) and the postgraduate National Defence Studies scheme (for others). For the military a new 30-month programme was developed in February 2001, focusing on national security, logistics, management and command and air space management (with six-month language training at intermediate level included). Applicants should have already graduated from officer's colleges and must have 5-7 years' experience in regular units. In addition the NDA offers postgraduate Strategy and Operations Studies, preparing officers – full colonels with a good knowledge of operational English and minimum one multinational mission – for senior command and staff posts.

English language training is given at military districts (first level), the NDA (second and third level, also for French and German), and at the Personnel Department of the MoD (third and fourth level). Concerning proficiency the biggest problem group is the NCOs.

4.4 Defence organisation

In January and May 2000 the *Security Strategy* and the *National Defence Strategy* replaced outdated predecessors of 1990 and 1992. Not surprisingly, as a NATO member Poland shifted its focus. The territorial defence forces remained under national command, and were only for national purposes. More emphasis was now put on the ability to participate in crisis-management operations outside Poland. Operational forces (mainly land forces) were assigned for these tasks.

The changes in the force structure and capabilities of Poland's armed forces after 1989 were aimed at dismantling instead of building up. This process took place in a piecemeal fashion. Only in 1997 did a *Plan 2012* set the agenda for the next 15 years, taking into account the requirements for integrating Poland into NATO. The reason for

this 'late' introduction of a reform and modernisation plan was the end of uncertainty concerning NATO accession. The *Plan 2012* scheduled a halving of the number of divisions (leaving the army with six divisions and five independent brigades), an air force with 150 combat aircraft and a navy with 50 units. This would leave the armed forces with a total manpower of 180,000 (compared to 234,000 in 1989). Although the Plan significantly reshaped the force structure, regarding the projected size of the forces it remained too optimistic (especially from the perspective of financial resources). It has been superseded, as explained below. In 2001 Poland spends 1.98 per cent of its GDP on defence.

Since Poland joined the alliance in 1999 many things have changed in the country's defence system, from attitudes to policy priorities. In the words of the Polish ambassador to NATO, "it learned the NATO ropes". It obtained inside knowledge of the institutions, responsibilities, relationships, procedures and customs of the Organisation. It established more bilateral co-operation with allies, the level of language and professionalism of Polish officials has dramatically increased, and also within Poland itself the level of co-operation between different ministries has improved. Poland *in 2000* nevertheless saw its contribution to NATO as only a modest one. Further efforts, legislative and material, were essential.

In line with NATO's planning cycle, changes were made in Poland's long-term projections; and *Plan 2012* was replaced in January 2001 with the *Programme for the Technical Restructuring and Modernisation of the Polish Armed Forces 2001-2006* (short title – *Programme for Modernisation*), focused on Poland's contribution to the alliance (and taking a much more realistic view of available financial resources). The new programme would shrink the armed forces to 150,000 by the end of 2003, withdraw obsolete equipment, and privatise some support units. In this way resources – around USD 1.5 billion – should be released for investment in new equipment. In the words of a Polish defence expert "the *Programme for Modernisation* is a more radical version of *Plan 2012* and takes better into account the shift in NATO towards more flexible and mobile forces. With the changes of force structures and the addition of new capabilities, the operational forces would undoubtedly see an improvement to their ability to project military power".

The *Programme* aims towards full interoperability and compatibility for the operational forces – rapid reaction forces, air defence forces and Special Forces (one-third of the total manpower) – by 2006. They should by then be fully equipped. Under the *Programme* the share of investment expenditure in the budget will grow from 12 per cent in 2001 to 23 per cent in 2006. This will allow for the upgrading of weapons, but it will *not* provide funds to replace Poland's fleet of MiG fighters. Nevertheless the government issued a tender in early 2001 for multi-role fighter aircraft. Bidders have offered the French Mirage 2000, the American F-16, and the Swedish-British Gripen. A decision will

be made by the new government (following the September 2001 ballot) and will depend on which supplier offers the best offset for Poland's industry.

The lack of urgency with which the territorial defence forces are going to be restructured stands in sharp contrast with the plans for the operational forces (even though the former remain a major component of the land forces). Yet many persons in the MoD think the territorial defence forces still consume too much time and resources. Of the main defence forces one-third should be fully interoperable and compatible at the end of 2010, and the last elements somewhere around 2012.

According to a source at the General Staff three big mistakes were made during the later 1990s. Firstly the armed forces wanted to keep as much as possible of the forces that were available. But the NCOs were of a very poor quality, and almost 50 per cent of the manpower actually were officers (of which 75 per cent were senior officers). So Poland in reality had 'hollow' forces *and* 'too many chiefs, too few Indians'. Secondly, there was too much obsolete equipment, e.g. huge numbers of T-55 tanks and Mig-25 combat aircraft. Thirdly, military planners, who hoped for better times (and for gullible politicians), preserved the enormous infrastructure. The result was that large slices of annual budgets were spent on the maintenance of units and equipment and buildings. (Note this is almost exactly the diagnosis of Bulgaria's troubles, now driving a revision of Sofia's *Plan 2004*. (See Chapter VII)).

The decisive element in the successful introduction and acceptance of the *Programme for Modernisation* was the retirement of certain old officers who were positioned in the highest command and planning echelons, and who did not feel any urgency to implement changes. These Moscow-educated officers – of whom some had worked under Jaruzelski and were planners during the Cold War – were replaced by young, open-minded and loyal officers dedicated to bring about changes in the armed forces. The new appointments were made because both President Kwasniewski and Minister Komorowski demanded fresh faces.

Within Poland a discussion is taking place on the all-volunteer forces issue. The *Programme for Modernisation* plans to have 50 per cent professional service personnel. The clear trend within the operational forces is towards a higher level of regulars at the expense of conscripts. Plans are now being made to reduce the length of service for draftees from the current twelve months to nine months after 2004. The planned increase in professionalism and the decrease of conscripts means that a new category of extended service soldiers must be created on contracts of differing conditions and length of service. The hope and expectation is to motivate conscripts through financial incentives to extend their military service and become NCOs. More generally, the military human resources management system is formally in line with NATO standards, but in reality it is still underdeveloped. Obstacles are the lack of accommodation for military personnel and the absence of any transparency in the competition for jobs. But the most important flaw is lack of management and co-ordination. For example, with the *Programme for*

Modernisation more than 70,000 persons have to relinquish office. However this will not necessarily mean that the older or less capable officers will leave. With obsolete functions, capable young officers (who can speak English fluently) may be removed as well.

Turning to deployment facts, Poland has troops in NATO's Multinational Corps-Northeast (MNC-NE) with Germany and Denmark. In addition to hosting the Corps headquarters, the country contributes a 17,650-strong mechanised division. It also participates both in a Polish-Lithuanian battalion and in a Polish-Ukrainian battalion. In addition there are plans to form a joint Polish-Ukrainian brigade (drawing on MNC-NE experience) and a Polish-Czech-Slovak brigade.

As for how Poland regards the EU's defence capability, the initiative is not really comprehended or appreciated by Poland's security community. In fact there is great scepticism. However, the official position is that Poland wants to join the CESDP, but has set certain conditions: i.e. no duplication, no rivalry or competition, no undermining of the US role in Europe, and procedures must be the same as in NATO. The Polish contribution will most probably be a framework brigade (details are unknown yet) and some search and rescue ships.

4.5 Assessment

Even though Poland had been very active prior to its invitation for NATO membership in July 1997 in Madrid, it was only post-accession in 1999 that decisive reform plans were made and implemented. However, Poland has now finally set up the framework for restructuring its armed forces towards full interoperability and compatibility with NATO standards. The consequences are far-reaching, but in general support among Poland's defence establishment is high: many had been urging such a radical restructuring for years.

Concerning the specific subjects of this study we have reached the following summary conclusions:

- Within the *civil-military relations* area the unclear division of responsibilities between the President and the Prime Minister during wartime is the most important ambiguity. The relationship between the MoD and the GS has been put on a proper basis only since Poland's accession to NATO. Within the MoD though, only 20 per cent of the personnel are civilian, resulting in a lack of expertise in its central institutions. Parliamentary oversight is stable. The provision of information from the MoD to the parliament is still improving. The armed forces are among the most trusted state institutions in Poland.
- The positive *public attitude* towards NATO membership has subsided gradually since 1999, but there is still at least 65 per cent of public support. Opinion on the

Programme for Modernisation is divided: many approve of the aim, but many others worry about the consequences.

- *Military education* will see some radical restructuring in the near future. Education institutes will be merged, and half of the lecturers will be dismissed. The priority in education will lie in the training of NCOs. Also a new education facility has been created in 2001, offering a 30-month course for officers graduated from Officers Colleges who have had 5-7 year experience in regular units.
- The approval of Komorowski's *Programme for Modernisation* in February 2001 (when the country had already been a NATO member for two years) finally brought radical changes in Poland's *defence organisation*; and we expect the post-September 2001 administration to implement this prospectus in all essentials. The active force will shrink to 150,000 in 2003; and obsolete equipment will be withdrawn to free resources for investment in new equipment. The aim is to have one-third of the armed forces fully interoperable and operational by 2006, the next one-third around 2010 and the rest by the end of 2012.

An assessment of Poland's progress in defence and security affairs must conclude with a remark on foreign policy, for the simple reason that the country has assumed a crucial and constructive role in regional security politics since 1991, much as Bulgaria has done in Europe's South-East (albeit only since 1998). Poland would certainly pass the catch-all 'security and stability' test if required to 're-sit' the NATO entrance examination in 2001 or 2002.

5. Preparedness and performance: summary

This parallel scrutiny of the 'first wave' accession states – to set alongside the profiles of the 'second wave' candidates in Chapter IV-VII of this Report – is an eye-opener, to put it mildly. It is clear, first, that none of the Three was particularly well prepared for NATO membership *on the eve of the 1997 Madrid Summit*. The possible exception is Poland. This lends credence to the accounts of the 1996/97 enlargement debate which say that, until weeks before the Summit, only the Polish candidacy commanded general support among NATO's (then) 16 nations. On any reasonable reading of the eligibility criteria in the *Study on NATO Enlargement*, these accounts say, the Czechs and Hungarians were not 'ready'; and their inclusion in the 'first wave' was not an acknowledgement of preparedness, but a political gesture (made largely on Germany's insistence).

It is equally clear that, even *at the time of their formal accession* to the North Atlantic Treaty in March 1999, this trio's preparedness left much to be desired, especially in the military organisation area. None had arrangements for 'democratic-style civil-

military relations' firmly in place; and none had yet addressed the 'reduction, rationalisation and restructuring' of armed forces in earnest or seriously tackled the reform of decision-making processes with delivery of 'appropriate, affordable and acceptable' provision in mind. Nor had much headway been made in reform of military education. Once again, Poland was further advanced than the Czech Republic and Hungary (in all these respects). However, that was more a reflection on how little progress Prague and Budapest had made than a mark of great accomplishment in Warsaw.

Most surprising of all, the 'parallel scrutiny' shows that *even in the third quarter of 2001* the Three still have some way to go to meet the Organisation's declared expectations and requirements. In fact, our assessments of their present position(s) – under the civil-military relations, public attitudes, military education and defence organisation headings – bear a remarkable resemblance to our appraisals of the Nine. Particularly striking is that, although today *members* of almost three years' standing, the Czechs, the Hungarians, and the Poles too in this case are only now conducting – or about to embark on – their supposedly definitive post-Cold war defence reviews. They are in that sense where (for example) *would-be members* Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia are also. Turning that statement around, in the matter of reshaping national defences – with appropriateness, affordability and acceptability as the watchwords – the Bulgarians, the Romanians and the Slovaks are currently positioned more or less where the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are.

We cannot stretch this particular 'parallelism' too far. It does not apply to the smaller MAP-states. None of these has had to tackle the remodelling of a 'legacy' force structure. In general the Three are not a particularly instructive point of reference for 'start from scratch' cases. The possible exception is Slovenia, which made initial post-independence plans on a basis it now wants to abandon: it thus has a minor 'legacy' problem of its own making. The Baltic States, of course, took care from the outset to make only appropriate and affordable military provision, keeping resources and commitments in balance. They have never had to restore equilibrium by having set-piece defence reviews. (As for Macedonia and Albania, they are still building/rebuilding their forces, each in its somewhat special conditions.)

Regarding the three larger 'second wave' aspirants though, on the proposition that they are now broadly where the 'first wave' trio are – finally reconfiguring their forces to match needs and means – the evidence is compelling. Taking a contemporary snapshot – the analytical equivalent of an aerial photograph – we find the following.

- In ***Bulgaria*** they are implementing their *Plan 2004* while at the same time working on a review of it (based on the Kostov government's *Programming guidance 2002-2007*). The datum *Plan* was adopted in 1999. It is a blueprint for reshaping the nation's defences by shrinking the forces and restructuring them for post-Cold War missions, cutting equipment inventories and relinquishing military lands, and in the

process eliminating 'rank inflation' and other consequences of past inertia. The revised version involves among other things a more ruthless stripping-out of obsolete equipment and disposal of redundant infrastructure. This should end unproductive spending and free more resources for necessary interoperability enhancement at first, desirable equipment purchases for force modernisation later. In due course this should get rid of the 'hollow forces' phenomenon and deliver leaner but fitter forces for the future.

- In the ***Czech Republic***, a Prime Ministerial appointee, General Skopek, was recently tasked to produce a (long-overdue) new structure plan for the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic (ACR). He delivered a prospectus with a 'preparation phase' lasting into 2002. However his remit foreshadowed a streamlined active force of 20,000-30,000 personnel – massively down from around 57,500 – and 'the necessary supporting assets and materiel inventory' subject to a budget ceiling set at 2.0-2.2 per cent of GDP.
- Meanwhile, in ***Hungary***, implementation of a *10-year plan (2001-2010)* is getting underway now that a parent *Strategic Review* has finally been endorsed (12 June 2001). The *Review* foreshadows (a) reduction in the length of compulsory military service from 9 to 6 months, (b) rundown of central staffs to free manpower for front-line forces and (c) the 'integration' of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and General Staff (GS) (which has been on the Budapest agenda since 1997 at least). The *10-year plan* is a three-phased affair. Put simply, it is a 'restructuring first, modernisation later' scheme (which makes sense). It involves some disposal of obsolete assets (which also makes sense). However, administrative restructuring features more prominently than attention to mission priorities which still favour territorial defence (which makes less sense, in our opinion).
- ***Poland***'s preoccupation is work on a 2001-2006 *Programme for Modernisation* unveiled in January 2001. This envisages a manpower rundown to 150,000 active forces by 2003 (from a present tally of over 200,000). It puts contingency warfare and air defence top of the mission priorities list. It prescribes the withdrawal from service of much out-of-date but costly-to-maintain equipment plus the privatisation or outsourcing of some support functions. Smaller but more capable forces should result, because investment spending is projected to grow to nearly one-quarter of the budget by 2006 (currently the fraction is one-eighth). Having said that, an advanced combat aircraft purchase could soak up millions of *zloty* – or maybe then Euros – from the capital budget. Also, though the Poles do not give territorial defence (and 'main defence forces') the sacred cow status that the Hungarians do, there is a potential drain of resources here also to the detriment of the more agile and mobile forces that Warsaw wants to field.
- What they want to do in Bucharest – or at least what Defence Minister Pascu wants to do – is to get a similar programme lined-up for ***Romania***; and the Minister (and

others) are working on it. There is a predecessor's *Army Reform* 2004 prospectus which envisages a manpower rundown to 140,000 (112,000 military and 28,000 civilians) by the target date, after which there can be some procurement. However, organisational reform is a priority here, to ensure implementation. Also, there are NATO Partnership Goals to be addressed and MAP-related actions to be taken. A start has been made. An all-party *Declaration for Romania's Integration into NATO* signals commitment. So does the tempo at which the legislature worked in the first half of 2001 on related bills. So does the strengthening of the civilian direction of the Defence Ministry and the introduction of better planning, programming and budgeting tools. Pascu has also prised funds from the Finance Ministry for NATO-(MAP-)related spending and to meet expenses of inherited projects from the 1990s.

- In ***Slovakia*** they do not have a guiding document yet: at least not an agreed action plan. However, such a text was in preparation as this study went to press and should be approved promptly and implemented quickly. (Parliament has been kept abreast of the work.) It will map the route to, in the language of the authors' remit, 'an effective but affordable Armed Force … modernised to be operable with NATO military organisations' and suitably supported. The awaited blueprint, entitled *Armed Forces 2010* or *Slovak Republic Force 2010*, is the 'operation order' derived from a *Military Strategy* paper which appeared in May 2001. This prescribes for the Slovak Republic's forces a (post-Cold War) mission-oriented force structure configured in accordance with a 'tiered readiness' concept to ensure that there are no 'hollow' front-line forces. Also foreshadowed is a 'restructure first, modernise later' sequence. On the agenda, too, one finds 'consolidation, reduction and disposal of inventories' to free funds for higher-priority purposes (the Polish/Bulgarian formula). In the shadows lurks a modern aircraft acquisition (as in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic).

There *is* a remarkable similarity about these six images from our 'aerial photograph'. More remarkable still, though, is the fact that we have juxtaposed here NATO's three newest member-states and the three largest MAP-states; and the proverbial visitor from Mars would be hard pressed to tell which was which.

It is worth underlining the conclusion we draw from this particular outcome of this Chapter's 'benchmarking' exercise. Taking the perspective of the Three (the member-states), we find these allies of nearly three years' standing:

(a) in the early stages of, or about to embark upon, *programmes* to reshape their defences for the 2000s and beyond; which are in turn,

(b) the product of the first definitive post-Cold war defence *review* the individual nations have undertaken where the object was clearly to move from a (Warsaw Pact) 'legacy' force structure to one characterised by appropriateness (to the strategic circumstances), affordability (in the light of economic prospects) and acceptability (to domestic publics); and, of course,

(c) where a need to show clearly how the obligations of NATO membership will be fulfilled was the catalyst for the *review* and NATO membership is the context for which the *programmes* have been fashioned.

What our earlier juxtaposition reveals, of course, is that the aspirants Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia *are in more or less the same position* – (a), (b) and (c) above can equally well be applied to them – thanks largely to the MAP experience. They are properly prepared for NATO membership – in the sense that their commitment to forward programmes demonstrates a willingness and ability to make a relevant, sustainable and durable contribution to the Organisation – which is something their predecessors were not required to show in 1997 (or 1999). The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are at this point *almost three years after accession* (and after well over two years' experience of NATO's internal planning and review disciplines). Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia stand there *even though they have not yet attained membership status* (but after completing two 'external' MAP cycles and preparing for a third).

One cautionary note is necessary. In all cases here we are looking at prospectuses, forward programmes, intended behaviour. The most important thing about the future is that it hasn't happened yet. What countries say they *will do* may not materialise. It follows that before we can be secure in this argument of 'parallelism' – or the inability to tell members and non-members apart – we should ask how much trust we put in promissory notes. Our own judgement on this is that Bulgaria has paid a first instalment: in 2000/2001 it did broadly what it had said it would do. This is encouraging. Poland deserves 'credit' also, we think, on the strength of a track record of doing what it says it will do. At our end-September 2001 reference point, what Romania and Slovakia promise has to be taken much more on trust. The same applies, though, to the Czech Republic and Hungary. So there is no categorical telling apart here either. What we can say is that there are powerful incentives for the aspirants Romania and Slovakia to honour their 'promissory notes' – and to begin to do so in 2001/2002 – because, if they do not, they face disappointment at the Castle in Prague. As residents of the NATO village already, the Czechs and the Hungarians are under no such pressure.

Clearly, we have here our measure of the larger MAP-states' accomplishment. At the time of writing they are clearly further ahead in preparedness for NATO membership than the 'first wave' candidates were at a comparable stage (pre-Madrid 1997). Indeed they are further ahead than the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were on accession (March 1999). In fact, in important respects they are where the three new member states are now, as the immediately preceding paragraphs have demonstrated. In a different way, the best-prepared smaller aspirants – the Baltic States – are also as 'ready' for membership as their predecessors were (or are). We return to this theme in Chapter IX below and in our concluding Chapter X.

IX. THE 'SECOND WAVE' CANDIDATES: READY OR NOT?

1. Introduction

When the NATO candidate countries met in Tallinn, Estonia on 2 July 2001 they adopted a joint statement which 'urged the alliance to extend invitations at the Prague Summit in 2002 to all prepared candidates regardless of geography and history'. The main purpose of this Chapter is to identify which of the MAP-states (the Nine) *are* 'prepared' for 'second wave' accession to NATO, at least so far as the military organisation aspects of the existing members' expectations and requirements are concerned. The analysis is based on the assessments in the country profiles in Part B of this Report (Chapters IV-VII). To supplement this evaluation we look also at how the Nine stand in relation to an obvious benchmark: the preparedness (pre-accession) and the performance (post-accession), in the same areas of interest, of the post-Cold War 'first wave' entrants (the Three). This material draws on the country surveys – and our reflections on them – in the preceding Chapter of this Part of the Report (Chapter VIII).

2. The Nine: country-by-country

Identifying which of the nine MAP-states might now be judged 'prepared' (or 'ready') to accede to the North Atlantic Treaty is a matter requiring, first, a collation of our summary assessments on a *country-by-country* basis. (There is a *thematic* overview in Chapter III above.)

2.1 Albania

In our judgement, Albania – one of two 'discontinuity' cases in our categorisation of the Nine – falls below the 'serious candidacy' threshold and is likely to remain there for the foreseeable future. The basis for this assessment is that, under the headings to which we have paid particular attention (and, indeed, generally), the country has a long way to go to satisfy NATO's formal eligibility criteria and other entry conditions.

For example, one cannot say that Albania clearly practises 'democratic-style' *civil-military relations*. Neither its arrangements for structural civilian control of the

military nor its broader democratic control mechanisms are up to standard. Given the political culture in the society – including an endemic 'localism' – it may be many years before they are. Civilian control continues to be based on the (sometimes arbitrary) exercise of power by leading personalities. Legislative oversight appears to be lacking altogether. One can say that, at present, *public attitudes* towards NATO membership appear to be positive (or not obviously negative). Solid statistical evidence is sparse however; there are no independent attitude surveys or opinion polls that give an up-to-date picture. Moreover, (presumed) supportive opinions may not be robust. For example, how NATO comports itself in Kosovo and how even-handedly member-states act in overseeing the settlement in Macedonia in 2001-2002 could be influential.

Albania's *military education* system is in the midst of its second transformation in a decade. There are serious gaps in provision. There may also be something lacking in syllabuses. Communist ideology was dumped in the first reconstruction. Given the 1997 experience, we would like to be sure that the architects of the second have appreciated that professional preparation for a career in the Albanian armed forces of the future should incorporate education in both democratic values and the military virtues as understood elsewhere (e.g. in the mature democracies).

The higher *defence organisation* in Albania has undergone its own transformation since 1997. On paper, it looks in better shape than before. Only time will tell how the new set-up actually works. Decision-making processes remain seriously flawed, though a welcome shift from annual to multi-year budgeting is imminent. An early-2000 move towards an appropriate and affordable force structure for the country is in difficulties. Furthermore, it is hard to muster confidence in the Albanians' ability to revise it satisfactorily, especially since the tension between the professional military and the political leadership is palpable. What is certain, though, is that necessary force modernisation must now be more than half-a-decade distant.

2.2 Bulgaria

In contrast, we think Bulgaria is well prepared for accession or will be when it is confirmed that some shortcomings in its military dispositions are being energetically corrected. A strong card in the Bulgarian hand is the constructive role the country has played in the security politics of South-East Europe in recent years. More to the point here, the Bulgarians now have their military organisation arrangements in good order.

The country's *civil-military relations* are on a satisfactory footing, even though there are some residual MoD-GS tensions and legislative oversight of defence is barely adequate. There is, for instance, the requisite constitutional clarity about who has what responsibilities in relation to the armed forces. Civilian direction of the military is well established, and well exemplified by the post-1998/99 development, implementation and

(pending) revision of a reform prospectus. Democratic control is formally provided for even though, as noted, the legislature is neither as diligent nor as professional as one might like and the executive does not help by regularly withholding details of its policies and its spending plans.

Nevertheless *public attitudes* are acknowledged to be important. On the basis of end-2000 poll data, they are clearly supportive vis-à-vis NATO, showing over 70 per cent of the population 'for' accession. There is also evidence of popular understanding of what NATO membership entails. Surveys on this subject show reservations on the part of the Bulgarian people about hosting stationed forces and allowing overflight, but a surprising level of support for defence spending. As for *military education*, in this field much worthwhile reform has been carried through already. There is more to come. The principal item on the 'carried through' list is the establishment of the Interoperability Centre at the country's main instructional facility. In the 'more to come' category are co-location of the main service schools and the setting-up of a training centre for NCOs.

In the matter of *defence organisation*, the massive challenge of reducing, rationalising and restructuring the Bulgarian armed forces has been addressed. These processes have already acquired momentum; and Sofia has been responsive to constructive comment on the shortcomings in initial plans and projections. Its programming guidance 2002-2007 produced by the pre-June 2001 Kostov government clearly meets the 'appropriate, affordable and acceptable' test (in our judgement). It follows that, if this guidance is followed by the new administration – as appears to be the case – Bulgaria's forces should emerge much leaner, but fitter in all respects. Also, progressively more units should be able to pass fitness-for-role tests to qualify for inclusion in multinational 'packages' for future contingency operations (whether under UN, OSCE, NATO or EU auspices).

2.3 Estonia

Since 1991 Estonia has conscientiously developed its armed forces, and at the same time worked with Latvia and Lithuania towards the creation of interoperable units and a modest joint defence capability. There is a national consensus on the aims of defence policy. The country has more or less solved its domestic 'Russian question' and managed the relationship with Russia itself skilfully.

Within the *civil-military relations* sphere some 'division of authority' issues arise but are being tackled. Executive branch direction of the military is assured: indeed the MoD is almost exclusively staffed with civilian officials (many of whom lack defence experience). Legislative oversight is formal rather than well developed, largely because few MPs have sufficient knowledge of security and defence affairs and 'outside' expertise is minimal.

The *public attitude* towards the armed forces is supportive. The proportion of the population favouring NATO membership is high, over 60 per cent. Among the younger generation (the younger Russians as well) the figure is above the overall average. The government actively promotes awareness of security and defence issues.

Military education is one of the priorities in the medium-term development of the armed forces. The contemporary focus is on standardisation of officers' training but NCO training is receiving attention too. There are, though, no domestic courses for civil servants. For higher staff training the country makes use of the Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL).

Estonia is steadily improving its *defence organisation* and the capabilities of its armed forces. Key recent and planned future developments are: the formation of three reserve-based light infantry brigades, which has started; and the development of the ESTBAT, the rapid reaction battalion for international missions. Options for further trilateral ventures with Latvia and Lithuania – to complement the BALTBAT, BALTRON and BALTNET undertakings – are under consideration. The extent of such joint effort by the Baltic States makes it difficult to say whether a single country like Estonia can be judged individually 'ready' for NATO accession. (We return to this point later.) The country is, however, clearly well prepared in the areas we have examined and, indeed, generally.

2.4 Latvia

Latvia has made serious preparations in support of its candidacy also. With regard to democratic *civil-military relations* all the relevant legislation is in place and there is a clear division of roles and responsibilities. However, like Tallinn, Riga obviously misunderstands civilian/executive control: within the MoD there are only civilians working, which is dysfunctional. The country does understand legislative oversight, however. Elected representatives play a big role in defence affairs. Over the years, expertise has grown within the parliamentary defence committee, which has an excellent relationship with the armed forces. The same applies to the public at large, who rate the defence establishment highly.

As for *public attitudes* towards NATO membership support is high among Latvia's Latvians: nearly 60 per cent 'for' according to a mid-2001 poll. Among the Russian population, however, the proportion is only 18 per cent. In order to provide a counterweight to anti-NATO propaganda, the Latvian government has recently started an information campaign aimed at the Russian minority.

As in the other Baltic States reform of *military education* is receiving considerable attention from the Latvian authorities. The country has a new NCO school. In September 2001 its National Defence Academy will start a course for university graduates, who will

become lieutenants and can later qualify to become captains (and company commanders); and a staff officers' course and an advanced officers course will start there in 2002 and 2003. This is a coherent sequence of officer education 'at home'. For higher training Latvian officers go to the BALTDEFCOL and in some cases abroad.

The country also has a sound *defence organisation* (apart from that military under-representation in the MoD). It is on course to raise the proportion of GDP allotted to defence to 2 per cent by 2003; and it has scheduled capability improvements in line with that. Since Latvia is a small country, the enhancements are obviously modest by other MAP-state standards. They are none the less worthwhile. As for the future capacity to deliver appropriate and affordable provision, it is encouraging that Latvia now has a well-conceived planning process (to short-term, medium-term and longer-term horizons).

These are serious preparations in support of the NATO candidacy. In addition, Latvia is fully engaged in the various BALT-ventures, to which the country probably attaches higher importance than either Estonia (which also nurtures a Finnish connection) or Lithuania (which has an intimate security relationship with Poland). In this sense, Latvia's interest in 'group' admission for the Baltics is probably greater than its neighbours'.

2.5 Lithuania

If NATO approaches 'second wave' enlargement strictly on a 'case-by-case' basis, however, member-states will register that, of the three Baltic States, Lithuania has the best relationship with Russia (and a well-conceived policy towards Kaliningrad) and is the country that induced President Putin to concede each state's right to choose its security arrangements. They will note also that Lithuania is the largest of the Baltic republics, and hence the one able to contribute most in terms of military capability. In our assessment too, Lithuania stands *primus inter pares* among the former-Soviet republics.

With regard to democratic *civil-military relations* all legislation has been put in place; and in practice divisions of authority, civilian control of the armed forces and democratic oversight of the defence organisation are well established. Legislative oversight could probably be more effective: the constraint is some parliamentarians have little knowledge of defence affairs. Public confidence in the country's armed forces could be higher also; but the present Minister of Defence has created better information channels to inform the public about the military.

This is all to the good because information on *public attitudes* indicates that fewer than 50 per cent of the public supports NATO membership (and more than one-third are 'against'). Prominent in the 'for' category are the younger, the better-off, the better-educated, and the urban population. Elite opinion is more supportive of the candidacy (76 per cent 'for', 7 per cent 'against').

Lithuania's *military education* system – regulated by a centralised training and doctrine organisation – is comprehensive and coherent. It incorporates provision for language training adequate for the country's needs. The *defence organisation* as a whole has been streamlined in recent years and now incorporates arrangements for consistent short-term, medium-term and longer-term planning together with a formal PPBS set-up. The currently-planned defence effort appears to meet the 'appropriate and affordable' test: it gives priority to development of interoperable forces; and with funding at 2 per cent of Lithuania's growing GDP it should be sustainable.

On all the evidence, Lithuania seems to us somewhat better prepared for NATO membership than the other Baltic States in the areas of interest upon which our analysis has focused. The below-50 per cent of popular support for the candidacy might, however, be a cause for concern in some quarters.

Looking, briefly, at the three Baltic States together, it is clear that – although small and 'starting from scratch' – they have made their defence dispositions wisely, both individually and jointly. Their defence efforts are modest, necessarily; but each has made rudimentary provision for national defence while developing trilateral co-operation. The achievements under the latter heading are well-known: the various BALT-arrangements. Some of the pay-offs, however, are not so widely appreciated. Thus already in 1999 – five years after the start of BALTBAT – the project had led to 2000 soldiers serving within NATO-host formations for at least six months each. This adds up to 15-30 per cent of the peacetime strengths of the regular armies. Further, virtually all the states' front-line units have actively taken part in international exercises or peace support operations; and virtually all career officers have received training in the West or at BALTDEFCOL. For these reasons, among others, the Baltic States are probably more 'ready' than most other MAP-states to take a place in NATO, and from a military standpoint it would make sense if they could do that together.

2.6 Macedonia

Another 'start from scratch' state, Macedonia is a country still coming to terms with recent turmoil; but one which remains in principle willing – if in practice not able – to contemplate accession to NATO in the near future. That was a distant prospect in our opinion even before the 2001 upheavals, because of political instability and also, 'military inadequacies' – including many in the organisation area.

Regarding democratic-style *civil-military relations*, on the division of responsibilities there are a number of ambiguities in the Constitution and Defence Law. Civilian oversight is not institutionalised at all. Its exercise is personal. Although the Assembly and its Defence Committee have a strong mandate to perform legislative oversight of the armed forces, in practice the executive calls the shots. Civil-military

relations are thereby held hostage to democratic consolidation in Macedonia and a maturing of the country's political culture as the 2001 Framework Agreement is applied. On *public attitudes* the evidence is fragmentary and ambivalent. Intuitively, we feel that NATO membership may not now be supported by a majority of the country's population. The price of even-handedness in helping resolve the 2001 crises is that Macedonian Slavs have come to regard NATO (and the EU) as too sympathetic to the Albanian minority.

Like the armed forces themselves, an independent *military education* system had to be developed from scratch. In 1995 Macedonia established a central education facility. This appears to function effectively enough although provision for language training is barely adequate. It has proved impossible in the past to reach the quotum for Albanian enrolment, but this should change as the Framework Agreement is implemented.

Under the *defence organisation* heading our judgement is that, if institutional reform is now possible and the implementation of plans for 1999-2007 now realisable, Macedonia could soon be in fair shape. Unfortunately, it is too early to be sure about these things. That Macedonian officials regard the country's NATO candidacy as in limbo at present is hardly surprising. We, too, place the state well below the 'serious candidacy' threshold.

2.7 Romania

In contrast, Romania is well above it. An 'also ran' in 1997, and passed over again (like others) in 1999, the second Iliescu government is determined that the country will not be snubbed again. After having lost ground to other MAP countries – in terms of membership preparedness – Romania is now mustering a credible case for Prague 2002.

The country has formal mechanisms in place for 'democratic style' *civil-military relations*, though lines of authority are confused – the 'two executives' phenomenon – and the legislative oversight of the security sector has been emasculated (not least because of resource constraints). Also, old personal networks clearly operate within and around the formal structures of civilian control. The ability to give clear policy directions and ensure implementation remains hampered by an aversion to tough choices plus the incompetence and inertia of the Romanian bureaucracy, but this is being addressed now by an enlightened and determined leadership.

Official claims that 80-90 per cent of the Romanian population support the drive for NATO membership are suspect. Raw data indicate that *public attitudes* are volatile though on balance still in very strong support. Government effort to influence (even manipulate) these attitudes has been sustained, but there has been little attempt to solidify well-informed judgement.

In the field of *military education* reform, there has been some concrete accomplishment: in NCO training (with Dutch help) and in provision of higher

professional training in the framework of sub-regional co-operation (staff officer training and advanced instruction in defence resources management); and in improvements at the National Defence College (which nevertheless needs re-invigoration) and at the School for International Relations and Public Administration (which has built an impressive record in training future civil servants).

Modernisation of the *defence organisation* – embracing rationalisation and restructuring – is at long last being tackled in earnest through a whole range of measures to ensure better prioritisation, attention to affordability and assured implementation. The government as a whole backs the reform underway and has demonstrated its support by pledging significant financial resources and initial co-operation as regards a division of labour between the different security agencies. Funds have been allocated to solve the personnel 'pyramid' problem and to honour outstanding procurement commitments. It is expected that by 2004 these burdening legacies will be gone, enabling new acquisition programmes to proceed. Until then human resources development has absolute priority. In sum, the ground is being prepared for an 'appropriate and affordable' defence effort. Romania will be able to deliver, however, only if the serious and hard work of 2000/2001 continues in the coming period of final preparations for Prague.

2.8 Slovakia

After years of stagnation in foreign policy towards the west under the Meciar government, the post-1998 coalition launched a very determined policy regarding NATO membership, which is widely supported. The challenge to be invited to join NATO at the Prague summit is taken extremely seriously and underlined by clear political signals as well as action, including effort in the military organisation area.

Changes in democratic-style *civil-military relations* compared to the previous government are most significant in the political sphere, particularly the favourable climate which allows pro-active guidance to responsible ministries. There is broad political support for the *Security Strategy* – a comprehensive and clear document – and the military enjoy a very high level of trust among the population. Legislative oversight is satisfactory and has even matured into a kind of partnership, in that members of the parliamentary Defence Committee are fully involved in the work on a key *Armed Forces 2010* prospectus.

At the same time, *public attitudes* to NATO are mixed and fewer than 50 per cent of Slovakia's population are in favour of membership. A 'public awareness campaign' has been launched, but its short-term success is not guaranteed. The Slovak population is sensitive to 'propaganda' and being told what to think (for deep-rooted cultural and historic reasons). There is still a possibility that Slovakia will hold a plebiscite on the membership question.

Military education reform is a long-term effort and disappointingly little has been accomplished so far. Communication between Bratislava and the military academies has been insufficient and confusing. Moreover, most working teachers are from the older generation. They lack insights and experience regarding the requirements for post-Cold War conditions. Current curricula strongly reflect the preparation of the Soviet-style operational soldier. On present plans military education will be subject to significant reform and brought under the supervision of MoD.

At this juncture, the role of the government in orchestrating reform of the *defence organisation* is of paramount importance. Since the appointment of Defence Minister Stank, civil direction has been imposed with determination; and good substantive work and crucial decisions for reorganising the department are in progress. A *Military Strategy*, envisaged as the most concrete 'marching order' for the planners and the professional military has been approved and forms the basis for the *Armed Forces 2010* text due as our own Report went to press. The new political team at the MoD is determined that this will be the blueprint for a sound and sustainable military contribution to NATO, which will be regarded as clearly demonstrating readiness for accession.

2.9 Slovenia

Our assessment of the final country in this analysis is that, whatever strengths Slovenia may have in the politico-economic area, the country is closer to falling below the 'serious candidacy' threshold on military organisation tests than either its leaders or its champions would like us to believe. It has neither the present ability nor the structural capacity to deliver an appropriate, affordable and acceptable defence effort (in our judgement). What would be appropriate is regarded as not affordable. What is acceptably affordable to Slovenian society is a less than adequate effort, even for a small state (consuming only 1.2 per cent of GDP).

The country does not get particularly good marks in the 'Carnovale-Simon' examination on democratic-style *civil-military relations*. Slovenia has the necessary institutional and legal framework. However, legislative oversight of the armed forces is barely satisfactory, civilian control (executive direction) is practised in a way that amounts to intrusive supervision; more attention needs to be paid to making internal security forces accountable; and the division of responsibilities in the security area is not absolutely clear.

Recent surveys of *public attitudes* suggest that some 50-60 per cent of the population support NATO-membership although almost all political parties are behind the candidacy. However, neither the population nor the parties likes spending on defence and security. It is almost certain that a referendum will be held if and when Slovenia gets an invitation to join, with a marginal vote in favour the likeliest outcome.

The *military education* system – last reformed in 1995 – is sound, but it is not breeding a necessary sense of professionalism and cohesion among the armed forces. Nor is it delivering enough well-trained personnel (military or civilian). In fact the country's entire *defence organisation* is flawed. Reform has been slow and remains incomplete. There are MoD-GS problems in communication and division of competencies plus deficiencies in resource allocation and resources management. A force structure plan looks in trouble.

This is anything but a ringing endorsement of Slovenia's candidacy, so far as our areas of interest are concerned. However, we recognise that, in an overall assessment, the country's progress to a consolidated democracy and determination to attain European standards in all aspects of governance commend it to NATO. That is why when the so-called 'minimal option' for 'second wave' enlargement is discussed – just one new invitation to negotiate at Prague 2002 – it is Slovenia that is mentioned as the likeliest invitee. What we are convinced about is that this *cannot* be on the basis of military merit. The country gets very poor value for its defence money and some units reportedly lack the most basic items of equipment. Clearly what lends strength to Slovenia's candidacy is that it is the easy option (not so much 'minimal' as 'zero-plus'). It is a country whose admission will contribute nothing to NATO in military terms – beyond the strategic value of its territory – but whose admission will, on the other hand, cost little or nothing in political aggravation.

3. The Nine: comparative assessment

It is convenient to begin our comparative assessment where the country-by-country overview ended. The case of ***Slovenia*** is *sui generis*. The fact that the country is not far above the 'serious candidacy' threshold on military organisation tests may not be decisive. Having spoken highly of Slovenia's credentials since 1997, supportive NATO member-states – the country's champions – are not going to leap off the Ljubljana bandwagon because entrenchment shovels are in short supply. At the same time it is worth remembering that, when the Slovenian candidacy was pressed at the 1999 Washington Summit, it was rejected. There was no consensus; and that was partly because the country had not made sufficient effort in development of its defence capabilities and structures compared with the other aspirants. The Slovenes could very well have to face that argument again in Prague. The candidacy is at risk too if the US Senate remembers – as it surely will – that, after ratifying the three 1999 accessions, it said that guarantees would be expected that additional new members would be producers and not consumers of security. Other than in respect of its territory, including the 'land bridge' to Hungary it

provides, Slovenia cannot satisfy that condition either (although finally getting the 10th Battalion ready for international duty will help its case). In sum, this is a difficult country to accommodate in comparative assessment: *in the areas we have examined Slovenia is not very well prepared for NATO membership, though whether it matters in this instance is an open question.*

So far as the other eight MAP-states are concerned, there are a couple – ***Albania*** and ***Macedonia*** which clearly stand apart. Neither is in any sense prepared for NATO membership. We have tried, in all our assessments, to apply the 'Carnovale-Simon test' to gauge the presence or absence of 'democratic-style' civil-military relations. This covers constitutional clarity, civilian control of the military (executive direction), democratic control of the defence organisation (legislative oversight) and public confidence in how military business is conducted. In *none* of these elements of the test can the pair claim eligibility. There is 'executive direction' in both, certainly; but it takes the form of individual power-wielding – sometimes arbitrary and capricious – and not the required structure-based exercise of authority by accountable office-holders. In fact accountability (and transparency) are almost entirely absent in these states. On this basis alone we would regard the two as effectively disqualified before 'second wave' candidacy appraisal starts (though there are one or two member-states of long standing where the practices observed in Albania and Macedonia are all too evident). Where the two are apparently well qualified, if their governments are to be believed, is on the 'public attitudes' component of our assessment checklist. It is impossible, however, to believe some of the assertions made in this connection; and there is no reliable evidence of informed opinion about what NATO is and does, and what membership entails. As for the assurance member-states seek that candidates have now – and have the capacity to deliver in future – 'appropriate, affordable and acceptable' defence efforts, neither of these states can provide that (in our judgement). *In short, Albania and Macedonia are not serious candidates for 'second wave' accession: they are not 'ready' now, and we think it will be some time before they are.*

The Baltic States also are in a class of their own: because they are small countries, because they are bound together by trilateral connections, and because their location and demography make them part of what Russia calls its 'near abroad' (to which former Swedish Premier Carl Bildt once famously retorted 'and part of our "near abroad" as well'). We think that ***Estonia***, ***Latvia*** and ***Lithuania*** are – individually and collectively – well prepared for NATO membership, in the areas of particular concern to us and in many other respects. In fact we have said they are 'probably more "ready" than most other states to take a place in NATO, and from a military standpoint it would make sense if they could do that together'. That assessment is based on all-round compliance with NATO's expectations and requirements on organising national defences. There are particular failings – if that is the word – here and there. One is the eccentric view that Estonia and Latvia take on what civilian control (executive direction) of the military

requires. Another is the apparent weakness of popular (but not elite) support for NATO in Lithuania. However, none of these, or others we could cite, has the 'disqualifying' character found in Albanian and Macedonian civil-military relations. Moreover, we see countervailing strengths in the Baltics. Military education is one case in point: arrangements are impressive, whether one looks at national provision or the joint BALTDEFCOL facility. A second is 'defence organisation' (in our nomenclature). These countries designed defence efforts *appropriate* to the strategic circumstances from the start, incorporating – in the BALTBAT and its 'feeder' units – the kind of capability for contingency operations which other states have since struggled to generate (cf. Slovenia). They also wisely ensured that what they did was *affordable* (and therefore sustainable), while committing themselves to finding 2 per cent of GDP for military purposes in the future (to forestall any 'free rider' or 'net consumers of security' accusations).

On this last point, critics might say that the generous assistance that the Baltic States have had – from immediate neighbours, the neighbourhood and further afield – counts as consumption of security. It could also be argued that sending a company here, a platoon there, specialist divers on one assignment, a medical team on another – all this amounts to free-riding, because the troops must be sustained by the logistics and other support of a 'framework' country's battalion, brigade, support vessel or field hospital. These are valid comments, and useful counters to the sometimes inflated claims which Baltic spokespersons and their friends occasionally make. For example, few mention the BALTBAT with the qualifying observation that the unit has never yet been deployed – on a peacekeeping, or any other, operation – *as a unit*. On the other hand, it has to be said that the 'framework' country concept has a solid rationale: the alternative would be formations prone to tripping over a tangle of logistical umbilical chords feeding participating states' individual combat units and/or condemned to inefficient operation by the requirement to carry around 'penny packets' of national combat service support. In addition, one should not discount the benefits that accrue to the 'guest' units in such arrangements. These include the chance to test interoperability in practice; and, as in the case of the Baltics, to give officers, NCOs and other ranks experience of active service which they might not otherwise get.

The fact that the troops of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have thus demonstrated their ability to operate with – typically within – the forces of NATO member-states is, of course, one reason for our view that these countries are well prepared for NATO membership (and, in important respects, better prepared than most other MAP-states). It also explains why the Vilinius-9 (+1) said in Tallinn (2001) – and will no doubt repeat in Riga (2002) – that NATO should extend invitations to 'all prepared candidates regardless of geography and history'. However, geography and history will *not* be disregarded at the Prague Summit and it is naïve to imagine that they might be. Thus Baltic borders with Russia *will* enter the reckoning in the Czech capital. So will the fact that the Baltic States *were* Soviet republics *de facto* and many Russians settled there. This means that

admitting Latvia, for example, would place in the supposedly democratic NATO 'village' a country of whose residents 25 per cent do not have citizenship and are therefore disenfranchised, not to say disenchanted and hence perhaps part of the reason why corruption is widespread in the state. These issues lie outside the remit of this Report, but they colour our judgement. *We think that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are well prepared for NATO membership in the defence organisation area on which this study has concentrated, better prepared than most other candidate countries in fact. What they have to offer is well-educated and well-trained forces that have had practical experience of working with NATO member-states. These function as part of a defence effort which clearly passes the 'appropriate and affordable' test and the individual countries do practise democratic-style civil-military relations in running their defences. Their candidacies do, however, carry a lot of collateral which cannot be lightly set aside.*

Of the three larger countries, about which we have already made some pertinent observations in the preceding Chapter, we treated ***Slovakia*** as a 'discontinuity' case. We did this because of the 1993 velvet divorce and the 1998 transition from the internationally ambivalent and domestically authoritarian rule of Meciar to the clearly Western-oriented and more liberal administration of the Dzurinda-led coalition. We could equally well have treated it as a 'legacy' state, because the decades of Warsaw Pact membership left their mark on this country every bit as much as they affected Bulgaria and Romania (and, of course, each of the post-Cold War 'first wave' enlargement states). In fact the Slovaks' May 2001 *Military Strategy* refers to the 'current legacy structure' which will be 'transitioned to the future "SR Force 2010" … that will emphasize force structure that is affordable'. (The Americanisms are everywhere – the new force will 'emphasize … the leveraging of new technologies', while 'well-trained personnel are crucial combat enablers' – and betray the statement's provenance: a US defence planning study performed for Slovakia in Spring 2000.)

Whether treated as a 'discontinuity case' or 'legacy state' is not a matter of major consequence, however, because both characteristics are relevant to the 'preparedness for NATO membership' issue. On this we have said earlier that we await the imminent *Armed Forces 2010* text which is to be the 'blueprint for a sound and sustainable military contribution to NATO which will be regarded as clearly demonstrating readiness for accession'. However, we do so in the knowledge that the approved parent *Military Strategy* exists and that the derived text should be quickly approved and promptly implemented, because the legislature has been kept informed of – and, indeed, involved in – its preparation.

The question is: does this make Slovakia 'ready' in 2001 (or likely to be 'ready' when the NAC convenes in Prague in late-2002)? The answer is: if you think that you can trust Bratislava's promissory note, then it does; if you have doubts, it doesn't. The parent *Military Strategy*'s prescription is unexceptionable. It makes affordability a central precept; and the government has pledged a constant percentage of GDP "through [the

period ending with] the budget for the year 2006" (p. 14). Moreover the force structure outlined – to which the legacy structure will be 'transitioned' – is one that meets the appropriateness test. This is largely thanks to the tiered readiness concept it embodies, the insurance against perpetuating 'hollow' forces. It owes something also to the promises that (a) 'obsolescent equipment and material will be removed … and the possible proceeds… used to fund repair, upgrade and modernisation'; and (b) 'mobilization stocks are to be reduced… to fund priority sustainment programs (sic)' (pp. 13 & 14). Further, there will be clear funding priorities along the timeline: (1) personnel and training readiness, (2) materiel readiness, and (3) equipment and infrastructure modernisation.

Attention to the shortcomings we have noted in Slovakia's military education will presumably be taken care of also by *Armed Forces 2010* (when it appears), under the priority (1) heading just mentioned. Whether public support for the armed forces and NATO will then solidify is more difficult to predict. It is clear, though, that 'democratic style' civil-military relations have received a boost lately: the government's decision to co-opt legislators to the bodies overseeing the preparation of the text-in-the-making looks like a breakthrough to a form of executive-legislative partnership which we have not seen elsewhere. Perhaps the Slovaks – ironically for Meciar's country – are pioneering a procedure 'beyond democratic control'.

For the comparative assessment of preparedness for NATO membership to which we are committed here, however, that positive development cannot count for much. For one thing building a new kind of relationship with elected representatives can work only if there is a commonality of purpose. With the 2002 elections looming, the Dzurinda coalition in trouble and other political forces – plus, inevitably Meciar – poised to take advantage, it is not clear that this can be guaranteed beyond the short term. More important, there is the 'promissory note' problem: will the Slovaks do what they say they will do? It will be easier to answer that question in mid-2002, when we will know whether the legacy structure is indeed being 'transitioned' or whether 'legacy' generals and others are hanging-on in the hope that after the ballot 'other political forces' will spare them the pain of reduction, rationalisation and restructuring (not to mention personal redundancy).

At this juncture we can say only two things. First, we place *less* trust in Slovakia's promises than we do in Bulgaria's (of which more later). There is a simple reason: the last Bulgarian government (1997-2001) was clearly in earnest about 'transitioning' and first signs indicate that the post-July 2001 administration will not risk all that has been accomplished since 1999. Secondly, we have *about the same* confidence in Slovakia's ability to deliver as we have in Romania's (on which, also, more later). This is a close call, because it is hard to say whether we rate the determination to reform of the Iliescu-Nastase-Pascu axis in Bucharest more or less highly than that of Minister Stank (and his parliamentarians) in Bratislava. If we were to introduce other elements into a comparison here, it would make little difference. We could say that the Slovak Republic's outline

prescription (*Military Strategy*) has a coherence not apparent in Romanian papers. On the other hand, if popular sentiment counts for anything, it is much more positive about NATO (and the military) in Romania. Thus our conclusion is that *we place Slovakia second-equal (2=) in a rough-and ready ranking of the three largest MAP-states' preparedness for accession. There is a proviso, though, and an important one. This judgement rests not on present realities but on indications that, first, the powers-that-be in Bratislava are firmly committed to change; and, secondly, that they will accordingly carry through a reshaping of Slovakia's defences to give the country, by the later 2000s, an appropriate, affordable and domestically acceptable SR Force 2010.*

We put ***Bulgaria*** top of that (three-nation) readiness ranking: above Slovakia for the reasons given; above Romania on similar grounds (as will be explained presently). This primacy rests on our military organisation appraisal, of course. Bulgaria does not fulfil a number of NATO's politico-strategic 'eligibility criteria'. It does not yet have a fully functioning market economy. They say in Brussels that the country can be described as a 'law-governed democratic state' but express reservations about the respect shown for the political freedoms and other rights of minorities, including those 'of Turkish national consciousness' and the Roma.

In our areas of interest, though, the evidence is largely positive. On civil-military relations the country 'passes' all elements of the 'Carnovale-Simon test': with good marks on constitutional clarity and executive direction, not-so-good scores on legislative oversight. As for public confidence, until the first quarter of 2001 we would have inferred from poll data that it was satisfactory, maybe better than that. The appearance of the *Movement Simeon II*, however, clearly evoked a lot of dissatisfaction in Bulgarian society with the *status quo* and some of that may have been about the conduct of military affairs. It is unlikely to have been about the NATO membership issue though. Support for accession – 70 per cent 'for' in December 2000 – is unlikely to have subsided since; and, of course, the 'royalists' now in office – until Prague and beyond – are solidly pro-NATO (and pro-EU, and motherhood and apple pie). We think Bulgaria's provision in the area of military education meets NATO's expectations and requirements also (especially the Interoperability Centre at Sofia's Rakovsky Defence College). If there are question-marks in this field they relate to the fact that Bulgaria does not have its sergeants' training facility up and running yet, even though it is going to need several hundred NCOs in the next few years.

Defence organisation – in our terminology – is the toughest nut for a 'legacy' state to crack, especially one which simply evaded the issue through most of the 1990s. However, in 1999 the Bulgarians set out how their 'legacy structure' would be 'transitioned' – as Slovakia's Americans would say – to a smaller, post-Cold War mission-oriented force. Implementation of their *Plan 2004* began in that year, proceeded on (or only slightly behind) schedule throughout 2000, and continued on track into 2001. At this juncture, though, the Progress Report on the 2000/2001 MAP 'round' was delivered to

Sofia and the obligatory 19+1 meeting was held in Brussels. From this the Bulgarians got recognition that their programme was going 'along the right lines' but also a wake-up call on serious shortcomings in their blueprint. Put briefly, the scrutineers saw not only 'hollow' forces today, which evolution of the programme would supposedly eliminate, but also a prospective perpetuation of the problem, because Bulgaria was proposing to retain too much obsolete equipment and too much redundant infrastructure, soaking up funds that could be used to enhance interoperability (short run) and modernise the force (longer term). The Bulgarians put their thinking caps on again and formulated new *Programming Guidance* for more rapid disposal of obsolete and redundant assets to pay for interoperability enhancements and, later, equipment purchases (see Chapter VII). The result is a 'revised version' of *Plan 2004* – to be released in the final quarter of 2001 – in which planned provision really does meet the 'appropriate and affordable' test.

This is why we have greater confidence in Bulgaria's promises than in Slovakia's (and, as later argument will show, Romania's). It has nothing at all to do with belief that Bulgarian policy-makers have greater integrity than their counterparts in the other states. It has everything to do with the fact that in 1999-2000 the country did what it had said it would do, and in 2001 responded promptly when 'serious shortcomings' in the initial prospectus were pointed out. We are doubly satisfied with these developments. In the first place, we are confident now – because the Bulgarian agenda has had a searching examination – that a sound and sustainable defence effort will result. In the second place, both production of the original blueprint and the way MAP feedback was processed show that Bulgaria does indeed have 'structures and processes … to deliver in future' military provision that is no less sound and sustainable.

That said, it is still the case that Bulgaria has to implement its new *Programming Guidance* and demonstrate that the 'serious shortcomings' are being tackled. In other words, there is still a promissory note here (and, of course, it is one issued by Ivan Kostov which Simeon Coburgotski will have to honour). This is why our earlier judgements are expressed as they are: Bulgaria is 'almost fully prepared' for accession, and 'Bulgaria is "ready" to negotiate accession or will be when it is confirmed that some shortcomings in its military dispositions are being addressed'. Recasting these statements into a comparative form, *we think that Bulgaria is the best prepared of the three larger MAP-states, with regard to defence organisation. It is two years into its definitive post-Cold war defence review and 'on track': and it has delivered so far. Moreover, it has responded to MAP-cycle comment and criticism of its original projections and revised its action plan accordingly. As a result it is more surely en route to a defence effort that is appropriate, affordable and acceptable (in our standard formulation). On top of that, the country clearly has – at last – the structural capacity to plan, programme and budget for defence in a coherent way and to use this machinery to effect change as and when necessary. In addition Bulgaria has made sound provision for military education; and public attitudes are supportive so far as NATO membership is concerned. There is also*

some popular understanding of the issues membership raises (stationing of allied forces, overflying, commitment of 'own' troops to combat, and so on). Furthermore, the country practises 'democratic-style' civil-military relations in managing defence affairs. Unless unforeseen circumstances arise, it should be 'ready' for accession to NATO by November 2002, given policy continuity (by ex-king Coburgotski) plus a continuing commitment to policy implementation (by all involved).

In our judgement ***Romania*** is less well prepared than Bulgaria and we put the country on a par with Slovakia in our rough-and-ready ranking. The main reason for this ordering is that, while all three of the larger MAP-states are reshaping their defences, Bulgaria is (a) the furthest advanced (but could, obviously be caught or overtaken), (b) the only one to have clearly delivered against promises of reform, and (c) the only one to have shown a structural capacity to plan realistically and manage change. Romania on the other hand has only just begun to provide tangible evidence that it is assuredly on the way to a sound and sustainable defence effort for the opening decade of the twenty-first century and beyond. It is only just starting to get rid of the last anachronistic features of its 'legacy' force structure, not to mention the associated human 'legacy' of 450 generals, 1,200 colonels, 3,800 lieutenant-colonels and 5,000 majors. (Note that this stage army adds up to more than the total active strength of the armed forces of Slovenia, or those of Estonia and Latvia *together*.) It is not absolutely clear, either, that the structures and process exist to make the 'right' decisions on necessary rationalisation and then implement them. The determination of Defence Minister Pascu – with a supportive Prime Minister – is not in doubt at all. Nor is that of his top aides. We recognize also that, though President Iliescu and Prime Minister Nastase follow different courses (in the navigational sense), they create a parallelogram of forces that is clearly moving Romania in the right direction. The problems are the bureaucratic sclerosis that has set in (or is endemic); and the fact that many middle-ranking officers are demoralised (and see their professionalism eroding).

Of course there are aspects of the Romanian picture that provide encouragement. Military education is one. Romania is reforming NCO training (with help from The Netherlands), whereas Bulgarian provision is lagging in this important area. Romania's initiatives in developing staff officer and defence management education in establishments open to others have produced concrete results: neither Bulgaria nor Slovakia has done anything comparable. The Romanian public is behind the quest for NATO membership (and support appears to be growing), whereas in Slovakia fewer than one-half of the population is pro-accession. Also, despite military difficulties, when called on to do so Romania can muster sizeable forces for international operations and sustain them in the field. This is something the Bulgarians find very difficult, and the Slovaks too sometimes.

With all these triangular asymmetries in the larger states' accomplishments (and failures to accomplish) it is not easy to come up with an overall characterisation of the

Romanian situation which, at one and the same time, (a) does justice to Bucharest, especially Minister Pascu and his reform-minded colleagues plus the cohort of younger military officers who share their aspirations; and (b) gives due weight to the lack of convincing evidence that Romania is assuredly getting it 'right' (where personnel management and arms acquisition plans are concerned for instance). Part of the problem is that the sincerity and determination of the leadership is manifest and persuasive. It is harder to gauge whether hiring and firing based on patronage is in fact being eliminated or whether mission priorities are in fact being wisely re-set and the legacy structure vigorously 'transitioned'. *There is much to be observed in Romania which clearly denotes preparedness for NATO membership (like good provision for military education, supportive public attitudes and the willingness and ability to find forces for contingency operations). On the other hand, on the central issue of the shape and size of the country's armed forces, and associated matters ranging from human resources management to weapons acquisition processes, the assessment must be cautious. The ground is being prepared for a sound and sustainable defence effort. It is enormously encouraging that this task is in the hands of able and dedicated people, and that the site clearance and foundation-laying are clearly 'in progress'. It is nevertheless the case that unambiguous evidence of concrete construction has only just begun to appear. Thus we conclude that, come November 2002, Romania will only be clearly ready for NATO membership if the serious and hard work of 2000/2001 has been energetically continued and the reformers' efforts have begun to show durable results.* A litmus test might be to see how many of the 'stage army' of supernumerary generals and colonels are still on the payroll.

Are *they* ready? That was the question. The foregoing comparative assessment provides our answer. It is based, we must continue to repeat, on the 'organisation' aspects of preparedness for NATO. We have not attempted a full politico-strategic cost-benefit analysis on either further enlargement generally or the merits and demerits of any particular aspirant's case. To summarise: our analysis places the Nine in four groups.

- Two states fall below our 'serious candidacy' threshold. *Albania* and *Macedonia* are not adequately prepared for NATO membership now and are unlikely to be for some time.
- *Slovenia* is not very well prepared, on our reckoning. The country's candidacy has its champions, including reputable analysts who rate the country highly even in terms of military preparedness. We find that incredible. Such a conclusion can only be reached on the basis of misinformation about the state of Slovenia's armed forces and/or gross misunderstanding of what can and cannot be inferred from statistical ratios like 'total spending divided by active force size' ('defence expenditure per troop').
- In contrast, the Baltic States – *Estonia, Latvia* and *Lithuania* – are well prepared. In fact, in important respects, they are – individually and collectively – the best prepared of all the MAP-states. It would be naïve, however, not to recognize that

'their candidacies carry a lot of collateral that cannot be lightly set aside' (to repeat an earlier formulation).

- Three countries remain: the two we treated as 'legacy' states, *Bulgaria* and *Romania*; and a country we treated as a 'discontinuity' case but which carried into its post-1993 independence its own legacy of Cold War/Warsaw Pact forces, bureaucracies, attitudes of mind and habits of thought, namely *Slovakia*. Each of these three has recently begun, or is about to begin, its definitive post-Cold War defence review. In a rough-and-ready ranking of these countries, in terms of preparedness for NATO accession, we put Bulgaria marginally ahead of the other two. It is further advanced in the process of reshaping its defences and has therefore also had an opportunity to show that it is indeed doing what it set out to do. Between Romania and Slovakia we find it hard to differentiate: in each case there is still some uncertainty as to what exactly is in prospect and about how much confidence one can have that announced programmes will be fully implemented.

We cannot be more precise than this. We would anyway resist pressure to be more exact. Certainly we would not contemplate some sort of numerical rating of all of the Nine (or the Serious Seven), if only because such exercises give an impression of spurious precision to what cannot be other than complex and largely subjective appraisals.

4. The Nine and the Three

The foregoing comparative assessment of the nine MAP-states honours our own promissory note. This is the principal task we set ourselves in this study. However, we undertook also to view the present readiness of the current candidates for NATO entry in relation to the 'preparedness and performance' of their predecessors, the 'first wave' enlargement states. The main observation to be made on this subject is that, in the military organisation area, at the time of writing the accession states of 1999 are still short of fulfilling key expectations and requirements for membership. That is apparent from the 'parallel scrutiny' we conducted. This was embarked upon as an exercise in *parallel methodology*: we will look at the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland (the Three) in the same way as we have looked at Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia (the Nine). The result of the work is a remarkable *similarity of outcomes*. The assessments for the Three (set out in Chapter VIII) bear a striking resemblance to those of the Nine (presented in Chapters IV-VII and summarised in the first part of this Chapter).

We find, for example, that none of the 'first wave' countries has a flawless report-card on the Carnovale-Simon test by which we gauge whether 'democratic-style' civil-

military relations are practised. In fact, generally they present poorer credentials than those of several aspirants and no better than most. As for public attitudes to NATO – and popular 'approval' of the Organisation is touted as a desirable commendation, if not condition, for admission – the poll data from several would-be members put the just-become members to shame. We find also that in the field of military education – the vehicle for preparing the human capital of security for participation in NATO – if there were awards for 'good practice' they would be shared among the dozen countries (9+3): the 1999 accession states certainly would not sweep the board.

In fact the 'similarity of outcomes' in the areas just cited is such that one of the key tasks we set ourselves turned out to be no job at all. There were obvious milestones for the 'parallel scrutiny'. One could ask how the nine aspirants' *current* state of readiness for NATO compared with that of the 'first wave' entrants (a) pre-negotiation – on the eve of the 1997 Madrid Summit; (b) pre-accession – in the run-up to the 1999 Washington Summit; and (c) at the present time (late 2001). To find a match at point (a) would have been no surprise or what a layman might have expected: it is the mark corresponding to where the aspirants are now. To find a match at point (b) would have confirmed an impression that not until their entry date were the Three even minimally 'ready' to join the Organisation. To find, as in the event was the case, a match at point (c) is instructive to put it mildly, not least because of what it denotes. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland cannot have been 'ready' when they were invited to negotiate accession. Nor can they have been satisfactorily prepared when they in fact acceded. This must be so because, nearly three years into membership, they still fall short of – or are only just compliant with – the standards for entry now prescribed (in the areas cited, but also in others, we suspect).

This argument is somewhat contrived. The 'standards for entry now prescribed' have evolved, from the basic candidacy conditions set out in the 1995 *Study on NATO Enlargement*, through the elaborations in the 1999 MAP prospectus, and through the subtle raising of expectations and requirements that has taken place in the course of 1999/2001 MAP practice. Moreover, we do realise that all this has happened – that the MAP procedure was introduced, and has become more demanding – largely because it became apparent, through pre-accession negotiations and after, just how poorly prepared for membership the 'first wave' entrants had been. The fact remains that the situation as the 2002 Prague Summit approaches is one where – largely thanks to the MAP routine, of course – several candidate countries are even now as well prepared for the various obligations and challenges that go with NATO membership as the trio who were accorded that status back in 1997 or 1999 (depending on when you think 'status' is acquired).

This is potentially problematic for the 19 member-states, because issues of good faith, integrity and equity arise. Formally, we know, enlargement decisions are a political choice for the existing membership at the time the issue arises. No state can qualify for

entry. Thus the 19 have total discretion in Prague. In practice, though, this is changing. We may indeed reach a watershed in the Czech capital, requiring a different approach. Certainly the existing membership has discretionary choice: it can invite whoever it likes. However, political imperatives have to be taken into account. It is difficult credibly to deny accession to a state at the time clearly as well qualified to assume the 'obligations and challenges' of membership as those most recently admitted.

This is where the 'defence organisation' aspect of our 'parallel scrutiny' provides food for thought. In the military organisation area on which we have concentrated, NATO's expectations and requirements are not defined precisely. However, it is fairly clear what the Organisation wants. It looks to would-be members for *a demonstrable capacity* to contribute on accession – and the structures and processes to deliver in future – a defence effort that is appropriate (to the strategic circumstances), affordable (in the light of economic conditions) and acceptable (to society-at-large). This is the more or less standard formulation used throughout this study, devised to encapsulate the core rationale of MAP Chapters II and III. Assessing the Nine – leaving aside 'special case' Slovenia and 'below the threshold' Albania and Macedonia – from this perspective we find the following:

- the Baltic States have, 'starting from scratch' and judiciously integrating national and tri-national provision, made military dispositions which clearly meet this prescription; and
- the three larger MAP-states – Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia – each in its own way a 'legacy' state with an inherited force structure (and military mindset) from the Cold War / Warsaw Pact era, have recently begun, or are about to begin, major exercises to effect a transition from the 'legacy' set-up to one based on the formulation set out here.

There is no great value in appraising the Three ('first wave' accession countries) in relation to the Baltic States. 'Start from scratch' and 'legacy' characteristics preclude it: so, in practice, does the question of scale. The two groups have almost nothing in common. The larger MAP-states are a different proposition. They invite comparison with the 'first wave' group because they have so much in common.

The essential comparison of the respective threesomes has already been made, in the 'juxtaposition' of information at the end of Chapter VIII. It will suffice here to underline what that material shows. In relation to the 'demonstrable capacity' for which NATO looks in the matter of present and prospective military provision, the 1999 accession states, at our contemporary reference point, stand exactly where the aspirant trio are. In Chapter VIII's 'aerial photograph' you could not tell just-become members and would-be members apart. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland too have only recently begun, or are about to begin, a decisive transition from a 'legacy' structure to one which accords with our 'standard formulation'.

There is some oversimplification here, of course. If our 'aerial photograph' were taken with greater discrimination it would reveal that the would-be members are not in *exactly* the same position as the just-become members. For one thing the latter have had the benefit of more than two years 'club membership' and are therefore probably better equipped to perform the required reshaping of defences. They have stronger economies as well. Still, the essential point holds. The 1999 accession states are only now doing what needs to be done to enable them to meet the military 'obligations and challenges' of NATO membership. Three aspirant states have got to that position also, thanks largely to the MAP procedure, and they think that accomplishment should be recognised.

X. CONCLUSION

1. Introduction

The hero, or anti-hero, of Kafka's *The Castle* is a Land Surveyor. We are told that, in the intended final chapter of the book – naturally the Czech writer never completed his *magnum opus* – we would have found the main protagonist on his death-bed, exhausted by a lifetime of map-making and poring over blueprints. There he would have heard that the powers-that-be at the Castle had at last decided that he could reside in their village: not because he had the *right* to do so, but because 'taking certain auxiliary circumstances into account' they had decided to *invite* him to do so.

It is difficult to suppress the image of delegates from the nine would-be NATO members – gathered in Prague for the November 2002 Summit – pondering on this in the Café Milena where, from the first-floor window-tables, they can watch the machinations of the Old Town Square's preposterous clock and, in the ground-floor foyer, they can inspect the Kafka memorabilia. After all the tiring work on MAP-material and blueprints, will there be an invitation for them? If their credentials are less than impeccable, will 'auxiliary circumstances' weigh in their favour?

There is very little drama in *this* final Chapter. It has a two-fold purpose. First, it recapitulates what this study set out to do and the approach taken. Secondly, it summarises our comparative assessment of the nine aspirants' preparedness for NATO membership, in the particular area(s) upon which we have focused (military organisation).

2. Aim and method

At their Prague Summit in November 2002, the 19 member-states of NATO will consider further enlargement of the organisation. In particular they will evaluate the candidacies of Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. These are the nine states that have been preparing for accession since 1999, following the Membership Action Plan (MAP) procedure established then. The present Report has been written as a *contribution* to the member-states' assessment of these candidacies. It is not, however, an all-encompassing analysis of enlargement issues

generally. Nor is it an all-embracing treatment of the merits/demerits of particular aspirant countries' claims to consideration. It is not so wide-ranging as that.

Among NATO's expectations and requirements of would-be members are a number concerning 'military organisation'. The MAP procedure has required aspirants

- to show that they can mount now, and have the structures and processes in place to deliver in future, defence efforts that are (a) appropriate to the strategic circumstances, including NATO membership, (b) affordable, in the light of the candidate country's economic prospects, and (c) publicly acceptable;
- to confirm that they practise democratic-style civil-military relations in running their defences;

  and
- to provide evidence that there is popular support for NATO membership in their country plus some understanding of what membership means (public preparedness); and that attention is being paid to military education in order to ensure interoperability in human terms with the armed forces of allies (the military profession's preparedness).

These are the aspects of readiness for entry examined here. Other expectations and requirements (or eligibility criteria) – relating to politico-strategic factors and actual military capability – have *not* been addressed in the study (though we have alluded to them here and there).

As to the method of working, we researched the immediate past history, current situation and short-term prospects of each of the nine MAP-states with particular reference to these areas of interest. The result is the country profiles in Part B of this text. To provide points of reference for these accounts we did a parallel scrutiny of the three former Warsaw Pact states that joined NATO in 1999. We then collated the individual summary assessments of the MAP-states and attempted a nine-country comparative assessment.

3. Comparative assessment

In conducting the individual country-studies we opted to divide the MAP-states into three categories: 'start-from-scratch states' (the Baltic States, Macedonia and Slovenia); 'discontinuity cases' (Albania and Slovakia); and 'legacy states' (Bulgaria and Romania). There were sound analytical as well as practical reasons for doing this which need not be repeated here.

For the purpose of our comparative assessment, however, an alternative grouping commended itself. The principal change was that we allowed Slovakia to commute to the

'legacy state' category. With hindsight, the country's Cold War/Warsaw Pact inheritance appeared more significant for cross-country comparison than the fact that post-Cold War development here had incorporated the 'discontinuity' of the 1993 velvet divorce (and that of the 1998 ousting of Meciar). The rearrangement also gave us a better basis for bringing the three 'reference point' 1999 accession states into the picture. Bulgaria and Romania plus Slovakia clearly lend themselves to comparison with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. In each threesome there is a Warsaw Pact 'loyalist' (Bulgaria, Poland), a Cold War maverick (Romania, Hungary) and, of course, a 'discontinuity case' (the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the two halves – or two-thirds/one-third – of the same discontinuity).

Addressing preparedness for accession directly, the essence of this comparative assessment is easily summarised.

- ***Albania*** and ***Macedonia*** are not serious candidates for 'second wave' accession to NATO: they are not 'ready' now, and it will be some time before they are.
- ***Slovenia*** is widely regarded as the leading candidate: the country most likely to receive an entry invitation when Prague 2002 comes around. However, in the areas we have examined, we find this country is not very well prepared for NATO membership. Its candidacy has its champions, including reputable analysts who rate the country highly in terms of its *military* preparedness. We find that incredible. We think such a conclusion can only be reached on the basis of misinformation about the state of Slovenia's armed forces and/or gross misunderstanding of what statistical ratios like 'total spending divided by active force size' (or 'defence expenditure per troop') can tell you.
- We think that ***Estonia***, ***Latvia*** and ***Lithuania*** are particularly well prepared for NATO membership in the defence organisation area, better prepared than most other candidate countries in fact. What they have to offer is well-educated and well-trained forces that have had a lot of practical experience of working with NATO member-states. These forces function as part of defence efforts which pass the 'appropriate, affordable and acceptable' test. The individual countries do practise democratic-style civil-military relations in running their defences. Their candidacies, however, carry a lot of collateral which cannot be lightly set aside.
- In the 'legacy' states we note many triangular asymmetries. Civil-military relations are on a sound footing in ***Bulgaria*** and ***Slovakia***, in ***Romania*** they are not. Public attitudes to NATO membership are strongly supportive in Bulgaria and Romania, in Slovakia that is not the case. Both Romania and Slovakia subscribe to international contingency operations to a degree commensurate with their capacity, Bulgaria clearly does not. Romania has taken important initiatives in reforming NCO training (with help from The Netherlands), Bulgarian provision is lagging in this important area. Romania has also taken initiatives in developing staff officer and defence management education in facilities open to others; neither Bulgaria nor Slovakia has

done anything comparable. What the states have in common is that each has recently begun, or is about to begin, its definitive post-Cold War defence reshaping. That this has been done represents a kind of preparation. In a rough-and-ready ranking of these countries, largely on the basis of the appropriateness, affordability, acceptability test, we put *Bulgaria* slightly ahead of the other two. It is further advanced in the process of reshaping its defences with the 'three a's' in its sights and has therefore also had an opportunity to show that it is indeed doing what it set out to do. Between *Romania* and *Slovakia* we find it hard to differentiate: in each case there is still some uncertainty as to what exactly is in prospect and how much confidence one can have that declaratory policy will be carried through to practical accomplishment. If we were compelled to put the two candidacies in order of merit, we would probably rate Slovakia's fractionally the stronger but it is a close-run thing.

Neither with the 'legacy' state threesome, nor with the Baltic States, nor with these seven serious candidates for 'second-wave' accession combined would we wish to be more precise than this. We are certainly not going to offer numerical preparedness 'scores'. As noted in the preceding chapter these 'give an impression of spurious precision to what cannot be other than complex and highly subjective appraisals'.

That is our comparative assessment covering the nine 'second wave' accession candidates (the MAP-states). Our supplementary cross-national comparison, bringing the 'first wave' accession states into the picture, is very interesting. Our headline observations are these.

- Neither the Czech Republic, nor Hungary, nor Poland was particularly well prepared for NATO membership *on the eve of the 1997 Madrid Summit*. (Poland was better prepared than the other two.)
- Even *at the time of their formal accession* to the North Atlantic Treaty in March 1999 the trio's preparedness left much to be desired, especially in the military organisation area. Once again, the Poles were further advanced than the Hungarians or the Czechs, but more because of backsliding in Budapest and Prague than conspicuous progress in Warsaw.
- Even *at end-September 2001* the just-become members have some way to go in meeting NATO's declared expectations and requirements. In fact our assessments – under the defence organisation, civil-military relations, public attitudes and military education headings – bear a remarkable resemblance to our appraisals of the would-be members.
- In a straight comparison between the three larger 'legacy' states now insiders and the three still outsiders, this *current* correspondence is especially striking. The Czechs, Hungarians and Poles are only now conducting – or about to embark on – the definitive post-Cold War reshaping of their defence efforts. They are in this respect where Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia are also.

The last point here is, of course, more telling when expressed the other way around. In the matter of reshaping national defences – with the 'three a's' in mind – the Bulgarians, Romanians and Slovaks are at the time of writing more or less where the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland are. In this respect they are 'ready' for NATO membership – in the sense that commitment to forward programmes denotes a willingness and ability to make a relevant, sustainable and durable military contribution to the Organisation – in a way that their predecessors were not, and were not required to be, in 1997 or 1999, and in fact did not become until well over two years after accession.

There are caveats to be entered on this final point, of course. All six 'legacy' states are offering – or, in the Czech, Romanian and Slovak cases soon will offer – plans and prospectuses for future provision. On this, though, we have two comments. First, a credit-rating agency would probably be cautious about the Czechs' (and the Hungarian's) promissory notes, on their recent record. It might note, however, that there are very powerful incentives indeed for the Romanians and the Slovaks (and the Bulgarians) to honour theirs. If these candidate countries do not do so, they face disappointment in Prague. As residents of the NATO 'village' already the Czechs and Hungarians are under less pressure.

A final comment takes us to the boundaries of our remit, if not beyond. In view of the foregoing, especially the 'current correspondence', if the 'outsiders' do not get a fair hearing in Prague – and this applies to the Baltic States too – they will feel hard done by, and justifiably so. The domestic repercussions – in Slovakia and Romania, for example (perhaps especially Romania) – might be considerable; and not in any way to the benefit of 'security and stability' in the Euro-Atlantic area.

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