

**SLOVENIAN SECURITY POLICY AND NATO**

**by Marjan Malešič**

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Slovenian Security Policy and NATO / by Marjan Malešič

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Thanks are due to all who gave him assistance during its preparation and to those who edited his text for publication. Responsibility for the facts and opinions in the work is, however, his own.

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

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## FOREWORD

By Peter Volten

When the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) first approached the Volkswagen Foundation to seek funding for our European Fellowship Programme (EFP), we stressed two features of our scheme. One was the opportunity we wished to provide: for scholars from Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to examine an aspect of their own nation's transition in the defence field, under our professional supervision and with a period of 'study abroad' in the Netherlands. The other was the results we could expect: authoritative, original research on *civil-military relations* and *security policy-making* in CEECs – the two themes on which we decided the EFP should focus – and hence valuable additions to an English-language literature on these subjects which had been dominated hitherto by general (and often superficial) essays by Western analysts.

In terms of these aims, the programme succeeded beyond our expectations. Some 25 fellows took part in it and most have seen their work published in this monograph series or elsewhere. For this success I have to thank all those members of my staff involved in the exercise. In particular, I must mention EFP Co-ordinator Sipke de Hoop, who was responsible for the selection of Fellows and overall management of the programme from early 1997; Joost Herman, who fulfilled this role at the start of the venture in 1996/97; and our administrators – Elena Herman and, later, Joke Venema – who provided office support for everyone and much practical help to the Fellows themselves.

Coming from CEECs, our Fellows faced the formidable challenge of writing-up their research in English, which for each of them was a second language (or even a third). All rose to this challenge, some impressively. Not surprisingly, however, their final submissions required careful editing prior to publication. The lion's share of this work has fallen to David Greenwood, Research Director at CESS. To him we owe a substantial debt for the effort he has expended in 'helping authors to say what it is they have to say' (in his own formulation). Thanks are also due to Sergei Malkin – and, latterly, Elzaline Schraa – for undertaking the final preparation of copy for our printer.

One last debt of gratitude I must acknowledge is to the Volkswagen Foundation, for providing the academic venture capital that made our programme possible. This was a courageous investment; but it has yielded regular dividends, of which this volume is the latest example.

Marjan Malešič's work is a most workmanlike empirical investigation of the domestic aspects of Slovenia's quest for NATO membership, covering the period before and immediately after the country's failure to secure an invitation to negotiate accession (at the 1997 Madrid Summit). It elucidates the nature of the policy-making process, against the background of theoretical propositions about security policy decision-taking. It provides detailed information about the attitudes of all participants in the process and in the accompanying national debate on accession (such as it was). The

author provides invaluable summaries of government statements, political parties' pronouncements, the writings of leading analysts, opinion poll data and the results of interviews with members of the Slovenian security elite; and he adds his own brief, but thoughtful, commentaries on this material. Here in fact is virtually all you need to know in order to understand the near-unanimity that has characterised the NATO membership aspirations of the westernmost Yugoslav successor state.

In this respect, Marjan Malešič has done a great service to all who are interested in Slovenia's fortunes, South-east European security, European integration and a host of related topics. He has given us an authoritative (secondary) source of reference on his country's circumstances and experience in seeking to rebuild its western connections. We are indebted to him for that.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Like the majority of other former socialist countries, Slovenia is in the process of profound political, economic, cultural and security transitions. One could say that the process is comparable to those in other countries. Therefore, the case of Slovenia might allow us to draw some general conclusions. However, there are many areas in the country's experience which are peculiar to Slovenia alone.

In the mid- and late- 1980s and at the very beginning of the 1990s, while still a republic of the former Yugoslavia, two different, but interwoven and mutually complementary, processes were taking place in Slovenia: a process of achieving independence from the common Yugoslav state, on the basis of the right of self-determination of nations; and a process of modifying fundamental social relations, i.e. the transition from a socialist system to one of political pluralism and market economics.

The final phase of these, as far as the former common state is concerned, was the ten-day 'mini-war' in June and July 1991 which, together with other internal and external circumstances, profoundly affected the perception of threats, the security policy of the independent Slovenian state, and the attitude of the public toward military, defence and security matters in general.

At the dawn of the millennium, Slovenia is striving to achieve its security on two different levels: nationally and internationally. On the national level, the country has made an effort to build up its national security system which, in the past, relied upon the federal state. On the international level, as a member of the UN, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA), the country desires integration into the key economic, political and security circles in Europe, i.e. the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU).

Slovenia is one of the smallest states in Europe.<sup>1</sup> It is a Central European country regardless of the fact that some geo-strategic analyses place it in South-East Europe or even in the Balkans. At the conclusion of the Cold War, the country's geographical location lost a great deal of its strategic importance, but not all of it. The territory of Slovenia still represents the shortest land communication between Western Europe and the Balkans. Also, its territory offers the shortest connection between Central European continental countries and the Adriatic and Mediterranean Seas. From the NATO enlargement point of view, it is noteworthy that Slovenia lies between two present NATO countries, Italy and Hungary, the latter being physically isolated from its new allies. The territory of Slovenia is also geo-strategically important for NATO because of its proximity to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.<sup>2</sup>

As stated above, Slovenia wants to join NATO. The process of NATO enlargement has caused a great deal of controversy among theoreticians, politicians and state officials in various countries. The proponents of enlargement thought it

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<sup>1</sup> The area of Slovenia is 20,273 sq. kilometres and the total population is around 2 million. Countries smaller than Slovenia in Europe are: Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Vatican City, San Marino, Cyprus, Malta and Luxembourg.

<sup>2</sup> See also, Anton Zabkar, *Geostrateski položaj Slovenije v 20. stoletju (Geostrategic position of Slovenia in 20th century)*. A paper presented in the National Assembly in January 1999.

would (1) bring about greater European and global security, (2) enhance internal stability and security of new members, (3) diminish the possibility of conflict between transition countries, (4) foster the respect of human rights, (5) make possible the common fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and ecological problems, (6) have a democratic and value effect on new members, and (7) have benign effects in other areas of co-operation between members, such as commerce, science and technology.

The opponents of NATO enlargement emphasised that the process would (1) inflame nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian public opinion, (2) have an adverse effect on the development of Russian democracy and restore the atmosphere of the Cold War, (3) negatively influence the disarmament process, (4) cause the new division line in Europe between 'ins' and 'outs', and (5) entail enormous costs. They also warned that the Western countries had forgotten the lesson of history learned after Versailles concerning the folly of disregarding the legitimate security interests of a potentially great power (Germany) even in times of tranquillity. They also suggested that prospective members are not threatened militarily at all: full integration of the candidates into NATO is not needed, but instead they should be fully integrated into the EU, which would have a greater effect on security.

In Slovenia, the proponents of Slovenian membership of NATO have underscored the propitious sequence of post-Cold War events which has led to its opportunity to join the alliance. Additionally, they have emphasised the fact that Slovenia lies between two NATO member countries and thus holds a key geo-strategic position. They argue in this final point that Slovenia is militarily the weakest country in the neighbourhood and cannot cope with the negative effects of Balkan crises, nor can it resist the claims of larger countries on the territory of Slovenia. The country therefore should have a natural interest to be a member of NATO – so far the only effective collective defence system in Europe.

The opponents of NATO membership in Slovenia preferred neutral status for the country and warned that different political integrations had brought nothing good to Slovenia in the twentieth century, but had exposed the country to territorial and other demands of greater (neighbouring) states. Also, Slovenia could lose its sovereignty and national identity, NATO could use its territory to deploy nuclear weapons, and Slovenian soldiers might fight and die in foreign countries.

In view of this division of opinion, it is instructive to investigate the attitudes of various domestic security policy actors toward Slovenian membership in NATO, and the knowledge (expertise), advisory systems and information processes that underpinned the security policy-making process.

Thus, this study aims to establish the level of consensus among various actors in Slovenian security policy-making about NATO membership, and, on that basis, to predict the level of support for making the Slovenian defence system, and the armed forces in particular, comparable to NATO standards. Progress in the direction of interoperability would make Slovenia eligible for any second round of post-Cold War NATO enlargement.

It explores approaches to and the attitudes of different participants in policy-making processes. The question to be answered is how the state establishment (legislative and executive branches of power), political parties, non-governmental organisations, academic community, and the general public perceived and reacted to the idea of Slovenia being a member of NATO; and what results, as far as the security

of Slovenia is concerned, they expected and predicted. Was making policy in this context a planned, systematic and consistent activity or a set of unplanned and sporadic reactions to the challenges imposed by domestic and international circumstances?

The technique is chronological (looking at the developments of Slovenian security policy in recent years, and to observe the patterns of continuity and change), and sectoral (looking at security policy as one aspect of public policy, the logic of security policy-making, and the problem of consensus and continuity). The theoretical starting point of the analyses was two American studies on the subject.<sup>3</sup>

Four methods have been used to examine the attitude of security policy-making actors toward the idea of Slovenia being a potential member of NATO: (1) content analyses of mass media; (2) content analyses of official documents and statements (3) interviews with state officials and political leaders; and (4) public opinion data processing and interpretation, from existing public opinion polls carried out mainly by academic institutions.

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<sup>3</sup> Robert H. Trice, 'The Policy-making Process: Actors and their Impact', in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, (eds.), *American Defense Policy* (fifth edition), (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), and Sam C. Sarkesian, *U.S. National Security: Policymakers, Processes, and Politics* (second edition), (London: Boulder, 1995).



## II. SECURITY POLICY-MAKING

Every government needs its own security policy, and it would be safe to say that all governments have, at least, some statement of principles in regards to security, however vaguely they may be enunciated. Principles, however, do not make policy. A security policy is derived from a very complicated process consisting of a huge number of decisions and actions made and undertaken by different players in the legislative and executive branches of power, in the military and civil society.<sup>4</sup>

### 1. The policy process

#### 1.1. Continuity and change

One of the problems to be addressed here is the problem of inconsistency caused by frequent changes in the 'political state'. In a democratic society there are parliamentary elections to be held every few years, and most often we witness a lot of changes not only in the legislative branch of power but also in the executive. Furthermore, if the government lacks stability there can be frequent changes within it. The question arises, how can coherent, long-range, security policy be maintained in such an environment? Each government must first decide what kind of security policy will develop following elections. After this, governments will often commission different studies on the strategic environment, goals, objectives and capabilities, as a basis for policy choice. Next, relations with other relevant state actors are to be established; and, finally, the government should establish active ties with the international community – neighbouring countries, important countries, and international organisations for collective security and defence.

#### 1.2. Security policy actors

In a democratic political system, there is a division of power, competences and missions. The legislature must approve security policy within the state. The government's prime responsibility is to prepare starting points of security policy and to implement them. The Ministry of Defence as a part of government is of chief importance, followed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, intelligence community, Foreign Ministry and National Security Council. Non-governmental actors are relevant as well: mass media, lobbyists, 'think tanks', interest groups, trade unions and the public at large. Each larger institution or organisation has several smaller groupings and bureaucracies which all have different interests, information and, consequently, different approaches to security policy.

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<sup>4</sup> 'Introductory Essay', in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, (eds.), *American Defense Policy* (fifth edition), (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p.494.

Hence, we have three different categories of security policy actors to deal with in our analyses: career professionals in the various national security bureaucracies, elected and appointed officials, and individuals and groups outside the political state, meaning civil society.<sup>5</sup> Each category has unique characteristics and the interaction among them generates alternatives for consideration in setting official governmental policy.

#### *The executive bureaucracy*

This category is comprised of the professionals who make their careers in national security bureaucracies: Ministry of Defence, Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Interior, Joint Chiefs of Staff and Armed Forces, and the intelligence community. These officials implement security policy decisions made by elected officials, avoid political involvement, are trained to act according to the 'national interest', and can make important decisions unencumbered by the need to satisfy the demands of any constituency in the domestic political environment. The nation as a whole is a primary focus for the loyalties and obligations of the diplomatic, intelligence and defence communities.

#### *Elected and appointed government officials*

This category of officials 'have one foot in the domestic political arena and the other foot in the professionally dominated foreign and military policy-making arena'.<sup>6</sup> They share responsibility with the officials in the executive bureaucracy, but they depend on domestic popularity with the electorate. This category of people, who may be partisan in the decision-making process, consists of the Head of State and/or Government, members of Parliament, members of Government and various appointees such as state secretaries, under-secretaries, assistant secretaries, and ambassadors. It is important to appreciate how internal political considerations influence the security policy alternatives chosen by these actors.

#### *Non-governmental forces*

Various important players are to be found outside the domain of legislative, executive and judicial power. These organisations, groups and individuals could be named civil society. Most relevant for our analyses are influential individuals, interest groups, the mass media, and public opinion. They have no formal policy-making authority, hence they must act through authorised bodies and stimulate them to transform their policy preferences into governmental action. Business, religious organisations, ethnic groups, professional societies and others try to influence the government to pursue their interests through policy actions. 'When interest groups succeed in mobilising interest and support of non-executive state allies, they can effectively override professionals in the national security bureaucracies'.<sup>7</sup>

Mass media play several roles that affect the conduct of security policy: they provide a link between the citizens and government, they are a source of information for the officials, they provide analyses and explanations, and they question the

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<sup>5</sup> See Robert H. Trice, 'The Policy-making Process: Actors and their Impact', in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, (eds.), *American Defense Policy* (fifth edition), (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p.504.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.505.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p.506.

wisdom and motivation of different political decisions, not in the least through their ability to conduct and publicise independent investigations.

The impact of public opinion is indirect and long-term by its nature. However, it has become more and more relevant in the last decade. Public opinion sets the limits of governmental action in democratic societies. 'It sets broad parameters that define the range of policy choices that are available to government decision-makers and are acceptable for ... public.'<sup>8</sup> Decisions are made within the limits set by public tolerance.

The attitude of influential and distinguished individuals is also very important, especially in a relatively small society. Their opinion is likely to significantly influence the attitude of other parts of civil society and, consequently, indirectly impact on the government itself.

### *Consensus*

The fact that we deal with various and numerous security policy actors demands consensus-building procedures and mechanisms in the decision-making process. If there is an important decision to be made without consensus, security policy actors will try to impede the decision-making process by extending the decision-making forum and by allowing public and private leaks. If such a decision is adopted despite the opposition to it, the implementation could further be delayed intentionally in the process. The role of executive power seems to be important here, both in reaching the consensus, and in the implementation of the decision.

## 1.3. Advisory system and information process

### *Advice*

If the executive power wants to gain the control and/or confidence of the majority of security policy actors, it needs substantial amounts of information and advice and a structure to facilitate their transmission to itself. This could be a legally constituted group of advisers (e.g. National Security Council), an ad hoc group, or a single individual. The advisory structures could be classified: 'to consider each decision in terms of the particular structural characteristics that were part of the decision process'.<sup>9</sup> In this respect, we could consider the composition of the decision unit (the number and rank of agencies involved in the process), various interaction patterns and frequencies of meetings.

### *Information*

The advisory system is able to provide adequate guidance when accurate information on the subject is available to all the advisers involved in the decision-making process. 'Accurate information is the *conditio sine qua non* for those who would offer advice on national security matters.'<sup>10</sup> Obviously, two characteristics of the information are most important: availability to those institutions and individuals whose position is important, and accuracy.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p.507.

<sup>9</sup> Introductory Essay, p.498.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

*Other relevant factors*

The system which provides the decision-makers with options is less likely to offer advice based on incomplete analyses, hasty conclusions, suppression of unpopular viewpoints and fragmentary information. The advisory system that allows unpopular and dissenting options to be expressed is more likely to provide good counsel than one in which dissent is viewed as undesirable and disloyal. The elimination of dissent in small groups could be fatal and is a sign of 'groupthink' (or, as analysed by social psychologists, the 'dynamics of groupthink'). Also, the advisory system should respect the requirements of decision implementation: the resources available and the will to act. It should also recognise the uncertainty of the consequences, and should involve experts to co-operate in the formulation of advice. Last but not least, an important 'requirement for good advice is the presence of a clear explication of the national interest and of the goals the decision is designed to serve'.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. Security policy-making models

One of the starting tasks of every new government should be the decision how to structure and manage security policy-making within the state. The task is not so easy due to the diversity, complexity and number of state bodies involved in the process, which requires *effective internal co-ordination*. The president or the prime minister – it depends who exercises the executive power, which is different from one state to another – should encourage interaction between ministries, agencies and other state bodies responsible for security and foreign policy. They need to establish 'lateral co-ordination by institution of various procedures and mechanisms, such as ad hoc or standing interdepartmental committees, policy conferences, liaison arrangements, a system of clearances for policy and position papers, etc'.<sup>12</sup> It is necessary not to allow the lateral co-ordination to become distorted 'by patterns of organisational behaviour and the phenomenon of bureaucratic politics that create impediments to and malfunctions of the policy-making process'.<sup>13</sup> The president or prime minister should define his/her role in the process at the outset, and then decide the delegation and distribution of responsibilities. There is a balance to be achieved between the idiosyncratic elements of the incumbent's security policy preferences and the operation of the formal structure responsible for elaborating and implementing national policy.

American studies have highlighted three leadership characteristics important for (security) policy-making:

- (1) Cognitive style. Psychologists view the human mind as a complex system of information processing, meaning every individual

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.501.

<sup>12</sup> Alexander L. George, 'The President and Defense Policy-making', in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, (eds.), *American Defense Policy* (fifth edition), (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), p.508.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

develops his/her own ways of storing, retrieving, evaluating, and using information. At the same time, the individual develops a set of beliefs about the environment which structure, order and simplify the world and influence perception of the environment. Hence individuals have different cognitive styles. Therefore, it is important how the top-executive defines his/her informational needs for the decision-making process, what ways of information acquisition he/she prefers and to what extent advisers are used.<sup>14</sup>

- (2) Sense of efficacy and competence. The types of skills the incumbent possesses, and the perception of importance or unimportance of different tasks to be accomplished, will influence the management and decision-making process.
- (3) Orientation toward political conflict and, consequently, toward interpersonal conflict. Some statesmen see politics and conflict as a 'dirty business' while others regard it as a 'useful game'. The former will encourage harsh debates, struggles and face-to-face disagreements among the advisers, while the latter will most likely give preference to advisory systems to develop teamwork or formal analytical procedures.

All three personal characteristics – cognitive style, sense of efficacy and attitude toward conflict – together with the nature of any previous experience in national or international security affairs, make a combination that influences the incumbent's methods of working. In this respect, we could speak about three different management models: formalistic, competitive and collegial models.<sup>15</sup>

- The *formalistic model* is characterised by an orderly policy-making structure, with strictly defined procedures, hierarchical lines of communication, and a structured staff system. The model seeks to benefit from the diverse views and judgements of security policy process participants, but also discourages open conflict and bargaining among them.
- The *competitive model* encourages more open and uninhibited expression of diverse opinions, analyses and advice. The model not only tolerates diversity but also encourages organisational ambiguity, overlapping jurisdictions, and multiple channels of communication to and from the top leadership.
- The *collegial model* attempts to benefit from the advantages of the formalistic and competitive models. The team of staff members and advisors is created to identify, analyse, and solve security policy problems. The intention is to incorporate and synthesise as many different views as possible, and to avoid parochialism in the sense of ignoring broader perspectives. In addition, collegial group problem-solving activity should replace the infighting, bargaining, and compromise associated with the competitive model.

<sup>14</sup> See also Ole R. Holsti, 'Crisis Management', in Betty Glad (ed.), *Psychological Dimensions of War*, (London: SAGE Publications, 1990), p.118.

<sup>15</sup> Alexander L. George, p.510.

Each of these security policy (and management) models tends to have certain advantages and to incur certain risks. The salient features are summarised in Table 1 opposite. These are of course the 'ideal type' models, while in practice all administrations combine different approaches. All must, however, rely on formal procedures to some degree. Thus we should explore variants of formalistic models which, in addition, use elements of competitive and/or collegial models.

This categorisation is not, of course, the only classification of decision-making styles to be found in the US literature. For instance, Sarkesian<sup>16</sup> distinguishes among the approaches to policy-making which he designates the concentric-circle approach, elite versus participatory policy-making and the systems analysis approach.

#### *Concentric-circle approach*

The concentric-circle approach presumes the top executive body (president of the state, prime minister-government) is at the centre of the national security process. The leader's staff and the national security establishment provide advice and implement policy in this field. The next circle represents the national security policies of (potential) allies and adversaries, representing external influences. Another is that comprising the legislature (Congress or Parliament), the public, and the media representing domestic or internal influences. The approach shows the degree of importance of various groups – the further from the centre, the less their importance. The explanatory deficiency of the approach lies in the fact that it oversimplifies the security policy process.

#### *Elite versus participatory policy-making approach*

The elite versus participatory policy-making approach acknowledges a basic dilemma in the democratic policy process. Security policy is fashioned by the elite concentrated within the national security establishment, however the elite must develop broader public support for the policy. 'On the one hand, the elite has the skill and access to information to formulate national security policy in contrast to an uninformed public. On the other hand, for national security policy to be successful in the long run, there must be some degree of participation by the wider public.'<sup>17</sup> Hence we have on one side a narrow approach to the policy-making process but recognition that a broader legitimacy must be sought. Policy is formulated by a restricted group of people – representatives of government, parliament, the military and the business community. The underlying assumption is that we deal with a cohesive elite with shared interests. Participation, however, requires a role for various parts of the public, interest groups, and officials. Different entities seek to influence policy, meaning we witness their constant attempts to form coalitions to support particular security policy decisions. The elite versus participatory approach 'struggles to reconcile the skill and power of the elite with the demands of participatory democracy'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sam C. Sarkesian, *U.S. National Security. Policymakers, Processes, and Politics* (second edition), (London: Boulder, 1995, pp.8-12).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Table 1: Three Management Models

BENEFITS	COSTS
<b><i>Formalistic Approach</i></b>	
<p>Orderly decision process enforces more thorough analysis.</p> <p>Conserves the decision-maker's time and attention for the big decision.</p> <p>Emphasises the optimal.</p>	<p>The hierarchy that screens information may also distort it. Tendency of the screening process to wash out or distort political pressures and public sentiments.</p> <p>Tendency to respond slowly or inappropriately in crisis.</p>
<b><i>Competitive Approach</i></b>	
<p>Places the decision-maker in the mainstream of the information network.</p> <p>Tends to generate solutions that are politically feasible and bureaucratically doable.</p> <p>Generates creative ideas, partially as a result of the »stimulus« of competition, but also because this unstructured kind of information network is more open to ideas from the outside.</p>	<p>Places large demands on decision-maker's time and attention.</p> <p>Exposes decision-maker to partial or biased information. Decision process may overly sacrifice optimality for feasibility.</p> <p>Tendency to aggravate staff competition with the risk that aides may pursue their own interests at the expense of the decision-maker.</p> <p>Wear and tear on aides fosters attrition and high turnover.</p>
<b><i>Collegial Approach</i></b>	
<p>Seeks to achieve both optimality and feasibility.</p> <p>Involves the decision-maker in the information network but somewhat eases the demands upon him by stressing teamwork over competition.</p>	<p>Places substantial demands on the decision-maker's time and attention.</p> <p>Requires unusual interpersonal skill in dealing with subordinates, mediating differences, and maintaining teamwork among colleagues.</p> <p>Risk that »teamwork« will degenerate into a closed system of mutual support.</p>

Source: T. Johnson, *Managing the White House* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), quoted by Alexander L. George, p. 519.

*Systems-analysis approach*

The system-analysis approach holds that many various inputs go into the security policy-making process. The inputs create political dynamics within the decision-making structure, which should reconcile various competing interests and formulate a policy acceptable to most. The impact of the policy is then measured by feedback, both in terms of policy effectiveness and how it is perceived by those whom it affects.

These different perspectives show that analytical attention may be concentrated on the procedures, lines of communication, information flow, advisory system, and reconciliation between different standpoints and views, or on the position of different actors in the security policy process and the degree of their importance, on achieving broader public support and legitimacy for a particular policy, and on reconciliation between different security-related interests. In fact, of course, one can attempt to do both, as I do in the following elucidation of Slovenian policy-making with respect to NATO membership.

The models presented above will be the basis for analysis of Slovenian security policy and security policy actors as far as the membership of the country to NATO is concerned. The analysis should enable us to establish what security policy model was predominantly applied and give us a thorough insight into the attitude of key actors. Furthermore, we should establish how frequent changes in leadership, lack of statehood tradition and doctrine, and ill-defined national interests influenced the policy-making process. Last but not least, the models should allow us to explore the co-ordination between security policy actors, their professional ethics, and the information and advisory activities that underpinned the process.

### III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE 'POLITICAL STATE' TOWARD NATO

The obvious starting-point is analysis of the attitudes of the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Foreign Minister, and the Government toward the enlargement of NATO and the role of Slovenia in that process. These are the key security policy actors of the state, and therefore of great importance for the study. I will primarily concentrate on their perception of European security, the role of NATO in it, the motivation and interest of Slovenia to join NATO, the eligibility of Slovenia to join NATO, the expected consequences of membership and the estimation of costs. My analysis is based on the public speeches of the above-mentioned players and on various documents released by their respective offices. All the pronouncements date from the late 1990s, but for convenience I use the present tense in the following paragraphs.

#### 1. President of the State

The President of the Republic of Slovenia sees the enlargement of EU and NATO as very important events historically. After two world wars centred on Europe and a nerve-racking Cold War, it is high time we learned a lesson from it – Europe should build an integrated security system.<sup>19</sup>

The decisions to expand EU and NATO have several dimensions ranging from political, economic and social to defence, security and more. However, the President underscores the values these organisations can promote through expansion, and the message this sends to the rest of the world. The decisions on the expansion of EU and NATO are a proof of readiness to finally rise from a European past which was marked by wars, conflicts, subjugation and conquest, the clash of ideologies and real power, nationalisms and phobias, at least as much as by creative periods of peace and co-operation. These conflicts wrought division in Europe and these divisions could remain if the process of integration will not transcend the consequences of a Europe only recently emerged from the throes of Cold War.

The reform events in Europe in 1989 facilitated a reduction of international tension, and promoted co-operation between countries as well as common resolution of European security and problems. They created the belief that it was possible to go beyond Europe's difficult past and to leave it behind. The transformation of 1989 offered an opportunity to shape a common European security system, which would be founded on the values of co-operation and trust, of peaceful settling of disputes and respect for the security interests of all countries, including the smaller ones. The new European security system should guarantee to all a higher level of security against traditional sources of danger based on the use of power and armed force.

<sup>19</sup> See the president's speech to the International Conference 'Central-Eastern Europe and Euro-Atlantic Security' reproduced in Anton Bebler, ed., *Central-Eastern Europe and Euro-Atlantic Security, Proceedings of the International Conference*, (second edition), (Ljubljana – Bled: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences, Defence Research Centre, 1997), pp. 3-6.

The Central and Eastern European countries are anxious, due to the difficulties which accompany the shaping of a new European security order and the enlargement of EU and NATO. Most importantly for them, membership in NATO means a return to their traditional civilisation and to their own cultural and spiritual environment from which they were separated after the Second World War, as a consequence and expression of the post-war division into ideological and political military blocs. Membership in NATO would mean the correction of an historical injustice, and proof that they are accepted as partners in the European security dialogue. NATO membership should be neither an illusion nor an automatic right, but the expression of a realistic interest in European security.

A new European security structure, founded on an enlarged NATO, will provide confirmation of the values and traditions of European civilisation. Slovenia is ready to bear its share of responsibility in safeguarding these. The country needs and desires all advantages which membership in NATO and EU can provide. We desire more rapid economic and political development, political stability and security, a democratic political system, rule of law, and respected human rights and freedoms. In this we see the possibility of preserving our national sovereignty, as well as our unique national and cultural heritage. And for this we need a safe alliance of democratic countries and institutions.

Slovenia is prepared to measure up to all requirements inherent in EU and NATO integration. The inclusion of Slovenia in Euro-Atlantic integration would cause no disturbance or difficulty, nor would it cost much. The incorporation of Slovenia would likewise neither cause harm to our neighbouring countries nor to the members of both organisations nor any other country. The area of stability and peaceful resolution of conflicts would be expanded closer to the Balkans.

## **2. Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Slovenia**

The Speaker of the Slovenian Parliament believes that security in the common and interconnected Euro-Atlantic area is more and more becoming a value whose dimensions are not exclusively military. The military dimension is still of prime importance, but today the relative weight given to such matters is different from that during the era of the Cold War and the division of Europe into blocs. Security is now becoming more a matter of economic, political and social stability, not merely a balance of military power or the absence of war or military conflict. Security also means development of democracy, prosperity, employment, human rights and tolerant coexistence of European countries.<sup>20</sup>

The Speaker is cognisant of the globalisation process and of the Euro-Atlantic integration process taking place. Slovenia has been part of those processes from the very beginning of its independence, when it decided to be open for co-operation and to seek Euro-Atlantic integration. The Parliament, its constituent bodies and individual deputies, played a significant role in this quest through initiatives, discussions, evaluations and analyses. In 1993, the Parliament adopted the National Security Resolution, which expressed the will of Slovenia to join the European

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<sup>20</sup> Anton Bebler, the Conference Volume cited at note 19, pp. 7-9.

security integration process, i.e. to achieve membership in both NATO and the WEU as a prelude to EU membership.

That intent was further re-enforced by the Resolution of 1996 on relations with Italy, EU and NATO, which says 'Slovenia wishes to assure its fundamental security interests within the framework of the system of collective defence facilitated by NATO membership, and through membership of the WEU wishes to fulfil an important element of incorporation into the EU'. In addition, in April 1997, the Parliament unanimously adopted a joint declaration supporting Slovenia's accession to NATO, claiming that Slovenia fulfils all conditions for NATO membership and is able and ready to bear its share of the costs.

No less important, many discussions, analyses and initiatives of state bodies and non-governmental organisations have taken place, allowing the consideration of different opinions and viewpoints in reference to the processes of Slovenia's adjustment to and inclusion into Euro-Atlantic integration.

Slovenia is historically, culturally, politically, sociologically, economically and strategically part of Central Europe. From this multi-faceted perspective, it would like to belong to the common security area provided by NATO and WEU/EU, in which the criteria and norms of democratic behaviour are accepted and respected. Slovenia applies these criteria to act as the basis and guidelines of its own statehood and development, and believes it could become an important piece in the mosaic of European security, stability and democratic co-operation between nations.

### **3. Minister of Foreign Affairs**

According to the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the recognition that international security is indivisible is one of the basic reasons for the necessity of NATO enlargement.<sup>21</sup> This is an embodiment of the concept of co-operative security, which is not directed against anybody, but serves as a most efficient response to the security challenges brought about by the disappearance of the apparent stability in the Cold War period. National security can no longer be defended at the national border-level. The defence of the country begins with the limitation and neutralisation of crises far away from national borders. Distant disturbances may not represent a direct military threat, nevertheless, they might destabilise neighbouring countries or spread outside the region by encouraging organised crime, traffic of drugs, weapons and dangerous substances, and illegal immigration. Only the re-establishment of the macro security framework can contain these negative phenomena.

The foreign minister believes that NATO enlargement will contribute most to the necessary response to security challenges, which the world faces since the end of the Cold War. Countries admitted to the Alliance will be able to qualify to the optimum extent for participation in common security efforts since their integration into the structures of the Atlantic Alliance will accelerate transformation of defence structures. Enlargement should be regarded as a process in consolidating European security and not as an act directed against particular countries. It is one of the reasons

<sup>21</sup> Summary of a speech presented during the same International Conference. See Anton Bebler as cited in note 19, pp. 11-13.

Slovenia wishes to join NATO, since the country is convinced that full membership provides the best long-term guarantee for its security and consequently for undisturbed political and economic development.

According to the foreign minister, NATO membership is an ideal opportunity for a small country to ensure its security and to optimally allocate resources to defence. Any second thoughts about the price Slovenia would pay by entry into NATO are groundless and do not take into consideration the fact that if a small-sized country endeavours alone to ensure its own security it pays an incomparably higher price than a country which is a part of a larger defence system.

Slovenia believes NATO expansion should rely upon the objective criteria which the organisation has formulated. Each country should be assessed on the basis of its fulfilment of these criteria and not as a part of various political combinations. The basic conditions are: political democracy, market economy, appropriate respect of human rights, democratic control of armed forces, and good neighbourly relations. Slovenia fulfils each and every one. In addition, Slovenia's membership would represent a positive example to countries situated southeast of its borders, proving that peaceful and democratic policies are appreciated. Also, the integration of Slovenia into the Alliance would confirm that enlargement is not a process aimed at taking over the strategic positions in Central and Eastern Europe once occupied by the Soviet Union, but rather a pan-European process intended to strengthen European security. Slovenia was never a member of the Warsaw Pact, and is, among all serious candidates, the furthest removed from Russian borders.

#### **4. Government**

According to the *National Strategy for Integration of the Republic of Slovenia into NATO*, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia on 26 February 1998, NATO is seen as 'the only efficient organisation for collective security in the existing European security architecture'. It provides collective defence assurances to member countries, but assumes responsibility for security and stability in Europe in general ('out of area' operations). NATO demonstrated such a role and its efficiency in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian war, where exclusively European security structures failed to stop the conflict.

According to the official view, the fundamental reasons for Slovenia to pursue NATO membership are: (1) membership in NATO would strengthen the security of the country and contribute to its long-term development; (2) the consequences of NATO membership are not estimated to be only those of security and military advantage, but also refer to foreign policy, economics, scientific research, and technical and organisational issues, (3) potential NATO membership means the country's inclusion in the political and security framework of the most developed Western European and North American countries, but also denotes promotion of economic and social co-operation and development, strengthening credibility of Slovenia, promotion of its international status and negotiating power, and consolidation of the international identity of Slovenia as a democratic and peaceful country.

The document itself elaborates on the 'European security architecture' and briefly outlines the role of international security organisations. The OSCE remains an organisation of co-operative security with an important role in implementing and ensuring mutual transparency (and compatibility) in the field of military affairs, and likewise in strengthening security and confidence, preventive diplomacy, early warning of possible conflict outbreaks and post-conflict activities. The WEU – which in 1998 was not fully integrated into the EU as its armed component and as the European pillar of NATO – 'does not command the proper military training and does not dispose of equipment required for ensuring collective security'. It also possesses very meagre capabilities in conducting more demanding independent 'out of area' operations without NATO co-operation. Thus Slovenia hopes for progress on the common foreign and security policy of EU which is an essential part of the European security architecture.

Furthermore, the document elaborates on the co-operation between Slovenia and NATO, from the beginning of informal co-operation initiated in the years 1990-1993, to its signing of the Partnership for Peace Framework Document in March 1994, and concluding with the active co-operation of the Slovenian Army in SFOR in October 1997. This evolution is summarised in Table 2 (at the end of this section); and of course, co-operation has continued since.

#### 4.1. Strategic activities in 1998-1999 for joining NATO

The 1998s National Strategy text represents not only a formal statement of policy and its rationale. It contains also a series of checklists on actions to be taken by Slovenia in pursuit of NATO membership: in the first instance in 1998-1999 but implicitly thereafter too, until the invitation to negotiate accession eventually materialises. Essentially it commits the country to continue to foster internal political, economic and diplomatic activities to fulfil basic criteria for full NATO membership. Slovenia will strengthen its democratic political system, continue the process of privatisation and de-nationalisation, further pursue economic reform by enhancing the market economy and liberalising foreign trade, maintain its high level of respect for human rights and national minorities' rights, strengthen democratic civil control over armed forces, and optimise good neighbour co-operation by resolving 'open issues' with neighbouring countries. The key checklists are given in the following paragraphs.

#### 4.2. Foreign policy activities

Slovenia will initiate a dialogue, exchange of views and information with Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary on their accession experience. Further, the country will:

- continue its formal dialogue with NATO at the level of Foreign and Defence Ministers of the Republic of Slovenia as well as at the expert level; supplementing state positions towards questions to be discussed within the framework of the dialogue, and providing

- detailed data, opinions, views and activities, to consolidate the credibility of the candidacy for membership of the Republic of Slovenia;
- conduct informal dialogue and consultations with NATO members and actively campaign for a NATO decision on further enlargement and an invitation to Slovenia;
  - pursue enhanced co-operation within the framework of the Partnership for Peace and active co-operation within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC);
  - engage in the identification, analysis, and carrying out of obligations stemming from planned and adopted obligations, as well as obligations deriving from future membership, including harmonisation of Slovenian legislation with the EU and NATO standards;
  - monitor the security-political situation in south-eastern Europe, and take part in the formation of units for international co-operation to satisfy the needs of trilateral or multilateral co-operation and to conduct possible peace support operations in Europe;

In a very specific gesture, the Republic of Slovenia also offered to host a session of the North Atlantic Assembly (now the NATO Parliamentary Assembly) sometime after the year 2000.

#### 4.3. Activities within state institutions

There is a domestic agenda also. Slovenia has committed itself to taking – and is taking – numerous measures of reform:

- in the field of civil-military relations with the stress on democratic control over the armed forces;
- in the field of legislative power, covering adoption of the legislation stipulating the type, scope and organisation of the armed forces plus strategic and doctrinal documents in the field of defence:
- in the field of executive power, preparation of relevant statutes;
- in the field of judicial power;
- in the field of defence policy related to financing and transparency of the use of financial resources, transparency of planning and use of budgetary resources, as well as 'open' procurement of equipment and arms).

Slovenia has further pledged that there will be regular reporting on the pursuit of these measures to the National Assembly working bodies.

#### 4.4. The Slovenian Army

In order to carry out the restructuring, reorganisation, modernisation and reform of the permanent composition of the Slovenian Army, the National Strategy paper foreshadowed a Proposal on the scope and structure of the Slovenian Army and a general, long-term programme of the development and provision of equipment to the Slovenian Army. Involved here are schemes for

- restructuring of the General Staff of the Slovenian Army and for the long-term restructuring of the entire Slovenian Army;
- introduction of a new Military Defence Doctrine;
- formation of a battalion for international duty, available for training, exercises and international co-operation within the PfP, in the field of peace support operations (PSO), search and rescue operations (SAR) and humanitarian operations; plus general co-operation of the Slovenian Army in PSO, SAR and humanitarian operations within the framework of UN, NATO, EU, WEU and OSCE, as well as on the basis of other possible initiatives.

Regarding the promotion of interoperability with NATO forces, the 1998 text promised action in two contexts.

- Planning and Review Process (PARP): active implementation of the second round of the PARP and realisation of the 27 adopted inter-operability objectives (IOs);
- Individual Partnership Programme (IPP): implementation of the IPP 1998-2000 with the objective of realising inter-operability goals defined in the PARP.

By and large, all these undertakings have been honoured.

#### 4.5. Economic aspects and defence industrial co-operation

The long checklist of actions to be taken under this heading includes the following:

- adjustment of the foundations for defence research and development of the defence industry and of the purchase system based on NATO standards;
- development of scientific co-operation with NATO;
- consultation to achieve accord and complementariness among state bodies in modernising infrastructure, communications and information systems in accordance with the implementation of NATO standards and requirements;
- preparation of the concept of activities in the field of environmental protection in accordance with NATO standards;

Quite specific targets are involved here also, such as ensuring oil derivative reserves to an extent which, in compliance with NATO standards, will be sufficient for covering 120-day consumption in the state.

#### 4.6. Activities in the field of information

Under this heading, the National Strategy mentions provision for:

- dissemination of information about NATO as well as on activities concerning the integration of the Republic of Slovenia into NATO;
- public presentation of the security and defence policy of the Republic of Slovenia and Slovenian Army;
- translation and publication of NATO documents;
- preparation and implementation of a special information and education programme on NATO for Slovenian Army officers;
- co-operation with non-governmental organisations and associations co-operating with NATO;
- publication of a White Paper on the security and defence policy of the Republic of Slovenia.

In short, Slovenia devised – and has since implemented – a comprehensive public information strategy.

#### 4.7. Organisation at the governmental level

The country also took steps mount a sustained membership campaign, viz.

- establishment of the Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the NATO Headquarters in Brussels and of the Mission to SHAPE in Mons;
- personnel reinforcement of the key sections of government departments, notably in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence, with corresponding organisational adjustments and internal personnel reinforcements.

Co-ordination was improved by organisational and programme upgrading of the inter-departmental working group of the government of the Republic of Slovenia for NATO.

#### 4.8. Financial and other resources

Finally, the 1998 document addressed the issue of resource allocation to defence. It announced the initiation of a comprehensive study on the financial consequences arising from joining NATO, accounting for all indirect and direct expense,

particularly with regard to achieving interoperability of the Slovenian Army and adoption of the necessary standards and procedures. It committed the government to:

- ensuring transparency of the budget;
- ensuring gradual increase of spending for defence purposes to the level of 2.3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by the year 2003;
- preparation of the financing of the next cycle of basic development programmes.

In short, it assured that Slovenia would be prepared to bear a fair share of the burden of collective defence within NATO

## 5. Commentary

The attitudes of the authorities within the Slovenian state toward NATO membership are very general and political by their nature. They all placed the discussion of NATO enlargement in a context of globalisation and European integration, and they all viewed enlargement as a means to achieve a new European security 'architecture'. They envisaged NATO as a collective security organisation, rather than a collective defence organisation.<sup>22</sup> Also typical for all presented standpoints is the attitude to inter-state conflict in Europe – their attitudes express high optimism about the low possibility of the use of traditional warfare on the continent.

Slovenian membership in NATO would mean the return to a cultural and civilisational circle to which Slovenia belonged in the past, and is understood as a correction of the historical injustice caused by the consequences of the Second World War. It is also obvious that NATO enlargement is seen in historical perspective, offering the chance for European nations to overcome the divisions of the past. Neither NATO enlargement nor Slovenia's potential membership is directed against other states, including Russia.

According to the ruling circles in Slovenia, the country was eligible for the first round of post-Cold War NATO enlargement. Slovenia fulfilled all general criteria set by the NATO Enlargement Study. However, the same cannot be said about defence or military criteria. It is most obvious that inter-operability could be a subject of serious debate in this respect. Also, some aspects of the relations of Slovenia with its neighbours, especially Croatia, seem not to be solved yet. Despite that, there is an expectation that these matters need not be decisive. It is also obvious that the authorities trust in a democratic effect of NATO enlargement – membership should strengthen democratic political processes in Slovenia.

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<sup>22</sup> It is interesting to note that the American Senate, while voting on the resolution for ratification of admission of Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic into NATO, on April 1998, passed by 82 vs. 18 votes an Ashcroft amendment to make it clear that collective defence will remain at the heart of NATO's mission.

Table 2: Development of relations between Slovenia and NATO 1990-1997

DATE	ACTIVITY	CONTENT
1990-1993	<b>Brussels</b>	
	A set of initial contacts at parliamentary and governmental level with the North Atlantic Assembly and its bodies	Beginning of informal co-operation between the RS and NATO
29 December 1993	<b>Ljubljana</b>	
	National Assembly of the RS adopts the Resolution on General Principles of National Security of the Republic of Slovenia	First formal document to formalise accession to NATO and relations with the Alliance in the field of foreign and defence policy
30 March 1994	<b>Brussels</b>	
	Signing of the <i>Partnership for Peace Framework Document</i>	Prime Minister of the RS, Dr. Janez Drnovšek, signed the document on formal accession of the RS to NATO PfP Programme
18 July 1994	<b>Ljubljana</b>	
	government of the RS adopted the Presentation Document RS in Partnership for Peace	RS presented to NATO its reasons for the accession to PfP Programme, implementation of measures for its realisation as well as planned activities in the military and civil fields
15-18 November 1994	<b>Washington</b>	
	Slovenia was granted associated partner status within the framework of the North Atlantic Assembly	Beginning of the formal parliamentary co-operation and activity by the RS within the framework of the North Atlantic Assembly
May 1995	<b>Brussels</b>	
	Adoption of the first individual partner programme on co-operation between NATO and the RS. Delineation of generic and specific fields of co-operation between the RS and NATO	Stress on adjustment of the defence system and military structure, on education, military exercises, on standardisation and compliance with the five starting points from the PfP Framework Document in the civil-political and military fields
20 April 1995	<b>Brussels</b>	
	the RS completed PARP harmonisation (NATO Planning and Review Process)	Beginning of the first phase of the implementation of the PARP Programme: establishment of national capacities for co-operation in joint exercises, training and conduct of humanitarian and peace activities within PfP

28 September 1995	<b>Brussels</b>	NACC presented the Study on enlargement to partner states. Reasons, basic objectives and principles are highlighted in the document underlying NATO enlargement
October 1995	<b>Ljubljana</b>	NATO working delegation (Mr. A. Cragg), presented a Study on enlargement. The study was presented to the expert and political public. Special presentation and talks also with the members of the National Assembly Defence Committee
1 November 1995	<b>Brussels</b>	NAC adopted a decision on the beginning of the individual dialogue with the candidate states for membership of NATO RS joined ten states in expressing interest in the beginning of the individual dialogue
22 December 1995	<b>Ljubljana</b>	Ratification of the Agreement between NATO Alliance member countries and countries participating in the PfP regarding the status of their forces (SOFA) Agreement and Additional Protocol to the Agreement were signed in Brussels on 19 June 1995
22 December	<b>Brussels</b>	By signing the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Slovenia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation regarding transit arrangements, Slovenia joins the Combined Endeavour Operation Agreement regulates the transit of NATO forces and all other forces in the IFOR composition
11 April 1996	<b>Ljubljana</b>	The National Assembly of the RS adopted a decision that the RS wishes to ensure its fundamental security interest within the framework of the collective defence system, enabled by NATO membership The National Assembly of the RS confirmed and reiterated the interest of the RS in full membership of NATO

17 April 1996	<b>Brussels</b>  Beginning of the individual dialogue with NATO on full membership	The delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence presented the views of the RS regarding NATO enlargement and the significance of the process for the entire European security
10 July 1996	<b>Brussels</b>  The second round of individual dialogue with NATO	Political and economic structure of the RS was presented
30 September 1996	<b>Brussels</b>  The third round of the individual dialogue with NATO	Slovenia presented its security defence organisation
17 April 1997	<b>Ljubljana</b>  The National Assembly of the RS adopted the Joint Declaration of Parliamentary Parties in Support of Slovenia's Integration into NATO	The Declaration states that the RS meets all the requirements for joining NATO and is capable and willing to cover its share of expenses linked to full membership of the NATO Alliance
22 April 1997	<b>Brussels</b>  The fourth round of individual dialogue with NATO	Meeting of the North Atlantic Council, attended by Prime Minister of the RS. Dr. Drnovšek presented the progress made in the dialogue and future activities.
29 May 1997	<b>Sintra</b>  Establishment of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the RS as an active member of the PfP became an EAPC member	Formation of the new co-operation mechanism, based on the NACC and PfP fundamental principles. The EAPC represents the framework for the consultations on political and security issues as well as for the participation in the military activities on the basis of self-differentiation.
9 July 1997	<b>Madrid</b>  Session of the Heads of State and Government of NATO and EAPC member countries, adoption of the Madrid Declaration	Invitation extended to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, to start negotiations with NATO; NATO enlargement defined as a process; reaching of the agreement with the Russian Federation; formation of the strengthened PfP
August 1997	<b>Ljubljana</b>  President of the Republic Milan Kučan signed the Order on the establishment of the Mission of the RS to NATO	Formal beginning of work of the Mission of the RS to NATO

1 October 1997

**Ljubljana**

Beginning of the active co-operation of the RS and of the Slovenian army in the SFOR

Slovenia ranks as the 37<sup>th</sup> country to participate in the SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina

There is a great optimism regarding the relative costs of joining NATO: Slovenia is capable to pay, is ready to pay, and the expenditures will be lower than in the case of an independent approach to security.

Having said this, the 23-page official document on NATO and Slovenia addresses broader topics such as the European security architecture, the role of OSCE, WEU and the Common and Foreign Security Policy of the EU; and it covers (in great detail) the history of NATO-Slovenia relations. The activities to be carried out to achieve membership are, however, compressed in points – the checklists – with no firm theoretical and empirical background.

Obviously, there were doubts about Slovenia's fulfilment of the basic criteria set by NATO for the first round of its enlargement. The powers-that-be in Ljubljana claimed Slovenia fulfilled the criteria, but the cited document envisaged a lot of foreign policy, military, administrative, and financial activities to be carried out in order to meet them! Therefore, we could assume, the Slovenian government accepted the (mainly American) criticism conveyed by US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright after the 1997 Madrid Summit. Albright gave some credit to Slovenia for its reforms and mentioned that Slovenia was the best candidate for the next round of NATO enlargement. Included in her text, however, was a suggestion that Slovenia should be more active in the conflict resolution process in South Eastern Europe, should continue economic liberalisation, and be more open for foreign investments.<sup>23</sup>

As for the readiness of the Slovenian Army to join NATO, clearly many activities remain to be carried out by the army to achieve NATO standards and interoperability with the armies of NATO countries. It seems the Slovenian army has undergone constant reform since its very existence, with not enough tangible results. Moreover, the deadlines set by the *National Strategy* document have not been respected by different governmental agencies, including the Ministry of Defence and the Army. Thus 'diplomatic rumours' – on the weakness of the Slovenian Army, not enough educated military officers, and leaking of military secrets – may be close to the truth.

At least, the optimistic estimation of NATO membership costs made in previous years is corrected in the 1998 text. The Government envisaged a 30 per cent increase in its defence budget (from 1.83 per cent of GDP in 1997 to 2.3 per cent in year 2003).

One final comment: the *National Strategy* anticipates only positive effects of Slovenia's membership in NATO (enhanced stability and greater possibility of social development, enhanced security, better image of the country within the international community, economic, scientific and technological gains, and even long-term reduction of defence expenditures) while the possible negative consequences of membership are not addressed.

<sup>23</sup> Summarised in a lecture by former US Ambassador to Slovenia Victor Jackovich, delivered to the post-graduate students of American Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana.



#### IV. POLITICAL PARTIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY: PERCEPTION OF NATO

The general impression received by the observer of the internal scene in Slovenia is that NATO membership is supported by all parliamentary political parties, or at least that no party is explicitly opposed to the project. This is also evident from the fact that parliament has passed documents proclaiming Slovenia's desire to join NATO without major dissent. I have in mind here the Resolution on the National Security of the Republic of Slovenia passed at the end of 1993, the April 1996 resolution stating that the Republic of Slovenia wishes to guarantee its fundamental security interest within the framework of the collective defence enabled by NATO membership, and the Joint Declaration of parliamentary parties in support of Slovenia's incorporation into the alliance signed in April 1997.

Given this general impression, the question then raises itself as to whether the statements and actions of the representatives of parliamentary parties contain nuances which might classify parties in terms of the intensity of their commitment to Slovenia's entry into NATO. Certain indicators may be used here: What kind of organisation is NATO in the opinion of Slovenian parliamentary parties? How do they view NATO enlargement and what effects do they ascribe to it? What kind of procedure do they advocate for the passing of decisions on Slovenia's entry into NATO? Where do they see the reasons for Slovenia's failure to be invited to join the Alliance in the first round of enlargement?

As well as the views of political parties the opinions of elements in civil society are important for understanding the discourse on Slovenia's membership of NATO. These include important organisations and associations, influential individuals and opinion leaders.

The views of political parties – and institutions and members of civil society – are summarised here on the basis of analysis of material in the Slovenian print media (*Delo*, *7D*, *Dnevnik*, *Demokracija*, *Republika*, *Slovenec*, *Mladina* and *Družina*), in political parties' programmes and documents of the Parliament relating to NATO, over a six-year period from January 1993 to December 1998.

##### 1. Political Parties on NATO

There are noteworthy differences of emphasis in the positions taken by individual political parties on NATO. The parties are ordered here according to their share of the vote at the parliamentary elections held in autumn 1996.

###### 1.1. Liberal Democratic Party of Slovenia (LDS)

The LDS programme suggests contemporary security is indivisible on the universal (global) scale, but on the national level it has economic, foreign policy, cultural, social, psychological, ecological, military and other dimensions. The security and defence of Slovenia are basic national interests. The party is in favour of a balanced development of society and a stable Slovenia, which would allow the country to

upgrade its own security within systems of collective security (UN and OSCE) *and* by joining international military-political alliances.

The scope, organisation, equipment and training of the Slovenian Armed Forces should be adapted to the economic and technological capacities of the country, and one of the conditions for greater security is the inclusion of Slovenia into the European security integration processes. Such inclusion should be confirmed by a national referendum.

The foreign and security policies envisaged by the programme stress political, economic, cultural and military co-operation. The economic interests of Slovenia call for accelerated integration into European economic arrangements. Through EU membership, WEU membership would also be reachable. Parallel to that, close contacts with NATO are to be established through the Partnership for Peace. This is an important test of Slovenia's ability to co-operate in an 'effective European security mechanism'.

The incorporation of Slovenia into the European Union and NATO is for this political party of strategic, national importance. In the opinion of party representatives Slovenia's membership of the European Union and NATO would promote economic development, place the country firmly in the democratic world and increase its influence in the international community.

Slovenia fulfils the five entry criteria set for candidates by NATO in its study on enlargement. These are political democracy, a market economy, the protection of human rights, democratic civilian control of the armed forces and well-ordered relations with neighbouring countries. Slovenia's advantages are that its membership would demonstrate that NATO enlargement is a pan-European process which does not harm Russian interests, since Slovenia was not a member of the Warsaw Pact and is further away from Russia's borders than all the other candidates. Slovenia's membership of NATO would strengthen the democratic bloc of countries on the edge of the Balkans. The president of the party told Parliament that with regard to the criteria set by NATO Slovenia was without a doubt one of the first countries which could count on full membership of that organisation. Slovenia worked very hard for NATO membership in the first round but would rather have been last in the first round than first in the second round. The party was not however completely agreed as to how much, or if at all, Slovenia could influence the decision-making process on the list of invited candidates for NATO membership.

It is interesting to note that the party felt that Slovenia's entry into NATO did not require unanimity in the country, and that the matter was primarily an internal political issue. Furthermore one of the representatives of this party feels that opposition to Slovenia's membership of NATO exists even in the Ministry of Defence and in the General Staff of the Slovenian Army. The president of the party, who is also the prime minister, therefore considered the declaration on Slovenia's entry into NATO, passed by parliament on 17 April 1997, to be important, since it proves that political parties can overcome their differences where wider national interests are concerned.

## 1.2. Social Democratic Party of Slovenia (SDS)

The SDS supports a foreign policy concept based on the Constitution, safeguarding Slovenian national interests. It is in favour of Slovenia's integration into European organisations, but the basis of Slovenian sovereignty should be protected. The decision must be made by referendum. The party supports the inclusion of Slovenia in all systems which serve European and global collective security, which would include active participation in bodies and working groups of the OSCE, WEU and NATO. Integration into the European defence structure would result in a more vigorous Slovenian defence system. The Partnership for Peace programme is one stage in the integration process and allows for stronger co-operation between Slovenia and NATO, and, consequently, the achievement of appropriate technical standards and interoperability.

Slovenia has set as its primary goal incorporation into European integration processes, including security arrangements, and thus NATO. The leadership asserts that in 1989 the SDS became the first political party to commit itself to NATO membership for Slovenia. The party believes that NATO is not in the first place a military alliance and that eventual membership of NATO would bring primarily economic benefits. By becoming a member of NATO Slovenia would become more attractive to foreign investors, foreign loans would be easier and cheaper to obtain, and its foreign policy negotiating position with regard to Italy and Croatia would be strengthened.

The party sees NATO's security strength in its value orientation and in the consistency of its goals. It attributes to NATO great functionality, since it was proved in Bosnia-Herzegovina that until the arrival of NATO – and despite the efforts of the European Union, the OSCE and the UN – it was not possible to stop the conflict and achieve the signing of a peace accord. Slovenia should be a good candidate since it fulfils all the conditions for entry into NATO and furthermore is not involved in any conflict and has never been a member of the Warsaw Pact. Additionally, full membership could have a positive influence on the resolution of the crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

At the beginning of 1994 a spokesperson of this party was of the opinion that a section of political forces in Slovenia (some liberal democrats and the party of the former Communists) opposed Slovenia's entry into NATO, despite the passing of the Resolution on National Security. This is not admitted, since the public is not favourably disposed towards such views, and therefore various machinations and falsifications are being employed to frustrate practical co-operation with NATO. In May 1997 the same party spokesperson said that total political consensus on entry into NATO existed but that there were differences with regard to the speed of integration and the fulfilment of the conditions for membership.

According to the SDS, Slovenia does not feel threatened by any other country and is not a threat to any other country, but nevertheless wishes to become a NATO member. The documents which Slovenia has passed – the Resolution on National Security, Positions and Relations of the Republic of Slovenia With Regard to the European Union, Italy and NATO, the Military Doctrine, the Joint Declaration of Parliamentary Parties in Support of Slovenia's Incorporation into NATO, and the Law on Investment in Basic Development Programmes of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Slovenia in 1994-2003 – define Slovenia's commitment to, and its

aspirations and readiness for, NATO membership. The last of these documents, for example, requires that all arms and military equipment bought by the state shall conform to NATO standards. The party's position is that a referendum would need to be held in Slovenia prior to entry into NATO.

The positions of these leading political parties towards NATO are illuminated by the 1998 correspondence between Janez Janša, the president of the SDS, and Dr Dimitrij Rupel, a leading member of the LDS and Slovenia's ambassador to the USA. In a letter published in the national press (*Delo, Sobotna priloga*, 18 July 1998) Rupel reminds Janša of the conversation they had a month earlier in which they deplored the inefficiencies at the highest ranks of the Slovenian Army and the tempo and thoroughness of the changes in the army itself, and asked whether because of the lack of unanimity in the highest ranks of the Slovenian Army the army would be commanded by foreign generals. Such questions are raised because of Slovenia's co-operation in international military operations and its possible membership of NATO. Rupel informs Janša that he regretted the latter's resignation as head of the Slovenian parliamentary delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly (NAA) and the content of a letter to the president of this assembly, US Senator Roth, in which Janša describes in very 'strong' words conditions in Slovenia and in particular in the Slovenian Army. Janša is supposed to have resigned in protest at these conditions. Rupel warns that this is grist to the mill of those in the USA who are opposed to Slovenia's membership of NATO and calls for a suspension of the internal discords which are weakening the country's negotiating power. Rupel proposes a thorough debate on strategic national interests in the area of 'international relations and defence', draws attention to the need for a functioning National Security Council, and expresses his regret that relations between Slovenia and Germany have cooled, since German support for Slovenia's entry into NATO would be more important than French or Italian support.

Janša replies (*Delo, Sobotna priloga*, 25 July 1998) that his party, despite being in opposition, has helped a great deal in the incorporation of Slovenia into NATO, for which reason he accepted the post of head of the parliamentary delegation to the North Atlantic Assembly. Only then did he see how far Slovenia lagged behind, since the members of the LDS who put together and led the delegation during the previous mandate had not proposed even one NAA activity to be carried out in Slovenia. The LDS delegation is therefore supposed to have avoided taking the steps which would have actually brought Slovenia closer to NATO. Janša claims that Slovenia belongs in NATO but must fulfil the conditions for entry into the organisation, including parliamentary control of the armed forces and transparency of the sphere of defence.

These exchanges indicate at least indirectly that the president of the SDS has (because of internal political exigencies?) lightly revised his position on Slovenia's fulfilment of the conditions for NATO membership and on the full political (party) consensus with regard to this issue.

Noteworthy too is the fact that there are dissenting voices in the leading parties. Forces exist in Slovenia which oppose Slovenia's entry into NATO on the grounds that NATO is an 'American (imperialist) terrorist organisation'. Pamphlets to this effect were circulated by the Youth Forum of the ZLSD in April 1998, with the undisguised approval of some liberal democrats and the majority of the leaders of the League of Associations of Second World War Veterans (more on this below).

### 1.3. Slovenian People's Party (SLS)

For the SLS, Slovenia's entry to NATO is an issue which concerns the whole of Slovenian politics – internal policy, the policy of social stability and economic development and foreign policy. The party has committed itself to informing the public about the various aspects of Slovenia's incorporation into the western alliance. In its opinion the electorate supports incorporation. This government party too has stated that it considers the joint declaration of parliamentary parties on Slovenia's accession to be an important contribution to the search for a national consensus on this important political issue.

As regards the costs of membership the party has taken the view that, as the smallest candidate, Slovenia would probably incur the lowest costs of all aspirants.

### 1.4. Slovenian Christian Democrats (SKD)

The Programme of SKD supports a peaceful policy and non-violent resolution of disputes between neighbouring countries. The international status of Slovenia does not allow complete demilitarisation of the country, meaning Slovenia should have adequate defence forces based upon conscription. Defence spending must be reasonable and balanced with other expenditures of the state.

Slovenia's foreign policy should serve to foster political, economic and cultural co-operation among nations. The party favours the integration of Slovenia into key international organisations, including the EU; but NATO is not mentioned explicitly.

The party gains few citations in the Slovenian mass media or in Parliament documents, in relation to Slovenia's integration into NATO. It has made no substantive contribution to the debate. Its pre-election document 'Manual for the Winners', however, supports Slovenia's quest for membership and the party expects that Slovenia will be able to join NATO some time around 2005. Through full membership, Slovenia would become part of the West and would definitely 'leave' the Balkans. NATO membership for Slovenia, being situated at the conjunction of three different civilisational blocs (German, Slavic and Roman), is the 'most suitable option and a guarantee for the existence of the Slovenian nation'.

### 1.5. Associated List of Social Democrats (ZLSD)

At the end of 1995, the ZLSD's Congress confirmed armed neutrality as an option for Slovenian security policy, at least until significant public and professional debate reveals that inclusion in one of the European defence affiliations would be a better choice. Even in such a case, the citizens of the state should make a decision about it directly through a referendum. Hence, memberships in NATO and the WEU are not the only options for Slovenia to provide for its national security. However, integration into the EU should be an absolute priority of foreign and security policy.

The Congress was convinced that the future and security of a new Europe depends on integration processes, and on the use of political, economic and social instruments rather than of military ones. Slovenian foreign and security policy should

be peaceful and should foster friendly co-operation with neighbouring countries. Slovenia currently provides its own security through active participation in the systems of collective security like the UN and OSCE. The key role in the process of creating 'a new world order' must be given to the UN as the most important organisation of international co-operation and to developing a new system of global security.

In parliamentary debates the party has shown a certain degree of caution with regard to Slovenia's entry into NATO. It has expressed its regret at the lack of information from the government on the obligations expected to come with NATO membership. Membership would be beneficial for Slovenia for several reasons, the most important being acceptance in the circle of developed western European countries. But the government, and with it all Slovenia, should not wait to see what conditions are dictated by negotiating partners from NATO. Slovenia must be more ambitious and demonstrate its identity as a political subject in a completely different way. It must place itself in the role of an active negotiator in order to obtain a hint from its partners with regard to their expectations and then, at home, democratically and in a reasonable time, agree about which obligations the country is to accept and what costs it is prepared to bear. This needs to be negotiated, as does the possible siting of military bases and nuclear weapons facilities on Slovenian territory.

The Women's Forum of this party explicitly opposes Slovenia's entry to NATO. The position of the Forum is that Slovenia's rejection in the first round of NATO expansion is good for taxpayers. At the same time this has offered the opportunity of holding an expert and public debate on the most suitable defence strategy, where NATO is merely one of the options. Other options include a new European military alliance – which probably means the Western European Union – armed neutrality and, the preferred option, a *demilitarised* Slovenia (Slovenia without weapons or an army).

The Youth Forum of the ZLSD likewise explicitly opposes Slovenian membership of NATO and is committed to the gradual demilitarisation of Slovenia. It claims that as a NATO member Slovenia would become a dump for nuclear warheads and other weapons from cities in northern Italy, and moreover the costs of membership would be too high.

On 27 April 1998 (the 57th anniversary of the foundation of the National Liberation Front) the Youth Forum issued a pamphlet entitled '*NATO (No to the American Terrorist Organisation)*' which greatly agitated the interested public. The pamphlet included statements claiming that there were no arguments against NATO to be heard in Slovenian society, although public opinion inclines towards the anti-NATO side –an assertion not confirmed at all by public opinion research. It argues that NATO has changed from being the defender of Western civilisation to a world policeman (which, under the leadership of the USA, nevertheless does carry out some useful functions in the protection of international peace). It says modernisation of the Slovenian Army is a mistake since the priority tasks of the country include the economic and social aspect of security but not the military aspect constantly stressed by the defence industry lobby. In the opinion of the president of the Youth Forum the majority of delegates invited to the ZLSD's annual conference in June 1998 were personally opposed to Slovenia's entry to NATO. However this was not confirmed at the conference itself. (It is worth recalling that a year before the Youth Forum campaign the ZLSD signed the joint declaration of parliamentary parties on Slovenia's

entry into NATO. Thus the Youth Forum campaign was also a challenge to the president of the party, who has however confirmed that the party continues to support the views expressed in the declaration.)

#### 1.6. Democratic Party of Pensioners of Slovenia (DESUS)

This party is sceptical about the integration of Slovenia into NATO, especially due to the expected higher defence expenditures and the inclusion of Slovenian soldiers in international intervention forces. It advocates a referendum about the issue, which would force 'pros' and 'cons' to introduce their own arguments. With the issues clearly on the table, Slovenes would be able to vote responsibly.

Slovenia's integration into the EU and NATO is understood as an opportunity for long-term integration into European political and economic entities and for military integration according to the security interest of the country. Joining NATO is acceptable if it means complete security, and if it does not mean an external *dictat* about the level of the defence budget. The latter should be relatively low, transparent and under the supervision of the national assembly.

In the opinion of the leaders of the party Slovenian membership of NATO requires a national consensus. The attention of the Alliance needs to be drawn to Slovenia's geo-strategic position and NATO should be informed that Slovenia is not interested in entering 'on its knees' but that full membership for the country is also in NATO's interest.

#### 1.7. Slovenian National Party (SNS)

The SNS has vacillated between voicing reservations about Slovenia joining NATO and expressing support. It sees the main difficulty in the economic sphere, since the costs of NATO enlargement will be too great a burden on the economies of the new member states, which are still in a state of economic distress. NATO's key task is seen as being enabling the USA to sell as many of its weapons as possible to potential members. The party is committed to a referendum on NATO membership for Slovenia.

Also problematic for the nationalists is the issue of sovereignty. This can be seen indirectly from the question tabled in the National Assembly by their president in March 1997. He asked the government with what right and on what legal basis it surrendered sovereignty over Slovenian territory and airspace to NATO forces for the operation Joint Guard carried out by SFOR in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On the other hand the party accepts that Slovenia belongs to the Western world, since during the Second World War the Slovenes were allies of the Americans. NATO membership would perhaps make impossible the rehabilitation of Slovene collaborators during the Second World War advocated by some political parties.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> In spring 1999, when NATO air strikes against Serbia were launched, SNS started to oppose the idea of Slovenia being a member of NATO, in favour of the neutrality of the country.

## 1.8. Commentary

In April 1997, at the proposal of the SDS, *all parliamentary parties signed a Declaration in support of the incorporation of Slovenia into the NATO alliance*. Full NATO membership should enable Slovenia to 'realise its security/political requirements and expectations such as the preservation of its independence, territorial integrity and political stability' and to 'rapidly strengthen the development of the democratic rules and institutions of civilian control of military structures. In this way it 'will contribute to a general raising of the level of respecting of human rights and the rights of citizens.' Slovenia fulfils the conditions for membership and 'is prepared to bear its share of the costs of full NATO membership', the Declaration said, adding that Slovenia expected an invitation in the first round of NATO expansion, which would confirm the pan-European orientation of the process and contribute to security and stability in this part of Europe.

With the exception of the sponsoring party (the SDS) the parties procrastinated considerably before signing the Declaration, and expressed themselves on it in more general terms, without unequivocal commitment, with the result that some began to talk of 'NATO-scepticism'. The ZLSD wanted to link talks on NATO to the topic of integration with the European Union, and at the same time doubted Slovenia's ability to influence the decision to be taken by NATO members in Madrid in July 1997, the obligations which Slovenia accepts with potential membership, and the demands it sets for membership. The ZLSD attempted to have a referendum prescribed in the Declaration as a means of deciding on NATO membership, though this was not subsequently passed. The Youth Forum of this party resolutely opposes Slovenian membership of NATO and rejected the Declaration. DESUS re-stressed the need for a national consensus and pointed out that Slovenia also offers something to NATO. The SNS saw the Declaration as a populist move by the SDS and warned that it was contrary to Slovenian interests. The LDS treated the initiative as 'positive and nation-building'. The SKD added its signature to the SDS's proposal. The SLS supported the proposal.

In the event, Slovenia was not invited to begin accession negotiations at the Madrid Summit. So *where do political parties in Slovenia place the blame for failure in the first round of NATO enlargement?*

The SDS blamed the government and its unrealistic judgement of conditions, and called for an extraordinary session of Parliament on this issue. More than pointing the blame this was supposed to be about rectifying mistakes. Slovenia had missed an historic opportunity to secure itself a place in this defence organisation and finally assert itself as a stable and developed European country. The government had not drawn up a document analysing NATO and its role in the future, nor prepared a strategy for Slovenia's entry into NATO. Slovenia would have benefited in its approach to NATO from, *inter alia*, an early attachment to the Visegrad group of countries, which worked significantly more intensively on the 'NATO Membership' project – introducing greater transparency of the defence budget, making arms purchases from NATO member states rather than from Israel, and helping resolve the crisis in the Balkans. Slovenia had underestimated the role of Germany in NATO enlargement. The government's starting points contained a number of contradictions, including the fact that it was committed to entry into NATO and the

professionalisation of the army while at the same time stating that Slovenia was not under threat.

The LDS saw the reasons for Slovenia's rejection outside the country. This was a political decision by the important NATO member states, above all the USA, where isolationism was gaining ground, over which Slovenia had no influence. Decisive for the non-acceptance of Slovenia were the 'global interests of the superpowers'. Nevertheless, the Slovenian Army is too politicised, while at the same time we are unable to safeguard our own military secrets. Prominent members of the party saw (and still see) difficulties in the unsatisfactory readiness of the army, especially the command cadre – some high-ranking officers lack suitable military training and do not speak foreign languages. In the future we need to understand NATO as an alliance for stability and peace, as an alliance of countries with similar democratic values, which should interconnect with each other as such, in the military sense as well.

The then Defence Minister, a member of the SLS, felt that it would have been better if Slovenia had been accepted in the first round of NATO expansion but believes that the country will be accepted in the second round. In the same breath he states that the Slovenian Army needs to be transformed from a territorial defence force into a 'modern structure able to carry out manoeuvres' and downsized in the interest of increased quality. This also means the introduction of a larger share of professional soldiers into the Slovenian Army. The army should become compatible with NATO as soon as possible so that it is capable of functioning as a NATO member. Individuals from the party leadership see the reasons for failure in the slowness of transition and reforms and in the mistakes of defence policy – which can be understood as self-criticism since the SLS is a government party able to influence the content and dynamics of social reforms, while the Ministry of Defence is under its supervision, which means that it enjoys considerable influence in matters of defence policy.

The ZLSD believes that in the future the government should conduct foreign policy activities with more discretion. The decision on the first round of NATO enlargement was not dependent on Slovenia alone.

The SKD have stated the view that the government misjudged political relations in the international community. It relied more on diplomatic persuasion than on carrying out of the reforms it had set itself, which would have made a more convincing case. Other reasons given for Slovenia's failure in the first round of NATO enlargement included the delay in forming a government after the 1996 elections and the lack of commitment to efforts for peace and stability in the region.

## **2. Perceptions of NATO in Civil Society**

In the 1980s, while Slovenia was still part of a socialist and federal Yugoslavia, civil society was an extremely important generator of transformation. Diverse cultural and subcultural groups, independent media, university institutions, individual academics, humanists, entrepreneurs and farmers – and to a certain extent also the Church as an institution – prompted radical political, economic and security changes in society.

The most prominent members of civil society organised themselves at the end of the 1980s into political parties of various ideological orientations and combined to form a political block called DEMOS (Democratic Opposition of Slovenia). Thus began the 'conversion' of a major part of civil society into a political force, which was confirmed by the first democratic elections following the fall of socialism in the spring of 1990, when DEMOS took power. But civil society then became weak and inactive, while the state became all-powerful. In recent years civil society has grown stronger again, although it addresses less important issues than it did in the 1980s. This is to a certain extent inevitable, since today channels of political activity exist which were not there during the socialist period.

One of the questions which has aroused interest and a more or less fruitful debate in civil society is Slovenia's convergence with western political, economic and security institutions, in particular with NATO. It is instructive, therefore, to record *the views of certain influential non-parliamentary or non-political players (institutions and individuals) of civil society* who have pronounced on these topics.

### 2.1. The Bebler critique

Pride and place here must go to Dr Anton Bebler of the Department of Defence Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana. In two articles written in early 1998, Bebler draws attention, in relation to Slovenia's potential membership of NATO, to the important historical difference between Slovenia and the other central and eastern European candidates, whether former republics of the Soviet Union or former members of the Warsaw Pact (*Delo, Sobotna priloga*, 7 and 14 February 1998). From the summer of 1949 to the spring of 1953, he notes, the territory of Slovenia, as part of Yugoslavia, was included along with the territory of Greece and Turkey in NATO's defence plans as an allied area. Because of its great geo-strategic importance the American military command strove to incorporate Yugoslavia – along with Franco's Spain, Turkey and Greece – as a full member of the Alliance. NATO Supreme Commander (and later US President) Dwight D. Eisenhower made a public statement to this effect to the US Senate in May 1951. In the end Yugoslavia did not join NATO, because of the unresolved territorial dispute between the federation and Italy, the opposition of the United Kingdom, and the very reserved position taken by Marshal Tito. Instead, Yugoslavia signed a triple defence pact with the two new NATO members Greece and Turkey. This accord was signed on 9 August 1954 in Slovenia.

Following the break-up of the Warsaw Pact the geo-strategic importance of the territory of Slovenia has decreased significantly. Moreover Slovenia is a smaller country than the former Yugoslavia and its military potential is considerably less. This is another reason for NATO's relatively lukewarm attitude to the requests of the Slovenian government for admission to the Alliance.

In Bebler's opinion, NATO has written and unwritten criteria for entry to the alliance; and Slovenia has not fulfilled all the unwritten criteria (he does not specify which). He is critical of the public explanation of the views of the Slovenian government with regard to NATO. High officials have stressed that NATO membership will stimulate foreign investment in the Slovenian economy, which is not a realistic expectation given that the movement of international capital follows other

rules. The government was over-optimistic with regard to Slovenia's chances in the first round of enlargement, and also misled the public with regard to the costs of membership.

For the Slovenian political elite NATO membership would have been a highly valued status symbol, in the sense of belonging to the West, while the general public was in Bebler's opinion more reserved about accession, and to a certain extent even opposed to it.

The reputed unofficial American criticism of conditions in Slovenia – the slow process of denationalisation and privatisation, the restriction of foreign investment, the reluctance of the government to take on its share of responsibility for stability in the Balkans, the military weakness of the country, and weapons orders placed with manufacturers from non-NATO countries – did *not* influence the decision, according to Bebler. The decision was made on the basis of Washington's appraisal of American global interests, including interests on the European continent, and influenced by the dynamics of US domestic policy. Slovenia was simply superfluous in this great plan. The arguments of the Slovenian government – that Slovenia had not in the past been a Soviet satellite or a member of the Warsaw Pact, that Russia did not oppose its membership, that Slovenia was co-operating creatively with the USA and enabling the transit and flights of NATO military forces across its territory – were simply not enough, since NATO would gain nothing essential in the geopolitical and military sense through the admission of Slovenia.

Bebler considers that the fundamental mistakes made by Slovenian diplomacy were unreal internal estimates, a mistaken understanding of the consensus within NATO on the passing of strategically important decisions, a failure to take into account expert opinions, weak media support, mistaken and insufficiently flexible tactics, and inappropriate public statements by high representatives of Slovenia (during candidacy, on the publication of American views, and on the publication of the conclusions of the Madrid Summit).

The government publicly described President Clinton's position as 'unreasonable' and 'unjustified', although it was carefully weighed and took into account the strategic interests of the USA. The postponement of admission was perhaps also meant to have an 'educational effect' signalling a need for continuation of internal policy and economic reforms, the strengthening of Slovenian military power and co-operation with the USA and NATO.

The denouement in Madrid was not a 'catastrophe', though it certainly was not a 'success'. Furthermore the positive report of the European Commission on Slovenia as a candidate for membership of European Union has reduced the psychological need for political assurances with regard to the incorporation of Slovenia into western institutions.

In his opinion Slovenia has no pressing security needs for incorporation into the military alliance, while strengthened co-operation with NATO and its members will ensure a high level of organisational and military-technological co-operation with the alliance.

Bebler believes that Slovenia's candidacy does not have financial underpinning, and that the consumption of funds for this purpose, given the existence of certain other costly programmes, was contrary to the desire of the Slovenian government to converge with European Monetary Union criteria regarding debt, inflation and currency stability.

In a later contribution to the Slovenian domestic debate (*Delo, Sobotna priloga*, 31 December 1998) Anton Bebler argues that for the elites of eastern and central European countries membership of any type of western integration is primarily a status symbol. The difficulty lies in the fact that 'the economic and political integration called the European Union does not require eastwards expansion for economic reasons, while the NATO alliance does not need to increase its membership for military reasons'. Here Bebler sees a weakness in the diplomatic position of all petitioners for membership of the European Union or NATO.

## 2.2. Other views

Another scholar who has commented on the NATO membership issue is Dr Jože Mencinger, the director of the Institute of Economics at the Faculty of Law, and chancellor of the University of Ljubljana. Mencinger believes that the non-admission of Slovenia to NATO has saved taxpayers approximately two per cent of social product. He sees in Slovenia's integration with NATO (and with the European Union) the danger of an excessive increase in bureaucracy, which even now costs taxpayers more than the former federal and republican administrations combined. Mencinger feels that the debate on NATO lacked an appraisal of the costs and benefits which membership would bring.

That is an economist's perspective. In contrast, Dr Anton Stres, an influential Catholic intellectual, links Slovenia's non-admission to NATO with the struggle of the old Communist forces against the restitution of 'stolen' property after the Second World War and their opposition to every fair rectification of wrongs committed by the Communists. In addition, he notes that some Western countries, in particular the USA, have judged Slovenia to be insufficiently democratic to become a member of NATO. Public media, which are almost exclusively in the hands of the 'old forces', and politicians have invented other reasons to conceal the fact that Slovenia is lagging behind in democratic transformation. Two criteria for admission to NATO are democracy and a state governed by the rule of law, while Slovenia is still merely on the road to the realisation of these two goals. The possibility exists that attacks by the public media, particularly on the Church and other anti-Communist elements, have contributed to the rejection of Slovenia.

The 'stolen property' issue features prominently in the stance of the Association of Owners of Expropriated Property which lobbied at least indirectly against Slovenia's entry into NATO when it linked the restitution of property nationalised after the Second World War with the membership issue. The Association sent a letter to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright requesting her to call on the Slovenian government to agree to the restitution of property before joining the Alliance. In her conversation with Slovenian prime minister Janez Drnovšek in May 1997 she mentioned *inter alia* that Slovenia should complete denationalisation as quickly as possible, for the sake also of those victims of expropriation who are American citizens. In the words of a representative of these people, through lobbying they had obtained the support of the US State Department and Congress.

So far as direct opposition to official Slovenian policy is concerned, the leading figure is Peter Kovačič Peršin. Editor of *Revija 2000 (Journal 2000)*, a publication which has become a focus for 'Euro-sceptics' and 'NATO-sceptics' who are

linked with the European Parliament delegates group The Independents for a Europe of Nations and the TEAM ('The European Anti-Maastricht Alliance') movement. Kovačič Peršin thinks Slovenia's preoccupation with Euro-Atlantic integration is ill-considered and short-sighted (*Delo, Sobotna priloga*, 24 October 1998). He does not see himself and those who share his views as 'a priori' opponents of integration but as critics of a policy of association which sees the only sense and goal of its activities in integration. They deplore a political structure within which parties seek in integration their own interests instead of advancement of national interests. In Kovačič Peršin's opinion the critical public is troubled by the 'euphoric unanimity of integration' which dominates debate. The impression is being created that by joining the Euro-Atlantic structures Slovenia will solve all its problems and realise the 'success story' predicted following the achievement of independence.

*Revija 2000* accepts the philosophy of like-minded individuals from the European Parliament who are critical of the European Union as a centrally-led macro-state in which the bureaucratic apparatus has the main role. In the area of security policy they are committed to neutrality – 'that is, against the military connecting of European states or the European Union in NATO' – and to less European dependence on the USA and its global strategic goals. They regard a policy of neutrality as a creative contribution to European internal stability and its international solidity.

The goal of *Revija 2000* is to stimulate in Slovenia open discussion of Euro-Atlantic integration and to promote the view that 'the only integration into Europe acceptable to Slovenes is one which will not threaten our fundamental national interest – the preservation and strengthening of our national identity'.

This view contrasts sharply with that of people like Dr Darko Štrajn, the director of the Pedagogical Institute at the Slovenian Academy of Science and Art and an influential representative of civil society, who viewed the signing of the declaration of parliamentary parties on Slovenia's entry into NATO in April 1997 as an unbelievable, almost idyllic, political consensus (*Dnevnik*, 28 April 1997). Štrajn believes that this reflects the symbolic importance which NATO has acquired in recent years. Although the defence or security aspect is important 'at all events' for Slovenia, despite the country's current distance from trouble spots in the Balkans, the symbolic importance far outweighs the importance for defence. To be in NATO means nothing less than to belong to European civilisation, which means that NATO expansion in central Europe is more a cultural venture than a military/political one. The isolation of central Europe from mainstream European civilisation and culture after the Second World War was defined by the borders of the military blocs. Admission to NATO will be proof for the countries from this region that they have not been 'barbarised' and that they have preserved their national and cultural identity. An integral part of this identity, even if it is a historical myth, is the sense of belonging to a wider cultural area. Isolation from NATO would, more than isolation from the pragmatic European Union, affect what we irrationally understand to be our unique identity, which is worth very little if others do not recognise it.

This is not a universally held opinion, however. For example, Dr. Rastko Močnik, a professor at the Faculty of Arts of Ljubljana University has represented an extremely negative view of NATO membership for Slovenia (*Dnevnik*, 30 May 1998). He believes that the NATO debate closes Slovenia on an 'ideological horizon' on which the essential issues of this moment cannot be seen. For him it would be a historic defeat if following the fall of socialism in Europe a new iron curtain were to

be erected, shifted slightly towards the east. In his opinion NATO enlargement means the preservation of the dividing line between east and west, while NATO is expanding to the east in the name of a racist ideology which is supposedly proved by the argument which decided the outcome of the referendum in Hungary: 'We are part of Western civilisation'. In Močnik's opinion neo-liberalism threatens the peoples of Europe, but the solution does not lie in the establishment a new 'imperial construction' in Europe.

In fact, according to Močnik, with NATO membership Slovenia would renounce its historical achievements, since association does not have a basis in the democratic struggles of the past, and is thus separating the state from the history of Slovenian society. NATO membership would make the country dependent on the military organisation of the leading countries of the world. In world conditions which already enable radical demilitarisation NATO is a dangerous remnant of the past, since it is actually merely an extension of the military force of one single, dominant country. Močnik proposes the abolition of armies and the establishing of a world police force controlled by the United Nations. NATO is a serious obstacle to this project in his opinion.

By entering NATO Slovenia might become safer but in a manner and in a sense which it would be unable to influence, since the country's security interest would be determined by NATO and the USA. It would thus lose a great deal of its independence.

In Močnik's opinion parliamentary parties did not serve Slovenia well in the NATO debate. With the attempt to present the case for accession as a *fait accompli* and the 'aggressive propaganda' directed at the public, they also worked against their own basic interest.

Two replies to Močnik have come from Dr. Anton Bebler (*Dnevnik*, 4 July 1998) and the journalist Jože Novak (*Demokracija*, 18 June 1998). Bebler feels that Močnik's accusation that political parties are undermining the democratic system is absurd, since in their commitment to NATO membership the parties have the solid support of public opinion. He goes on to stress the positive role of NATO in ending the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the dependence of Slovenia's security on the presence of NATO troops south-east of the country. This means that Slovenia has a 'natural interest' in joining the system of collective defence. Particularly absurd is Močnik's theory of NATO enlargement driven by a racist ideology, given that NATO includes not only countries from the Western Christian world but also countries from the Eastern Christian and Islamic worlds (Greece and Turkey). Even the historical parallels offered by Močnik are completely out of place, since they do not take into account the differences in the position of Slovenia during the Second World War and today, nor the fact that the Slovenian liberation movement was part of the Yugoslav movement, which in turn was part of the broader anti-fascist coalition in which an important role was played by some of today's most powerful NATO members. Močnik's idea of abolishing armies and establishing a world police force under UN control is utopian, since such a prospect is not even on the horizon.

Novak accuses Močnik of 'hopeless simplification, historical inaccuracy and utopian assumptions which leads to morbid megalomania'. His arguments mix ideology and personal discrediting. Thus he accuses Močnik of anarchism and Marxism, which the professor is supposed to have embraced during the student movement in Europe at the end of the 1960s, of pro-Serb and pro-Yugoslav views, of

connections with the new generation of the ZLSD which published the anti-NATO pamphlet, and of ideological blindness. Novak points out that NATO is an alliance of sovereign states which have entered the alliance voluntarily and not on the basis of 'limited sovereignty' as was the case with the Warsaw Pact; and that NATO is an effective organisation which, because of their complicated decision-making procedures and options of veto, cannot be replaced by the UN and the OSCE.

The views of Ivan Franko – a prominent member of the national liberation movement during the Second World War in Slovenia and later a high Yugoslav state official – are interesting too (*Delo*, 13 December 1997). Franko criticises the criteria for NATO admission, which in his opinion contain six to eight considerations of a political, economic and military nature. Political and not military criteria are in first place, and the point of putting forward political criteria is to speed up the transition process rather than to impose practical conditions for admission to NATO. Yet the true criteria are of a strategic nature. This is confirmed by the selection of candidates in the first round of NATO enlargement. The Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary do not fulfil the formal conditions any more than Slovenia does, but they have been chosen because they move the borders of NATO to the east, in the direction of Russia. This means that military policy rules and not the stated conditions for admission. The newly-admitted countries occupy the most important geographical areas on a west-east axis, and the equipping of their armies with modern weapons will be highly profitable for the US defence industry, and that is also an important criterion for admission to NATO. This is proved by the case of Turkey, which does not fulfil political conditions for alliance membership but which in terms of its geo-strategic position is an irreplaceable link in the overall organisation of NATO. Thus a small country like Slovenia should have no illusions about 'transitional advantages' in comparison with other former socialist countries.

Franko also notes that Slovenia has already been indirectly linked with NATO since in the 1950s Tito's Yugoslavia was part of the Balkan Pact along with NATO members Greece and Turkey. The pact envisaged very concrete activities from the armies of all three countries in the case of an attack by the Soviet Union. These military activities would have taken place mainly in Macedonia. He also stresses the role of Yugoslavia and Slovenia in the co-operation with the western Allies during the Second World War, which could be a comparative advantage for Slovenia when it comes to NATO membership.

Ivan Dolničar, president of the League of Associations of Second World War Veterans (ZZB) responded to the accusations of the leader of the SDS that 'powerful forces exist in Slovenia which oppose our country's entry into NATO on the grounds that NATO is an 'American (imperialist) terrorist organisation' (*Delo*, 1 August 1998). This accusation was supposedly opposition made with the 'explicit approval of certain liberal democrats, young and old, and the majority of the leadership of the ZZB.' Dolničar replies that the leadership of the ZZB has never discussed Slovenia's entry into NATO. The programme guidelines of the ZZB do however contain the following: 'In the area of national security and the international position we proceed from the positive traditions of the struggle against Fascism and Nazism as a world process. In this we stress the role and position of Slovenia in the great Allied coalition during the Second World War. Today, on the basis of these values, we support the assertion of Slovenia as a sovereign and independent state in the international community, in the UN and in its bodies and institutions. We are

particularly committed to its incorporation into the processes of European integration and the creative role of our country and its social institutions in the just and long-term resolution of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, not just in its military and political dimensions but in its humane, financial, economic, medical, social, cultural and other dimensions. We are committed to genuine good relations with our neighbours and to the organic succession of the international treaties of the former SFR Yugoslavia which concern the sovereignty and interests of Slovenia'.

### 3. Commentary

It is appropriate now to address the questions posed in the introduction with regard to the attitude of Slovenian political parties to NATO. The main task is to check whether the general impression of the observer of Slovenian politics – that all political parties support full NATO membership for Slovenia – is correct.

Although differences existed among them by the end of 1998 we might say that it is possible to classify Slovenian political parties into two groups with regard to this issue. The *first group* comprised the four most powerful parliamentary parties – the LDS, the SLS, the SDS and the SKD – which unreservedly supported Slovenia's entry into NATO. (The position of the SKD has however not been set out in detail and justified – at least not publicly.) The *second group* contained the ZLSD, DESUS and the SNS, which nominally supported NATO membership, but with certain reservations or under certain conditions. The ZLSD is most divided with regard to this issue, since both the party's Women's Forum and Youth Forum explicitly opposed accession. The major shift occurred in SNS which ceased to support the membership quest in Spring 1999.

It is fairly typical of parties not to deal with NATO as primarily a military, defence or security organisation, but to attribute to it instead other properties. Thus the effects of Slovenia joining NATO are seen as being economic, cultural (underpinning a value system) and political (having a democratising effect).

Slovenia fulfils the conditions set for potential candidates by NATO in its enlargement study, and its advantages include not having been a member of the Warsaw Pact and the fact that its accession would have a favourable influence on resolution of the political and security crisis in the Balkans. Despite the optimism regarding the fulfilment of conditions for membership, it is important to stress that one of the basic criteria set by NATO was that disputes with neighbouring countries should be solved. Obviously, Slovenia does not meet these criteria, since there are still undecided questions with Croatia, among them that of land and sea borders. This is significant because, should Slovenia become a NATO member, its frontiers also become those of the Alliance. Some political parties also overestimated the negotiating value of the country's geostrategic importance after the dissolution of the bipolar bloc structure of international relations, while others underestimated the costs of potential NATO membership.

Some parties (ZLSD, SDS and SNS) are openly committed to a referendum on NATO, while others feel that this would give a message of inconstancy or lack of commitment on Slovenia's part.

Comparison of the content of political parties' programmes and their actual actions shows some inconsistencies. The programme of the Associated List of Social

Democrats envisaged the security policy of armed neutrality, while the political activities of party representatives (e.g. signing the Parliamentary Declaration in April 1997) supported NATO membership; Slovenian Christian Democrats do not even mention NATO in their political programme, but in practice they support the idea of Slovenian membership without any hesitations; the programme of Liberal Democracy of Slovenia calls for a referendum on the membership issue, while later on the party representatives abandoned this stipulation.

It is in explaining the non-acceptance of Slovenia in the first round of NATO expansion that the difference between government parties and opposition parties becomes most apparent. The reasons are seen by government parties as mainly lying in external factors over which they themselves did not have a decisive influence, while the opposition parties blame the government for the failure. The two key coalition parties which make up the present government – the LDS and the SLS – at least indirectly see the difficulties of Slovenia's integration with NATO in the unsatisfactory readiness of the Slovenian Army. The opposition draws attention among other things to the slowness of changes in society (incomplete political, economic and military reforms), the deliberate delaying of the restitution of nationalised property and with it the righting of wrongs committed under the previous 'totalitarian regime', the protracted process of privatisation and the hindering of foreign investment, Slovenia's lack of commitment in the resolution of the crisis in the Balkans. It notes also the failure to accept certain required defence obligations, inadequate civilian supervision of the armed forces and the poor readiness of the Slovenian Army, a defence budget which lacks transparency, and purchases of weapons and military equipment from countries which are not NATO members.

The institutions and individual members of civil society are a good deal more critical than the parties towards the idea of Slovenia's membership of NATO. There is practically no advocacy of membership in the mass media we have analysed. If we consolidate and generalise arguments we see that for a broad group Slovenian membership of NATO is (ideologically) unacceptable (and some extremely irrational claims are also made here). A second group is concerned about the sovereignty of the state and national identity. A third group warns that for the political elite NATO membership is primarily of symbolic importance. A fourth is afraid that the costs of membership will be too high. Members of the older generation, with their experiences of the Second World War, stress that Slovenia should have a more solid negotiating position with regard to NATO since the importance of its geo-strategic position has been confirmed throughout history. Finally they remind us that in 1941-1945 the Slovenian national liberation movement was an ally in the anti-Hitler coalition, which should count for something in negotiations.



## V. PUBLIC OPINION ON NATO

In dealing with the views of parliamentary parties and influential members of civil society, and indirectly of the institutions which they represent, we have seen that individuals appeal to public opinion, claiming popular support for their stances on Slovenia's integration with NATO. Some political parties are also demanding that a referendum be held before a decision is made on Slovenia's entry. These are two of the reasons why it is also necessary to analyse what opinion polls reveal about the attitude of the Slovenian public to possible membership.

Before dealing with this issue, however, remarks on the broader public opinion context are in order.<sup>25</sup> Poll results in recent years show that Slovenes feel safer than they did in the past. They are increasingly aware of non-military sources of threat – notably ecological and socio-economic threats – while other concerns include traditional crime, natural and manmade disasters, the sale and use of drugs, internal political instability, the possibility of social unrest, and a lagging behind in the area of science and technology. Respondents do not attribute major importance to external military threats. This is important since we may assume that the level of perceived military threat will influence the public's attitude to Slovenia's membership of NATO, which in the first place is an institution of collective defence.

Furthermore, polls indicate the public's mistrust of the international actors (NATO, UN, EU, OSCE) involved in the resolution of political/security crises on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, while their contribution to guaranteeing world peace is given a very low rating. Most respondents are in favour of reducing or ideally preserving the level of defence expenditure, although Slovenia sets aside a relatively low percentage of its gross domestic product for defence.<sup>26</sup> The public imposes on the army an imperative which is in equal parts functional and social and ascribes to it a modest societal role, but at the same time is absolutely opposed to the interference of the army in political events in the country.<sup>27</sup> A majority is in favour of reducing the size of the armed forces, which to be strictly honest even now have only a modest potential.<sup>28</sup> There is popular support for a smaller regular army and a larger reserve, a mainly conscript army with a smaller professional core, and a seven-month period of national service, all of which accords with the actual state of affairs.

Some other general trends can be summarised. Public opinion surveys reveal a unique form of 'economic determinism' which is apparent in the perceived threats, the favoured goals of the Slovenian state and in social values which have an economic bias. Citizens tend to have a lot of confidence in their own role in the preservation of the sovereignty and independence of the state and relatively low confidence in the

<sup>25</sup> The public opinion research we are relying on was carried out by the Institute of Social Sciences which operates under the wing of the Faculty of Social Sciences of Ljubljana University. The author of this article is himself a researcher from this Institute and took part in obtaining certain data.

<sup>26</sup> According to Ministry of Defence figures 1.83 per cent of GDP in 1997 was earmarked for defence, including investments in basic development programmes, military pensions and civil defence expenditure; and 1.89 per cent in 1998 (*Facts About Slovenia: Defence*, April 1998).

<sup>27</sup> The Law on Defence prohibits officers from being members of political parties and only allows them passive electoral rights (they may vote but they may not be elected).

<sup>28</sup> In 1997 the Slovenian Army numbered 4,200 professionals (soldiers, officers and non-commissioned officers) and 5000-6000 conscripts. The total number at complete mobilisation was 56,000 (*Facts About Slovenia: Defence*, April 1998).

political (and repressive) institutions of the country. Figures show the public's high ecological awareness and its sensitivity to human rights.

### 1. Poll data

Data on the attitude of the Slovenian public to NATO is available from 1994 onwards. The general question put to respondents in a spring 1994 poll read as follows: 'Below is a list of statements. To what extent do you agree or disagree with them?' One of the statements related to NATO: 'We would prefer to look after Slovenia's defence ourselves, even if this costs us more, than to become dependent on the West (NATO)'. The level of acceptability of this statement was extremely high, with two thirds of respondents indicating that they 'agree completely' or 'agree'. Less than a third indicated that they 'do not agree' or 'do not agree at all'. From this we may infer that in the spring of 1994 the public had *not* yet accepted the idea of Slovenia joining NATO.

Roughly a year later (in January 1995) we asked the public once again about Slovenia and NATO. The majority of respondents believed that the Alliance would strengthen its political role in Europe and expand through the inclusion of certain eastern European countries. Only a small number of respondents thought that NATO would not change (25 per cent) or that it would be disbanded (5 per cent). Figures for the public support of NATO membership can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Public support for government efforts for NATO membership (1995)

The government is striving for NATO membership for Slovenia. Do you personally support such efforts or do you oppose them?	
I support them	44.2%
I don't support them but I don't oppose them	32.7%
I oppose them	8.6%
I don't know, I am undecided	14.6%

These figures show acceptance of the government's efforts towards NATO membership, but less support than among the political elite and state officials working in the area of national security. This result did not accord with the authorities' expectations and in fact represented a shock and a disappointment, since it was now seen that public support for NATO membership was not something automatic and that it would be necessary to justify the idea more systematically and professionally. It is interesting to note that almost half the respondents were indifferent or undecided despite the fact that this was one of the country's most important projects since the achievement of independence in 1991.

We invited the 1995 respondents to consider claims about the advantages and disadvantages of NATO membership and asked whether or not they agreed with these claims. Respondents agreed most with the propositions that in the case of Slovenia joining NATO our armed forces would have easier access to modern weapons, that the military security of the country would be strengthened, that its reputation in the

international community would increase and that this would ease the path to European integration. The majority of respondents also agreed that NATO membership would increase the share of the budget to be used for defence purposes, that given the small size of the country the placing of NATO military bases would represent too great a loss of national territory, that membership would require co-operation in military operations outside the territory of Slovenia, that Slovenian companies would be able to co-operate in the military projects of NATO member states, and that Slovenia's armed forces would become more efficient. Fewer agreed with the claim that NATO would establish military bases in Slovenia which would represent an ecological burden on the environment, and even fewer that the personnel of these bases would be a disturbing factor in the social environment, or that the establishing of military bases would provide jobs for the local population. Fewest of all agreed with the claim that NATO membership would limit Slovenia's sovereignty.

A good quarter of those asked felt that Slovenia's security position had improved through its co-operation in the Partnership for Peace programme, but more than half felt that it had not changed. Approximately a fifth of those asked were unable to judge this.

More intensive public opinion research was carried out from autumn 1996 to autumn 1997. Public support NATO membership can be seen from Table 4.

Table 4: Public opinion support for NATO membership of Slovenia (1996-97)

	Oct 96	Jan 97	Feb 97	Mar 97	Oct/Nov 97
Yes	66.4	61.3	58.3	64.1	55.4
No	15.7	20.5	21.1	18.3	18.4
Undecided	17.9	18.2	20.7	17.6	26.2
Sample	958	996	942	965	2031

Certain trends can be read from this table. *First*, from October 1996 to March 1997 public support for the government's efforts was relatively high and stable. *Second*, the level of opposition to government policy regarding NATO was relatively low (approximately a fifth of respondents) and stable in this period. *Third*, the group of undecided respondents in this period was relatively high (approximately a fifth of respondents). *Fourth*, in October and November 1997 support for Slovenian membership of NATO fell perceptibly: opposition did not increase but the group of undecided respondents grew larger. This result was almost certainly influenced by the decision of the North Atlantic Council at its meeting in Madrid not to invite Slovenia to be one of the candidates for the first round of NATO enlargement.

Deeper analysis of the results of the survey carried out in October and November 1997 show that support for Slovenian membership of NATO was greater among respondents aged 46-60, among male respondents and among those with vocational and secondary-school education. There was less support among respondents under thirty, among those with university education, farmers and the self-employed. The majority of the undecided respondents were women, most of them

housewives. The respondents who opposed government policy on NATO also opposed all international connections for Slovenia.<sup>29</sup>

The figures obtained in October 1996 revealed the public's expectation that the speed of Slovenia's incorporation into NATO would be influenced to a large extent by Slovenia diplomacy and the Ministry of Defence. This turned out to be mistaken, since the decision on which countries would be in the first round of enlargement was made by NATO, or rather by the most important members of that organisation, in particular the USA. In March 1997 respondents estimated their own knowledge of the issues of Slovenia's integration with NATO as follows: 'medium', 44.7 per cent, 'poor' or 'very poor', 30.1 per cent, and 'good' or 'very good', only 16.4 per cent. This is at least indirectly a criticism of the work of the governmental and parliamentary office of public relations, the activity of political parties in the field, and of media reporting.

## 2. Comment

In the introduction to this section I indicated that a majority of those surveyed were in favour of reducing or ideally preserving the level of defence spending, in particular with regard to military defence, while the demand for a reduction in spending on non-military (civil) defence was slightly less marked. On the other hand it is true that joining NATO would mean an increase in expenditure (above all in military outlays) for Slovenia, which has also been confirmed by the government in its projections for forthcoming years. It should be noted that researchers have not yet established a direct correlation between the two variables (defence spending and Slovenian membership of NATO). Even so the question is raised as to whether we can expect that support for NATO membership will be lower if accession will mean a significant increase in defence spending.

This point aside, polls showed Slovenian public support for membership to be relatively high, at around 60 per cent. I use the term 'relatively high' for three reasons:

- (1) the support was not as high as in some other applicant countries,
- (2) the data indirectly indicated the public was not ready to cover the increased defence expenditures caused by the potential membership, and
- (3) the public support was not as high as the support of state institutions and parliamentary political parties who were at that time all more or less in favour of the idea.

What, though, of *élite* opinion in the country? Did this reflect the official unanimity or the more nuanced popular sentiment?

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<sup>29</sup> L. Jelušič, A Grizold, 'Slovenian Security in a European Perspective', in Paul Luif (ed.), *Security in Central and Eastern Europe*, (Laxenburg: Austrian Institute for International Affairs, 1998), p. 39.

## VI. STATE AND POLITICAL ELITES ON NATO

To gain greater insight into elite attitudes on the NATO membership issue, in late April/early May 1999 interviews were conducted with 20 selected individuals – including senior officers and officials, elected representatives and party spokesmen. Each interviewer was asked a number of 'open questions'. These fell in two categories:

- queries pertaining to the respondent's personal views; and
- queries concerning the standpoint of the respondent's institution or organisation.

The second category included inquiries about security policy-making in the relevant institution/organisation.<sup>30</sup>

The investigation showed that the great majority of respondents supported the idea of Slovenia being a member of NATO without any major reservations. Only one was explicitly against the idea, favouring armed neutrality, and two had certain reservations: one preferring Slovenia to be a neutral country *if possible*, while the other supported accession because of his formal position, but not personally.

The principal arguments for NATO membership offered were as follows.

1. Membership is a vital interest for Slovenia in the context of 'de facto' and 'de jure' integration of the country into Euro-Atlantic structures; Slovenia would be closer to the Western democracies. Only within a united Europe can Slovenia achieve greater prosperity.
2. Membership would be a logical continuation of the country's independency process started in the late 1980s.
3. The geo-strategic and military-political situation of the country demand it.
4. The political orientation of the country and internal political situation require it; NATO membership could foster the democratic values of society.
5. Slovenia is on the edge of the turbulent Balkans, and NATO membership would bring greater security to the country. As the only effective organisation of collective defence in Europe, it offers security guarantees.
6. Slovenia is forming its military system and it is necessary to accept the solutions that have already been tested in the past. The discussion on NATO membership itself has already brought a lot of positive effects: options were narrowed down and improvisations reduced.

<sup>30</sup> The first set of questions referred to the personal attitude of the respondent toward potential NATO membership for Slovenia, reasons for the attitude, the membership criteria set by NATO, and the positive and negative effects of potential NATO membership for Slovenia. The second set of questions referred to the attitude of the institution/organisation toward membership, information and advisory processes in the organisation/institution, the decision-making process, and the question of how to provide national security prior to Slovenia's potential membership in NATO.

7. Membership would attract foreign investors (positive economic effects).

The majority of respondents thought Slovenia fulfils the membership criteria set by NATO regarding democratic standards, human rights, freedoms and rights of minorities, resolved territorial and other disputes with neighbouring countries, the rule of law, economic freedoms and market economy, democratic supervision of the armed forces, transparency of defence planning, and interoperability. Some respondents questioned the fulfilment of 'resolved territorial and other disputes with neighbouring countries' criterion, since Slovenia still has some open territorial and property disputes with Croatia, while the others problematised the rule of law, transparency of defence planning, democratic control over armed forces and their interoperability with NATO.

On the other hand, it is quite obvious that the criteria set by NATO are to be seen as conditions which need to be achieved prior to candidacy, while the decision on actual membership is a political choice. Some of the respondents warned that even some NATO member countries do not fulfil the criteria set by the Alliance for aspirants. Those who deal with NATO more professionally emphasised that would be members should be contributors to Atlantic security, and share political and strategic interests with the important and influential NATO members.

Slovenia fulfils the nominal criteria at least as well as Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic; but there are some unwritten conditions to be met, as well. It seems that in the case of those three countries, the most important reasons to accept them were geo-strategical (the geographical positions of the countries and their relative military strength) and moral ('historical debt'). A few respondents warned that the Slovenian government is too servile toward NATO (e.g., the permission to fly over Slovenian territory, land transit permission, 'no secret' policy), meaning NATO has no need to be interested in Slovenian membership.

Most respondents expect the criteria in the future to be more objective, detailed and selective in comparison to the first round of enlargement.

What can Slovenia do to enhance its chances? Slovenia has made a lot of mistakes in the past: poor political decisions, undefined national interests and strategy, too much political struggle within the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs, problems within the Slovenian Armed Forces (territorial instead of operational, level and type of officers' education, manner of promotion), tardily established contacts with foreign defence ministries and delayed lobbying, and inadequate military and civil diplomacy due to a lack of political instructions. These are all areas in which Slovenia could do more to improve its chances to enter the second round of NATO enlargement. The respondents further emphasised the need for Slovenia to actively contribute to security in South East Europe through participation in peace operations (especially Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Albania), to foster relationships with NATO (Membership Action Plan – MAP, Partnership for Peace – PfP, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council – EAPC) and NATO member countries, to accelerate internal political and economic reforms, to improve the co-ordination of NATO-related activities between (and within) different branches of state power, to increase the defence budget and restructure it in favour of military outlays, and to reorganise and modernise the armed forces.

According to the respondents, the positive effects of NATO membership for Slovenia would be:

- recognition of Slovenia as a part of Europe,
- national self-confirmation,
- increased level of (national) security (security guarantees),
- enhanced credibility and better image of the country in the international sphere and especially within the region,
- enhanced respect for the rule of law,
- indirect benefits in economic (lower 'country risk' and increased foreign investments), social, scientific, technological and cultural fields,
- rational and transparent defence planning and budgeting, and
- modernisation of the armed forces.

Negative effects of NATO membership cited were:

- part of national sovereignty will be yielded to collective bodies (limited sovereignty, threatened national identity – language, symbols, customs, tradition),
- the attitude toward defence in the public will change – we will lose the 'defence consciousness and readiness' achieved in the past,
- international obligations will increase due to the crises in Europe,
- degradation of the environment,
- foreign military bases on Slovenian territory,
- Slovenian soldiers will be sent abroad and will die there, and
- high membership costs.

The attitude of the institutions/organisations represented by the respondents toward the idea of Slovenia being a potential member to NATO was positive in all cases but one – Slovenian National Party changed its platform, and is now supporting the security policy of armed neutrality.

As far as the information process, advisory system and decision-making process regarding Slovenia and NATO are concerned, the results showed that it differed in various state institutions and political parties. The Presidential Office noted the absence of internal (Slovenian) political and professional debates on positive and negative effects of membership. At the same time, the Office felt the lack of conversation and agreement between Parliament, Government, Ministries and the President about a common attitude and approach to potential NATO membership. The Slovenian authorities first said 'we want to enter NATO' and *then* began to scrutinise the decision. There is no competent body – and no adequate methodology – within the state as an institution, to regularly provide the professional basis for decision-making. It is not currently the regular practice to first conduct alternative professional analyses, and then make a decision.

The President made his decision on Slovenia and NATO upon his own calculations. He listened to his advisors, and he took into account public opinion, but that was not of decisive importance for his decision.

As far as the decision-making process was concerned, the President was urging the Government and the Parliament to find common standpoints; he was encouraging a collegial approach to security-policy making. Because of the potential for intra-governmental contention, he emphasised the importance of a professional basis in their decision-making processes.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs seemed to be well informed about the implications of potential Slovenian membership to NATO, the information being provided directly from NATO Headquarters in Brussels or through the civil and military diplomatic corps. The important source for different ministries and agencies within the Government was the so called 'inter-sector working group for NATO', which is the governmental body, comprised of representatives of twelve different agencies, responsible for preparing recommendations and operative decisions for ministries and Government. There is no direct contact between the President of the State and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – the information flow is strictly formal, from the Multilateral Sector of MFA, through the State Secretary responsible for NATO and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Prime Minister. The Government informs Parliament about all operative decisions pertaining to NATO-related activities made by the Government.

The decision on NATO membership for Slovenia was made gradually, step by step, and there was a high degree of consensus among different security policy actors in the country. As far as the policy-making model within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is concerned, it was a formalistic one in which hierarchy played an important role, the latter being partly a consequence of NATO's hierarchical structure. NATO is regarded as an effective symbiosis of political and military parts; and therefore the Slovenian decision-making model is a reflection of NATO. There are also informal relations between civil servants of different Ministries, but they do not significantly influence the decision-making process.

The respondents from the Ministry of Defence generally agreed that there was enough information on Slovenia and NATO at the top levels of the Ministry and Slovenian Armed Forces, while the lower strata of the Ministry and military lacked accurate, prompt and comprehensive information. The flow of material was halted at the director level within the various administrations, therefore some employees of the Ministry got their information through the mass media only.

The Ministry of Defence made the decision on NATO membership before the very first public opinion polls were conducted. Consequently, public opinion was not taken into account. The public is ill-informed and therefore its opinion is deemed unreliable. If the attitude of the public is supportive of the idea, however, the motivation to work towards membership is greater. Despite this, public opinion is not decisive in policy-making.

The decision-making process was institutionalised. There was no debate or opinion exchange among the officials involved about the membership issue itself; but there was discussion on the manner, and dynamics, of the requisite co-operation with NATO. The search for consensus in decision-making process was instead replaced by a hierarchical approach. At the top of the Ministry, however, the approach was a collegial one. The professional role of the military was neglected, and the armed forces were not involved in the analytical process in an adequate and appropriate way. The co-operation with other institutions was good, but the Ministry's role was primarily to realise the decisions made by the Government and Parliament.

Parliament (Defence Committee) had sufficient information, partly provided by the Government, and partly by the opposition parties, which was funnelled through the Members involved in various NATO-related activities at home and abroad. It is interesting that the political parties generally did not rely on the internal experts within Parliament, who had allegedly been 'indoctrinated' by the Government. Opposition parties were suspicious of the mass media as well, claiming that the public opinion polls were 'manufactured' by the media. There was no substantial debate in the Parliament regarding the issue because of the consensus reached before (there was no need). It was quite obvious from the interviews that members of the Defence Committee acted along party lines.

Political parties got information from the Government (via their MPs) and from experts who supported their policy. But they also organised round tables, debates and 'political academies' to inform their own members. They were mainly suspicious about public opinion polls carried out by the mass media and institutes, so some commissioned their own public opinion surveys. Some respondents thought that political parties were very hierarchically structured and 'five people decided on everything'. Others detected a collegial approach in the decision-making process, with debate between leadership and membership.

Less than two-thirds of respondents thought the support for the membership of Slovenia to NATO was sincere; but they were not always well-informed and, therefore, were not always objective. It is important that the military corps is supportive of the idea, and that military officers see their professional careers in a Euro-Atlantic perspective and not in a Slovenian one. More than one-third of the respondents thought the support was not sincere in some political parties, nor in the Government itself – sometimes the latter promises a lot, but fails to back these promises with concrete actions. It is most obvious the financial support of the Government for the 'project' to be accomplished is rather modest, despite the obligations accepted in NATO-Slovenia exchanges.

At the end of each interview respondents were asked to state how Slovenia could provide its own security in the meantime, i.e. before gaining NATO membership. Here are the most popular answers:

- by enhancing international co-operation, especially with NATO (PfP – allows consultations with NATO if the country feels threatened, MAP, EAPC);
- by exercising peaceful policy in international relations and maintaining good relations with neighbouring states;
- by building up its own effective defence system;
- by adapting Armed Forces to NATO standards, 'modernisation' of the technology and thought, introducing an all-volunteer force (AVF), fostering educational programmes within the armed forces.

The message here is that a majority of the Slovenian elite regards some *relationship* with NATO as important, pending attainment of *membership* status.

## **Comment**

To sum up on the interviews exercise, the attitude of the respondents toward potential membership of Slovenia in NATO was mainly a positive one, and in conformity with the attitude of the institution or organisation they represented. The arguments for, and at the same time the most positive effects of, membership could be summarised as follows: definite inclusion of the country into Europe and Western civilisation, strengthening of democratic values, enhanced national security and economic prosperity. Beside the positive effects, the respondents identified negative ones, however: partial loss of sovereignty, increased international security obligations and, in this context, possible casualties involving Slovenian soldiers abroad, degradation of the environment and increased defence costs. Further, the elite think that Slovenia fulfils all basic membership criteria set by NATO, but the 1997 Madrid decision to invite only three aspirant countries was a political one.

The requisite information needed to make decisions related to NATO membership was available to the top ranks of the state institutions and political parties. The decision-making process had predominantly formal characteristics, and was characterised by an absence of necessary co-ordination between key security policy-making actors.

## VII. SECURITY POLICY OF SLOVENIA (TEST OF THE MODEL)

We have used various methods – analyses of mass media, political parties' programmes, official documents and declarations, public opinion polls and selective interviews – to explore the attitudes of different participants in security policy-making in Slovenia (president of the state, government, ministries, parliament, political parties, civil society institutions and the general public), with particular reference to the idea of Slovenia becoming a member of NATO. Now, it is instructive to do some basic testing of the modified American models of security decision-making and management outlined earlier.<sup>31</sup> Also, it is appropriate to speculate about the existence and non-existence of a security policy-making model pertaining to Slovenian policy on this issue.

To begin with some general observations on the nature of Slovenian decision-making are in order.

### *Frequent change in leadership.*

The 'history' of the Slovenian state – the first free elections were held in Spring 1990, while independence was achieved in 1991 – is distinguished by frequent changes in leadership. There have been three major shifts of governments and several smaller changes in the cabinet itself. If we analyse the changes in the two ministries responsible for the security policy of the state – Foreign Ministry and Ministry of Defence – we can see frequent cadre changes at the top: five different defence and foreign ministers, respectively, served in a relatively short span of time (nine years), not to mention turbulence among state secretaries and other senior officials. The latter should provide necessary continuity of governmental policy, but became an object of political dealing and bargaining. Thus, the security policy process was a victim of frequent personnel changes. A common feature of all defence ministers was that they did *not* want any external expertise and professional help once they assumed the post. Rather, they were self-confident about their knowledge and relied on close collaborators. Sooner or later, however, they contacted academic and professional institutions to help them with some security policy issues. Therefore, the learning process – which is an anticipated phenomenon upon assuming a ministerial post – started with a significant delay.

### *Lack of statehood tradition and doctrine*

Slovenia is a relatively new state, therefore there is no proper statehood tradition. This has caused mainly (security) policy difficulties. There is no continuity, no previous experience, and no behavioural patterns to guide the state administration. The lack of guidelines, security policy starting-points and doctrinal documents is more than obvious. There has also been an anomaly in the way that some *specific* defence documents were adopted prior to more *general* ones. For example, there was

<sup>31</sup> Robert H. Trice, 'The Policy-making Process: Actors and their Impact', in John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, (eds.), *American Defense Policy* (fifth edition), (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), and Sam C. Sarkesian, *U.S. National Security. Policymakers, Processes, and Politics* (second edition), (London: Boulder, 1995).

a law adopted in the Parliament on basic investments for the armed forces, even though no military doctrine had been adopted by the Government prior to that.

#### *Security policy actors and professional ethics*

Slovenia has a comparable political structure to those in some other Western European countries. However, it is important to stress that Slovenia only established its National Security Council in 1998. Its composition indicates that the NSC is more a consultative body than an advisory one, namely, the role of policy professionals and academicians is neglected, while the roles of top politicians and senior officials are emphasised. We could hardly say that the executive power on different state levels had accurate information and sound advice, or that data and information processing was satisfactory. This holds especially for the lower ranks of civil servants and the military, who were actually denied adequate information because of poorly-developed channels of communication.

Some of the important actors did not fit into the general scheme of government security policy and, in some extreme cases, even compromised the government by making huge mistakes (e.g. the activity of the military and civilian intelligence services). We could also say that leaders were sometimes too concerned with economic issues, while security policy was neglected and, therefore, ill co-ordinated.

The lack of professional ethics demonstrated by individual actors caused a lot of abnormal situations in which high state officials by-passed their superiors and communicated directly to journalists or politicians, 'leaking' information and data.

#### *National interest*

The Slovenian government needed quite a lot of time to define key national interests in the security and foreign policy field, and even then some governmental activities were not in conformity with the declared interests. Also, the political and diplomatic means used did not match the desired goals. Needless to say, some prominent politicians acted in favour of peculiar and particular political party interests instead of respecting the national interest. The nation as a whole was not the primary focus for the loyalties and obligations of the diplomatic, intelligence and defence communities. As noted before, some senior officials and intelligence officers worked in favour of political party leaders with damaging effects on the security policy of the state.

#### *Co-ordination*

On the one hand, the Government had its own 'inter-sector' body to co-ordinate NATO-related activities. The body comprised members representing twelve different sectors of government (defence, foreign policy, environment, health, science and technology...). The members of the body met on a regular basis to discuss various aspects of co-operation with NATO. On the other hand, there was no formal co-ordination between the government, Parliament and the President of the State. Therefore, there were no procedures and mechanisms to provide for a common basis of security policy. The co-ordination could have been exercised by the National Security Council, but the body was established rather late.

The model of security policy-making was obviously a *formalistic* one, with an orderly policy-making structure, strictly-defined procedures, hierarchical lines of communication, and a structured staff system – lacking open and uninhibited expression of diverse opinions, analyses and advice, and collegial group problem-solving activity. The key decisions were made by the *political and state elites*, who first made the decision that Slovenia should try to enter NATO (Resolution on National Security adopted in 1993), and then started to seek support for the idea in civil society and among the population-at-large. This is clear from public opinion surveys which showed that the public did not support the idea before 1995. It is also clear from the analyses that the role of the public was very limited – all state and political actors took popular sentiment into account, but that was not of decisive importance in the decision-making process.



## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Slovenia is one of the 'transition states', aiming at NATO membership, but was not invited to start the membership negotiations to enter the first round of NATO enlargement. In this group were only three of twelve European countries which expressed their desire to join NATO, namely Hungary, Czech Republic and Poland. This trio was invited to start membership negotiations in Madrid in 1997, during the North Atlantic Council meeting, and entered the Alliance in Spring 1999. The Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Co-operation mentioned Slovenia as one of the potential candidates for the second round of NATO enlargement.<sup>32</sup> The Washington Declaration, issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NATO (April 1999) did not initiate that second round but simply said the Alliance remained 'open to all European democracies, regardless of geography, willing and able to meet the responsibilities of membership, and whose inclusion would enhance overall security and stability in Europe'.<sup>33</sup> No new potential members were explicitly mentioned in the document. At the same time, the Washington Summit offered aspirants the opportunity to frame a 'Membership Action Plan' – a programme of activities which should assist aspiring countries in their preparations for possible future membership. Although the sceptics doubt there will be a second round of enlargement, senior political representatives of NATO countries and NATO officials emphasise that enlargement is a *process*, composed of several phases, and any country which fully meets the membership criteria and conditions may be invited to join NATO.

The general impression gained by the observer of the internal social and political scene in Slovenia is that NATO membership is supported by all security policy-making actors, to include various state institutions, political parties, civil society and the general public. No player appears to be explicitly opposed to the project.

1 The *political* state displayed great enthusiasm about NATO membership in official documents and public statements, but there is still room for improvement:

- A more analytic and systematic approach to foreign and security policy is needed to avoid ill-conceived initiatives like the one on the abolition of nuclear weapons taken at the United Nations, despite the fact that NATO still advocates nuclear weapons as a pillar of deterrence. Additionally, Slovenia's initial hesitation in Autumn 1998 in granting NATO airspace accessibility for potential Kosovo sorties did not accord with Slovenia's stated desire to be a part of the Alliance.
- More substantial and concrete work is needed in the security, defence and military fields, like the formulation of a White Paper

<sup>32</sup> Article 8 of the Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Co-operation, Madrid, 8-9 VII 1997.

<sup>33</sup> Article 8 of The Washington Declaration, Washington D.C., 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

on defence and other important documents, the reform of the defence system and, especially, the restructuring of the armed forces from their still predominantly 'territorial' nature, in order to be able to co-operate in multi-national military operations.

There is some evidence of official assessments of these shortcomings.

2 The impression given by all official statements of parliamentary *political parties* is that the Slovenian political scene as a whole is genuinely in favour of Slovenia joining the Western integration processes, especially NATO. However, behind this general preference are differences between statements and actual behaviour, in the intensity of working towards acceptance, in measuring the effects of NATO enlargement, and in expected procedures of joining the Alliance:

- It appears from public statements and political programmes that political parties would like to enter 'their own' NATO – they all have different perceptions of what NATO is and what the membership brings. Rarely are military, defence or even security aspects mentioned. The various parties instead emphasise the more general effects of NATO membership, i.e. civilisational, economic, social, and foreign policy. They stress the by-products of NATO accession. The results of our interviews showed, however, that the leaders of the parties were cognisant of almost all dimensions of membership, including military and defence ones.
- The four most significant political parties support the concept of NATO inclusion without hesitation. Others either do not have a clear standpoint or have some reservations despite declared support. The differences reflect ideological background. One of the political parties (SNS) withdrew its support when NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia began in March 1999.
- Some of the political parties advocate a referendum before the political decision about membership is made.
- Regarding the reasons for Slovenia's rejection in the first round of NATO enlargement, the government parties thought these were to be found mainly outside the country, while the opposition parties claimed they were to be found within the country. They cited the slowness of changes in society (incomplete political, economic and military reforms), the deliberate delaying of the restitution of nationalised property and with it the righting of wrongs committed under the previous 'totalitarian regime', the over-slow process of privatisation and the hindering of foreign investment, Slovenia's lack of commitment in the resolution of the crisis in the Balkans and the failure to accept certain required defence obligations, inadequate civilian supervision of the armed forces and the poor readiness of the Slovenian Army, a defence budget which lacks

transparency, and purchases of weapons and military equipment from countries which are not NATO members.

The differences in judgements under this last heading were a straightforward reflection of the government-opposition division.

3 The institutions and individual members of *civil society* are a good deal more critical than the representatives of political parties towards the idea of Slovenia's membership in NATO. There is practically no uncritical and evangelical advocacy of membership in the mass media that we have analysed. If we categorise and generalise their arguments we see that for one group Slovenian membership of NATO is (ideologically) unacceptable (although some extremely irrational claims are stated here); a second group is concerned about the sovereignty of the state and national identity; a third group warns that for the political elite NATO membership is primarily of symbolic importance; and a fourth is fearful that the costs of membership will be too high.

4 *Public opinion* poll data indicate a majority in favour of reducing or ideally preserving the level of defence spending, in particular with regard to military outlays (though the demand for a reduction in spending on non-military (civil) defence was slightly less marked). On the other hand it is true that NATO would mean an increase in defence expenditure (above all in military defence spending) for Slovenia, which has also been confirmed by the government in its budgetary projections for forthcoming years. It should be noted that researchers have not yet established a direct correlation between the two variables (defence spending and Slovenian membership of NATO) although the question is raised as to whether we can expect public support for membership to be lower if membership will assuredly mean a significant increase in defence spending.

On this question we predicted hypothetically that the level of perceived military threats could affect the public's attitude toward NATO. However, data showed public support of membership was consistently high and reached, on average, around 60 per cent. Despite that, we used the term 'relatively high' support, for three reasons. First, the support was not as high as in some other applicant countries. Secondly, the data indirectly indicated the public was not ready to cover the increased defence expenditures likely to accompany membership. Finally, popular support was not as high as among state institutions and parliamentary political parties who were almost all in favour of the idea.

We raised the question at the outset of the, whether Slovenian security policy, as far as its potential membership in NATO is concerned, was a planned, systematic and consistent activity or a set of unplanned and sporadic reactions to the challenges imposed by domestic and international surroundings. Our analyses have shown that policy-making lacked appropriate planning and systematic and consistent approaches to the issue were neglected. This may be because the main political, economic and security goal of Slovenia in the early nineties pertained to the membership of the country in EU. However, the EU was not on the agenda at that time but NATO was. This forced Slovenia to give priority to NATO membership. Furthermore, Slovenian political and state elites formally accepted the idea of NATO membership in

December 1993 when the Resolution on National Security was adopted by the National Assembly. However, there was no thorough 'cost benefit' analysis prior to that, and the argumentation of the idea actually followed its acceptance and not vice versa.

**APPENDIX: FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT SLOVENIA<sup>34</sup>**

Republic of Slovenia	Parliamentary democracy
Area	20,273 sq km
Population Slovenia	1,983,351
GDP per capita 1997	US\$ 9,151
Currency	Slovenian Tolar/SIT SIT 177,30 = US\$ 1 (May 1999)
Capital	Ljubljana
Population Ljubljana	330,000

Slovenia is one of the youngest European countries, having become an independent state in 1991 after the collapse of the Yugoslav federation. Slovenia became the 176th member of the UN and is a full member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement, a participant in NATO's Partnership for Peace, a founding member of WTO and an associate member of the EU.

**1. The Constitution**

Under the new Constitution, Slovenia is a democratic republic and a social state governed by law. The state's authority is based on the principle of the division of power into legislative, executive and judicial branches, with a parliamentary system of government.

Power is held by the people and they exercise this power directly (through referendums and popular initiatives) and through elections. The highest legislative authority is the National Assembly (90 deputies) which has exclusive jurisdiction over the passing of laws.

The present Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia was adopted on 23 December 1991, following the results of the plebiscite on the independence of Slovenia on 23 December 1990, when Slovenes overwhelmingly voted for an independent Slovenia. The New Constitution accelerated the process of political and economic reform aimed at establishing parliamentary democracy and a market economy. The Slovene legislature first declared the sovereignty of the Republic on 2 July 1990 and resolved that Slovene laws should take precedence over federal – Yugoslav – laws.

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.uvi.si/slo>

## **2. President of the Republic**

The head of state is the President of the Republic. He is ex officio the supreme commander of the armed forces. He is elected for a maximum two consecutive five-year terms in direct, free and secret elections by an absolute majority of votes.

The President calls elections to the National Assembly, proclaims laws adopted by the National Assembly, proposes a candidate for Prime Minister to the National Assembly, proclaims documents of ratification for international treaties and agreements and performs other duties defined by the Constitution.

The President proposes to the National Assembly candidates for judges to the Constitutional Courts, members of the Courts Audit, the Human Rights Ombudsman and five members of the Judicial Council.

## **3. Judicial Authority**

The highest legal statute in Slovenia is the Constitution, which is adopted and amended in Parliament by a 2/3 majority. All other laws and regulations (laws passed by Parliament, decrees issued by the government for the implementation of laws, regulations, guidelines and orders issued by ministries for the implementation of laws and government decrees, and regulations which local government bodies have passed) must be in accordance with the Constitution.

### **3.1. Regular Courts**

Court functions are performed by regular courts and by Labour and Social Courts. The court system consists of: a Supreme Court which is the highest court in Slovenia, four (4) high courts which serve as appeal courts and eleven (11) circuit courts and forty-four (44) district courts, which serve as courts of first instance.

Labour courts decide labour disputes, while social courts have jurisdiction in disputes over pensions and disability insurance, health insurance and disputes over family and social benefits.

Judges are entirely independent in the performance of their duties; their sole obligations being adherence to the Constitution and statute. Judges are appointed for life by the National Assembly at the proposal of the Court Council.

### **3.2. Public Prosecutor**

The Public Prosecutor is an independent state authority responsible for prosecuting cases brought against those suspected of committing criminal offences.

The Public Prosecutor operates at the level of the basic public prosecutor's office, the higher public prosecutor's office and the state public prosecutor's office.

#### **4. Constitutional Court**

The Constitutional Court determines compliance of national legislation and other laws and regulations with the Constitution; laws and all regulations must conform with the generally valid principles of international law and with international agreements to which Slovenia is bound. The Constitutional Court may annul unconstitutional laws and unconstitutional regulations. It decides on jurisdictional disputes between the Parliament, the President and the government, and makes rulings in disputes related to rights and obligations between the state and individual municipalities. The Constitutional Court is composed of nine judges – legal experts, who are elected for a term of nine years.

#### **5. Legislative Authority**

##### **5.1. National Assembly**

Legislative authority is exercised out by the National Assembly, which has exclusive jurisdiction over the passing of laws. The legislative powers of the National Assembly are not stipulated in detail, meaning that the National Assembly itself decides upon what matters must be regulated by statute. Exceptions apply only in two circumstances: the National Assembly must regulate certain issues by law, but only those for which it is so stipulated by the Constitution, and where the rights and obligations of Slovene citizens and other persons are concerned.

The National Assembly passes amendments to the Constitution, decides the declaration of a state of war or emergency and the use of defence forces.

The National Assembly ratifies international agreements. It also has the power to call a referendum. The National Assembly is composed of 90 deputies who are elected in direct elections for a term of four years. In compliance with the Constitution, one representative each of the indigenous Hungarian and Italian ethnic communities occupies a seat in the Parliament. The Chairman of the Parliament is elected by majority vote of all deputies.

##### **5.2. National Council**

The National Council is a mainly advisory body composed of representatives of social, economic, professional and local interests. It may propose laws to the National Assembly, and at the latter's request gives opinion on specific issues.

It may demand that the National Assembly reviews its decision on a law before its promulgation. It also may require the calling of a referendum relating to legislation and require the commissioning of a parliamentary inquiry.

The National Council has 40 members, known as councillors. The term of office in the National Council is five years.

## **6. Executive Authority**

The government must be approved by the National Assembly, to which the government and individual ministers are responsible. The government is composed of sixteen (16) ministers, who are responsible for fields determined by law, and four (4) ministers without portfolio. The government proposes laws, general acts, other regulations and state policies for individual and economic fields to the National Assembly and supervises the state administration through ministers.

## **7. Prime Minister**

The National Assembly elects the Prime Minister, the head of the government, at the proposal of the President of the Republic (after consulting the parliamentary party leaders) by a majority of all deputies. The Prime Minister then proposes to the National Assembly candidates for ministers. The Prime Minister leads and coordinates the work of government, gives orientations of the government and represents the government in the National Assembly.

## **8. Court of Audit**

The Constitution provides for the establishment of a Court of Audit. It is independent and is responsible for auditing state finances, the state budget and funds expended for public purposes. Its members are appointed by Parliament at the proposal of the President of the Republic.

## **9. Ombudsman**

The Ombudsman is responsible for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in matters involving state bodies, local government bodies and statutory authorities.

The Ombudsman protects and represents individuals in disputes with these bodies and acts when an individual has exhausted all other means of redress.

## 10. Population

The vast majority of the population are Slovenes (87.84 per cent – 1991 census). Italians and Hungarians are considered indigenous minorities with rights protected under the Constitution. Other ethnic groups – which mostly arrived in Slovenia after W.W.II as economic immigrants – identify themselves as Croats, Serbs, Muslims, Yugoslavs, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Albanians.

There are Slovene indigenous minorities in Italy, Austria and in Hungary. Ethnic Slovenes living outside the national border numbered between 250,000 to 400,000 (depending on the inclusion of second and other generations) with the vast majority of them living overseas and in the countries of the EU.

The religion of the majority of the population is Roman Catholicism, although there are small communities of other Christian denominations (in particular Protestants in the eastern parts of the country) and of Muslims and Jews.

## 11. Historical Overview

End of 6th Century:	Slavs begin settling the valleys of the Sava, Drava and Mura rivers, and under pressure from the Avars, reach the shores of the Black Sea, Friuli plains, the Danube, Adriatic Sea and Lake Balaton.
7th Century	Western Slavic tribes form an alliance with the Slavic Duchy of Carantania with its centre in present day Austrian Carinthia
745	Carantania becomes a part of the Frankish empire. The Slavs convert to Christianity and gradually lose their independence
869-874	Prince Kocelj briefly establishes an independent state of Slovenes in Lower Pannonia.
9th Century	Alongside the growing influence of Christianity the Slovene language is increasingly used in religious services. The Freising Manuscripts, the oldest written records in the Slovene language, originate from this period.
14th-16th Century	The Habsburg monarchy was the first to include all of the Slovene regions.
1551	Protestant Primož Trubar publishes <i>Katekizem</i> (The Catechism), the first book written in the Slovene language.
1584	Jurij Dalmatin translates the Bible into Slovene. Adam Bohorič writes a grammar book for Slovenes.
1848	Slovene intellectuals issue the first political program for a United Slovenia.
October 1918	Liberation of all Slovenes from the territory of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy is declared, and in December the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is formed.
27 April 1941	The formation of the OF (Liberation Front), an anti-Nazi coalition, which becomes the pillar of the partisan struggle against the German, Italian and Hungarian occupation after the

	capitulation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.
1945	Fighting with the Germans in Carinthia and Styria ended on 15 May (Last battle of the Second World War).
1945	The process of nationalisation begins, gradually bringing private business, industry and land ownership under state control.
1988-1990	The military trial of three journalists and an army officer leads to calls for an independent Slovenia. Events following are known as the Slovene Spring, ending with the first parliamentary multiparty democratic election in the former state (April 1990).
20 January 1990	The Slovene delegation attends the congress of the Yugoslav League of Communists for the last time.
23 December 1990	88.5 per cent of voters at the referendum cast their vote for an independent Slovenia.
25 June 1991	The Republic of Slovenia officially declares its independence
27 June 1991	The Yugoslav Army attacks Slovenia.
7 July 1991	By signing the Brioni Declaration the Yugoslav Army terminates its military involvement in Slovenia.
25 October 1991	The last Yugoslav soldier leaves Slovenia.
29 November 1991	The Law on Denationalisation is published in the Official Gazette.
23 December 1991	The Slovene Constitution is adopted.
15 January 1992	The European Union officially recognises Slovenia.
22 May 1992	Slovenia becomes a permanent member of the United Nations.
7 November 1992	Parliament adopts the Law on Privatisation of Socially-Owned Companies.
6 December 1992	The first elections are held in independent Slovenia.
27 September 1994	Slovenia signs the accession declaration in Geneva for incorporation in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Slovenia thus becomes a founding member of the World Trade Organisation (23 December 1994).
6 March 1995	The European Union Council of Ministers grants a mandate for negotiations to begin between the EU and Slovenia on an association agreement.
1 January 1996	Slovenia becomes a full member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement.
10 June 1996	Slovenia and the European Union signed an association agreement, granting Slovenia the status of associate membership and access to the structural dialogue.
25 June 1996	The Western European Union (WEU) Council welcomed Slovenia as a WEU associate partner.
1 January 1999	Slovenia became a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.
1 February 1999	Association agreement with the EU came into effect

## 12. Defence System

On February 27, 1997, the Parliament of the Republic of Slovenia approved a new Government determined to continue the Euro-Atlantic orientation with the ultimate aim of Slovenia obtaining full NATO membership. This commitment is based on the decision of the Slovenian Parliament, which associates Slovenia's security with its membership in NATO. We want to share common values with Euro-Atlantic institutions and would like to join NATO's efforts to secure global peace and stability. We believe that Slovenia, as an important element of international stability, can resolutely contribute to the successful accomplishment of this aim.

The Republic of Slovenia began constructing its own defence system after achieving independence in 1991. The basic political elements of the Defence and Security system organisation and development are as follows:

- ensuring the functioning of a democratic, legal, sovereign, territorially united and indivisible state – the Republic of Slovenia,
- ensuring the observance of human rights and basic freedoms,
- ensuring balanced economic, social and cultural development,
- providing for democratic control over the armed forces,
- total and consistent depolitisation of the armed forces, and
- security and integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions.

The Republic of Slovenia's defence comprises military and civil defence which is a complementary, complete system. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia coordinates the organisation and preparation for military and civil defence and is in charge of implementation thereof. Military defence is the defence of the country with weapons and other military means and is carried out by the Slovenian Armed Forces. Civil defence is a unified system of measures and activities that support and complement the national military defence with non-military means and provides for the operability of the authorities and supplying, protection and survival of the population.

## 13. Slovenian Armed Forces

The Slovenian Armed Forces are one of the youngest armed forces in Europe. In May 1998, seven years will have passed since their establishment. During this short period, the Slovenian Armed Forces have changed from armed forces composed of reserve infantry units to armed forces which include air force and air defence units, coastal defence unit, artillery, armoured units and operation units, whose equipment and development is provided under a special Defence Law which stipulates NATO standards as being obligatory.

The main purpose and fundamental mission of the Slovenian Armed Forces is firstly to deter any possible enemy from armed intervention against Slovenia and,

secondly, to defend the state. The fundamental tasks of the Slovenian Armed Forces are as follows:

- providing defence in the event of an attack on the country,
- complying with Slovenia's commitments made to international organisations,
- training for defence purposes,
- providing an adequate level of combat readiness, and
- participating in civil emergency operations in the event of natural or other disasters.

The Slovenian Armed Forces are currently in the process of restructuring and adaptation in order to prepare for integration into a collective defence system. Many different conceptual and organisational measures will have to be undertaken to apply the necessary standards, procedures and ways of codification.

#### **14. Perspective on the Possible Restructuring of the Slovenian Armed Forces**

The aim of restructuring the Slovenian Armed Forces would be to create forces which are small in size, but well armed and equipped, and able to participate in Euro-Atlantic security integration. At present, the Slovenian Armed Forces have 56,000 service members and 4,200 professional soldiers, non-commissioned and commissioned officers and 5,000-6,000 conscripts.

The restructuring process should be finished by 2010. At that time, the Slovenian Armed Forces will number 33,000 service members. The ratio between the reserve and professional soldiers should thereby increase in favour of the latter. That ratio is currently 1:14, and should become a ratio of 1:2 in 2010.

In the mid-term planning period (1999-2003), a new force and unit structure could be set up and the formation, personnel and material activities connected to rapid reaction forces completed. The main brigades should be upgraded, the territorial forces should be reorganised into support defence forces and changes in logistics should be carried out.

During the period 2003-2010, the final structure and size of the Slovenian Armed Forces, particularly in terms of career personnel numbers, modernisation and the ratios between the main and support defence forces should be established. Forces should be available to be assigned to joint forces of collective defence.

According to purpose, the Slovenian Armed Forces should be organised into: rapid reaction forces, main defence forces, and support defence forces.

##### *Rapid reaction forces*

Rapid reaction forces should be organised into a multipurpose brigade which will be equipped and trained to operate over the entire territory of the Republic of Slovenia, as well as to participate in humanitarian activities and peace support operations.

*Main defence forces*

Main defence forces should comprise the biggest part of the Slovenian Armed Forces. They will consist of professional and reserve units, as well as of recruitment structures.

*Support defence forces*

Support defence forces should consist of reserve forces, which should be mobilised with or without the help of previously formed development nuclei. The tasks of the support defence forces should involve combat, protection/security, logistical, support or other activities.

To carry out these changes, it will also necessary to amend current legislation and to ensure appropriate funding. For this purpose, the Slovenian Ministry of Defence plans to prepare changes to the Defence Law, strategic and doctrinal documents, providing the gradual increase of defence expenditures to the level of 2.3 per cent of GDP by 2003. This is to ensure funding for the next cycle of the basic development programmes for the Slovenian Armed Forces.

In the first phase of implementing the basic developmental programmes, partial modernisation of the existing Slovenian Armed Forces and establishment of C4I system, a command and information system, air defence, an anti-armour combat system and resources for coastal defence should be facilitated.

## **15. Military Co-operation**

In compliance with Partnership for Peace (PfP) principles, the North Atlantic Military Council (NAMC) and the Euroatlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) initiatives and support, the Republic of Slovenia has been intensively developing and enhancing its military co-operation, particular regional military co-operation. The Republic of Slovenia wishes to develop multidirectional and multilevel regional military co-operation.

Slovenia has been participating in a number of specific projects and initiatives within the military co-operative framework. The establishment of multinational forces reflects an efficient form of military co-operation, in a political, military and financial sense. But above all, it meets operational requirements derived from new tasks and contributes to the consolidation of a new European security architecture.

### 15.1. Trilateral Multinational Land Force (MLF)

As part of the rapidly expanding bilateral and multinational military co-operation of the neighbouring countries, Italy, Hungary and Slovenia, an initiative to establish a Multinational Light Land Force (MLF) at a brigade level was taken in 1997.

Its main aim is to improve the interoperability level of the armed forces of the three countries by improving their mutual awareness and taking responsibility for agreed operational procedures.

The MLF will consist of a highly operational light infantry brigade at a rapid preparedness level, capable of an effective military reaction to newly-emerging challenges related to ensuring international security, peace and stability. The MLF will be responsible for all of Europe, but will focus on Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, particularly in operational regions characterised by slow-go territory and an unfavourable climate.

#### 15.2. CENCOOP – co-operation among Central European countries in the area of peacekeeping operations

From the very beginning, Slovenia has been actively participating in the implementation of the Austrian led PfP initiative – Co-operation of Central European countries in Peacekeeping Operations (CENCOOP). Five PfP member countries are participating: Austria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, Czech Republic and Switzerland as an observer. CENCOOP will link the activities of small Central European countries based on principles in accordance with the UN Charter. It will take into account UN recommendations on how to improve the preparedness, interoperability and capabilities of potential peace contingents, as well as OSCE principles related to conflict prevention and the provision of collective security.

The purpose of the project is to establish a multinational peacekeeping operation at a brigade level. The CENCOOP unit will be composed of modules which have a broad scope of activities, flexible structure and a 'standby' principle of engagement. It will allow for the formation of multinational contingents consisting of two or more countries, on an individual, case-by-case basis.

#### 15.3. Military Co-operation in South-Eastern Europe

In compliance with the Joint Declaration of the ministerial meeting of South-Eastern Europe ministers of defence (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and the USA) in Sofia, on October 3, 1997, Slovenia has been developing noninstitutional co-operation in the military area. Within the framework of the programme agreed at the ministerial meeting, Slovenia is preparing the first meeting of south-eastern European Chiefs of General Staffs, which will take place in June 1998 in Slovenia.

### **16. Bilateral Military Co-operation**

Slovenia and its armed forces have established bilateral military co-operation with 24 countries in the short period of their existence. Bilateral co-operation is predominately based on the agreements that are in place. Priority tasks of bilateral military co-operation with neighbouring countries include co-operation between border units, activities related to the reorganisation of the Slovenian Armed Forces

and PARP support, that is, activities intended to improve the interoperability level of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

## **17. Slovenian Co-operation in Peace Support Operations**

The participation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in peace support operations dates from 1997. This was a significant turning point in the Army's development and functions. Before members of the Slovenian Armed Forces were sent to peacekeeping operations based on international obligations and agreements, the Slovenian Government made appropriate decisions and issued regulations pertinent to the status of the Slovenian Armed Forces service members when on duty in foreign countries.

Lessons learned through participation in peace support operations are an important contribution to improving the interoperability level of the Slovenian Armed Forces.

### **17.1. Participation of the Slovenian Armed Forces' medical unit in the ALBA operation**

From May to July, 1997, the Slovenian Armed Forces medical unit participated in the ALBA operation in Albania as a battalion aid station (ROL 1). Despite the fact that the preparation time was limited, the lessons learned from co-operation in the ALBA operation were extremely useful. The government's decision to co-operate in this operation also accelerated the work of all staff involved in the UNFICYP operation on Cyprus.

### **17.2. Co-operation in the UNFICYP peacekeeping operation**

Since September 1997, 10 service members of the Slovenian Armed Forces have been participating in the UNFICYP operation on Cyprus within the Austrian battalion. Service members of the Hungarian armed forces are also participating in the battalion.

Slovenia will maintain the present size of the Slovenian contingent in the operation until the end of September 1998. The contingent will thereafter be increased to the platoon level.

There are members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion for International Co-operation participating in the Slovenian contingent. Activities related to preparations for participation in these operations and the practical experience gained in the previous participation, are being applied during the preparation phase for future co-operation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in peace support operations. Participation in the operation is a result of the exemplary bilateral co-operation of the neighbouring countries.

### 17.3. Participation in the 'Joint Guard' operation and Co-operation in SFOR activities

Slovenia is one of 37 countries participating in SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina and was the first state emerging on the territory of former Yugoslavia to participate. Co-operation includes helicopter transport and a transport aeroplane. Apart from air transport, Slovenia has offered hospital space and the Cerklje military airport for possible use by SFOR forces. Slovenia will participate in SFOR until the end of the operation's mandate and is now conducting preparations for further co-operation within the SFOR-FOF force.

### 17.4. Participation in the UNTSO operation

Starting in August 1998, Slovenia will participate in the UNTSO operation in the Middle East by contributing two Slovenian Armed Forces officers as observers.

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