



Geneva Centre for the  
**Democratic Control of  
Armed Forces (DCAF)**  
CH 1211 Geneva  
Tel. +41/22/741 77 00  
info@dcaf.ch  
www.dcaf.ch



**medienhilfe**

PO Box, CH 8031 Zürich  
Tel: +41/(0)1/272 46 37  
Fax: +41/(0)1/272 46 82  
info@medienhilfe.ch  
www.medienhilfe.ch



Centre for Civil-Military Relations

Centre for **Civil-Military  
Relations CCMR**  
www.ccmr-bg.org  
office@ccmr-bg.org  
tel/fax: +381-11-435 428



**Media Center Belgrade**  
www.mediacenter.org.yu  
mc.mail@mediacenter.org.yu  
tel:+381-11-3343 225  
fax:+381-11-3343 420

# Reform of the Security Sector

## Summary

Presented by

**Prof. Miroslav Hadžić**

Center for Civil-Military Relations CCMR Belgrade

Paper prepared for presentation at the Conference

## Security Sector Reform and the Media

### Regional Conference on defence and the freedom of information

Organized by

Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces DCAF  
and medienhilfe Switzerland

in cooperation with the Center for Civil-Military Relations CCMR  
and the Media Center Belgrade

Serbia & Montenegro, November 14/15, 2003

Several years ago, the phrase “reform of the security sector” entered the political and scientific lingo (Forster, 2002 : 27). Its usage was accompanied by attempts to provide theoretical foundation for the concept of integral reform of the security sector. However, a universal definition of the “reform of the security sector” establishing the exact scope, contents and meaning of this concept is still missing. Hence a lack of a complete list of the key indicators showing whether or not a country is undergoing this type of reform. Moreover, a harmonized methodology for monitoring and evaluating the tempo, scope and reach of the reform of the security sector is yet to be adopted.

Also, this phrase is optionally used to designate the current and/or planned changes of security concepts and practices within a given state. Therefore, this is a collective phrase encompassing a series of simultaneous and yet partial changes aimed at introducing order into the security sphere of a given state in a new and different way. At the same time, this phrase serves to implicitly highlight that the changes critically depend on the tempo, contents and course of reform in a specific society.

When it was first used, this concept mainly referred to the (European) societies in transition and the post-conflict societies of the Western Balkans. Soon its referential framework included the transitional societies of South America, Africa and Asia. In the European circle, this concept was based on the nominal readiness of the majority of citizens and elites in trans-socialist societies to adopt the liberal-democratic values of the Western model-societies. Therefore, in these societies this reform is generally understood as a simultaneous process of making the society compliant with the practices of modern democracy, but also transforming the inherited armed forces to fit the needs of the emerging democratic order. Of course, the transformation of the armed forces required their radical reform. It is therefore not surprising that the reform of this sector has essentially been understood as a procedure of a more or less creative application of the Euro-Atlantic solution in the security sphere. This approach was encouraged by the offered model of security integration into the Euro-Atlantic community, which was based on the expansion of the NATO, i.e. the candidates’ preliminary membership in the Partnership for Peace.

Obviously, the range of the concept “security reform” also covers the modern democratic societies from the Euro-Atlantic community. However, in this context, it has largely meant the adaptation of the states and their respective and/or joint armed forces to a new security situation that resulted from the demise of a bipolar world order. This is why this group of countries focused on the issues and dilemmas regarding further professionalization of the army and its postmodern image. Their agenda included the reintegration of the army into the society and, at the same time, the protection of human rights in the army. Essentially, the debate focused on

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the improvement of the model of democratic civilian control of the army and other components of the armed forces.

The reformist measures were largely dictated by the need of the Euro-Atlantic states to redefine their role in a changed security environment. The referential framework now included an extended and modified list of security challenges, risks and threats, giving precedence to the non-military ones. As a result, the final decade of the last century was marked with a comprehensive search for a new – individual and common – security identity of the EU and NATO member states. The disappearance of the enemy bloc shifted their attention from sustaining readiness for a potential world war to making the global community compliant with its security, i.e. political and economic requirements. To this purpose, they first instituted their own security model as standard, and then promoted the NATO into the key instrument of global security.

However, the terrorist attacks on the US in September 2000 imposed a radical reform of the security sector in the Euro-Atlantic community. Its member countries, above all the US, are currently in the process of redefining the concept of security as preemptive action against potential challenges, risks and threats. The reform of the security sector has subsequently been brought into compliance with this new concept, and focuses on the reform of the armed forces corresponding to the requirements of the ongoing war against terrorism.

As a result, the struggle against terrorism has also appeared on the security-reform agenda of the countries in transition and the post-conflict societies. Hence, these societies, and particularly the societies of the Western Balkans, are now facing the problem of reforming the security sector while at the same time contributing to the elimination of the democratic insufficiencies of their respective societies, but also eliminating new challenges, risks and threats to regional and global security.

All this indicates that there is no such thing as a unique, one-size-fits-all model of security sector reform. It is therefore our intention to, in the central part of the paper, offer the elements for a hypothetical construction of a security sector reform in the countries in transition and post-conflict societies. Our emphasis will be on the states of the Western Balkans. The reason for this is found in the fact that in these countries the reform of the security sector presents the key condition for the stabilization of the democratic order and its taking root.

For the sake of clarity and because one of the models mentioned above derives from it, let us expound on our understanding of the concept of the security sector reform. Our approach rests on the conviction that in the European circle this concept has been developed from the anthropocentric evolution of the idea of security that places in its center the individual (citizen), who later came to be the purpose and standard of a state's and society's security. In this

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context, the demilitarization of security began and it – the security of citizens, society and state – is increasingly understood as the joint product of the activity of economic, social, political, cultural, demographic and ecological forces within which the military and police component loses primacy and monopole (Buzan, Weaver, De Wilde, 1998).

The concept “security sector” refers to the entire society and its institutions, and therefore its reform also requires: (1) change of security ideas and practices, (2) change in the constitutional and institutional arrangements – for the countries in transition, this entails the establishment of democratic institutions and accompanying infrastructure, (3) establishment and promotion of the democratic civilian control of the armed forces, (4) redefining the purpose and tasks of the armed forces and its components and, consequently, their structural transformation, and (5) various forms of international security cooperation and tightened security integration (Kuhlmann, Callaghan, 2000).

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**Regional Conference on defence and the freedom of information - Belgrade, November 14/15, 2003**