

THE BULGARIAN ARMY – FROM THE WARSAW PACT TO NATO (SOME PROBLEMS OF THE MILITARY REFORM)

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ABSTRACT

The reform of the Bulgarian has progressed with difficulties, following the logic of the political process and looks for the foundation of national understanding of state's priorities, including in the field of defence.

The significance of the problems in the process of reformation of the Bulgarian armed forces is getting a more outlined form through following its historical importance and development.

In the process of building stated democratic institutions the society needs the implementation of this military reform for the creation of a new army.

Shaping the military reform concept is a result of a dispute between BSP and UDF. The transition period was accompanied by a waste of the military human potential.

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EL EJÉRCITO BÚLGARO – DEL PACTO DE VARSOVIA A LA OTAN (ALGUNOS PROBLEMAS DE LA REFORMA MILITAR)

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RESUMEN

El proceso de reforma búlgaro ha ido progresando con dificultades, ha seguido la lógica del proceso político y con el objetivo de conseguir una lista de prioridades nacionales que incluyen el área de defensa.

La importancia de los problemas acontecidos durante el proceso de reforma de las Fuerzas Armadas búlgaras está tomando una mayor importancia debido a su importancia histórica y desarrollo.

En el proceso de construcción de las instituciones democráticas la sociedad necesita la puesta en marcha de la reforma militar con la creación de un nuevo ejército.

La delimitación del nuevo concepto de reforma militar es el resultado de las disputas entre el Partido Socialista Búlgaro y la Unión de Fuerzas Democráticas. La transición estuvo acompañada de un gran desperdicio de potencial humano.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The policy in the field of the military building, the defence and the security of each country is based on the concepts of its own interest and the best way for its protection and strengthening. The most important task of each government is to keep the freedom and the integrity of the state territory and its people. Notwithstanding that since many years the governments in the old democracies deal with the control over the security matters exercised by the legislative power, actually they have to manage the issue of the transformation of the army structures and the efficient management of the defence with view to the new political realities in the world.

For the east European societies of the former Warsaw pact, incl. the Bulgarian one, these problems are considered in the context of the transition from totalitarian-socialistic to democratic state system. Within the frameworks of the overall social changes being implemented in Bulgaria the need of new military building and the implementation of the defence policy require as a rule a solid political and nationally responsible consensus. The reform of the Bulgarian military forces required their adequate adaptation in conformity with the new social relations, the new democratic character of the state and the new world realities and the national choice. Its course is not smooth, but rather difficult and hard, following the logic of the political process in the country and looking insistently for the fundamentals of the national understanding on the national priorities, including in the sensitive field of the defence. Over the period of changes the Bulgarian army has been gradually, but definitely transformed from large-scale deployment national armed forces holding the south flank of the Warsaw Pact during the years of the Cold War into efficient from military point of view, nationally provident and interoperable with the future North Atlantic allies force.

2. HISTORICAL PLACE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BULGARIAN ARMY. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY FACTOR.

The Bulgarian army is among the institutions, which mark the reinstatement of the Bulgarian state structure after the Liberation of the almost five-century Ottoman rule. It was established on 15th July 1978 by the order for the institution of the Bulgarian land troops. Yet in the first government of free Bulgaria, led by the Prime Minister Todor Burmov, the Ministry of Defence was among the main institutions of the state. It was established by Decree No. 23 dated 17th July 1979 on the grounds of art. 161 of the Tarnovo Constitution on the administration of the Bulgarian army.

The peak in the activity of the Ministry of Defence and the army during this earliest stage, was the implementation of the Unification of the Principality of Bulgaria with the Eastern Rumelia on 6th September 1885 and the defence of this act during the Serbian-Bulgarian War in November the same year. This was a crucial time, because the recall of the Russian military officers of the Bulgarian army put an end to the seven-year period, where the position of the Defence Minister has been implemented by Russian militaries.

Over the period of peace between 1886 and 1912 the military administration undertook measures for the fast development of the army. The established brigade organization and the favourable demographic conditions helped achieving a quality leap in the strengthening and the improvement of the Bulgarian army as a mass and modern military force. The Military Academy was set up in 1912.

The participation of Bulgaria in the triumphant Balkan War (1912-1913) for the implementation of the national liberation and unification turned the Bulgarian army into the principal military force on the Balkans through the rout of the main army group of the Ottoman Empire at the peninsula. In the second Balkan war 1913 (inter the former allies) there was a paradoxical historical situation – the Bulgarian army was not defeated to any of the fronts, but at the price of important loss of staff, military equipment and arms. That is why its organizational structure was modified. The situation during the participation of the country (1915-1918) in the World War I to the side of the Central forces was the same. The loss of the war was extremely hard for the country and the army. The Neuil Treaty abolished the conscript army and the Bulgarian army could not exceed 33,000 people. Bulgaria had not the right of Military Academy, navy and air forces, and the Bulgarian officers were forbidden to study abroad. The principal task of the Ministry of Defence in the 20th years of the 20th century was to transform the army into voluntary one with very restricted number of the staff. By the end of 1924 the number of the armed forces was only 25,520.

After 1927, when the Allied control commission leaved the country, better conditions for the development of the Bulgarian army were created. The division organization was gradually restored, navy and air forces units were formed, and the army included tank sections. Navy and aviation schools were opened, as well as a military school in 1937.

The burst out of the World War II and Bulgaria accession to the Trilateral pact imposed organizational and structural changes in the organization, armament and the training of the troops. From organizational point of view the armed forces consisted of individual armies, divisions, regimens, battalions, companies and platoons with triple organization. The army was divided for the first time by types: land, air and navy. According to the effective then law the commanders of the individual armies were directly subordinated to the Minister of defence.

After the World War II up to 1947 the organization of the ministry remained the same, but there were bodies introduced in its structure for political work in the army. By the vote of the Constitution of Republic of Bulgaria in 1947 the Ministry of the war was renamed to the Ministry of national defence (MND) and the Bulgarian army - in Bulgarian national army (BNA). During the socialism period the military administration as the central military and administration establishment, as well as all the other state institutions, were under the control of the Bulgarian communist party. Some of its structures related to the activity of the Joint command of the Allied armed forces of the Warsaw Pact states, whose member Bulgaria became in 1955. The administration bodies of the MND were the Minister of the national defence, the vice-ministers and the college of the institution. Its structure consisted of: Headquarters, General political administration of the national army, administration and individual departments, administration of the three types of armed forces.

By the democratisation of the Bulgarian society, which began in November 1989, and after the country leaving the Warsaw Pact in 1991 the organizational

structure of the Ministry was changed, and it was renamed in 190 to the Ministry of defence. Pursuant to the Constitution voted in 1991 the President is the chief commander of the armed forces, and the management of the Ministry of defence accounts its activity to the parliament – the National Assembly. The organizational structure of the Ministry of defence was set into compliance with the changes occurred and the priorities of the state policy for Bulgaria membership in NATO and the European Union. The amendments in the legislation state that the exercise of the state control over the armed forces is made by the civilian administration of the ministry.

It is well known that the armed forces and their commanders have always played an important role in the politics. The Third Bulgarian Kingdom (1879-1946) was rich of audacious military raids in the field of politics not protected by the Constitution. But the judgment on the intervention of the army in the political life may not be simple and plain. The army in the monarchic Bulgaria was “out of the politics but not apolitical, as it served as a very important factor for the implementation of external and internal goals”ⁱ. The officers had not the right to participate in any political parties and organizations, and were divested of election rights. The striving of the administration to impose them political virginity, though, was condemned to failure. Notwithstanding that the officers had not party membership cards, they could not be kept out of the impact of “philes and phobes”, their sympathy to various political programmes could not be banned by orders. The coups d'état: two in 1886, 1923, 1934 and the participation in the events of September 1944 overthrew the legitimate governments, but although their motives were different, they always proclaimed the strengthening of the state system. The politics were discussed, but the officers did not claim openly any political demands. Although the civil rights of the military were injured, they have always had a representative of theirs in all the governments of different membership. The sovereign kept the right to nominate the Defence Minister. On its turn the latter kept office after the political defeat of the ruling party just to underline that the army was a non-partisan institution. His main duty was to claim in the government and the parliament larger defence budget, the strengthening of the officers' corps and the satisfaction of its professional and everyday life needs.

During the socialism (1944-1989) the army was under the direction and control of the Bulgarian communist party (BCP) ruling by Constitution. The officers ranked as company commanders and above were 100% members of the BCP, as well as the majority of the platoon commanders and part of the sergeants. The Minister of the national defence was the member of the Political bureau of the Central committee of the BCP. The higher commanders and the garrison commanders were without any exception members or co-opted as members of the ruling national and regional structures of the party – from the Central committee to the relevant municipal party committees. Political bodies were created in the Bulgarian army, and the “National and Social Security” Dept. of the Central committee of the BCP worked out the matters of the party policy in the army. Notwithstanding of the close party supervision during the years of socialism the officers kept their patriotic feelings and were perceived by the people as nationally responsible, by keeping the historical traditions.

3. NECESSITY OF THE ARMY REFORM. NATIONAL INTERESTS AND NATIONAL SECURITY.

The Bulgarian state and society enter in the era of globalisation without achieving the national ideal – the Unification of the ethnic Bulgarians in an united national state on the territories they live. The endeavours of the Bulgarian social, cultural and state institutions, which organized the Bulgarian people to achieve this goal, were vain, and the actions of the various governments and our diplomacy were pure disaster. It was only the Bulgarian army, which as a social and state institution has completely implemented in an excellent manner its tasks related to the achievement of the national ideal – the Unification. That is why it enjoyed high prestige and the society was very sensitive to all that was formed as state policy with regard to the army and to what was happening inside the army.

By erecting the democratic state institutions the society will need a new national ideal and new endeavours to reach this goal, respectively, including completely new army. So it is already time to leave to the history the implementation of the actual military reform and to begin considering and acting for the building of a new army.

During the various states of its development the Bulgarian society has existed in the dimensions of historically determined political forms. At the stage of the industrialized economy this form was the national state (comprising the monarchist and the socialist Bulgaria). Its adequate military organization was the conscription-mobilization army, formed under the principle of the universal military service, which on its turn determined its mass character.

During the past decades some social processes were observed, where the national states faced the reality to give way, although with great difficulty, to the newly forming states of new type. The newly forming type of state organization is based on the multinational corporations, whose products, by means of the international division of labour, may be hardly attributed to an individual nation. This is the prototype of the new “market” (under Philip Bobbit) states, which turns to be possible thanks to the level they have reached:

- the technological revolution – the high technological and biotechnological productions and the mass destruction weapons being made on that grounds. Moreover, even their production, intended for peaceful purposes only, may be used and was used in the 11th September events as mass destruction weapon;
- the information revolution – the prevailing role and significance of the telecommunications with regard to the international relations;
- the financial revolution – which is the sequel of the markets deregulation, marked by the important growth of the bank loans.

The multinational corporations represent the backbone of the global economy. They, as the national states, too, have their own “armies”, orderly financing and sources of incomes, civil service, their own intelligence and analysis services. They have their own management hierarchy and create internal laws, which have to be strictly observed. And finally, they are not bound to any definite territory, i.e. they are a kind of virtual states. Thus the moral values laid in their base acquire another dimensions. This reflects to the building of the armed forces. We can even consider the multinational terrorist network made by Osama ben Laden as malign and mutated form of the advancing “market” states. On that

ground the military science reconsiders the known classical dimensions of the strategy, the operation art and the tactics of the modern armies.

This requires the outline of the quality parameters of the needed new army, without, however, being clear about the grounds:

- on what kind of doctrine will be erected the new Bulgarian “market” state;
- what will be the formulation of the new national goal (ideal);
- what will be finally the policy of the Bulgarian state while organizing the efforts of the people to achieve this new ideal.

Such a review in the beginning of the democratic changes was necessary, so that we can adequately respond as a state and army to the new challenges. Without any doubt we possess the resource to do so and we must make use of the experience of the states being more advanced in the globalisation era – mainly the USA and those of the European Union.

What kind of processes do we observe there?

First, the principles on which the motivation for the service of the civilians in the army (known as a professional army, unlike the conscription-mobilisation army) are clearly defined and successfully operate:

- striving to profit – the civilian must be sure that starting his way to the military profession he will be able to easily satisfy his own and his family economic needs during the time of service and upon its completion;
- striving for success – as a naturally laid in each individual striving to realize his abilities in the implementation of work useful for the society;
- the guarantee of some social status – the wish of each individual realizing his abilities in the hard profession of the military to win the relevantly guaranteed recognition for his work by the society and the institutions.

The provisions of the efficient action of those principles could be implemented only if the Bulgarian governments, since the beginning of the democratic changes, have accepted and guaranteed clear, fixed, strictly observed and acting within a relatively long period and legally sanctioned conditions and rules for the carrying out the professional military service.

Second, the social dimensions of the military are clearly and exactly revealed and sanctioned. It is necessary, though, to bear in mind that the striving to a “professional army” and “professional soldier” wash away the difference between the soldier hired by the army, who is professional in the sense that he works for money, and the officer who is professional in completely different meaning – a man devoted to the service of the society.ⁱⁱ Notwithstanding, we should note that the specific social dimension of this type of activity come to

- military qualification – the military-professional is an expert with specialized knowledge and skill in an important field of the human activity. In the sphere of the military competence, inherent to all or to almost all of the military, unlike all or almost all civilians, the “management of the force” is the basic skill (under Harold Laswell);
- military professional responsibility – the military-professional is a practicing expert who works in a social context and implements some specific service unreservedly needed for the operation of the society. The civilian-professional remains such even he makes use of his qualification to the prejudice of the society. He can apply it in this aspect, if he refuses to assume his social responsibility. The qualification of the professional military enjoins him some specific social responsibility. The society has a direct, constant and common interest to see this qualification applied for the improvement of its own

security. And even though all professions being regulated by the state to some extent, the military profession is completely monopolized by it.

- The military society – where the members of this profession are tied together by the sense of organic unity and realize themselves as a group differing from the others. The military profession is socially bureaucratized profession. Its corporate structure comprises not only the official bureaucracy along with the relevant hierarchical levels, but also societies, associations, magazines, customs and traditions. The professional world of the military includes an unusually large amount of his activity. He lives and works almost always apart from the rest of the society, the demarcation line between him and the laic – the civilian, is publicly expressed by a complex of symbols.

By directing our efforts to the reform of the army and by conceptualising our ideas with this respect we should take into consideration that the subordinated in the army hierarchy sergeants and soldiers, conscription military and civilians are part of the organizational bureaucracy, and of the professional one. They do not enter into the military social and professional group, which is a part of the social stratification of the society. This is not made according to some social discrimination, but due to the character of their activity in the army. They are experts in the implementation or assist the implementation of the force, and not in the management of the force, which is within the powers and competence of the officers' corps. For all of them the army service is an occupation, and not a profession. This fundamental difference between those groups, and also between the "military-civilians" within the military administration can be seen in the sharp division in all armed forces all over the world and is reflected in the realization of their motivation principles (salary, status etc.).

Notwithstanding that the soldiers in a future professional army, unlike the conscription-mobilization one, will be recruited not by virtue of some normative act for the universal military service, but through free negotiations, the features, especially those related to the sergeants and the soldiers, will be defined again by the character of their activity – the exercise of the force.

The vision for the building of the Bulgarian army as a professional one should not exclude from the list of the social obligations of the Bulgarian citizens their military duty to the Motherland. What kind of social dimensions and structural and organizational forms will assume these social relations will be defined by the legislative activity of the Bulgarian state.

4. PROBLEMS OF THE ARMY REFORM

The creation of a management vision, as well as of the overall concept on the military reform, has not been made at once, but after a long and sharp political struggle between the main political forces in the country – the Bulgarian Socialist Part (BSP) and the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), which could not establish for a long time the national consensus on the geopolitical direction of our country. The Socialist party, which has imposed itself as the initiator of the transition to democracy for a long time could not manage to clarify its vision on the development of the country, incl. of the army. This party originating from the former Bulgarian communist party (BCP) used to hold a half-way positions: it declared a policy of deep market reforms (the Prime minister A. Lukanov proposed the programme Run-Ut) and attachment to the idea of the country membership in the European Union on one hand, and on the other hand the

policy of neutrality and non-adherence to NATO. The internal party struggle between the reformers and hardliners and the sharp political fights with the UDF within the period 1990-1997 did not allow the possibility to formulate and to implement a clear management reformer policy, notwithstanding that the socialists held alone the power twice – the governments of the Prime ministers A. Lukanov (1990) and J. Videnov (1995-1997), once they openly dominated the power through the coalition government of the prime minister D. Popov (1990-1991) and once through expert participation and parliamentary support of the coalition government of the Prime minister Prof. L. Berov (1992-1994). The evolution in the politic line of the Socialist party on the main social, economic and geopolitical directions of the country development occurred after 1996, where the party got down from power and gradually worked on the establishment of a consensus with its main political opponent on the necessity of reforms and the stable movement of the country to NATO and the EU. The UDF as the main political force had more clearly defined priorities: immediate market and administration reforms, membership of Bulgaria in the EU and NATO.

The military administration of the country involved the high-ranked commanders staff, graduated Bulgarian military schools and soviet academies. They all were members of the BCP and took part in the central and regional administration bodies of the party. After almost thirty-year leadership of the military institution by the general of the armies D. Dzhurov and the team formed by him on the principle of the personal loyalty, the new administration of the Bulgarian army was promoted. Later on the general of the armies L. Petrov, chief of the headquarters, would promote “a la Dzhurov” his own personnel to the main commanders positions in the army. The observers will discuss the so called “Macedonian lobby” in the army management, according to the native region and the passing of part of the military service of Gen. Petrov and some of his deputies. The years of change will be marked by large and chaotic scattering of army staff potential. Within the generals staff one would observe the natural withdrawal of the military service, as well as unjustified promotions and removals from office, drastic jump over of hierarchical levelsⁱⁱⁱ etc., and this in a number of cases could not be justified by incompetent staff policy of the civil management of the ministry. Some partial illustration of striking facts of the staff policy is the case of Lt-Gen. St. Topalov and Ch. Chervenkov. Although differing one from the other, it was amazing to see the promotion of the first to the rank of military No. 2 in the hierarchy – as the first vice-commander of the Headquarters of the Bulgarian army, and the second – to the position of vice-commander of the Headquarters of the Bulgarian army and chief of “Intelligence and security” service of the HQ, and their shift to other positions within 1-2 years, having in mind that this shift was not related to any negative results and was “justified” by “further promotion”.^{iv} It may seem even paradoxical at first glance, but the removal of the control functions of the political bodies in the army and the unjustified destruction of the army special services and the reformulation of the structure of their subordination lead to some extent to the building of uncontrolled in its essence military elite, relying on management incompetence of the civilian administration and manifesting affinity to the maximal lack of transparency of the information related to the army under the pretext of the protection of the national security.

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This has marked the transformation of the Bulgarian army, whose reform started in unclear manner, without precise vision on its new tasks.

4.1. The political factor, the military factor and the relations civilians – military

Undoubtedly the political factor is the decisive factor for the military reform. The parties policies, regardless of their public statements crystallize in their authentic shape in the political practice of the elected governments.

The one-party government formed by the BSP (1990) after the elections for the 7th Great National Assembly, headed by Andrey Lukanov, does not undertake substantial reforming policy in the military sphere. The Prime minister kept the position of the Defence Minister for the general of the armies Y. Mutafchiev. Gen. Mutafchiev - the No. 1 in the military hierarchy, who kept this position in the coalition government of D. Popov, as well, (1990-1991), started working out the new defence doctrine without a clear geopolitical vision of the state. He worked together with two heads of the Headquarters of the Bulgarian army – Col-Gen. R. Minchev and Col-Gen. L. Petrov. He made substantial reductions in the staff of the Ministry of defence administration. As from November 1990 to May 1st 1991 30% of the officers in the army were dismissed. 78 generals and 1700 officers were pensioned off. The changes in the staff organization and structure came from the acceptance of the new military-defence doctrine complying with the Paris agreements of 1990 on the reduction of the battle equipment and armament. After the voting of the Political parties and movements act in the same year the procedure of leaving the party started among the staff of the Bulgarian army. The military establishment was transformed from the Ministry of the people's defence to the Ministry of defence. The address "Mister" instead of "Comrade" was restored in the army and the replacement of the symbols and rites begun. The term of army service was reduced from 2 years to 18 months. The Bulgarian army became the guarantor for the peaceful transition to the democracy.

In 1991 the President Zheliu Zhelev signed the final document on the suspension of the membership of Bulgaria in the Organization of the Warsaw pact. During that time Dimitar Ludzhev, Defence Minister in the government of the UDF headed by Ph. Dimitrov, undertook substantial reforms in the military sphere. He was the first civilian Defence Minister after 1923. As a minister he started the reforms in the Bulgarian army by reorganization of the establishment. He created three blocks – military-administration, military-economic and military-politic. He dismissed part of the generals in the Ministry of defence and replaced them by civilians. He restructured the bodies of the military security service, created the structure of the military police and closed down the military departments in the local authorities. He wound up the Organization for military assistance and restructured its activity, put an end to the "Initial military training" in the secondary schools. In 1991 he was the first Bulgarian Defence Minister who visited NATO Headquarters in Brussels and made an agreement to receive experts, which to assist the reforms in the army. Within the frameworks of the government reshuffle he was replaced in April 1992 by Alexander Staliyski. Minister Staliyski proposed to the government to consider and vote the Concept on reforms in the BA and moved for deliberations and voting in the Parliament the Defence and Armed Forces Act, which to replace the fundamentals of the normative base in the military

establishment from the years of socialism. He tried in vain to dismiss from the BA the generals and officers, which have not graduated higher military school and did not possess the relevant diploma for higher education graduates, thus entering into conflict with the general of the armies L. Petrov - chief of the Headquarters.

Minister V. Alexandrov (Defence Minister in the expert government of Prof. L. Berov – 1992-1994) has deepened the reforms in the army institution and meanwhile has defended and practically realized the political leadership and the civil control over the military establishment through administration decision stabilizing the system. He restored some structures of the military intelligence and the security service. He restructured the military – political block of the ministry by removing the position of state secretary. He wound up the Strategic Analyses and Research Centre and created the Centre for training of national security staff. He restored the 6th of May – the day of Saint George – as the Holiday of the Bulgarian army and set up the only military award sign “For the loyal service under the banners” along with the respective ranks, as well as the new distinctive signs on the army uniforms. Initially he worked well with the general of the armies L. Petrov – chief of BA Headquarters. They cooperated well during the working out of the national security concept by beginning with the realization of the trends laid down on new relations with the adjacent countries. The reform in the military training system started – the first staff course in the Military academy was set up. The first peacekeeping mission of a BA unit in Cambodia under the aegis of the UN was implemented. The political neutrality of the army was defended and an attempt to involve it in the support for some specific political party was cut off – the government proposed and the President Zg. Zhelev dismissed the Land forces commander Lt-Gen. L. Lyutskanov for his engagement to the political acts of the former prime minister and leader of the UDF Ph. Dimitrov. In the frameworks of the unified actions attempts for supremacy of the military factor over the political one took place going in the context of the responsibility of the politicians for the decisions taken as concerns the state of the army and their administration competence in the field of defence. The visible “rightness” of the military management is such only at first glance. It is interesting to point out that the contradiction and conflicts line escalated at one of the best trained civilian experts in the field of the defence and national security, at that with an attitude to the army institution from the time of the Bulgarian national revival. The attempts of the military factor to disown the principle of the undivided authority in the ministry of defence lead to politically ignorant actions by it. There was even a situation arising where the civil military minister and the chief of BA Headquarters were engaged in a dispute and the commander of the 1st Army Major-Gen. L. Vassilev engaged himself personally as well as the Military council of the army in public support of the chief of BA Headquarters general of the armies L. Petrov. The government and the President Zh. Zhelev reacted in an adequate manner to the situation and the generals Petrov and Vassilev were dismissed.

The office minister B. Noev (October 1994 – January 1995) was the initiator of the meeting of the Defence Ministers of the countries in the region.

D. Pavlov, the Defence Minister in the socialist government of the Prime minister J. Videnov, was vice-admiral of the reserve and former commander of the navy. The government policy in the field of the defence and the army provided for slow and gradual steps in the army reform. As it was in all past

governments the vision on the reform was not clear: it was not clear what would be the geopolitical orientation of the country in order to assess the external factor. At the same time it was clear that the resources in the country were restricted, that the independent maintenance of the defence possibilities to the modern level was difficult, that the inherited philosophy of military building and existing balance between the organizational structure, the battle capabilities, defence resources and possible threats should be modified. Minister Pavlov provided assistance for the voting by the Government of the National security concept and BA reforms concept for the period 1995-2010. One has started the implementation of the corps army organization. The team of Minister Pavlov provided assistance for the voting by the Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria Defence and Armed Forces Act (RBDFA), which basically laid down the new democratic fundamentals of the army, the Regulation of the staff service was approved, the new contracts for staff service were signed with the officers and sergeants, new regulations of the BA were worked out. Minister Pavlov suggested the idea to call a Balkan meeting of the Defence Ministers, and the government signed the Bulgarian participation in the initiative "Partnership for peace". At the end of the government mandate terminated ahead of schedule the team of Minister Pavlov failed to provide the normal payment of the salaries of the staff military. In order to bring down the discontent especially among the protesting trainees of the Military college "G.S.Rakovski" the chief of BA Headquarter Col-Gen. Tsv. Totomirov and his first deputy Lt-Gen. Z. Iliev were personally involved, which resulted in sharp discontent among the officers against the military management of the army.

A serious acceleration of the reform in the BA was undertaken by the office government of St. Sofianski (February – May 1997) and by the government of the United Democratic Forces (UDF) of the Prime minister Iv. Kostov (1997 – 2001). Minister G. Ananiev headed the ministry of defence yet as office minister and kept its participation in the first team of Kostov government. In the office government minister G. Ananiev together with the office foreign minister St. Stalev prepared the National programme on Bulgaria's accession NATO, and the government voted a decision for membership of Bulgaria in NATO and made the required steps before the alliance. Within the frameworks of Kostov government the activity of the team of minister Ananiev was directed to the implementation of structural modifications in the Ministry of defence and the individual armed forces and types of armies with view to the integration and adaptation of the Bulgarian army to NATO structures. The Minister did not present leadership qualities and was first outshined by the deputy minister on the military political matters R. Kanchev, and after that by his substitute on the same position deputy minister V. Shalamanov. The position "Chief of BA Headquarter" is henceforth restricted by term and a rotation between the deputy heads of the Headquarter and the heads of the three types of armed forces headquarters is introduced. In June 1997 Col-Gen M. Mihov, commander of the air force was appointed as the chief of the BA Headquarters. A Plan for organizational building and structure of the BA within the period 1997-2004 was approved, known as the Plan 2004, and the BA reduced its strength to 45,00 people. The Disciplinary regulation and the regulations of the internal, garrison and sentry services are worked out, the modernization of the army begins by starting the project for introduction of the field integrated communication-integration system in January 1999. At the same time the Agreement on

deployment in Plovdiv of the headquarters of the Multinational peace forces in Southeast Europe has been signed. Minister G. Ananiev was the first Bulgarian Defence Minister who visited the Pentagon. The reshuffling in Prime Minister Kostov's government in December 1999 led to the appointment to that position of B. Noev again. Minister Noev kept on applying the active policy and preparation of the BA for accession to NATO. He was the host of the meeting of the Defence Ministers of the applicant countries for NATO and the Secretary General of the Pact Lord Robertson held in 2000. The first version of the "White book on the defence and the armed forces of Republic of Bulgaria" has been worked out, the first annual "Report on the state of the defence and the armed forces for 1999" has been submitted to the Parliament. The "Military strategy of Republic of Bulgaria", the financial management concept in the Ministry of defence and the Bulgarian army have also been worked out and the programme approach in the management of the budget for the defence has been applied. The old battle uniform has been replaced by new one, in 2000 the general ranks were introduced after the NATO standard – general, major-general, lieutenant-general, colonel-general and general of the armies. Started the erection of the new building of the National military historical museum.

The reforms in the Bulgarian army were continued by N. Svinarov - Defence Minister in the present government of the Prime minister S. Saxe Coburg Gotha (elected in 2001). The priority in his activity is the preparation of the BA for the full membership of the country in NATP. For this purpose the Plan 2004 was updated in order to speed up the organization and structural building of the armed forces. Amendments and supplements to the RBDFA and the military doctrine have been made. The ratio between the senior and line officers has been regulated in favour of the line officers. The last large reduction of the staff military was in 2002 and 2003 – over 14,000 people, the destructive period of the BA reform has ended. New forms for assistance of the dismissed military and their families are introduced in order to realize their qualities and skills in the civil life. The higher military education was reformed through the setting up of the National military university "Vassil Levski" in Veliko Tarnovo, with faculties in Shumen and Dolna Mitropolia, and the navy education is now made in the Higher Navy School "N.Y.Vapsarov" in Varna. The transition to completely professional army in 2010 is prepared and the modernization and rearmament programme up to 2015 was drawn. The rehabilitation of the flight resource and modernization of the aircrafts MIG-29 started. The reduction of the missile complexes SS-23, Scud and Frog was realized. With view to the new tasks the organizational changes led to the winding up of First, Second and Third army corps and to the setting up of the Operation forces, the Special operations force, "West", "East". The "Tactical aviation" and "Anti-aircraft" corps have been reorganized in "Tactical aviation" and "Anti-aircraft" Commands. In connection with the new threats to the security and the fight against the terrorism the units of the BA proceed to special training, including for participation in mission within the international anti-terrorist coalition. In 2002 Bulgaria takes part in the international mission in Afghanistan – ISAF. The regional contacts between the Defence Ministers and the heads of Headquarters of Bulgaria, Romania, Greece and Turkey are further promoted. An agreement with Romania is reached for joint protection of strategic sites along the border. On 18th November 2002, at NATO Summit in Prague Bulgaria was invited to join NATO, and up to May 2004 the parliaments of the 19 member-states will ratify the

contract. Within the frames of the ministry has started the Strategic overview of the defence. N. Svinarov is the first Bulgarian Defence Minister invited to participate at the meeting of the Defence Ministers at the North Atlantic council and the NATO Defence Planning committee.

In this context of the world development the Bulgarian society over the past 14 years faced also the task to build and to stabilize the democratic institutions of the state including the army and at the same time to respond to the global challenges.

The changes in the features of the state and the gradual realization of the national consensus on the geopolitical choice of our country has lead to the idea that the Bulgarian national interest is determined as the main criterion for the formulation and implementation of the overall state policy. The state guarantees its security by realization of the national interests, aims and priorities. It was accepted that the “national interests could be reduced to the following categoriesv:

- independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity;
- democracy, human rights and legal order;
- sustainable economic development and prosperity;
- international peace and security”

On that ground the political class united around the vision that the armed forces guarantee the sovereignty, security and independence of the country and protect its territorial integrity. It was accepted that the new challenges of the strategic environment, the dynamics of the relations between the structural elements of the security system, as well as the overall transformation of the society in Bulgaria, are the main precondition for the changes in the armed forces, which are to be able to implement a wide range of tasks, incl. the compliance with the increased demands addressed to them. The thesis was consolidated that the state builds its defence concept and develops its protection abilities in compliance with the nature of the potential sources of strain, the international legal commitments and the integration trends. The reform of the defence system and the army was perceived as one of the key elements of the new security policy of Republic of Bulgaria. The aim set comprised the building and maintenance of the defence capabilities for the efficient implementation of the tasks and mission defined in the basic documents in the field of the national security and defence and in compliance with the changes in the military strategic environment, the new geopolitical choice, the financial, economic and demographic capabilities of the country and the requirement for accelerated achievement of high interoperability with the future allied armies of the Alliance. It was considered that as a result of the reform Bulgaria would dispose of defence potential adequate to its needs and realities and clear military politic perspective, efficient management and united planning, reliable early warning system, high level of mobility and motivation, modern system of management. The armed forces should be reduced to the staff and organization, which will provide them the possibility to efficiently implement their functions on the defence of the country and to be equivalent partner in the international peacekeeping efforts.

It is considered, that the defence and the armed forces as its main guarantor are maintained through the integration of the main principles and formulations of the documents in the field of the security and the defence, a reliable system of planning of the defence provided with resources and transparent process for

decision taking. It was considered, that in the future the endeavours should be directed in the following main fields:

- completion of the reorganization of the main components of the defence system and establishment of an army on the grounds of the available resources;
- building of integrated civilian – military model for defence management;
- reaching the requirements on the main criteria for NATO membership, creation of the required conditions for functional integration of the country with the political and command structures of the pact and achieving interoperability with the armed forces of the member-states;
- development of the system for material, technical, medical and financial supplies;
- priority utilization of the resources released in the course of restructuring for improvement of the conditions for life and the interoperability .

The implementation of these priorities and the conceptual visions on the army reform should lead to gradual and continuous increase of the defence capabilities of the troops and forces according to the whole spectrum of missions and tasks imposed by the modern time.

It should be noted that the building of optimal defence capabilities represents versatile process, which needs wide public support and dialogue and should engage military and civil resources, as well. It has to comprise the maintenance of the security system ready to adequately respond to the actual challenges and protection of the national interest, incl. in case of internal or international crisis. This, on the other hand, presumes the availability of efficient system for early warning, consultations and decision taking, unity of action among the institutions, the military and civilian components of the systems and efficient cooperation of the international public. The adaptation and flexibility in the cooperation institutionalisation is considered to be the necessary element of the overall strategy for management of the crises.

Undoubtedly, in the transition period from socialism to democracy, the changes in our country involve also the place, the role and the essence of the armed forces within the common political system frame of the state, their purposes and tasks to the benefit of defense as a major instrument of the security policy. They are not accidental, having in mind that "...the vital significance of this subject is guaranteed by the statutes of political responsibility and the prohibition on problem making out of political content".vi We need not disregard the fact that the army is the state institution with the absolute "efficiency of the power, coming out of a coherent mass action", nor the fact that under the former system in Bulgaria, "the party was the subject of the centralized monopoly power, while the army, although not incorporating the spirit of the system, was reduced to the role of passive officials.vii In this meaning, the issue of the civil control on the security policy, whose instrumental subject is the Bulgarian Army, acquires a special significance. It is only natural to define the parameters of the civil-army relations in a new and different way. In the first place, according to the principles of modern democracy, and secondly, as the mechanism and practice of this relationship (specified principles and parameters), and thirdly – as historical tradition. There are plenty of examples both in Bulgarian and in world history, when the army successfully employed force to occupy the total power and undertook the role of public corrective. The specific nature of civil control is determined by the fact that there is no other institution, exclusively

authorized to control and employ most diverse fatal means. The modern principles of democracy and the practices in the advanced democratic countries have a special meaning for Bulgaria with their prescription that "...in all cases the armed forces should act under the unlimited power of the ones who have been elected and vested by the people with the responsibility for the state matters".viii

There are no occasions in the most modern history of Bulgaria of employing armed force against the civil populace. The national ideal of post-liberation Bulgaria was the unification of Mysia, Thrace, Macedonia and Dobroudja. The realization of this ideal was directly related to the army and therefore, great significance was attached to the army, which enjoyed extremely high public reputation. At present, in the beginning of the 21st century, when the integration of our country into the Euro-Atlantic structures is a national priority, the army is again assigned a paramount role, since the changes in the army are crucially significant to receive the invitation for NATO membership. This situation determines on the one hand the position of the civil and military public with respect to the army institution and its leadership. On the other hand, however, the public attitudes are considerably influenced by the fact that the implemented changes involve considerable reduction of the personnel and dismissal or redeployment of units. This has a direct impact on the material and financial status of scores of thousands citizens, and also on the means of living and the demographic process in entire regions. Irrespective of the number of unpopular and painful steps related to the army reform, implemented by the leadership of the Ministry of Defense, for the last two years (the government of Simeon Sax-Coburg Gotha), both the population and the army have given actually positive evaluation of its performance. This helped preserving the image of the institution, which is traditionally high among the public. The activities in the last twelve months have been approved respectively by 35,7 % of the citizens and by 40,8 % of the army. The disapproval reported by the citizens is 17,6 % and by the army – 27,9 %, which indicates a positive rating for the leading team of the military department activity. We should note, however, that at present each second citizen and each third army member withhold evaluating the performance of the Ministry of Defense leadership. Among the citizens, approval is more typical of the men in the active people aged between 31 and 50 and of the workers in the private businesses. Among the servicemen, positive evaluation is given by each second of the sergeants and the regular soldiers. Among the officers (senior and petty) this position is taken respectively by 36,0 % and 38,7%. As a whole, the commissioned officers have a more critical attitude to the performance of the departmental management. This current situation is largely due to the fact that the commissioned officers undertake the grater share of the consequences from the speedy army reform and, considering them in the light of their own status, are more apt to negativism. Among the citizens, the university graduates and the state employees are more critical to the army leadership, as well as the residents in the capital and in the towns.ix This survey, and the other regular surveys show that the armed forces have a relatively good reputation. The mandatory recruitment service has been a fact for decades, calling to service in the armed forces all men of legal age at a specific point in their life. That is why the majority of the male population has undergone army service and a great number still consider the time spent in uniform as a ritual of manhood. It is well

known, however, that the public interest in defense and in army issues is waning, which undoubtedly expresses the political changes in Europe since the end of last century. The army units seem to be well integrated among the local populace. The housing, employment and education needs of the families of the professional regular servicemen – officers and sergeants in the armed forces, provide a strong link with the local social structure, and the local economy profits from the material-technical (logistic) support and supply, necessary to sustain the large number of servicemen. The interrelation between the servicemen and their families on the one hand, and the local community on the other hand is present on all levels. The army units give advice and cooperate to protect the population, and they can be called to provide urgent assistance, for instance to eliminate the consequences from calamities and accidents.

They are not distanced or isolated from the public, on the contrary – the servicemen participate actively in the life of the local population. There is a wide public relations organization in the armed forces, and all formations and larger units have PR officers. Besides making popular the activity of their own units, the PR officers provide assistance for the training of servicemen by giving them information and briefing them on human rights, democracy and current events in Bulgaria and abroad. Some of the efforts to expand public relations include regular open days in the barracks of the army units and at the army sites. Special attention is attached to the group visits of pupils and young men, but also the parents of the servicemen, as well as the local community and the media are encouraged to attend. These open meetings strengthen the relations with the local community and with individuals interested in the activity of specific units. They provide a valuable opportunity to introduce and explain the role and the purpose of the armed forces. We welcome this undertaking, which strongly emphasizes the democratic openness of the Bulgarian armed forces, although it is on a relatively low level. About fifteen non-governmental organizations are active in the area of defense and national security, starting from the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria, going through The Union of Reserve Officers and Sergeants to the Committee of the Soldiers' Mothers. Most members of the various NGO-s see few opportunities to introduce or to discuss defense issues. Some think that the public as a whole does not display interest in military matters and therefore, there is no pressure for making defense-related issues and facts universally accessible. One molded opinion is that it is easier to have information on the Bulgarian defense from the Internet than from the Ministry of Defense. We are justified to draw the conclusion that this overall absence of knowledge and understanding will most probably work counter the cause for defense in Bulgaria in a long-term perspective, if some measures are not undertaken to correct the situation as soon as possible. On the behalf of MOD, a more active role is needed to satisfy the demand for an open and transparent debate, which will guarantee a better understanding of the policy and the concepts, and a higher estimation of the role of defense and of the army expenditures. The PR structure in MOD must play more actively its part. It should articulate more clearly the rationale and the policy of the government, related to the defense, chiefly by informing and monitoring the public response. With their contribution to the debate on defense issues and by raising socially significant questions both before and off the National Assembly, the media play a key role for providing the democratic supervision in the area of defense. Although it is a well-known fact that governments have a strong impact on their national

television, it seems that this is not applicable to the printed editions, and as a rule, the Bulgarian press is considered to be free, uncensored and unrestricted. By official information, both the media and the widest public have a low interest in defense and in the armed forces. That is why the media have a tendency to reflect the negative and to disclose the sensational, but such things are not unique for Bulgaria. Among the measures to overcome this tendency, MOD might undertake a more active position to make military issues more popular and clear. More recurrent and high quality parliamentary debates on military issues would also help the ministers of defense pursue a more positive impact in this respect. There are, however, no experts among the journalists on defense, armed forces and national security, and it will be difficult to generate such knowledge and skills in the foreseeable future. The current efforts related to public relations are not very efficient to popularize and explain the role the armed forces. It is expedient now to plan and launch initiatives, which will satisfy the information needs of the people outside MOD. Both the public and the media should be involved in a debate on the defense and this must become a priority of the PR structure in MOD. The debate would be beneficial for MOD as well, because it will enhance the understanding of the defense issues and will promote explaining the need of the desired amounts for military expenditures. The maximum employment of the available information and its wide dissemination both in MOD and among the civil infrastructure interested in defense activities will promote the better understanding of military matters.

4.2. Constitutional and legislative parameters

One of the focal issues both of the army reform and of civil-army relations concerns the way in which the democratic control on the Bulgarian armed forces and MOD is stipulated in the constitutional and legal regulations of the state, and how it is practically implemented in the systems and in the control mechanisms within the respective organizational structures.

Since 1989, the key feature of the army reform is the decision of Bulgaria to join NATO, which decision acquired political expression in:

- the declaration of the Parliament from 21st December 1993;
- the declaration of the Government from 17th February 1997, proclaiming the willingness of Bulgaria to have full membership in the alliance.

This willingness parallels the unambiguous acknowledgement of the need to satisfy the criteria of democratic control on the armed forces. Bulgaria is an active participant in the Euro-Atlantic Council of Partnership (EACP) and Partnership for Peace (PFP).

The legal foundation of the reform in the Bulgarian Army is the Constitution. The Constitution of Bulgaria was approved by the Grand National Assembly on 12th July 1991. Article 1, chapter 1, entitled Basic Principles reads: "Bulgaria is a republic with parliamentary government". Paragraph 2 reads: "The entire state power originates from the people. It is implemented by the people directly and through the bodies stipulated in this Constitution". It defines the basic rights and duties of the citizens, the role and the responsibilities of the President, the Council of Ministers, the National Assembly, the judicial power, the local self-governments and the Constitutional Court. According to the regulations of Chapter 4 from the Constitution, the President is the Head of State. "He personifies the unity of the nation and represents Republic of Bulgaria in the international relations." The President is elected directly for a term of five years

and can serve no more than two mandates. The President is Supreme Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of Bulgaria. He is the Head of the Consulting Council for national security. He is entitled to appoint and dismiss the high command staff of the Armed Forces. The Council of Ministers recommends and the President officially promotes to rank and awards the high commissioned officers. The president declares war in case of armed attack against Bulgaria, or if necessary to comply urgently with international obligations; he declares martial law or another contingency, when the national Assembly is not in session. In such cases the latter is immediately convened to judge the decision. The Presidents' cabinet consists of secretaries who counsel him on a wide variety of issues. Among them figure the secretaries on defense and national security. A regular officer is appointed to one of the three positions. The capacity of this position to give advice independent from the army hierarchy would have been better guaranteed if the positions were accessible for civil persons and for reserve officers, as is the case with the other two positions. We need to note, however, that for the period of transition, there is shortage of civil candidates with the relevant qualification for such positions.

The National Assembly has the power to exercise parliamentary control on the executive power, chiefly through the legislation. The National Assembly is a directly elected body with 240 national representatives. The national representatives are elected for a term of 4 years. The most significant point is that the National Assembly approves the strength of the Armed Forces and of MOD on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. The standing parliamentary commissions play a key role in the supervision of the army area. The commissions, whose activity has contact points with the defense department are the Commission on Foreign Policy, Defense and Security, the Commission on Economic Policy and the Commission on the Budget and Finance. These commissions have the power to call some persons – the minister, the Chief of Staff HQ and their inferiors, to provide information. So far, no one has refused to appear before the commissions, and the provided information has been satisfactory. As is the case with a number of democratically elected parliaments, in Bulgaria, too, many deputies are novices in the national Assembly and they need time to penetrate into the problems of defense before becoming completely efficient in their control role. It is evident that we will need an educative preparatory process if we are to hold a well-informed and in-depth parliamentary debate.

The Council of Ministers – the chief body of the executive power, consists of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers and Ministers and represents the executive power of the government on the cabinet level. It is responsible for the formulation and implementation of the home and foreign policy, for the public order and the national security, and for exercising the general management of the state administration and of the Armed Forces. The military issues can be proposed on the agenda of the cabinet by the Prime Minister, or by the Minister of the Defense. The discussion on the issues is held in an open session.

The Security Council is chaired by the Prime Minister. Its function is to embrace all areas of national security. The Council Secretary has technical functions, and its members are the ministers of defense, of the interior, of the foreign affairs, the respective vice ministers, the Chief of HQ and the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Interior.

4.3. Legal treatment of defence

The Bulgarian concept of national security was approved by the National Assembly in May 1998. It specifies the goals and tasks for the accession of Bulgaria to the system of Euro-Atlantic and European collective security. The concept takes into account “the available resources and the conformity with the guarantee levels, provided by the world, Euro-Atlantic and European security system”^x, and particularly the impact of economic, environmental and technological factors on the Republic.

One year later, the Parliament approved the Military Doctrine of R. Bulgaria, and in 2002 amended and supplemented it. The doctrine considers “the military strategic environment, defines the priorities of the defense policy and the lines for employment, building and developing the armed forces for the benefit of defense, peace strengthening and stability”^{xi} in close cooperation with NATO, EU and other major international organizations. The document provides the respective base for defense planning.

The HQ of the Bulgarian Army elaborated also the Military Strategy of R. Bulgaria as “a natural sequence of the Concept of the national security and the Military Doctrine, by developing further the basic principles of the Military Doctrine related to the purpose, functions, tasks, building, development and employment of the armed forces in the new strategic environment”^{xii}. It is defined as a strategy for achieving operation compatibility and preparation for NATO membership.

The Law on Defense and Armed Forces (LDAF) regulates the issues of the defense of R. Bulgaria. The law was ratified under the force of Art. 98, point 4 from the Constitution and was published with Decision No. 305 of the 37th National Assembly. The decision was published in State Gazette on 22nd December 1995. The law was amended and supplemented repeatedly until this year. It defines the role and the responsibilities of the National Assembly, of the President, of the Council of Ministers and of the Minister of Defense, as well as the participation of the remaining state bodies and organizations in the management and in the control on MOD and the armed forces. The law provides detailed procedures related to state of war, martial law and mobilization, apart from the tasks, which can be assigned to the armed forces. Further on, LDAF treats the procedures of commandment, the issue of lawful orders by the Minister of Defense and by the Chief of HQ on a number of occasions, as well as the statute and the content of the Martial Board under the Chief of HQ. The law embraces the entire personnel of the armed forces, as well as the servicemen and civil servants in MOD. The types of armed forces are complete with commissioned, recruitment and reserve servicemen, and their lawful rights and obligations, and the terms of service are defined in LDAF. The amendments in the law extend and complement its regulations. The most remarkable amendment is the requirement that the Minister of Defense and his deputies should be civilians. There is a good provision for the subordination of the Chief of HQ to the minister and for the rotation principle of the position Chief of HQ each three years. There are provisions for the amendment of the recruitment service term and some amendments in the service conditions. Another major feature of the amendments is setting up a Defense Fund. The funds will be raised from privatization revenues and will be used for the modernization and development of the armed forces. Besides, the powers

related to commissioning servicemen from the armed forces abroad, or to the transit or stay of foreign armies in Bulgaria have been assigned to the National Assembly and to the Council of Ministers. In general, these amendments provide strengthening of parliamentary and civil control. Nevertheless, two articles attracted our attention:

a) Article 34 reads that the minister of defense shall be supported (1) by the Chief of HQ and (2) by the deputy ministers of defense. This seems to formalize to a certain extent the advantage of the position Chief of HQ in the absence of the minister, submitting the control to a position, which is not fully democratically responsible. In these circumstances, the position of the deputy ministers could be clarified better.

b) Article 78 (2) reads that the Chief of HQ shall receive directly the entire information on the Bulgarian Army (the armed forces), obtained from the military police and from the military counter-intelligence. If it could be added in the beginning: "Besides the minister of defense", the possible interpretation that this information is not accessible to the minister, could be avoided.

As a legal basis, LDAF contains detailed regulations for a normal parliamentary supervision and democratic control on the Bulgarian armed forces and MOD. Nevertheless, if the present structure and subordination of the highest management levels in MOD and the armed forces is changed with respect to the currently existing, we will need further amendment of the law to formalize the changes. Like a number of other areas of national interest, the regulations of the Law on Defense and Armed Forces should be opened for detailed review by the wider military community and by the public in general.

Under the Law on Defense and Armed Forces and the amendments thereof, the recruitment military service in the Armed Forces of R. Bulgaria is mandatory for all Bulgarian men who have turned 18. The period of recruitment service for all types of armed forces is 12 months, which is less than the previous period of 18 months. The conscripts who are university graduates service still shorter period – only 9 months. At present, plans are implemented to expand the voluntary professional element in the Armed Forces, thus striving gradually to reduce the strength of the annual contingents called up for routine service.

The system of martial jurisdiction is set up in accordance with Art. 119 of the Constitution and consists of courts at three instances. In ascending order, these are the district martial courts, the martial court of appeal and the marital tribunal at the Supreme Administrative Court. The five centers with martial courts are respectively Sofia, Plovdiv, Pleven, Varna and Sliven. The district prosecution offices have the same headquarters, which are subordinate to the Chief Prosecutor. MOD, as an independent element, has a legal administration and territorial legal experts. The judgements of the district martial courts are always appealed before the martial court of appeal, because the district courts are not entitled to consider claims. The martial court of appeal, which was constituted in April 1998, still has to complete its composition of 8 judges, but this does not prevent its efficient functioning. All advocates for the defense are civilians. Depending on the type of proceedings for a criminal case and on the eventual judgement, sometimes advocates are not needed. In some cases, the defense is paid by the state, but in most actions, the defendant has to find an advocate himself and pay him. All judgments are publicly announced and the media are always informed. The activity of the courts is reviewed by the Inspection at the

ministry of Justice. It is interesting to note that the martial judges play a duplicate part, since they work also as civil judges.

5. CONCLUSION

Starting the reform in the Bulgarian Army without clear outer and inner priorities, or vision to build the political factor in Bulgaria put this national institution to a severe test. The implementation of the national consensus as a geopolitical choice provided the opportunity to rebuild the Bulgarian armed forces. Putting into effect the army reform in BA involves a process of giving a new meaning and evaluation of the existing national and collective security systems, which voices two major tendencies. The first is related to the globalization and the second – to the role of our country in the preservation of shared values. Both have a direct relation to the current challenges, risks and threats, bringing a new type of essentially martial behavior. The changes affect directly the coalition strategy of the North Atlantic pact and the practices of regional and international army cooperation, to provide an efficient and comprehensive answer to the modern untraditional threats. The evolution of the security concepts and the ongoing reformation process of the national and collective defense structures will undoubtedly have a direct impact also on the development of the theory on civil-army relations. Re-defining this theory depends directly on the current status of the international system and on the maturity of the present Bulgarian civil society. The mass army and civil audience have often had ambiguous and conflicting ideas, considering them as petty bossing political superintendence, or only in the narrow practical meaning of the civil-army coordination. The situation becomes even more complex with the limited democratic experience and the apparent deficiency of the civil professional expertise in the area of defense and security, and in the military area – policy in general, particularly on the level of legislative and executive power.

The strategic leaders – politicians and servicemen, are facing questions about the role of Bulgaria in the region, the possibilities of defending national interests in the conditions of vague threats and unpredictable conflicts. The new frameworks of uncertainty and the limited resources of the country are challenges to the national security and need an integrated approach and identity in formulating and implementing the common strategy. The major obligation of the political leadership is to elaborate interaction policies for security and cooperation for due counteraction of possible crises, while the army leadership has to plan the armed forces employment, the management on each single level of possible operations at all times.

The dynamic changes in the military and political environment in the region generate a large range of risks, which the Bulgarian Army has to consider when planning crisis actions, martial conflicts or peacekeeping operations. This variety requires a flexible process with high level of reliability and integration. The implementation of the principles, requirements and the planning methodology of such actions are the foundation of operation compatibility for the achievement of security through integration and cooperation.

The implementation of the army reform is based on the necessary martial capacities and is targeted to create and maintain them within the frames of the forecast resources. This is the way to provide planning and management of

defense and the army forces modernization in strict compliance with the resource limited solutions for priorities and creating the needed operation capacities, and the martial capacities are defined as requirements to the country. Bulgaria must be capable of a major contribution to its own defense and to collective defense, and of a meaningful and reasonable contribution to NATO peacekeeping operations.

Optimizing the strength of the Bulgarian armed forces is a major task of the army reform. At this stage, the efforts of the political and military leadership should be targeted at achieving quantity and quality indexes, which meet the tasks set by the Military Doctrine and the National Program for accession to the European and Atlantic structures. At this stage, Bulgaria selected as major principle to build the armed forces – transition to a professional army. This generates also problems, however, which we are to solve simultaneously with our declaration of willingness and will.

A review of the national defense programs is in progress in the defense policy of the leading countries, as well as formulation of new training and readiness concepts for the forces. This involves acknowledgement of the positive points in the actions carried out today, analysis of current and anticipated challenges, expanding the scope of planning, adaptation of the system to employ the opportunities of the new technologies in the mission packages. The beginning of the 21st century made it clear that the future holds challenges of diverse nature. That is why the positive results from the implementation of the new approach and the opportunities for compatibility can become a guarantee for a more secure world.

The key alternative is the international cooperation in the area of research and development, and the pursuit of opportunities for cooperation, which will promote sharing the financial burden, thus creating good prerequisites to advance international cooperation. The identification of the real essence of the new threats to security and their clear formulation are a section of the path, which the Bulgarian society has to go to find adequately efficient ways to eliminate or reduce their impact and to build up a modern and efficient army.

i Markov G., "Password "Sword". The conspiracies and the coups d'état of the Military Union 1919-1936. VIK Saint George the Conqueror, "Science and Arts" Publishing House, Sofia, 1992 ,page 189

ii Huntington C. The Soldier and the State (Theory and Policy of the Civil and Military Relations), IMO Saint George the Conqueror, Sofia, 1998, p. 21

iii Cf. Alexandrov V., Interview, Trud daily, 15th May 2003, p. 17

iv Cg. Reference book on the new structure of the Ministry of defence and the Headquarters, VIK Saint George the Conqueror, Sofia, 1992, p. 84 and 86, and Bulgarian Army newspaper, year XLIX, publ. 13151, 26th February 1993, p. 1

v The White Book. Sofia, 2002, page 11

vi See Upter D., Policy of Modernization, a cycle of lectures on G. Dimitrov's Theory of Modernization, given in Sofia University St. Climent Ohridski, 1992.

vii Id.

viii Rachev V., Security and Armed Forces in the Democratic Society, Research Studios – 2, IISMO, Sofia, 1996, page 20.

ix Empirical sociological survey "The majority of servicemen in the Bulgarian army are in favor of this country membership in NATO"; site: www.eamci.bg

x Concept of the national security of R. Bulgaria, Art. 1, State Gazette No. 46 from 22.04.1998

xi Military Doctrine of R. Bulgaria, Art. 2, State Gazette No. 20 from 2002

xii Military Strategy of R. Bulgaria, page 1.