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Civilian Control of the Armed Forces in Slovenia

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Summary

The Republic of Slovenia, as the state created at the end of the Cold War from the territory of the former SFRY, channelled the evolution of its society towards democratisation. An important aspect of the democratic restructuring of the Slovenian society is also the formation of the new civilian-military relations, based on the principles that exist in developed parliamentary states. At the same time, Slovenia is confronted with the burden of the former (Yugoslav) authoritarian social system and with the problems which derive from the antagonisms in the course of the transition itself. The most important obstacle to the establishment of democratic civil-military relations and adequate mechanisms of civilian control of the armed forces was the lack of consensus among Slovenian political elites about the long-term defense strategy. Today the situation has changed and there is a general consensus (especially in the defense-security field) about what the permanent, basic, vital strategic national interests are. The proof of that is the transparent and clear definition of Slovenian national interests, derived from the security threats and their sources, which are defined in the basic defense document, ratified by the Parliament in the year 2001: "The Resolution on the national security strategy of the Republic of Slovenia". That same year the parliament ratified "The general long-term programme of the development and equipping of the Slovenian Armed Forces for the period 2002-2007". The adoption of those developmental and operational documents in the area of national security established an appropriate institutional framework for the civilian control of the armed forces like those in developed states.

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Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War and with the arrival of new deterrents and instability in some regions, contemporary society once again faces an old dilemma: how to achieve

a balance within the modern political state that ensures both national security and individual freedoms. Experience indicates there is a discrepancy in the relationship between the individual and the national security that is rooted in the very nature of the modern political community (Buzan, 1991: 51) and, thus, can neither be solved nor abolished. There is an ever-present danger that the political state as a whole, or its institutions, will jeopardize individual and civil freedoms in the organization of its national security. One of the key elements in regulating this relationship is the civilian control of the military.

The military organization of the contemporary state is an important manifestation of its power within society as well as an instrument of its policy (Grizold, 1990: 231). Hence the military is not merely a "blind tool", but a specific agency that helps define the way a state can make decisions and provide the necessary means for an organized armed coercion (Wiatr, 1987: 263). This ambivalence within any state-military relationship always poses the threat that the military will intervene in state policy and so overstep the boundaries of its duty, as defined by the laws and social values of civil society (Edmons, 1988: 93-112). Such an intervention can "push the military towards collision with civilian authorities" (Finer, 1988: 24). Although means of restraint do exist within the military, such as "the anxiety not to lose its identity as a military power or to be supplemented by police forces" (Finer, 1988: 26-28), the modern liberal democratic state has developed several mechanisms to ensure the civilian supervision of the military. They come in institutional and non-institutional forms and are the best guarantees for preventing the military from decisively interfering in the political sphere.

The institutional mechanism that ensures civilian ascendancy derives from the very organization of the modern state. Namely, the final decisions on military and security matters are the exclusive preserve of civilian authority. To meet this requirement, the following must be observed:

(1) competence and responsibility concerning military and defense issues must be clearly defined by constitution and law;

(2) these responsibilities are to be under parliamentary and public supervision;

(3) the convention of state and military secrets is used rationally;

(4) civilian politicians are to be appointed to the highest posts and accountable for decision making;

(5) the professional ethics of conduct within the state military organization must ensure the supremacy of civilian authority and the political neutrality of its professional staff, whose loyalty should be to the state and not to the political parties.

Public opinion is the principal non-institutional form of supervision, as represented by individuals or organizations.

In most industrially developed countries, the principle of democratic control of the military has prevailed. This means, in practice, that:

(1) armed forces are subordinated to democratically elected political authorities; and

(2) all the decisions concerning security are made by those elected to manage the country's affairs (Rose 1994: 13).

At present, most countries ensure democratic political control of the military in line with their historical and cultural traditions as well as the broader context of the international security environment. While there is no single model of such control, there are several fundamental characteristics to be met:

(1) a legal and constitutional framework,

(2) the hierarchical responsibility of the military to the government through a civilian Minister of Defense,

(3) military co-operation with qualified civilians when estimating defense requirements, policy and budget,

(4) the division of professional responsibilities between the civilians and the military, and

(5) the incontestable supremacy and scrutiny of the parliament (Rose 1994: 15).

Slovenia has emerged as perhaps one of the most successful East and Central European post-communist states. It is a front-runner to join the European Union (EU) and a serious candidate to join NATO. Since 1991, Slovenia has become the richest country in Eastern and Central Europe; it has the highest per capita income in the region and has achieved a steady positive economic growth since 1993. It has advanced considerably in liberalisation and privatisation and successfully stabilised its economy. Equally important, Slovenia has made big political strides in its transition toward democracy. It has quickly established a liberal constitution and an operating multiparty political system, held free and fair elections in 1992, 1996 and 2000, and has seen the growth of independent civic initiatives indicative of a democratic society. Slovenia has the characteristics of a democracy with stable institutions guaranteeing the rule of law, respect for human rights and for the protection of minorities. Although both the smallest and the least populous of Central European post-communist states, it has captured interest and attention due in large part to its ability to implement economic and democratic reforms, including a real progress toward the creation of a system of the civilian-military relations characteristic for the world's developed democracies (Mataija, 1999: 1).

The 1994 Partnership for Peace document considers the democratic control of defense a top priority. Slovenia has respected this through all its activities on its way to becoming a member of NATO, and this has remained a focus in the Partnership Work Programme activities (Carnovale, 2000: 3).

The purpose of this essay is to outline the system of the civilian supervision of the military in Slovenia. The emphasis will be on an analysis of the civilian-military relations as they have emerged since the independence, within the broader context of international security issues in the 1990s.

Security in the 1990s

In recent years we have witnessed some important and positive changes in international relations around the world, and especially in Europe. Most significant perhaps

was the fall of the Soviet empire which, ending the bipolar division of the world and of Europe, reunited Germany and irrevocably altered the values and ideas that had determined international stability since 1945. The states of the former Eastern block and the Soviet Union have undergone fundamental changes; the effort to integrate Western Europe has become more thorough; and there has been a notable attempt to redefine the function of international organizations, such as NATO, the United Nations, the European Union, the West European Union and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe among others (Keohane, Nye and Hofmann 1993, 23-148).

These changes have established a new climate of co-operation in international relations. The resolution of old conflicts has provided an opportunity to redefine the approach to security questions, and to avoid hostile competition among states. Nevertheless, the expectation that there would be no need to resort to force in achieving national goals in the world after the cold war has proved too optimistic (Grizold, 1990: 34). To solve the conflicting inter-state and inter-ethnic processes, a destructive and force-based approach has been adopted, which reduced, threatened or entirely annulled the positive trends outlined above (see Munera, 1994: 1-105). Therefore, in the contemporary field of national and international security we must qualify the progress made with some explanation of the new tensions and threats that have emerged. The most significant among them are:

(1) The problem of international terrorism after 11 September 2001, which represents the most important threat to international security,

(2) The escalating complexity of socio-economic, national and other matters in some post-socialist states,

(3) Global shifts of economic and political power combined with economic crises and insecurity in some regions as a consequence of a multi-polar international community,

(4) The nascent competition for new spheres of influence among the emergent economic super-powers, a united Europe and particularly Germany and Japan,

(4) A deepening gap between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres,

(5) Ethnic conflicts and mass migrations,

(6) The arms proliferation in local conflicts, both of the conventional weapons and the weapons of mass destruction, and

(7) Global pollution of the environment.

It is more than obvious that the environment, the society and the individual are subject to a bewildering number of threats that are increasingly difficult to contain despite the attempts to eradicate or limit the dangers.

The perception of these problems as global threats has increasingly linked the international community and emphasized the importance of global security. Consequently, the questions of defense and protection have shifted from the military-political sphere to the civilian sphere of activity (Javorović 1992: 14). The issue of security today is multi-dimensional and cannot be reduced to its military component. The armed forces

must be seen as only one instrument among the many within the national security establishment.

In spite of the contemporary military conflicts, the emerging new world order demands the redefinition of the substance of security from two perspectives: the universal and the demilitarizing.

One further component of security in this new world context must be taken into account, namely the globalization of contemporary security problems. If universalism refers to the perception of the interconnectedness of security issues, and demilitarization aims to shift the emphasis from the military to the non-military sources of threat, globalization aims to end the illusion that security problems can be limited to local or national areas. Contemporary security has become internationalized and based on interdependency. In the future, despite military-political events in the international community and regardless of whether it refers to natural, ecological, military or any other kind of threat, contemporary security at the national and the international level is increasingly interdependent.

A decade ago, after the communist parties waned and the Wall came down, conventional wisdom envisioned a "Europe whole and free" and more expansively, a "zone of peace and prosperity" stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

It never happened. A decade came and went – a short period, historically speaking. But in those few years, hundreds of thousands of people from the Adriatic to the Caspian died in post-cold war conflicts, millions of people were displaced, and billions of dollars were lost as housing and infrastructure were destroyed. Large-scale warfares of one kind or another broke out time and again in the Caucasus and the former Yugoslavia, while Central Asia, the Russian Federation, Albania, and Moldova witnessed sustained separatist clashes or violence. Together with the Kosovo conflict (1999) and the second Chechen war (1999), there may be 400,000 dead, 6 to 7 million internally displaced persons or refugees, and $200 billion in property and infrastructure damage in all the post-cold war European wars (Nelson, 2001: 21).

As a ten-year-old state, Slovenia has increased efforts to develop the concepts, policies and institutions to provide for its own national security and, at the same time, contribute to the international security. Slovenia's contributions to international crisis management efforts, which are best manifested in the per capita terms and not in the absolute numbers of troops and civilian experts, are an indivisible part of ensuring the nation's own national security. The spillover effect of the most pressing crises is usually manifested not only as fighting but also as a variety of economic, immigration, terrorist, environmental and other trans-border problems that could potentially evolve into real security threats. Slovenia relies first of all on its own national resources and capabilities to ensure its national security. Following the war in 1991, and the establishment of an independent state, internal stability and security have been achieved. Thus, Slovenia is obliged, not only for the sake of its own security, to extend this stabilising influence into the neighboring region, politically, militarily and economically. The need is growing for

an extensive Slovenian contribution to the security of Southeast Europe regardless of the dynamic, positive political changes in Croatia and Yugoslavia.[1]

At the international level, Slovenia has adopted cooperation instead of competition as a primary strategy for international problem solving. Locally, Slovenia has striven hard to improve its relations with the neighboring states. Despite some public uncertainty, there is a general consensus to move towards the European integration, including joining the EU and NATO. This is in fact Slovenia's primary foreign policy goal, which officially obliges the country to seek peaceful solutions of inter-state conflicts but also to an armed defense if attacked and only when necessary. Slovenia sees benefits in the cooperation in the Partnership for Peace as a better prospect for national security, thanks to the participation in joint operational planning, the development of a modern military defense structure and the procedures compatible with NATO's, leading to the inclusion in an integrated European military and political structure (Grizold, 2001).

After 11 September 2001, the whole world is in a new security situation. Generally speaking, there were two facts that made the attacks of 11 September possible: globalisation and human nature. Neither is likely to change much. As long as we live in an open, accessible, interconnected world and as long as there are evil men and women, we are going to face the specter of international terrorism. Even if Al Qaida is destroyed, even if other terrorist groups are disrupted, even if some of their state sponsors are punished, we will still live with the knowledge that it could happen again – and again. The 1990s produced a paradigm through which to view the world: globalisation. Within globalized settings there is no single country (including the superpowers) that can ensure optimal security for its citizens. In this regard, countries today must work with two basic parameters: (1) complex security threats and (2) the need for enhanced co-operation to ensure the national as well as the international security.

Civilian-Military Relations in Slovenia before Independence

Throughout its history, Slovenia usually formed a part of a larger state since Slovenes never strongly craved after independence. A small ethnic group, tucked between the Southeastern foothills of the Alps and the Northern Adriatic, and at the junction of the Slavic, Germanic and Romanic worlds, Slovenes sought self-expression through their culture, and especially through their literature and religion. Slovenes first settled in their present corner of Europe in the sixth century. In the thirteenth century, most Slovene lands became part of the Habsburg feudal domain (from the mid-19th century, the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the relationship that would come to an end only in 1918. This relationship with the Habsburg Monarchy helped shape the Slovene cultural identity within the framework of Western/Central European civilisation processes. Because of this cultural orientation, many Slovenes see their entry into the present political, economic and security integrations of Western Europe as a sort of a re-incorporation. Slo-

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[1] This has been reinforced by the results of the October 2000 elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the continuation of political violence in Kosovo and Metohija, the incursion of Albanian guerrillas into the southern part of Serbia, the shaky relations between Serbia and Montenegro, the strong pressure from ethnic Albanians in Macedonia for at least a federation and the poor economic situation in the war-torn region.

venes, according to their self-image, are industrious, democratic, progressive, well-educated, and self-assured (Mataija, 1999: 1).

During, and immediately following World War One, the Slovene political elite decided that Slovenia would stand a better chance for facing pressures from the potentially hostile neighbors – Italians, Austrians, Germans, and Hungarians – if they were to unite with the Southern Slavs. As the Slovenes were not in a position to form an independent state following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1918 they became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (after 1929, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia).

In 1941, Yugoslavia was invaded and Slovenia was partitioned among Germany, Italy, and Hungary; the occupying forces carried out genocidal policies against the Slovenes. A resistance movement was organized: the Liberation Front (LF) of the Slovene Nation. The LF, in its association with the larger partisan resistance in Yugoslavia, subscribed to a post-war plan for a federal Yugoslav state in which Slovenia would constitute a separate republic.

Following World War Two, Slovenia was one of the six republics within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) until the proclamation of its independence in June 1991 (Mataija, 1999). From late 1968, the then Yugoslavia had a two-part armed force, consisting of a fully centralised federal standing army (the Yugoslav People's Army – YPA) and a militia-type Territorial Defense (TD) organisation in each republic.

The Yugoslav system of civilian-military relations between 1945 and the mid 1980s developed from the legacy of a guerrilla-type fusion between the political and military leaderships. This symbiotic relationship between the Communist Party and the YPA was partly modified between 1945 and 1948, bringing the system closer to the Soviet type of communist civilian-military relations while retaining some traits originating from the guerilla experience.

At that time, Yugoslavia maintained an authoritarian, Communist-Party-dominated type of civilian-military relations, which had been established under the influence of the Marxist theory of an armed people and drew from the experience of the national freedom fight during World War II. After the war, the Communist Party exercised a form of civilian-political control over the military (Jelušič, 1997).

For several decades before his death in 1980, Tito dominated the entire Yugoslav system. At the same time the head of state, the leader of the ruling Communist Party and the Commander-in-Chief of the Yugoslav Armed Forces, Tito served as the lynchpin between the civilian and the military spheres. Moreover, he personally exercised control over the military through his own relatively small presidential office, excluding the civilian Communist Party apparatus and the civilian security and intelligence agency.

After Tito's death in 1980, official civilian control over the Yugoslav military progressively deteriorated and soon became an official sham. By the late 1980s, an uneven joint rule with the federal civilian leadership had developed. The divided and bickering

civilian elite very quickly became ever weaker and susceptible to blackmail by the much more homogenous YPA leadership.

Towards the end of the 80s, there was an increased demand for depolitization (political neutralisation) of the military in Yugoslavia. There was a conflict between the YPA and the democratic public (civil society) in the more politically advanced Northwestern part of Yugoslavia. The conflict between the old Communist-Party dominated civilian-military relations and the parliamentary-democratic model proposed by Slovenia was essentially about political pluralism in a civilian political system.

By the end of the 1980s Yugoslavia was already on its way towards the dissolution of the federal state. Different theories regarding the future type of government were openly and loudly declared. National programmes for redressing the historical grievances appeared (the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences), while Slovenia and Croatia declared their intentions for self-determination. The YPA was losing its good name, its supra-national character and becoming increasingly less representative both socially and nationally. These facts evoked strong negative feelings towards the YPA among the young generation in the Northwestern republics of Yugoslavia.

The System of Civilian Supervision over the Military in Slovenia after Independence

On June 25, 1991, the Slovene Parliament passed the Declaration of Independence of Slovenia, under which Slovenia was politically and legally obliged to take over all the functions of state authority on its territory. This virtually meant secession from the SFRY. The day after the proclamation, the YPA invaded Slovenia, but using the YPA for internal purposes proved to be inefficient. As an army made up of multinational conscripts, it was not able to muster the necessary cohesion and motivation to intervene, which was one of the reasons the lower YPA units disintegrated when they engaged in combat with the Slovene Territorial Defense (TD) units. They surrendered after the Slovenian authorities urged them to do so. After the YPA left Slovenia in October 1991, the supervision of the Slovenian territory was taken over by the Slovene TD and police forces.

In the post independence period, Slovenia implemented certain changes that were important for an efficient transition from an authoritarian system to a democratic socio-political system and market economy (Grizold, 1998). From that point onwards, the necessity to develop a new model of the civilian-military relations has intensified. It is worth mentioning that after the first multiparty elections in Slovenia (in 1990), the requirement that the Slovenian liberation process be legally regulated was emphatically expressed by various parties (Grad, 1993: 49). It was clear that the broadest common interest of all the new parliamentary political parties was a sweeping change of social system, including the development of a new national security system. The latter aspect was even emphasized in the programmes of most Slovene political parties, which favoured military organization even though the idea of a demilitarized Slovenia had been vociferously promoted before the elections. The two poles in this debate expressed diametrically opposite and extreme positions, and this undermined the viable application of

any of them. The choice between a new Slovene Army and Slovenia as a demilitarized zone, has opened schisms within the parties, as well as in the public opinion (Jelušič, 1992: 233).

After the elections, the new Slovenian government introduced some very important changes into the former authoritarian Yugoslav system. The adoption of the new Slovene constitution in December 1991 established the widest possible legal framework for the implementation of the following changes that affected the Slovene national security system:

(1) The legalization of a multi-party parliamentary democracy;

(2) The principle of the division of power among the executive, legislative and judicial branches was established by the constitution;

(3) The legislative functions of the government and the control of the national security policy were now performed by the Parliament;

(4) The government's powers to regulate national security and especially defense were increased. The government both proposes all defense expenditures and defines and regulates the defense capacity of the military;

(5) All the responsibilities related to defense were invested in a single body, the Defense Ministry, which takes all responsibility for the management of the military; the Territorial Defense Headquarters itself became a constituent part of the Defense Ministry with its Chief of Staff directly responsible to the Defense Minister;

(6) Territorial defense units, formerly under the authority of communes, now became the responsibility of the State (the Defense Ministry); in this way, the foundations for the future shape of the Slovenian armed forces were laid;

(7) All the laws that had enabled the military to regulate its affairs autonomously (for example, in the areas of education, social security and heath care) were abolished. The status of professional soldiers, NCOs, officers and conscripts was now the same as that of civil servants, with some exceptions related to the special nature of military organizations, such as the prohibition to strike;

(8) All former special military schools were abolished. Professional soldiers are now recruited from high schools and universities and they receive their professional military education at a new military education center, which is the responsibility of the Defense Ministry (Bebler, 1993: 67).

These changes in both the political system and the defense subsystem have enabled qualitative changes in the civilian-military relations in Slovenia. The former symbiotic relationship between the military and "the Party" has been abolished, together with the requirement for party membership for the professional military personnel. All party activities have been prohibited and the religious restrictions and discrimination have been lifted. The entire military corps has become more socially representative regarding gender, social origin and religion, and more nationally and culturally homogenous. The professional officer and NCO ranks are more accessible to women. The military is now under a strict civilian control; the Defense Minister is a civilian who is directly answerable

to the Parliament and to the Government. The National Security system, as a whole, is more transparent and accessible to parliamentary scrutiny, the mass media, empirical scientific research and public criticism. The entire interface between the military and the civilian society has been arranged in the spirit of pluralist democratic values, which have become the explicitly stipulated frame of reference for the military, coupled with the guaranteed professional autonomy (Bebler, 1993: 67).

Unlike the previous system in the SFRY, the relations between the civilian and the military institutions in the new Slovenian state are organized along the lines similar to the model of developed parliamentary states. This assures that:

(1) In the division between the civilian and the military power, the former prevails over the latter;

(2) Military leadership is in the hands of the highest representative power;

(3) All the decisions concerning national security are approved by the Parliament;

(4) The military is restricted to a purely executive role;

(5) The military is depoliticised.

Despite this, as the civilian-military relations were transforming in Slovenia, certain problems arose which slowed down the development of a democratic system in the first half of the 1990s. These problems primarily had two sources:

(1) The incomplete establishment of the overall legal order of the Slovene State. Many new laws that affect the rearrangement of various fields of Slovenian public life are still to be adopted under the new constitution.

(2) The markedly different degree of institutionalization between the existing national security arrangements, and the accountability of legal organs to the Parliament and the public.

These facts principally point to a degree of vagueness and ambiguity between the responsibility for state institutions and the new legal order in matters related to national security. This can be clearly seen in the way that the existing laws for defense and protection fail to conform with the new constitution, and in the way that the state organs similarly fail to fulfill their peacetime defense function. Such difficulties occurred easily in the first half of the 1990s, which were characterized by a high degree of politicization, a remarkable failure of the civil society and its professional associations to influence vital political decisions, and the rifts within the Slovene political elite which sapped political life with personal and party squabbling over irregularities, ideology and faux pas, as the emerging parliamentary democracy established itself.

The fact is that the Slovenian political sphere has become more fragmented and more antagonistic since independence. This is particularly true in the case of the former communist politicians and the "new" politicians since both groups, to a significant extent, took part in the Party's activities in the past.

In such circumstances, many politicians who hold the most important offices have furthered their private and party interests instead of representing the interests of the Slo-

vene society on the whole. Consequently, since the elections of 1990, a certain discord has dominated Slovene politics, almost to the point of excluding the civil society.

During the period from 1990 to 1994, the most influential position in the national security sphere was held by the defense minister. There were two main reasons why the defense minister enjoyed this excessive power:

(1) In the new Slovenian Constitution, the responsibility for defense was defined in a vague and generalized way; the President of the Republic was given only titular responsibilities as the official "Commander in Chief", and the Prime Minister was denied any defined or direct authority in the defense sphere.

(2) The establishment and organization of the Defense Ministry was carried out by the defense minister himself who, after the integration of the Headquarters of the Territorial Defense into the Defense Ministry, effectively became the commander of both the military and its logistic support systems.

The period between 1994 and 2000 was in Slovenia full of general setbacks in the area of the civilian-military relations, not unlike those faced by many other former communist countries. In this rather short six-year period, the Slovene Ministry of Defense was headed by five ministers. The Slovenian defense ministers changed so quickly that nobody had time to organize the system of leadership, management and command inside the Ministry. The future role of the Slovenian defense ministry needed to be more dynamic, allowing work in small teams and avoiding the repetition of tasks. Overall, the diagnosis of the "illness" of the Slovene defense management system was the same like in many small transitional countries (e.g. the Baltic states) (Bebler, 2000: 36).

Slovenia, at this moment, as a PfP partner, agrees that enhancing democratic control of the country's defense system is a common priority for three main reasons. First, it is an essential element of democracy; i.e. a model of society which is now almost universally accepted throughout Europe. Second, far from tying its hands, democratic control of defense is useful for the military. The latter, just as other organisations, benefits from external scrutiny and oversight which catalyse improvements and help prevent abuses and waste; as demonstrated in many European countries and elsewhere in the world, a more transparent military is both more effective (i.e. it does the right things) and more efficient (i.e. it does things better) than when it operates in social seclusion and above the law. Third, democratic control of defense provides the armed forces with indispensable legitimacy in society.[2]

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[2] Since the war for independence, the Slovene Armed Forces have enjoyed a high measure of trust among the population. A representative public opinion poll conducted in December 2001, showed that in this respect the Slovene Armed Forces with 3.45 points (on a one to five confidence scale) only slightly lags behind the President of the Republic (3.93), the national currency (3.71), the president of the government (3.51), the National Bank (3.45), the health system (3.50) and the media (3.51). It is ahead of the Government (3.05), the National Assembly (2.94), political parties (2.57), the courts (2.77), the police (3.06) and the Roman Catholic Church (2.54). This relative high mark of trust (although lower than in 1991-1994), probably reflects the population's confidence in the strict civilian supremacy over the military as well as in the Slovene Armed Forces' benign and neutral political position (Bebler, 2000).

Conclusion

The newly emerging situation in Europe, following the end of the "Cold War," has created many shifts and changes in inter-state relationships as well as within the socio-political systems of individual states. The latter is most obvious in the states that have abandoned their authoritarian communist models in favor of democratic socio-political systems. One of the fundamental elements of this system is the regulation of the civilian-military relations. The relation between the political regime, the state military organization and the civil society based on liberal democratic principles ensures the supremacy of civilian authority and its control over the military. The regulation of democratic political control over the military in modern states depends on the level of political, cultural, economic and scientific technological development, as well as the level of international security.

At present, the process of reforming the structure of the international community and of reshaping the mechanisms and instruments for ensuring national and international security could – unlike in the past when the logic of ideological and geopolitical globalism of the two continuously antagonistic super powers prevailed – to a greater extent be geared towards safeguarding some of the common security interests of the members of the international community. The security efforts of many states nowadays seem to stem from an awareness that modern security is a complex phenomenon that can be effectively resolved only if the security interests of individual states are coordinated, adjusted and linked to the interests of other states. In this respect, it is of great importance that the developed, traditionally democratic states back up the positive processes in the states making the transition from authoritarian to democratic society.

Slovenia, as a newly established state on the territory of the former Yugoslavia after the end of the "cold war", channelled the development of its society toward democratization. An important aspect of this process of transformation was the formation of a new democratic model of the civilian-military relations. In contrast to the former Yugoslav system, the relations between the civilian and the military institutions in Slovenia have been organized similarly to those in developed parliamentary democracies. However, like many other East Central European countries, Slovenia did not succeed in the first years of independence to develop a comprehensive national security system as well as a comprehensive democratic framework of the civilian-military relations. The main reasons for this are the following:

(1) The objective conflicting and contradictory nature of the different components of the process of radical social, political and economic changes;

(2) The Slovenian political sphere has become, after independence, more fragmented and, to a certain extent, even antagonistic (this is particularly true in the case of the former communists and the "new" actors on the political stage);

(3) The Slovenian political elite, internally differentiated and antagonistic, has enervated itself with personal and party squabbling about irregularities and *faux pas* occurring in the process of the establishment of parliamentary democracy;

(4) A notable lack of criticism on the part of individuals, groups and organisations, previously involved in the civil society movement, in respect to the "new" politicians.

In general, Slovenia has made at least as much progress as any other Central or East European country since the end of the Cold War in terms of the institutionalisation of democracy, the protection and advocacy of human rights, the consolidation of a prosperous market-based economy, and the creation of a system of civilian-military relations characteristic of liberal, democratic societies. The Slovenian military does not represent a potential threat to the effective exercise of the civilian rule or to the stability of the country. Constitutional and legal mechanisms that ensure the civilian control and supervision of the military are in place. The government has asserted its control over defense strategies and priorities, military budgets, personnel, and force structures. The National Assembly has the capacity to review the decisions related to the military matters and to monitor their implementation. The defense system in Slovenia is, for the most part, transparent and accessible to parliamentary scrutiny, to the mass media, to academic researchers, and to public criticism. Clear limitations have been imposed on the military regarding their political involvement. The civilian rule by democratically elected representatives has been reaffirmed as the norm. Great emphasis has been placed on military professionalism.

Although successful in minimising the military intervention in politics, Slovenia needs to place more emphasis on the minimisation of political intervention in the military sphere. Future developments in the civilian-military relations in Slovenia will largely depend on the actions and the quality of the civilian leadership. Politicians must resist the temptation to use the military in their quest to further their own political ambitions or to manipulate and take advantage of the military issues for political objectives. Still, Slovenia has, within a short period of time, been able to make a real progress toward the creation of a system of civilian-military relations characteristic for the world's developed democracies (Mataija, 1999: 17).

Slovenia is intensifying its preparations for accession to NATO and the EU. Given this fact, democratic control of the armed forces and the defense structures remains one of the main priorities in our cooperation. Through this cooperation, democratic control of the armed forces has to be constantly studied, reviewed and further developed. The experiences gained from various forms of cooperation are an invaluable source which assists Slovenia in the demanding project of developing and designing its defense policy and system according to the best democratic traditions.

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