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Georgia's Search for Security

An Analysis of Georgia's National Security
Structures and International Cooperation

by
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Abstract:

Security problems of Georgia and the Caucasus are frequently analysed in terms of conflict, geopolitics and pipeline diplomacy. This study, however, awards those aspects subsidiary roles and turn focus to some of Georgia's *tools* for handling security. That means that national security actors, international structures and security cooperation are assessed. Hence, the objective of this study is to: *analyse and critically assess Georgia's security as of the year 2003*, by seeking to answer three separate questions, namely:

1. *What is the current status of Georgian's national security structures?*
2. *What are the current options and implications for Georgia concerning international security structures?*
3. *What long-term issues and risks are connected to the US-Georgian security cooperation?*

By and large this is done by canvassing issues of: the reform of the Armed Forces and civil institutions as the Ministry for State Security and Ministry of the Interior; the process of withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia; the international cooperation within structures such as NATO, CIS and GUUAM; and finally, Georgia's civil and military security cooperation with the US. Two key themes in this study are civil-military relations and the combination of perceptive and traditional security risks. The study is presented as three separate case studies that all rely on literature, news and interviews.

Keywords: Caucasus, Georgia, Russia, Security, Security Concept, Reform, Military, United States, Armed Forces, Strategy, GTEP

About the GFSIS

The Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS) is an independent, non-profit policy think tank dedicated to helping improve public policy decision-making in Georgia through research and analysis, training of policymakers and policy analysts, and public education about the strategic issues, both domestic and international, facing Georgia and the Caucasus in the 21st century.

GFSIS activities are aimed at promoting democracy and fostering political and economic reforms; enhancing regional cooperation; creating a friendly and secure investment environment; and providing local private sector and the international business community opportunities to participate in the economy of the Caucasus region.

GFSIS brings together experts working in multiple disciplines. In order to carry out research projects and training, the Foundation attracts leading Georgian analysts for individual and joint studies on a contract basis. GFSIS also serves as a forum for foreign scholars who are conducting field research related to political and economic processes in Georgia, as well as in the Caucasus at large.

About the Author

Robert L. Larsson is a Swedish Political Scientist who previously has studied and worked on issues relating to Russia and the Caucasus in Stockholm, Edinburgh, Novosibirsk and Tbilisi. He is especially interested in defence and security analysis concerning Russia and the Newly Independent States and has published several articles on the topic. He is currently living in Tbilisi and works as a visiting researcher at the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies.

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Robert L. Larsson
July 2003, Tbilisi

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1 INTRODUCTION

[...]Georgia's defense policy directs that the nation's armed forces be sufficient to deter a military attack against its territory, its infrastructure, or its institutions. In the event that deterrence fails, the Georgian Armed Forces should be able to counter threats until assisted by the Intel-national[sic] community.¹

The Republic of Georgia has since its independence from the Soviet Union struggled through civil wars, economic crises and ethnopolitical turmoil. In addition, Georgia's location in the South Caucasus,² between NATO and Russia, is its geopolitical blessing and curse. It is a key state for regional cooperation, but also for regional conflict. Russia's unwillingness to let go of the South Caucasus as a sphere of influence has not decreased. Georgia's short experience of statehood is insufficient for handling domestic and foreign pressure and it is, thus, vulnerable to both national and international powers. The foundation for Georgia's security is thus in its making – even after more than a decade of sovereignty. This search for security takes many forms. First and foremost Georgia has taken on a process of reforming its national security institutions, as the Armed Forces and 'power ministries', but the search also has an international dimension. In 1999, the Parliament declared that Georgia's prioritised goal was membership in NATO and the European Union. Until this goal is reached, regional security cooperation is also on the Georgian agenda. However, the weak statehood of Georgia and embedded problems that lags from the Soviet era has slowed down processes of reformation. This has forced Georgia to rely on foreign aid. Aid and support, civil and military, is given by many states - most notably by the United States of America, which has undertaken a mission to train and equip the Georgian Armed Forces. This cooperation is, undeniably, the most rewarding way for Georgia to improve and develop both its military establishment and civil institutions while still fulfilling what is indicated in the quote above. Nevertheless, the road to security is long and scattered with potholes - maybe too many for a safe journey. If Georgian security is to be understood, these issues deserve attention and must be analysed. This is what this study will do.

1.1 Objective of the Study

Analyses of Caucasian and Georgian security are frequently made, but most often only by assessing the regional conflicts or the pipeline diplomacy of Caspian oil. In contrast to this, the objective of this study is: *to analyse and critically assess Georgia's security as of the year 2003*, by seeking to answer three separate questions, relating to the issues outlined above, namely:

¹"Georgia's Defense and Security Strategy", *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*, <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/defense.html>, 2003-05-01

² N.B. Forms of spelling and usage of geographical names have no political meaning and should not be interpreted as a solidarity with one or another side in the various conflicts. Also, the 'South Caucasus' consists of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan (also know as The Southern Caucasus, Transcaucasus or Transcaucasia). North Caucasus refers to the southern part of the Russian Federation, i.e. the republics of Dagestan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachai-Cherkassia and Adygheia. When referring to the 'Caucasus' or the 'region', neighbouring states of Turkey, Russia and Iran are also included. Finally, the institutions of Georgia are often written and abbreviated differently depending on translations and origin of the author, e.g. the same institution can be called: State Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Ministry, Foreign Office, Department for Foreign Affairs et cetera. This study attempts to stick to the ones that are most frequently used. Naturally, one distinction is made between Ministry and Department, of which the latter is subordinated to the former.

- 1) *What is the current status of Georgia's national security structures?*
- 2) *What are the current options and implications for Georgia concerning international security structures?*
- 3) *What long-term issues and risks are connected to the US-Georgian security cooperation?*

1.2 Scope of Inquiry and Point of Departure

As a detailed examination of all security-related issues in Georgia, and the South Caucasus, would pose too wide a scope, much will be left aside. Therefore, lengthy historic descriptions will be avoided and instead suggestions for further reading will be given.³ As indicated, issues well covered in other works, as the struggle to various pipeline routes; the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia; and the impact on security by neighbouring states, will be awarded subsidiary roles in this analysis. What the study will do, however, is to approach Georgia's security in three different ways and attempt to answer the questions posed above. Approaching an issue in three different ways, ignoring the important aspects of oil and posing different kinds of questions produce incoherent results, one could argue. However, this study does not attempt to elucidate in full for Georgia's security, but rather to contribute to a wider understanding of the current situation in Georgia and the South Caucasus. The rationale for such an approach is found in the fact that all issues covered can be seen as tools that Georgia has for handling security. For security actors and analysts in Georgia, most things are no news, but other readers might be interested. This is done in three separate case studies that seek to answer the questions posed above by relying on different sources.

While eschewing a theoretical discussion, a classic definition of security is that it is protection from something negative that might happen in the future. Given the fact that the Caucasus is a region of great political tension, Georgian security must be met on several levels. Firstly by having a strong and stable civil state that is able to handle domestic and foreign threats and risks; secondly by having a potent national security structure, such as a police force and Army; thirdly as part of a regional or multinational security structure. A security structure is, in this case, the formal institutions that play an important role in issues of security. At the national level this relates to both the governmental apparatus, but also such forces as single paramilitary units, while at the international level, organisations such as NATO and GUUAM.

At all levels, a basic assumption of this study is that although 'hard' security as military capacity is a substantial part of the analysis, 'soft' cognitive security issues also have an impact on the security environment, which is something that has been neglected in other analyses. Most notably, this will be the case of the third study that will have a long-term perspective. Moreover, civil-military relations are something that will draw much attention in this study. The reason is that separation of civil and military powers is a key feature of a democratic state. As will be shown, Georgia adheres to this idea and thus it is worth to explore the current situation. It is, also, worth mentioning that this study solely approaches issues from Georgia's horizon and therefore concerns of other actors, domestic or international, will be treated somewhat unfairly. This is especially the case throughout the study concerning the Georgian-Russian relation. Occasionally, and related to this, normative conclusions and comments will be made. It is important to underscore that this will be done from Georgia's point of view and will only be made on the basis of what relates to the political intentions of the state. Concerning the method of utilising case studies, it can be

³ For a comprehensive overview of the history and present situation of the Caucasus, see: Cornell, Svante E. (2001), *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of the Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*, Surrey: Curzon Press

stated that there is no intention to explain or generalise issues that will be discussed in this paper. The result is that the meaning of a case study differs somewhat from its ordinary academic practice. The rationale for this is to facilitate reading for someone who is only interested in certain parts of this paper. Therefore, the intention is to separate the part to the greatest extent possible. Finally, the study takes into consideration material and data until mid-July, 2003. Having said this, the essence of the three studies is outlined below.

Case Study One – Georgia’s National Security

Aim of the Case Study

The aim of the first case study is to assess Georgia’s domestic institution for handling security issues. Therefore the first study seeks to answer the question: *what is the current status of Georgian’s national security structures?*

Content of the Case Study

Addressing three broad fields will answer this question. The first field, ‘Civil Security Structure’, includes such institutions as fall outside of the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence - as the Ministry of State Security and Ministry of the Interior. The second field is, hence, the formal military force under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, as the Army, Air Force and Navy. Finally, the withdrawal of Russian military troops from Georgia will be awarded special attention as this dimension underlies the general security reform in Georgia and takes a central role in the debate on Georgian security. Within all fields, the issues of current status, reform agenda and problems of reform will be addressed.

Scope of the Case Study

Although rich in detail, this study makes no claim to provide a comprehensive numeric overview of all units and equipment of the Georgian security establishment. The ‘frozen’ conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in addition to tension in other regions will not be a focus neither will the historical account of Georgia’s military be.⁴ For greater detail on military numbers and equipment, see the works by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute - SIPRI and the International Institute for Strategic Studies - IISS. What the study does, however, is to provide a few examples of the military and civil security situation in Georgia by highlighting its status within important areas. The reform will be assessed in several ways and over-arching and embedded problems that are common form all security institutions will be devoted more attention than peculiarities of single entities and actors. The reason is first and foremost to underscore deeper problems and give an illustration of the current status of Georgia’s security actors and their capacity.

Sources to be Utilised in the Case Study

To a great extent, primary sources, as news and interviews, is the core of this case study, most notably from the resourceful publication by CIPDD, such as *Army and Society in Georgia*, which contains analyses and press digest from Georgian press until 2001. This press digest covers shortcomings derived from insufficient usage of sources in Georgian, at least to a minor extent. In addition, national newspapers such as *Svobodnaya Gruzia*, *Georgia Today* and *The Georgian Messenger* are utilised along with various reports and secondary analyses. Interviews will be conducted as a source of information and analysis, but mostly in order to highlight opinions of some central actors. The US Centre for Defence Information (CDI) has made a similar study as this one.⁵ However, it was made in 1998-1999 and therefore does not

⁴ For an examination of issues that require attention in terms of assistance and aid, see: Cornell, Svante E. (ed) (2002B), *The South Caucasus: A Regional Overview and Conflict Assessment*, Stockholm: SIDA/CCC

⁵ Feinberg, Jared (1999), *The Armed Forces in Georgia*, Washington: CDI

take the current reform into consideration, as this study will do. Moreover, the CDI study paid great attention to historical accounts and the composition of the various actors. Therefore, this study devotes more attention to reform, main problems and current status by analysing also the civil parts of security.

Case Study Two – Georgia’s International Security

Aim of the Case Study

The aim of case study two is to analyse Georgia’s various alternatives for handling security at regional and international levels. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question: *what are the current options and implications for Georgia concerning international security structures?*

Content of the Case Study

In turn, this case study will cover a majority of both the official organisations, such as the CIS, NATO and GUUAM as well as various proposed constellations of handling security and discuss their pros and cons from Georgia’s horizon.

Scope of the Case Study

As previously stated, as opposed to the majority of academic articles in international journals, this case study will analyse the issue from Georgia’s point of view, rather than from the institution at a focus. This means that judicial aspects of international treaties, opinions of every actor or a historical account will be left aside. Looking at main trends is most important in this aspect.

Sources to be Utilised in the Case Study

Naturally, the main sources to be utilised are those that deal with the various security organisations, alliances and quasi-alliances of the region, as *Insight Turkey*, *Survival* or the work by the RAND Corporation. In addition, prominent officials will be interviewed. Recent events and news will also be at a focus.

Case Study Three – Georgia’s ‘American’ Security

Aim of the Case Study

The aim of the third case study is to assess one important way for enhancing Georgia’s security, namely the cooperation with the United States. Thus, this study seeks to answer the question: *what long-term issues and risks are connected to the US-Georgian security cooperation?*

Content of the Case Study

Consequently, this study consists of three main parts. The first part discusses the American and Georgian approaches towards cooperation and outlines the strategic context. The second part penetrates the political problems and issues related to the cooperation of democracy and economic growth. The third part assesses military and strategic key-points and analyses the impact of cooperation.

Scope of the Case Study

As indicated above, the cooperation on hydrocarbons is not a core concern of this study, as these questions are already well assessed in other works. The numerous bilateral agreements and consultations will not be detailed, nor will economic information on cooperation. Instead, the impact, or presumed impact, of the cooperation itself will be analysed in-depth.

Sources to be Utilised in the Case Study

As this study is not meant to detail a situation, but instead to analyse the impact of cooperation, the sources to be utilised must differ somewhat. By this, the last case study aims to rely, to a major extent, on secondary sources, where US foreign assistance and policy are analysed against various backgrounds. Examples of this are the journal *Survival* and academic anthologies related to Caucasian security.

2 GEORGIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

Georgia has set onto a course of action that includes a restructuring of its security institutions. The Soviet legacy of parallel security institutions has left Georgia in a costly and politically unstable situation where intra-departmental fighting is common. Reform of the complex institutional security system, with links to paramilitary forces and organised crime, has been initiated, primarily with foreign assistance, but the road ahead is heavily protected. As stated, the aim of this study is to critically assess Georgia's domestic institution for handling security issues. Therefore this first study seeks to answer the question: *what is the current status of Georgian's national security structures?*

Naturally, security structures encompass many dimensions worth taking into consideration, although this study only incorporates a handful. An important difference between this study and many others is that this does exclude the general security environment and instead focus on the actors and structures for managing security *within* this environment. As stated earlier, a key-theme in this study is civil-military relations. Here, this primarily includes the aspect of civil control over military and security forces, which must be said is a pivotal issue in states that strive towards greater democracy. This is most often measured by a way labelled concordance theory,⁶ which basically assess the level of military subjugation to civil structures. This study lacks the methodological tools for such a quantitative undertaking, but it will nevertheless be an important aspect when assessing security reform. In general, when canvassing such issues, the concepts of transparency, accountability and legitimacy also come at a focus. Finally, the process of replacing military structures by civil ones is just in the making, which makes any assessment somewhat bizarre, as the indications of reform is of a size that is almost impossible to measure and draw any conclusions from.

2.1 Lack of Security Concept and Doctrine

All activities involving civil security structures, defence forces, foreign policy and politics in general, require that the political establishment knows at least three things. Firstly what the issues and tasks are; secondly what that the short-term and long-term goals are and; thirdly, how to reach these goals. In most states, this is handled by having some kind of national security concept for general security policy and in addition, a defence concept and military doctrine. A concept is the ideology and compass for security. In combination with some kind of action-plan that specifies means to be used, they form a doctrine, which serves as roadmap for military and politicians. In addition, concepts and doctrines have the advantage of providing some predictability of policy, which is of gain for all actors as it builds stability. However, a fundamental problem is if politicians do not know what kind of security the state is opting for, a codification of a concept is difficult.

As Georgia has never had a codified security concept, but only a vague and incoherent idea of security that incorporate all and nothing at the same time, it can be stated that *real* such concepts and doctrines mentioned above are missing. Indeed, the process of forming has started but as the meaning and content related to these issues are unknown to a great extent.⁷ It is true; a security concept is not a required for every state if it has a long history of coherent

⁶ See, for example: Schiff, Rebecca (1995), "Civil-military Relations Reconsidered: a Theory of Concordance", *Armed Forces and Society*, vol 1, no 22, pp 7-24

⁷ Yet, these ideas have been in the developing phase for several years, for example see: - "National Security Concept of Georgia", *The Strategic Research Centre*, Tbilisi: November, 1998

and predictable security policy has clearly illustrated the intentions and priorities of the state. However, this is not the case in Georgia and thus the need of a concept is pivotal.

In January 2003, a conference was held on the topic, which is one real step towards a coherent policy.⁸ It was shown that at least there is an understanding of the needs, but the development is still at the drafting stage. An International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) is currently assisting Georgia in drafting a new concept.⁹ The result will likely be presented before the General election on 2 November 2003, but there are many disparate views involved and expectations should not be too high. This is of great importance and if the Parliament adopts the concept it will enjoy the status of a law, which would require a qualified majority for future changes. The result is thus greater stability, legitimacy and predictability.¹⁰ This would be the first real concept of this kind in Georgia. During the last decade there has only been a broad and vague notion about what the unwritten concept encompasses. Currently, there are but a few things that give an indication of future priorities, for instance the state budget. Presidential decrees and laws naturally give an indication of intention, but as the implementation often is poor, it is of little interest. Finally, by looking at past and recent event it is also possible to draw some conclusions of the status of the current security structures. Some of these issues outlined above will be awarded attention in this study.

Speaking about a military doctrine, it can be said that Georgia does have a codified military doctrine, dating from 2 October 1997. In sum it had clauses on:¹¹

1. Banning of transportation, deployment and productions of nuclear armament.
2. Prohibition of usage of armed forces for domestic political purposes.
3. Definitions of the functions of military bodies and separations of responsibilities.
4. Declaration of Georgia's intentions to cooperate with the UN and other organisations.

In addition, it pointed out two potential causes of war, namely “[...] separatist forces aiming to destabilize the state and the aspirations of some states to dominate the region with the use of force”.¹² Obviously, this is a political product that is of little use as a security ideology or an agenda for handling defence and security issues. This is partly why it is neither used nor frequently analysed. It is a dead document. What the doctrine does, however, is to illustrate two objects that the security apparatus must handle. In reality, this points towards the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, along with other paramilitary forces on Georgian ground, and, secondly, Russian interference in Georgian internal affairs. It can thus be stated that these two potential causes of war are what Georgia believes must be priorities objectives for the security establishment. Hence, the coming analysis will assess issues against this background.

2.2 ‘Civil’ Security Structures

It must be remembered that protection of the territorial integrity of Georgia is not solely a task for the military troops. Territorial defence is based on three lines of defence. The first line consists of Border Troops, followed by a second line of regular Army units. Finally, a third

⁸ Miller, Eric A. (2003), “Georgia Struggles to Develop National Security Framework”, *Eurasianet*, 28 March, 2003

⁹ Smith, David (2003B), presentation on US Engagements in Georgia at the GFSIS, 23 June, 2003

¹⁰ Interview with Dr Archil Gegeshidze, former National Security Advisor and currently Senior Fellow of the GFSIS, 26 June, 2003

¹¹ Feinberg, Jared (1999), *The Armed Forces in Georgia*, Washington: CDI, p 18f

¹² Feinberg (1999), p 18

line of Interior Troops and officers from the Ministry for State Security exist. The first and second echelons are assessed in part 2.3 and the third one below.

Civil Security Actors

The number of organisations and institutions that can be said to be a part of a larger security structure is difficult to assess, as many groups are informal, nameless gangs of bandits. In addition these merges are sometimes between illegal paramilitary groups and the national defence establishment, at least during the most turbulent years of the last decade. Overlapping and parallel structures of official institutions do not only make analytical evaluations impossible, it is also a key problem to reform and decision implementation. However, it is possible to distinguish between three different kinds of actors, namely: governmental, official international, and paramilitary. Although the first group is at focus here, knowledge about the other groups serves at least two purposes. First, it highlights the groups that existing security forces must handle, especially the civil forces, as paramilitary groups mainly operate in a mixed sphere of criminality and military. Secondly, it indicated the background of the existing structure and thus some of its contemporary problems. However, to avoid a lengthy description, information on the paramilitary forces is found in appendix three of this study as they are not to be seen as tools for Georgian security policy.

Governmental Forces

Ministry of the Interior (MOI aka MVD): The MOI is the largest and most influential of the governmental institutions. Its total strength includes 23.400 personnel and has several departments and units. The majority of the staff are ex-Soviet police officers and its links to the old Soviet structure has made it less popular than the Ministry of Defence. After some problems in the early 90s, however, it has consolidated its position. Areas of responsibility include assisting local police, maintaining law and order, fighting terrorism and organised crime, guarding prisons and special cargo transportations.¹³ Much complains have been heard about its position on human rights. Some of its responsibilities include property protection, which has been a major source of bribes as it gives opportunity for extortion. In addition to this, the level of corruption has been extremely high and related to the contraband smuggling of tobacco and petrol. Officials have also often been excessively interested in fining drivers for non-existing traffic violations. In sum, it is a stronghold of political élite groups that by intrinsic rules of extra-budgetary spending enjoys a strong economic position.¹⁴

Interior Troops (of the MOI): The Interior Troops is a civil, but armed, branch of the MOI, based in Kutaisi and Tbilisi among other places. It includes 6400 servicemen in addition to the ordinary staff of the MOI - on paper that is. During 2000 it only got 59% of the conscripts needed to fill its units.¹⁵ Its function has been a mixture of police and military responsibilities. The bulk of its weapons are Kalashnikov assault rifles, mortars, grenade launchers, sub-machine guns, Main Battle Tanks (MBTs) and Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs). In addition, one airborne brigade serves under the MOI (located east of Tbilisi).

State Department of Border Guards (of the MOI)(aka SBDD): Until 2003, the SBDD was a part of the Ministry of Defence during times of war, but is now being transferred to the MOI

¹³ Feinberg (1999), p 25

¹⁴ Darchiashvili, David (2003), "Georgia: A Hostage to Arms", *The Caucasus - Armed and Divided: Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Humanitarian Consequences in the Caucasus*, Matveeva, Anna & Hiscock, Duncan (eds), London: Saferworld, p 76f

¹⁵ Press Digest, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, January-February, 2001

as its police functions will increase. As an example, it will enjoy investigate responsibility. It includes some 8700 persons and is armed with APSs, vessels and possesses a Motorised Rapid Reaction Force.¹⁶ In addition, the US has contributed with three helicopters and two patrol planes.¹⁷ Yet, it has been chronically underfunded (by \$2,7 million in 2001) and has not been able to carry out its duties, not even along the northern borders. However, its head, General Valleri Chkheidze, has a good reputation of only spending money on relevant issues, as things necessary for his soldiers.¹⁸

Gen Gulua Special Forces (of the MOI): This is a special unit that directly reports to the Minister of the Interior. Its two operative brigades are deployed near Pankisi and Abkhazia.¹⁹

Coast Guards (of the MOI): The current reform of the armed forces will subordinate the Georgian Coast Guards to the Border Protection Department of the MOI, starting in 2003.

Ministry of State Security (MSS): The MSS, a civil institution, has about 4000 servicemen, of which a minor part constitutes of a special force detachment and some combat guard units.²⁰ Five years ago it also consisted of some 40 at the State Intelligence Department²¹ that now is an independent body. The most important responsibilities of the MSS include monitoring of anti-governmental plots and terrorism as well as investigation of economic crimes. The foundation of the MSS is the old Soviet State Security Service - KGB. As KGB had little popular support and was too integrated with Russian structures, it dissolved in the early 90s after having been split up in Intelligence, Information and Special Forces Departments. Ex-KGB officer Igor Giorgadze then created a new organisation - the MSS. He was later accused of having a role in the 1995 assassination attempt on Shevardnadze. The Airborne Brigade, which is now under the MOI, was first created as a part of the MSS. The MSS has had close links to the Russian Troops in Georgia – the GRVZ (see 2.4). Currently it is headed by Valerian Khaburdzania who denies that there are any informal links, whatsoever, between the MSS and the GRVZ.²² MSS' present responsibilities of handling economic crimes have raised doubts about are undertakings. Allegedly, the responsibilities of supervising tax crimes have provided fertile soil for incomes of bribes by officials promoting payments of 'fees' instead of taxes.²³

Special State Guard Service: (SSGS) and the Presidential Guard (SGS): 3000 persons serves in the SSGS/SGS and initially it was set up by people from the MOI and the MSS. The SSGS is concerned with protection of pipelines, governmental agencies and embassies.²⁴ The SGS, which serves under the SSGS, is focused on protecting the President. Currently, Mr Papaskiri, who is said to be honest and professional, heads the SSGS.²⁵ The budget of the SGS has been growing steadily the last couple of years. In 2001, the budget was around \$3 million, which is considered to be rather high if the staffs of 3000 men are considered.²⁶

¹⁶ Darchiashvili (2003), p 85

¹⁷ *Army and Society in Georgia*, January-February, 2001

¹⁸ Darchiashvili (2003), p 83

¹⁹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 84

²⁰ Darchiashvili (2003), p 84

²¹ Press Digest, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September-October, 2001

²² Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

²³ Darchiashvili (2003), p 78f

²⁴ Darchiashvili (2003), p 83

²⁵ Darchiashvili (2003), p 85

²⁶ *Army and Society in Georgia*, January-February 2001

Ministry of Justice (MOJ): The Ministry of Justice is, naturally, not focused on combat activities, but it has some 3000 staff armed with light weapons. In 2001, the Minister of Justice, Mikhail Saakashvili, created a Special Task Force consisting of 60 persons (with an aim of having 300). Its purpose is handling of riots and hostage crises in prisons and colonies. After Saakashvili's resignation, it ceased to exist rumours had it.²⁷ In fact it still exist but has not taken part in any major operation since.

Ministry of Finance (MOF): The Georgian Ministry of Finance of today includes the former Ministry of Taxes and Revenues, and has an armed Special Legion of 370 men. However, it has no role in state protection and no heavy weapons.²⁸

State Department of Intelligence (SDI): The SDI is the military intelligence agency of Georgia. Before 1998 it was subjugated to the MSS but is currently independent and reports direct to the president. According to the Head of the SDI, this reform improved the efficiency of the SDI as it could focus on pure intelligence issues and further reform is not planned. Its mandate only covers foreign operations.²⁹

National Security Council (NSC): Although the NSC is not an armed security actor, it has great importance in policy planning and implementation. It is headed by the President and consists of the State Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of State Security, the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Secretary of the National Security Council. Its main function is to serve as a consultative body to the President.³⁰

Official International Forces

Transcaucasian Group of Russian Troops (GRVZ, aka TGET): Today, Russia has around 500 soldiers at the closed Gudauta base in Abkhazia and some 5-6000 soldiers at the two bases in Batumi and Akhalkhalaki. However, these are addressed further in chapter 2.4 of this study.

CIS Peacekeeping Force (CISPKF): As a part of a UN mandate, Russia has some 2500 troops located in Abkhazia and South Ossetia under the umbrella of the CIS, which will also be address in 2.4.

The United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG): The UNOMIG, stationed in Sukhumi, has since 1993 served as observers of some parts of Abkhazia, notably near Gali and Kodori. Their military staffs counts 116 and the civilian 272.³¹ UN Military observers are unarmed and rely on protection of the CISPKF. However, as the UNOMIG is not a part of the Georgian security structure and does not constitute a threat to be handled by these structures, it will not be further addressed.

²⁷ Press Digest, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, March-April, 2001

²⁸ Darchiashvili (2003), p 84f

²⁹ Interview with Avtandil Ioseliani, Head of Georgia State Department of Intelligence, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

³⁰ - "The Law of Georgia on the National Security Council", National Security Council, Adopted on May 24, 1994 by President Eduard Shevardnadze, <http://www.nsc.gov.ge/EN/main.htm>. 2003-05-30 See appendix five for the functions and mandate of the National Security Council.

³¹ UN webpage on UNOMIG, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/unomig/facts.html>, 2003-05-21 for more info see: UNOMIG webpage, <http://www.unomig.org/>

Civil Reform Agenda

Judging from the descriptions given above, two points can be elaborated on. The first point is that security problems as border problems, secessionist regions, trafficking, smuggling and violations of territorial integrity will be handled by this structure (and the MOD which is analysed in chapter 2.3). Although these risks are not an object of this study, a priority of any security reform should be to form a structure potent of managing these risks. The second point is that the structure actually brings along security problems by its form and even content. The forms of overlapping responsibilities create a structure that is inefficient and lacks transparency. The content refers to corruption and conceptual problems. Consequently, a security reform must address both points outlined above.

In general, the process of reformation is very slow and not at all prioritised according to General Lieutenant Valerii Chkheidze.³² When reform is discussed by NGOs, Western experts and even the Government, there are several areas that need to be dealt with. The MSS has understood that it is difficult to assess the problem of the own organisation. Therefore all power ministries and security bodies of the state form a working group to tackle the issue. It is financed by the general state budget and lies under the executive branch. No results have yet been seen, as it is just in the making.³³

Just to mention one example as an illustration how a traditional security problem has an obvious link to the security structures is the wide-open borders. The (Georgian) TV-program '60-minutes' staged a fake smuggling during the summer of 2003 in order to show how easy it is. They labelling a box containing fake items 'weapons and drugs', and sent it from Turkey to Georgia without problems. The structures that are supposed to handle this are the border guards, the customs department, the sixth police department for economic crimes, the security service and the legion.³⁴ This complicated Tbilisi's control over the situation and illustrates how integrated the problems are. As another example that shows Tbilisi's lack of control is that the Custom Service was expected to transfer some 300 million Lari to the government. Currently only 24 million has been transferred. The newly appointed head of the Customs Department, Tarkhan Mouravi, is not expected to be able to change the situation.³⁵

Structural Reform

Firstly, the very core of the problem, at an institutional level, is the overlapping of functions and responsibilities. This leads to clashes and conflicts of interests that work in two ways. When a security problem emerges, two or more departments assume that another body will handle it and thus no one is responsible or accountable for it. The opposite can occur too - when there are some benefits from handling an issue, several bodies fight for it. Secondly, the mixture of civil and military duties and responsibilities is a phenomenon that needs to be abolished.

For the MSS, there are a few issues that deserve attention. One of the most important ones is the attempt to reform the Ministry to a civil security service where counter-intelligence, investigations and analysis are the core issues. Preferably, the current MSS should be replaced completely, Valerian Khaburdzania argues. Demilitarising of the Ministry will, surely, take

³² Fedorova, Natalia (2003), "Valerii Chkheidze: Delo ne Odnogo dnya, no Pervie Shagi Usje Sdelani", *Svobodnaya Gruzia*, 16 May, 2003, p 3

³³ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

³⁴ - "Sunday on '60-minutes'", *The Georgian Messenger*, 27 May, 2003, p 4

³⁵ Bakashvili, Nana (2003B), "Controlling Corruption", *The Georgian Messenger*, 9 July, 2003

time, as there is no plan to replace all military staff at once, but instead increase the amount of civilians over time. Furthermore he sees the separation of the MSS and the SDI as a waste of resources as more staff is needed now. It is also doubtful whether this will generate any visible results, he further argues. Nonetheless, it is of great value in a democratic aspect.³⁶ It can thus be concluded that when the Minister for State Security emphasises democracy there are some good prospects for improvements. Yet, it must be remembered that although he is considered to be a reformist, with a somewhat clear and democratic agenda, he has been in office for two years and the results have been modest so far.

Additionally, the MSS considers its internal problems to be two-fold. One aspect is the old mentality of the Soviet era that still colours everything, second, the mix of old-time staff and the new educated generation poses serious problems in communication at work. This has proven to be even more important than economic problems as sometimes when heads of various departments are allocated funds for reform, the spending have been dubious. The way out of this destructive and inefficient situation is, according to Gela Suladze, to reform the structure in such a way that it is made easy to dismiss people if they do not perform, and secondly to raise wages to that there are greater incentives to work. Under the current laws and regulations this is, apparently, impossible, but new laws are currently under way and are expected to be fully adopted in early 2004.³⁷

Seen in the light of concordance theory, a few things can be noted. Georgia's attempts to subjugate military structures to political ones are indeed an indication of awareness. However, subjugation to political structures is not necessarily the same thing as subjugation to civil ones in the notion of Parliamentary and democratic control. Then the question arises whether the civil armed forces of the MSS and MOI are to be seen as equal to the MOD in this sense. If this is the case, all high-ranking officials of the Ministries and other relevant bodies should be civil and subjugated to control of the Parliament. Presently, most of the interviewees have been asked about this and it seems that the general Georgian standpoint on this is unclear. It is something to pay attention to when reforms are to be undertaken.

Currently, there is a discussion going on whether or not military personnel should be allowed to serve as MPs. The opinion points toward not allowing but no decisions are made. This could have several effects. Firstly, it could be seen a step towards a clear and extensive separation of military and civil bodies. Today, Military or Police officers are not allowed to serve as MPS or as civil bureaucrats at the same time.³⁸ Secondly, it could be a step towards a reform of loyalty. This means that MPs should not be allowed to have other businesses than their official duties. Thus one of the core problems is the existing double loyalty. As the wages are extremely low, it would be hard to discourage MPs (as other officials) to have other incomes, which would run the risk of increasing informal ways of making extra money. It is questionable, however, if makes a difference. Georgia has laws and structures, but its potential is not fully utilised. Also, even if the wages were doubled, the level would still be extremely low and would provide no incentives to refrain from taking bribes. The immunity to prosecution of MPs also naturally infringes on the ability to handling the problem. However, there are methods for expelling MPs from office by voting in Parliament. Although voting has occurred, MPs have never been dismissed in this way. Partly this can be explained

³⁶ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

³⁷ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

³⁸ Interview with David Darchiashvili, President of CIPDD and Head of R&D Department concerning civil-military relations of the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 9 July, 2003

by the fact that the laws and regulations are blurry and partly due to the fact that most people in Parliament has been involved in some kind of criminal activity which complicates the situation and move questions of ethics into a grey zone.³⁹

About transparency, the MSS has reached the conclusion that a certain level of openness will improve the public opinion of the old KGB structure. The PR-campaign launched during 2003 included intentions of greater openness and intentions to communicate with the citizens. The budget will also be more transparent than before.⁴⁰ This PR-campaign is carried out on several levels. One is greater exposure of the Minister of State Security in media and the other is the recent launch of a new web site that contains some information about the activities of the MSS.⁴¹ Yet, there are no specific goals to be fulfilled and no polls are intended in order to measure if improvements are made or not.⁴² From an anticorruption point of view, institutional change relates to three things. The first is that there should be great transparency within the security structure as far as financial and budgetary issues are concerned. Secondly, there must be a clear civil-military separation. Thirdly, the power ministries must have a clear division of responsibilities that include a separation of police and civil units.

The International Security Advisory Board has been cooperating with the Anticorruption Bureau of Georgia on issues of transparency and the outcome has been a set of recommendations to the President. The bottom line of the document is, not surprisingly, that all totalitarian lags must be abolished. Thus the focus of state activities should be the individuals, society and state, not the regime. This is especially important in the aspect of security. For instance, the old KGB structures had the responsibility of issues of social control related to ideology that today has no place in Georgia today.⁴³

Furthermore, the ISAB suggested in 1998 that the Interior Troops should be under the MOD and the Border Guards under the MOI. Georgian authorities agreed, but any signs of a will to implement the idea have not been seen. Strangely enough, the current situation is unconstitutional.⁴⁴ Mustafa Aydin argues that it is the Soviet heritage that constitutes the problem, as Georgia does not have a tradition of handling its own problem by self-governance.⁴⁵ It is true that Georgia lacks experience and that its situation differs from other post-communist states as Estonia and Poland. This is also visible within the economic and democratic sphere. However, this fact is insufficient as explanation of lack or political will of implementations.

It must be remembered that reform of the security structures are supposed to be undertaken simultaneously and the Georgian political system has some peculiarities that also have an impact on the reforms. As an example, the current constitution is tailor-made to suit

³⁹ Interview with David Darchiashvili, President of CIPDD and Head of R&D Department concerning civil-military relations of the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 9 July, 2003

⁴⁰ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

⁴¹ Georgian Ministry for State Security: <http://www.sus.ge> (in Georgian)

⁴² Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

⁴³ Interview with Andro Gotsiridze, Expert on Power and Law Enforcement Policy at the Anticorruption Bureau of Georgia, Tbilisi, 3 July, 2003

⁴⁴ "Report to the National Security Council of the Republic of Georgia", *The International Security Advisory Board*, 1998, especially p 4-6

⁴⁵ Aydin, Mustafa (2001), "Geopolitics of Central Asia and the Caucasus: Continuity and Change Since the End of the Cold War", *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no 32, Ankara: Ankara University – Faculty of Political Science, p 168

Shevardnadze and in 2005 he is to leave office. It is still unclear what will happen to him and the constitution.⁴⁶ As another example, the conditions for presidential elections are under review and a new office of the Prime Minister is being created. In addition, there are ideas on a two-chamber Parliament and this idea goes hand-in-hand with issues of territorial integrity.⁴⁷ This may enhance the existing inter-regional clashes, but it also provides a legitimate venue for doing so. That is better than the informal and illegal structures of today. The reform is not only a process that incorporates several domestic aspects, but is also largely connected to international trends. This is particularly the case as foreign intervention, due to geopolitical concerns, it affects Georgia's security sphere.⁴⁸

Responsibility Reform

Another important aspect of the reform that has been suggested is 'areas of responsibility', which connects to the structural reform. This both relate to the broad security responsibilities of protection Georgia from various threats, but also at a detailed level. It is believed that removing responsibilities of handling economic crimes from the MOI would reduce the opportunities for receiving bribes. As said, forbidding officials to have business interests on the side of public duties is another idea.⁴⁹ There is a contradiction in this aspect. As an example, since 1995, the MOI has been able to stop and eradicate extortion by several paramilitary groups. However, after this, the MOI has taken over the role by replacing them.⁵⁰

What is most important, however, is to see whether there are any clear visions for the security structures. The new Minister of the MSS adheres to a reformist agenda and is by many seen as fairly depoliticised.⁵¹ He states that a German system of a Security Service with the mission to protect the constitution would be positive. What he refers to is the German Security Service, *Verfassungschutz*, which literally means 'constitution protection' that has a role of fighting crimes directed against Germany as a state, as terrorism. This includes both domestic investigate tasks and direct counter terrorism by utilising special squads at the 'GSG 9'. When asked to elaborate on the issue, Khaburdzania also refers to the American model of FBI of a special police force for certain types of crimes with special powers that are well defined.⁵²

About the responsibilities, he states tax crimes and economic crimes by individuals should be handled by the investigative parts of the Police or the Ministry of Finance, however, as soon as the crimes are organised and of greater scale, it should fall under the responsibilities of the MSS, for example concerning contraband. Apparently, the various power ministries have no problem of cooperation amongst each other. Nevertheless, the NSC is currently working on making clear distinction on the problem of overlapping responsibilities and develops a long-term strategy for handling potential problems.⁵³ The problem of overlapping responsibilities is a Soviet legacy, but new laws that are expected in 2004 will clear the distinctions of areas of

⁴⁶ Messenger Opinion (2003B), "Charm of Constitutional Changes", *The Georgian Messenger*, 17 June, 2003, p 2

⁴⁷ Messenger Opinion (2003B), "Charm of Constitutional Changes", *The Georgian Messenger*, 17 June, 2003, p 2

⁴⁸ Interview with Shota Sandukhadze, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Parliamentary Control of Activities carried out by the Defence and Security Bodies under the Committee on Defence and Security at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June, 2003

⁴⁹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 77

⁵⁰ Darchiashvili (2003), p 77

⁵¹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 79

⁵² Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

⁵³ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

responsibility. The risk of having too many security actors is acknowledged by Khaburdzania who points out that some of them, as the Legion of the MOF, are of little use as their level of professionalism is very low.⁵⁴

Staff Reform

A third dimension that needs to be reformed is the unofficial system of appointment by nepotism or political/personal loyalty. As it is, several attempts, including the newly created Anticorruption Bureau, has had little impact of the MOI. The loyalties to Shevardnadze make officials immune to certain legal actions.⁵⁵ The recently appointed Minister of the MOI, Koba Narchemashvili, is said to be a friend of reform. So far, the action of improving and reforming the important Property Protection Department or replacing old friends to the previous minister has not been done.⁵⁶

Forming a professional bureaucratic apparatus has both advantages and disadvantages. Professional officials, as opposed to politically appointed, have the advantage of good continuity, which reduces the number of staff needed. At the same time, it runs the risk of becoming a power by its nature. Every organisation has a basic wish to survive that is more important than serving the interests of the state and electorate. Thus the logic prescribes that reductions and reform will be met with scepticism. There is also an aspect of accountability. If the whole political apparatus is appointed on professional grounds, it is not accountable in the same way as parliamentarians. Georgia's approach to this issue is appointments should be made on professional grounds rather than political. Traditionally, the way has been by having professional bureaucrats that have been appointed on other grounds than professionalism, as nepotism or parochialism. Most parties, where Zhurab Zvania's and Mikhail Saakhahsvili's parties are excluded, have elements of clans-based loyalties that reminds of the old nomenclature system. By this, any structural reform is doomed to fail. A change of power in favour of the opposition bring along two dangers. One is that the opposition is defeated and the other is that even if they are successful, they fall into the clan-system and nothing has changed.⁵⁷ Khaburdzania also sees this as a key problem. His vision concerning staff reform is to increase the level of professionalism. First of all, the organisation should be a civil instead of a military one. What is more, more money is needed in order to raise wages so that the best people will be attracted to the MSS. Funds are also greatly needed for investigating internal problems within the Ministry.⁵⁸ The Anticorruption Bureau that states that redundancies are one of the best ways to break the 'principle of the locked circle', which is something that supports this idea. The result would be that wages could be raised when surplus staffs are expelled. Presumably the expelled staff will become entrepreneurs and contribute to Georgia in a better way than they did within the governmental bodies.⁵⁹ As most of the staff cannot be replaced overnight, measures must be taken concerning the mental approach to reform. Indeed this is a difficult task to undertake, and the Anticorruption Bureau acknowledges the problem and adheres to a long-term preventive agenda that encompasses three parts. The first part is about legal actions concerning crimes of corruption. The second point is education and awareness rising on the topic and finally general anticorruption

⁵⁴ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

⁵⁵ Darchiashvili (2003), p 77

⁵⁶ Darchiashvili (2003), p 78

⁵⁷ Interview with David Darchiashvili, President of CIPDD and Head of R&D Department concerning civil-military relations of the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 9 July, 2003

⁵⁸ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

⁵⁹ Interview with Andro Gotsiridze, Expert on Power and Law Enforcement Policy at the Anticorruption Bureau of Georgia, Tbilisi, 3 July, 2003

propaganda is made. This has proven to be successful in Lithuania and in Hong Kong and the bureau believes that those models can be applied on Georgia.⁶⁰

Key Issues and Problems of Reform

From what has been said, it is clear that Georgia actually lacks an explicit reform agenda. Problems that the reform aims to handle are both at theoretical and practical levels, which to a great extent relate to fundamental principles of how to organise a society. Despite the fact that a real vision is missing, some of the cases in point of the actual reform in itself will be addressed below. They mainly relate to structural, conceptual, legislative problems.

Structural Problems

Comparatively, and relatively, speaking, Georgian legal and political institutions were rather efficient during Soviet times.⁶¹ However, institutional 'lags' from the USSR and Zviad Gamsakhurdia's political manoeuvring, have come to set the stage for the reform problems of the present. As said, the Soviet-style organisation with several parallel structures with overlapping responsibilities complicates decision-making, implementation and above all, reform. If a democratic perspective is applied, it is clear that these questions of security in general, and those related to institutions in particular, have a democratic deficit. Anna Matveeva argues that all these democratic institutions, that Georgia actually have managed to create is just a façade, as they are no leverage on the security development.⁶² This contrasts recent European trends towards greater transparency even within the military field. There is no openness in Georgia's concerning defence and security issues. Not even the Parliament has the right to review the internal budgets of the power ministries. This causes a distancing between civil and military-security institutions where trust and legitimacy are sacrificed on the altar of secrecy. Like most states of former Soviet Union, the secrecy related to security is substantial. In the US, for example, the level of openness is so much greater that it is possible to obtain public information on Georgian military issues that are closed information in Georgia. Considering Georgian NATO and EU aspiration, it is interesting to look at any Georgian strives towards increased openness. It is generally believed that the greater level of transparency is, the greater support for military structures by the public. It is difficult to improve the democratic features of the system if reform and problems cannot be assessed openly or even by the Parliament. Another thing that connects to democracy is that the President presently appoints the Minister of State Security (among others) and in order to increase the legitimacy it would prefer to have this done by the Parliament instead. If is obvious, but it is of greater importance for power ministers.⁶³

Considering corruption, several things can be said. The fact that the MOI is involved in dubious activities is a key factor. Narchemashvili, the very Minister of the MOI, has admitted in public that the MOI has been involved in criminal activities in Pankisi, as smuggling and upsurge. Naturally, this has an impact on both the actual activities of the MOI and how other actors view the Ministry and Georgia in general. A common argument is that as the MOI staff earns money by using the Property Protection Department, it must be removed from MOI's

⁶⁰ Interview with Andro Gotsiridze, Expert on Power and Law Enforcement Policy at the Anticorruption Bureau of Georgia, Tbilisi, 3 July, 2003

⁶¹ Gegeshidze, Archil (2003), "Georgia in Need for New Strategic Agenda", *Caucasus Context*, no 1, 2003, p 33

⁶² Matveeva, Anna (2003), "Arms and Security in the Caucasus", *The Caucasus - Armed and Divided: Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Humanitarian Consequences in the Caucasus*, Matveeva, Anna & Hiscock, Duncan (eds), London: Saferworld, p 27

⁶³ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

area of responsibility. This would not necessarily solve the problems, as the mission must be taken care of by some organisation. This would include greater opportunities for private security agencies. The result is also that a strong power base for the MOI disappears.⁶⁴ It can therefore be assumed that the MOI would be unwilling to undertake such a reform, as some of its employees would lose from it. Yet, doing so, in combination with greater transparency, would improve perceptions of the MOI. The problem of corruption within the MSS, on the other hand, is allegedly extremely small. There exist, therefore, no action-plan for reducing corruption within the Ministry. However, there are two priorities of the MSS in this respect. One is to fight general criminal activity within the Ministry and the other is to investigate and analyse criminality in order to combat the problem more efficiently.⁶⁵ Hence, the internal affairs department of the MSS handles most of the work concerning investigations of corruption and crimes within the MSS. The inspectors of the MOF have no authorisation to investigate problems of the MSS, although the Parliament and President have, but those powers are rarely used.⁶⁶

The notion of ‘statehood’ is a key factor in the reform process.⁶⁷ Without a strong state and a common conception of statehood, the reform is pointless in many ways. Development of civil-society goes hand-in-hand with reform of the political bodies but there are reasons to believe that a thorough reform must be imposed from above. The impact by NGOs in Georgia is limited and is dependent on donors’ will. Analyses suggest that the role of the civil-society is increasing within the security sector, but the impact is still small. The reason is that within the most important areas, as concerning the situation in Abkhazia, actors are unwilling to compromise on their political objectives even if they are positive to cooperation.⁶⁸ A similar idea can be suggested in relation to Georgia’s civil security structure. Even if many actors agree on the need of reform and work for improving Georgia, their personal situation makes them dependent on the structure in which they work.

‘Conceptual Problems’

An underlying problem, which relates to what has been outlined above, is that lack of coherent system thinking. There are no common guidelines of what the notion of security or institution building is. This means that all executives can interpret and carry out issues while acting according to their own belief in what Niko Melikadze calls a “conceptual cacophony”. The result is that Georgia, under Gamsakhurdia and Shevardnadze, is carrying out a systematic reform, or tries to, without system thinking. Thereby, institution building becomes organisational building, which in reality is just an enlargement of the bureaucracy. Once these new, and sometimes strange, institutions are established, their costly position is entrenched and viz. - they become opponents to further reform.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Darchiashvili (2003), p 77

⁶⁵ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

⁶⁶ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

⁶⁷ Rondeli, Alexander “Georgia: Foreign Policy and National Security Priorities” *Discussion Paper Series*, no 3, UNDP, Tbilisi, Georgia, p 5

⁶⁸ Cohen, Jonathan (2002), “Struggling to Find Peace”, *Searching for Peace in Europe and Eurasia: an Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*, Tongeren, Paul von, Veeb, Hans van de & Verhoeven. Juliette (eds), London: Lynne/Rienner, p 407f

⁶⁹ Melikadze, Niko (2001), “Strengthening Policy-Making Capacities – National Security and Development Challenge for Georgia”, *Presentation at the Forth Annual Conference of American-Georgia Business Council on Development Strategies for Georgia*, Washington D.C., December, 2001

Many conceptual problems do not have a solution in any state. As an example, a ‘cyber attack’ directed at the Georgian security apparatus by a civilian, state or paramilitary unit, is it to be seen as a crime or an act of war? According to the MSS, it is an act of war, but it does not necessarily mean that it automatically falls under the responsibility of the MOD. The problems of definition must be handled carefully and diplomatically. Currently, the MOD, MSS and MOI handle such issues jointly. Most often, the MSS is in charge and gives recommendations to the President on what to do. The same thing goes for armed attacks. When asked if attacks by Russians in Georgia is seen as crimes, terrorism or acts of war, no clear answer is given. The reason is, allegedly, that the public relation with Russia is so important that definitions runs the risks of causing political tension.⁷⁰

Legislative Problems

In Georgia, the President approves or creates the security structure and the Parliament only approves the number of staff. The Parliament does not have the authority to amend the state budget without the approval of the President. As the budgets from the various departments often only consist of one or two pages, there are few possibilities for the Parliament to control the activities of the security establishment.⁷¹ It is also interesting to note that the Parliamentarians have the right to bear arms and are immune to prosecution. Occasionally, MPs have shot people and, naturally, not been prosecuted due to immunity. This illustrates that any approach to reform may face problems within the political and bureaucratic establishment. Information given by the Parliament on its web site illustrates this. The quote is the full piece of information given.

President of Georgia is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. He defines the structure of the Armed Forces and chairs the National Security Council, which is an advisory body. The Main Military Inspection Service is under direct subordination of President. The Parliament of Georgia approves the number of Armed Forces and the defence budget, means defines the state policy in the military. In case of military situation the commandment and coordination of the Armed Forces is centralized and carried out by the President and the State Security Council.⁷²

The powers given to the President are thus extensive, especially on security issues (see appendix five for the President’s role in the NSC). It cannot be concluded that this is a problem in itself. It can make the decision-making efficient, but at the same time, reforms become dependent on one person. The predecessor to the NSC (the National Security and Defence Council – NSDC) reported to the Parliament, whereas the current NSC reports to the President.⁷³ Moreover, the President is, according to the Law on State Defence from October 1997, responsible for:⁷⁴

1. Signing defence treaties.
2. Presenting military doctrine and project for approval by the Parliament.
3. Approving mobilisation of the armed forces.
4. Approving deployment of foreign troops on Georgian ground.

⁷⁰ Interview with Gela Suladze, Head of Department of Inspection and Personnel Security of the Georgian Ministry for State Security, Tbilisi, 30 June, 2003

⁷¹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 86 For an insight on constitutional problems of Georgia, see: Melkadze, Otari (2001), “Modern Problems of Georgian Constitutionalism”, *UNDP Discussion Paper Series*, Tbilisi: Poligraph Service

⁷² *Command of the Georgian Defence Forces by the Parliament of Georgia*, www.parliament.ge/ARMY, 2003-05-23

⁷³ Feinberg (1999), p 19

⁷⁴ Feinberg (1999), p 19

It can furthermore be argued that an organisation needs to evaluate its own functions and results in order to improve and become more efficient. As an example of how Georgia's security forces do this, the MSS can be at a focus. The reform of the MSS encompasses a new model of auditing activities. The economic model is based on the American FBI auditing system and the legal parts of evaluation focus on controlling, monitoring and observing all activities of the MSS. The core concepts are legitimacy and constitutionalism. Andro Gotsiridze states that the best way of measuring the result is the passive way. When people do not complain, he knows that the Bureau has done a good job.⁷⁵ It can hence be said that the evaluation model for results is currently underdeveloped at the Anticorruption Bureau

Armed Problems

A somewhat different problem of reform from a militarised to a civil security structure not solely relying on arms has another dimension. Analyses by *Saferworld* show that the numbers of small arms and light weapons have a role in the transitional problems of security. A strong gun culture, due to four reasons, has made the situation worse. These are the traditions of the 'macho-style' of the Caucasus in general; the Soviet army legacy; the easy access to weapons and finally; the belief in violence as a solution to disputes.⁷⁶ No one really knows how many illegal weapons there are in Georgia, but some estimations indicate that around 20.000 are missing.⁷⁷ By this situation, emergence of new, or old, paramilitary forces are facilitated. Public discontent and upsurge can thus take a more violent form than had these weapons not existed. Judging from the present situation and past event, it can be said that it is not totally unlikely.

2.3 Military Security Structure

By turning to military security structures, many things can be said and several have been touched upon above. Military security and defence policy is the responsibility of the President, the MOD and the NSC. The starting point for such an analysis can be the budget of the MOD. The process of the Georgian Defence Budget has several steps, namely:

1. Draft by the Defence Resource Management Department of the MOD.
2. It is turned to the MOF after a preliminary reading by the MOD.
3. On the basis of a yearly indicators plan, the MOF works out a draft budget.
4. Draft state budget is under perusal of the government.
5. The President and the NSC considers it and submit it to the Parliament 3 months before next fiscal year.

The preferred budget allocations by the MOF is much less than by the MOD, and consensus is rarely reached. This leads to confrontation not only between the ministries, but also between the committees within the Parliament. Most often, when it reaches the parliament, the draft only reflects the opinion of the MOF. As there has been a huge deficit in the state budget, the expenditures of each fiscal year have had to cover the dept from previous years. According to the Parliament only about three quarters of the MOD budget has been executed during the last couple of years (see table on next page).

⁷⁵ Interview with Andro Gotsiridze, Expert on Power and Law Enforcement Policy at the Anticorruption Bureau of Georgia, Tbilisi, 3 July, 2003

⁷⁶ Matveeva (2003), p 21-24

⁷⁷ Darchiashvili (2003), p 95

Table 1: MOD Budget Execution

MOD Budget Execution	
1998	77%
1999	69%
2000	56%
2001	66%
2002	Approx 70%

Source: Parliament of Georgia

The problems of the armed forces have recently received attention because of arguments between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Defence. A meeting held on the topic by the Security and Defence committee of the Parliament questioned Finance Minister Mirian Gogiashvili about the problem. “Such a negligence of the problems faced by the armed forces will touch off the threatening processes. We have taken a military oath, and if you need army, you are to finance it. If not, release us from oath and let us go home,” Defence Minister Davit Tevzadze later said to *Georgian Times*. A similar meeting at the National Security Council ended with the President ordering the Minister of Finance to allot \$17 million to the Ministry of Defence. This is a problem, as the IMF demands that defence spending should be cut by some GEL 20 million. The latest figures of 2003 show that the budget execution for 2003 will be as low as 62,7%, which in real money is between \$9-10 million only.⁷⁸ The MOI and SDI are also underfunded, as are the Border Guards.⁷⁹

As far as democratic control over the security forces is concerned, the Parliament is, in theory, granted extensive powers according to the Law on State Defence. As an example, the Parliament is supposed to:⁸⁰

1. Approve military doctrine.
2. Adopt laws regarding defence.
3. Discuss and approve defence budget.
4. Approves composition of the armed forces.
5. Ratifies international treaties.
6. Implement mobilization process.

The thing is that the Parliament does not fully utilise its powers and authorities. As it seems, Georgia has most of the structures and organisations that it needs. The structural problems relates to issues of individuals and staff, lack of coherent concepts, blurred regulations on, for example, responsibility and legislative problems that are further addressed below.

Currently, there are only two options for controlling the defence budget. One is the Military Inspectorate, which assesses the combat status of the Armed Forces. It reports to the President and to the NSC. The State Audit Chamber monitors the financial books and records of the MOD and has as a mission to determine whether expenses correspond to budgetary figures. The Parliament has a function for monitoring and controlling the Ministries, but when it comes to the MOD, it is not fully utilised. While turning to the missions of the armed forces, its missions can be pinpointed:

⁷⁸ Tatishvili, Temur (2003B), “Georgian power Ministries in Crisis: Armed Mutinies are Imminent”, *The Georgian Times*, 14 July, 2003, <http://www.georgiantimes.ge/fullview1.php?id=958&cat1=6>, 2003-07-14

⁷⁹ Tatishvili (2003B)

⁸⁰ Law on State Defence quoted in Feinberg (1999), p 20

1. To protect ground, sea and air borders from aggression.
2. To provide protection of integrity of State.
3. To stop attempts to change the state institutions with use of force.
4. Assessment of war threat.
5. Participation in rescue operations after disasters.
6. To maintain equipment and control arms of mass destruction.
7. Participation in international peacekeeping operation.
8. Military cooperation in accordance with international agreements.

From a military viewpoint, this raises many questions. It is clear that the missions outlined above are a political construction that has little connection to military reality. It is merely a statement of political wishes. The missions are vaguely and ambitiously formulated, which is an indication of the discrepancy between military capacity and political will. Most often, a state, when developing a military structure, attempts to harmonize political intentions to the current structures and capacity and thereafter take the financial situation into consideration for formulating further policy.

Judging from what has been said, this incoherence has the effect of making the tasks of the security structures more difficult as their mandate is unclear. The scarce resources must thus be divided among operations of disaster assistance, international operations and protection of territorial integrity. Considering the fact that the latest training via the GTEP includes very basic duties as techniques of throwing hand grenades, it is an overwhelming responsibility to handle efficiently. Nonetheless, Georgia is fully aware of this and a plan of improving is slowly taking shape. Gela Bezhuashvili, Deputy Minister of Defense in Georgia, underscore the main objectives for Georgia's defense policy:⁸¹

1. Accomplishment of the military reforms in order to acquire a credible, modern and efficient, but at the same time, affordable and sustainable defense capability.
2. Enhancing Georgia's status of security provider, through maintaining and improving our contribution to the regional stability.
3. Strengthened civilian and democratic control over the armed forces and the subsequent mechanisms, according to the principles and values of constitutional democracy.
4. Harmonization of national legislation to ensure compatibility with appropriate standards and regulations.
5. Integration in the Euro-Atlantic and European security structures.

The next part intends to illustrate how this will be done.

Military Security Actors

Ministry of Defence (MOD):⁸² The over-arching structure of the Georgian Ministry of Defence is divided into twelve main bodies:

1. Apparatus of Defence Minister
2. General Staff

⁸¹ - "Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General", Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

⁸² For a more detailed account of weaponry, see appendix nine.

3. National Guards department
4. Rapid Reaction Force
5. Personnel department
6. Main military inspectorate
7. Special mission group under Defence Minister
8. Military Intelligence Department
9. Foreign Military Relations department
10. Law department
11. Financial-economic division
12. Public relations service

In addition, there is a MOD Military Board, which is a planning and consultative body in wartime. This also includes the Ministry of Interior and the Border Guard.⁸³

The Army: As of 2003, the Georgian Army had 18.700 soldiers divided in seven (sometimes the figure four appears because not all units are considered full brigades) brigades and a number of single units. Conscription is carried out twice a year and service is for 18 months or 12 if the person has a higher education.⁸⁴ In 2001, the units falling under the Ministry of Defence counted some 9730 new conscripts.⁸⁵ However, during the last couple of years, conscription rates have been falling. In 2002, only between one third and half of what was needed, were drafted, even for the units stationed in Pankisi.⁸⁶ A peculiar phenomenon is that the 25th Motorised Rifle Brigade in Adjara undertook ‘territorial conscription’ and filled the unit only with local citizens. The reason was said to be the cost for transportation must be kept low and arguments are heard that it is unconstitutional.⁸⁷ The army units are located in:⁸⁸

- 1st Brigade (Artillery) – Tbilisi
- 2nd Brigade – Senaki (West Georgia)
- 3rd Brigade – Gombori (East Georgia)
- 11th Brigade – Koda (South of Tbilisi)
- 21st Brigade – Kutaisi (West Georgia)
- 22nd Brigade – Akhalkhalaki (South Georgia)
- 25th Brigade – Batumi (South West Georgia)

The Navy: The Navy has 900 (2000) personnel and 17 vessels. These form a mixed Brigade in Poti.

The Air Force – Air Defence Forces: The Georgian Air Force is of a modest size, as its personnel count 900 (1200), 22 aircrafts (mainly at Marneuli and Kutaisi) and 11 helicopters (Telavi).⁸⁹ Its Rapid Deployment Force has some 500-900 servicemen. During Soviet times, the 34th Single Army Air Defence and 31st Airborne was stationed in Georgia. At that time, ten airfields were operational. As their mission was to attack Turkey or Iran, its quality at the

⁸³ *Army and Society in Georgia*, January-February 2001

⁸⁴ "Georgia's Defense and Security Strategy", *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*, <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/defense.html>, 2003-05-01

⁸⁵ *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

⁸⁶ Chitaia & Zhvania (2003)

⁸⁷ *Army and Society in Georgia*, January-February 2001

⁸⁸ *Basic dislocation [sic] sites of the Armed Forces of the Defense Ministry*, <http://www.parliament.ge/ARMY/disarm.html>, 2003-05-01 (This list is not complete)

⁸⁹ "Georgia's Defense and Security Strategy", *Ministry for Foreign Affairs*, <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/defense.html>, 2003-05-01

time was excellent. Today, most infrastructures have been destroyed by Russians and by local plundering.⁹⁰ RAND estimates that only two are in good condition and six that are acceptable for military usage.⁹¹

National Guards: As indicated in previous chapter, the National Guard was created before the MOD and its status has varied. It has incorporated many paramilitary forces (see appendix three). At one time it was renamed ‘Rapid Reaction Corps’, but was later renamed again. It failed to compete with the MOD and MOI for funding and is now a semi-autonomous group of the MOD. Its purpose is to be a reserve for the Armed Forces and support the State in emergencies. This overlaps the Department for Emergencies Situations of the MOI.⁹² The Guards are consists of some 1000 men,⁹³ but its function in peacetime is not specified.⁹⁴

Arguably, Georgia’s forces in Abkhazia should be representative of the status of combat ready units. This gives an indication of the general status of Georgia’s military apparatus. If the numbers detailed in appendix four are considered, it is clear that the situation is poor. The Abkhazian part of the Georgian Ministry for Defence consisted of a 3000 servicemen strong organisation, structured in the regular bodes of the Air Force, Army and Navy. In addition, a guard company and a communication company is directly subordinated the Minister of Defence.⁹⁵ Judging from this list in appendix three (from 2001), it can be hence be concluded that the personnel situation and equipment is far form acceptable in order to wage war. The air defence capacity in terms of anti-aircraft artillery is limited, intercepting capabilities are non-existent. However, the ground forces have a substantial number of Armoured Personnel Carriers and Main Battle Tanks. Yet, these are of outdated kind and will not stand up to the heat of modern tanks or even the T-72s or T-80s, which are the backbone of Russian armoured forces. Against Abkhazian forces, it has some capacity, but against Russian troops that usually have an attack ratio of 1:10 it is of little protection. Naturally, an invasion from Russia is unlikely, but as Georgia as pointed out Russia as a potential source of conflict, it is what the Georgian troops are supposed to handle.

Military Reform Agenda

There are numerous areas of the Georgian defence forces that require additional funding. Below the areas of the social situation, the equipment situation and training and mission tasks are examined. In general, the reform during the last decade was not a complete failure. It is interesting to not that during the first two years of independence; there was no military force under the control of the Georgian government. The National Guards and the Meskhedroni, both fighting on the Georgian side against Abkhazia, were loyal to their commanders. The latter was even involved in the assassination attempts on President Shevardnadze.⁹⁶ For more on the various paramilitary groups of Georgia, see appendix three. It can thus be concluded that Georgia, after all, has managed to integrate several forces into a structure that today is

⁹⁰ Messenger Staff (2003), ‘‘Georgia’s Airfields Have Something to Offer’’, *The Georgian Messenger*, 23 May, 2003, p 3f

⁹¹ O’Malley, William D. (2003), ‘‘Central Asia and the Caucasus as an Arena for Operations: Challengers and Contrains’’, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the US Army*, Olikier, Olga & Szayna, Thomas (eds), RAND Report MR-1598-A, Santa Monica: RAND, p 253

⁹² *The Army and Society in Georgia*, September 1999

⁹³ Darchiashvili (2003), p 80

⁹⁴ Darchiashvili (1997), p 8

⁹⁵ ‘‘Kviris Palitra’’ no 44, October 29-November 4, 2001, p 9 from Press Digest, ‘‘Are Weapons Illegally Transited Through Georgia?’’, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September-October, 2001

⁹⁶ Feinberg, Jared (1999), *The Armed Forces in Georgia*, Washington: CDI, p 17

controlled by the Georgian Government. However, one reform of the MOD was completed by 1994 after the turbulent years of civil war in the early 1990s. Six key areas were improved:⁹⁷

1. Abortion of illegal paramilitary groups.
2. Purging of non-professionals and criminals.
3. Restoration of a draft system.
4. Clarification of the army's structure.
5. Restoration of funding via state budget.
6. Strengthening of political control over the army and its withdrawal from politics.

This meant that by loosing criminals, Georgia lost many combat-experienced soldiers. This is important concerning competence, but has little impact on the reform process and it is time to look at the issues connected to the reform.

When asked to outline the political wills of what kind of army Georgia should have, Shota Sandukhadze only emphasised that it should be a light and mobile army that it capable of protecting the territorial integrity of Georgia.⁹⁸ Luckily, the general reform approach is more sophisticated than this. A fundamental starting-point for reform out to be to cut the number of troops that Georgia has today. Considering both needs and budget allotments, it is clear that the current numbers are greater that what Georgia is capable of handling. Therefore, the initial plan is to cut the army from 18.700 to 12000 soldiers in the coming years.⁹⁹ The ISAB and USECOM assessments have put forward recommendations of developing a rapid reaction force by merging land forces with Special Forces units and a helicopter squadron.¹⁰⁰

In June of 2003 it was announced that presence of the Border Guards would be extended along the northern borders of Georgia. In all ten new outposts, along the border to Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, will be created.¹⁰¹ In addition to this, the OSCE has recently contributed with over EUR100,000 worth of technical equipment. For instance, this included binoculars, ponchos, boots and communication equipment that facilities patrol duties.¹⁰²

Social Issues

It is no secret that Georgian conscripts are willing to go great lengths for postponing military service. Currently, a postponement for 12 months can, officially, be bought for about \$100.¹⁰³ There is an ongoing discussion on the topic of raising this fee, but as it would only increase the gap between rich and poor, it has so far been rejected. A great many young Georgians have, arguably, been moving north, to Russia, in order to avoid military service and started to work instead. This has, according to Lyudmila Rayeva, had two effects. First, it has been one

⁹⁷ Darchiashvili, David (1997), *Georgia: the Search for State Security*, Stanford: CISAC, p 10f For a general overview of the background of the Armed Forces in Georgia, from an official point of view, see: <http://www.parliament.ge/ARMY/hisarm.html>.

⁹⁸ Interview with Shota Sandukhadze, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Parliamentary Control of Activities carried out by the Defence and Security Bodies under the Committee on Defence and Security at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June, 2003

⁹⁹ Interview with Nodar Kharsheladze, Advisor at the NATO Division, Department of Political-Military Relations, Georgian Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi, 19 July, 2003

¹⁰⁰ - "Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General", Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

¹⁰¹ Bakashvili, Nana (2003), "Georgia Tightening its Border Security", *The Georgian Messenger*, 20 June, 2003, p 4

¹⁰² - "OSCE Helps Georgian Border Guards to Better Protect the Border", *The Georgian Messenger*, 30 June, 2003

¹⁰³ Chitaia & Zhvania (2003)

of the reasons for the Georgian demographic gap and, second, it has outflanked many of the older Georgian traders in Russia.¹⁰⁴ The reason for the desperate attempts to avoid service is the poor social conditions in the armed forces.

Investigations of military units based in Kartli and Kakheti reveal unsafe accommodation conditions (often in tents) where several units lacked bed sheets. There is a chronic shortage of uniforms and no medical supply. One of the aspects that draw most attention, both from media and from soldiers, is the endemic malnourishment. According to Georgia's general nutrition standard, a soldier needs 4524 Kcal a day. This is well below international standards and, as a comparison, Turkish soldiers 'need' over 6000Kcal. To tackle this problem, the diet has been composed, increasingly, of food rich in energy, as pasta and bread. This remedy is only working in the short run, as lack of fat, protein, vitamins and carbohydrates lead to malnourishment in the longer term. Soldiers have taken to steal food, but since the stock is poor, it is of no gain. Reports state that the daily diet mainly consists of only "kasha" – oatmeal. If meat is served it is often rotten and from fish, only heads are served. Apparently, deliveries of food have been problematic, as the drivers have sold food to increase their own low wage.¹⁰⁵

In 2001, a report labelled "Analysis of Suicides and their Reasons in the Armed Forces" by the Chief of the General Staff, Johnny Pirtskhalishvili, indicated that the social situation of the Armed Forces was devastating. It revealed that between 1995 and 2001, 28 privates and four officers committed suicide, with an increasing trend. The reasons for this figure is, both according to the government and independent NGOs, bad psychological and social background of the soldiers. However, NGO polls show that 30-40% of the respondents confirmed torture and brutal treatment - *dedovshchina*. Almost 50% of the officers mistreat their inferiors. In addition, between 1999 and 2001, 54 servicemen died for various non-combat reasons. Analyses suggest that "bold violations of military regulations", most often reckless usage of weaponry, was the main reason.¹⁰⁶ In addition, food poisoning had been frequent, even if the situation is better now than in the 1990s when several cases were seen. Allegedly, radiation was one of the causes.¹⁰⁷

Consequently, all of the social problems of military life in Georgia provide incentives for leaving. Sickness, due to malnourishment, is not even a reason for going to the hospital, conscripts confirm. Therefore, desertion has been increasing. The military prosecutors office investigated 1872 cases of desertion in 2000, 2498 cases in 2001 and over 1102 during the first quarter of 2002.¹⁰⁸ If this was not enough, in May 2001, 400 servicemen of a Border Guard battalion committed mutiny, as they had not been paid for over 14 months. Shevardnadze managed to control the situation, and even apologised.¹⁰⁹ The immediate problem was thus solved, but the underlying issues remain. Officers and soldiers today are paid, although extremely low wages.

¹⁰⁴ Rayeva, Lyudmila (2003), "Georgia on Brink of Demographic Catastrophe" *IWPR*, 16 May 2003, www.isn.ethz.ch/infodienst/indepth.cfm?sNewsID=6570, 2003-05-19

¹⁰⁵ Chitaia & Zhvania (2003)

¹⁰⁶ Liklikadze, Koba (2001), "Why Soldiers Die in Peacetime", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, March-April, 2001

¹⁰⁷ *Army and Society in Georgia*, April 1999

¹⁰⁸ Chitaia & Zhvania (2003)

¹⁰⁹ Antidze, Margarita (2002), "Georgia Wants to Build Western-style Army", *Reuters English News Service*. 30 April, 2002

Equipment Problems

Pinpointing all weapons and equipment that Georgia would need to wage a full scale war, would be an overwhelming task. Yet, providing an example of the Georgian capabilities to preserve its territorial integrity may serve a purpose of highlighting its capabilities. As Russian fighter planes are carrying out missions, let be unofficially and in unmarked airplanes, in Pankisi and Abkhazia,¹¹⁰ it interesting to note what Georgia can do about it.

As far as monitoring of air space is concerned, the situation is far from positive. Georgia possesses no low-altitude radar.¹¹¹ The old Soviet P-15 and P-18 radars in Poti, Kopitnari, Marneuli, Makhati and Kvishiani are of little use as they lack fuel and electricity and, therefore, do not operate permanently. This had led Georgia to rely on the civil radar stations of Senaki and Kvishiani. Even if this system makes monitoring of Armenian Air force Bases possible (which the place for Russian fighters with responsibility from protection of Russian bases in southern Georgia), this is rather useless for serious military purposes, as the onboard identification devices must be on for it to work. Even if Georgia manages to track an enemy aircraft, its counter measures may be insufficient. As mentioned above, Georgia's Air Force consists of some 20 aircrafts. However, none of these are interceptors, and its capabilities in this respect thus come to a halt. The remaining option is ground based anti-aircraft systems. For this purpose, Georgia has a range of equipment. The rather aged artillery system, ZU-23, and S-60 automatic artillery are of secondary quality (23mm and 57mm systems from the '60s), while the somewhat more modern self-propelled anti-aircraft system 'Shilka' (ZSU-23-4) along with S-125 SAMs (often mistranslated as C-125) and some shoulder launched anti-aircraft 'Strela 2M' (aka SA-7b Grail) and 'Igla', are the backbone of the Georgian Air Defence units.¹¹² This very problem is clearly acknowledges by Georgia. Therefore, it intends to develop the Air Space Surveillance System and later the Air Defence system by involvement in NATO's Air Situation Data Exchange Program (ASDE).¹¹³ What is more important, however, is the political dimension. If Georgian manages to shoot down a Russian aircraft carrying out operations of Georgian soil, the political implications would be paramount and it is doubtful whether Georgia would benefit from such actions. This is a dilemma for Georgia as a weak state, as territorial integrity is the foundation for independent statehood.

Although most of the military-industrial complex of Georgia has been falling apart, some of its capabilities remain intact. For example, the Tbiliviamsheni (Tbilisi aircraft plant) launched its newly developed SU-25 'Scorpion' in 2001. The SU-25 was developed in collaboration with Israel as it uses the Elbit System. The aircraft is a new version of the SU-25T with new night fight capacity. In addition it can use both western weaponry and ex-Soviet Weapons. As it costs some \$5 million, Georgia will unlikely buy any (new ones) themselves, but hope to export some.¹¹⁴ Apart from this, the amount of new purchases by the defence forces is rather modest. The latest gain was some 'Delga 1' terrain vehicles that were created in Georgia for tourist purposes. Operated by a three-member crew, it has a selection of machine guns, anti-tank weapons or grenade launchers.¹¹⁵ In addition, 12 second-hand T-55 MBTs have been

¹¹⁰ *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

¹¹¹ *Army and Society in Georgia*, March-April 2001

¹¹² *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

¹¹³ - "Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General", Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

¹¹⁴ Aladashvili, Irakli (2001B), "The 'Scorpion' to Enter the International Arena", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, March-April, 2001

¹¹⁵ *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

bought from the Czech Republic, for use in Abkhazia.¹¹⁶ Drawing from this, it is clear that the situation concerning weaponry and equipment is problematic. NATO aspirations in combination with equipment from a range of countries and lags from Soviet times may infringe of efficiency of the armed forces and require substantial improvements to be made. As can be seen in the diagram of the MOD budget of 2001 and 2002, found in appendix seven and eight, procurements of materiel and weapons is not prioritised. The major cost is wages. It is in this context interesting to note the enormous share of the budget, which is not directly specified. Such spending give room for speculations about how spending is made. Maybe not in the same way as during the Cold War, but instead in a criminal perspective.

Training, Missions and Responsibilities

Georgia participates yearly in several hundred military exercises within the PfP and with regional states, for example Turkey. It should be noted that the Georgian share of these exercises is of a small scale. Its KFOR troops are less than a platoon and on some occasions, only one patrol boat represented Georgia in international exercises. However, increased training with international forces, including via the PfP, are under way. An infantry company within a German battalion will also extend the peacekeeping platoon in Kosovo. As another step in this direction, the Peacekeeping policy department of the MOD will be linked to the Defence Policy and International Relations Department.¹¹⁷

Locally financed training exercises are rarely held due to financial problems. The 'Katheti-2003' exercise that was to be held in the summer of 2003, with the objective of training for prioritised instability in Pankisi, was indefinitely postponed for the same reason.¹¹⁸ This exercise was much needed. The Georgian military campaign in Pankisi in 2002 was said to be an easy task, but still the problems remain unsolved.¹¹⁹ What is more, all since 1985, Georgian officers did not attend Soviet military schools, which today result in a lack of competent platoon managers.¹²⁰ A new training exercise, 'Makhvili-2003' is planned, but over \$2,5million are needed for training every month.¹²¹

One, let be marginal, aspect of a security reform has been initiated in early 2003, namely the reformation of the Border Guards. Previously, these had a mainly military character, but developments within the security sphere has called for widened responsibilities as operations in the borderlands is not always of a combat character, but instead resembles a mixture between police and military missions. From 2003 until 2007, the Border Guards are to transform and take on the role as a police force, as they have been granted police functions as investigative powers. By this transformation, the Border Guards of the Border Protection Department will be subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior, instead of the Ministry for Defence. An interlinking process is that of the Coast Guard. The previous Coast Guard Service, created in 1997, will from now on fall under the responsibilities of the State Border

¹¹⁶ Aladashvili, Irakli (2001A), "Foreign Assistance to the Georgian Army", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, January-February, 2001

¹¹⁷ - "Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General", Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

¹¹⁸ Messenger Staff (2003), "Military Exercise Postponed Due to Lack of Finances", *The Georgian Messenger*, 19 May, 2003, p 3

¹¹⁹ - "Georgia's Pankisi Operation to End Shortly", *Daily News on Russia and the Former Soviet Republics*, 4 November, 2003, p 3

¹²⁰ Darchiashvili (1997), p 13

¹²¹ Tatishvili (2003B)

Department of the MOI.¹²² Further, Djemal Tchumburidze, commander of the National Guards, have the US National Guards as a form of role model for his organisation. Soldiers should serve some time every year and have a responsibility of assisting the state also with non-combat actions. However, its core must always be warfare, he argues.¹²³ This, again, illustrates what has been mentioned above, the extensive responsibilities of the armed forces brings along problems that the resources may be insufficient to meet.

A lot has to be made before Georgian military forces are up to international standards. Russia often claims that the reasons for the poor status of its military equipment is due to that most equipment fell into the hands of former republics upon the disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, looking at the case of Georgia, it is clear that the bulk of equipment and resources fell into the hands of Russia. The equipment and infrastructure of the ZkVo – the old Transcaucasian military district of Soviet Union, was, according to the estimations of the Georgian MOD, worth \$11842,12 million in 1992. Till the year 2001, Georgia has got equipment and infrastructure to a value of only \$989,53 million only.¹²⁴

By and large, the improvements need to come within three key areas if Georgia is to come closer to international levels, especially if NATO membership is a goal. The first is concerns the organisational structure of all security branches. This paper highlights the fact that it is not without its problems. Secondly, major training of staff is needed. Finally, some kind of standardisation of procedures, training and equipment is necessary. To be able to do this, Georgia receives international assistance. Thanks to the US, some progress has been made. The creation of the Centre for Defence Resource Management has started and reform of the General Staff structure is underway.¹²⁵ This will unlikely improve performance, but will be a small step towards NATO standards. A rapid deployment unit will also be created. So far the results have been small, but still it is much better than within the civil structures.

External Support

The training and support given by external forces to Georgia is divided, in order to avoid an overlap. For example, the 11th Brigade is the ‘American product’ and France, Italy and Switzerland support the mountain units while Ukraine and Israel take care of other units. The strategic planning of the MOD enjoys support from Greece, while implementation is taken care of by Turkey. Increased presence of external advisors is also planned. The top level of the MOD will have 2, the General staff and HQ will have 4-5 and 9 advisors will be assist platoon commanders.¹²⁶ The UK and the US are further involved as advisors in budgeting issues and in early 2003 they assisted implementation of an integrated defence resources management system called PPBS.¹²⁷ However, some of the training, as that given at the

¹²² Messenger Staff (2003), “Georgian Border Guards Facing Major Reforms”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 16 May, 2003, p 1

¹²³ Liklikadze, Koba (1999), “National Guards Undergo Reforms but Does not Turn Swords into Ploughshares: Interview with General Djemal Tchumburidze, commander of the National Guards”, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September, 1999

¹²⁴ Gribincea, Mihai (2001), *The Russian Policy on Military Bases: Georgia and Moldova*, Oradea: Cognito Publishing House, 2nd ed, p 69

¹²⁵ - “Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General”, Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

¹²⁶ Interview with Nodar Kharsheledze, Advisor at the NATO Division, Department of Political-Military Relations, Georgian Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi, 19 July, 2003

¹²⁷ - “Speech of Ambassador G. Bezhuashvili, Deputy Defence Minister of Georgia at the Meeting with Lord G. Robertson, NATO Secretary General”, Brussels, 13-14 March, 2003

Ukrainian Defence Academy, is not donated to Georgia and Georgia still owe the Ukraine \$1,2 million for training.¹²⁸

It is not a surprise that the US funded 'Train-and-Equip'-programme comes as a blessing for Georgia. Its initial stage budget of \$64 million may be modest by American standards, but considering the Georgian defence budget of \$17 million,¹²⁹ it will have a paramount impact. In addition to 10-20 thousands of uniforms and caps,¹³⁰ six UH1-H helicopters has been given to Georgia by the US.¹³¹ This security cooperation is of pivotal importance and deserves extensive assessments, which is made in the third case study. By and large, the GTEP has been going on since May 2002. Initially the Green Beret Special Forces trained Georgian Commandos, but now several American units are involved in the Task Force GTEP programme. First and foremost, the US Marine Corps is responsible for the actual training of Georgian troops. In addition, the US Army is in charge of communications, first aid training and provide surgical teams while the Air Force and Navy have minor roles. The training curriculum for the three companies of the battalion (from the 11th Brigade in Koda) is a 14-week training cycle. To a great extent, the American instructors are non-commissioned officers (NCOs). NCOs are believed to have a positive impact as they are supposed to show how mature they can be and inspire Georgian troops to develop in a similar way. The core issues of the training is:¹³²

- Week 1-4: Land navigation, movement, fire drills, first aid and infantry tactics.
- Week 5-7: Squad tactics, marksmanship, illuminated night attacks and patrol exercises.
- Week 8-10: Supported platoon attacks and tactics, ambush training, patrol base operations and initial defence training.
- Week 11-13: Urban terrain combats tactics, defence and offensive, movement to contact and raids.
- Week 14: Final exercise by company level live daylight fire supported attack (AK47s, Machine Guns, RPGs etc).

Another part of the training that has received special attention is usage of mines. The Georgian troops has been thought to use, detect, clear and mark mines and mine fields of both anti-tank mines and claymore mines (for usage against troops). In addition, proper technique of throwing hand grenades has been included in the curriculum.¹³³ As patronising as it may sound, this underscores the poor level of combat proficiency of the Georgian forces.

After the US, Turkey is the largest donor and sponsor of the Georgian military. This aid will greatly improve Georgia's military capacity. Turkish help made renovating the Marneuli base possible. It become operational in 2001 but still lacks night-time navigation control systems. The plan is to replace the P-18 radar with new NATO-standard TACAN.¹³⁴ Also, \$4 million

¹²⁸ Tatishvili (2003)

¹²⁹ This was the case when the GTEP was launched in 2002. Now the MOD budget has doubled and GTEP has increase by some \$12 million. Shanker, Thom (2002), "Green Beret Vanguard Arrives In the Former Soviet Georgia", *The New York Times*, 30 April, 2002, p 16 (section A)

¹³⁰ Aladashvili (2001A),

¹³¹ *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

¹³² Ovalle, Teresa (2003), "GTEP Phase IIIC Steps off", *The Georgian Messenger*, 28 May, 2003, p 4

¹³³ Ovalle, Teresa (2003B), "SLUG: Georgian Soldiers Rock GTEP", *The Georgian Messenger*, 18 June, 2003, p 3-4

¹³⁴ Aladashvili, Irakli (2001C), "Turkey Repairs, Armenia Protests", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development,

was awarded for modernising the 11th Motorised Rifle Brigade in Koda. This does not only include equipment, but also a kindergarten for servicemen's children.¹³⁵ Also Turkey has given Georgia two UH-1H helicopters,¹³⁶ and 125 vehicles.¹³⁷

Germany has since 1996 funded the Georgian Army and provided numerous bilateral consultations every year. As far as training is concerned, some 25 fellowships have been given to Georgian officers to German military institutions on topics of security policy, inner leadership, personnel and commander training. Since 1997 over 100 servicemen have been trained by Germans in Tbilisi, Bonn and Berlin. Equipment given includes PCs, 'Iltis' cars, mine sweeper boats, ration packs, medical packs and uniforms for one brigade.¹³⁸ As the environmental problems related to of Georgian military are substantial, much help has been given within this fields, for instance by dismantling outdated ammunition and, poisonous or radioactive waste, mostly at the old Air Force bases of Most and Meria, but also at the air fields Dedoplistqaro and Vartsikhe.¹³⁹ Moreover, France has supported Georgia by donating a military hospital in Telavi and Romania has given 10 000 uniforms. Even China has contributed by some logistical goods¹⁴⁰ The UK has, since 2000, supported Georgian military with English language courses.¹⁴¹

Although important, foreign aid cannot solve every problem of the Georgian armed forces. Equipment can be bough, money given and training undertaken, but as long as the institutional problems remain, improvement is difficult. By reiterating what has been said before, the problems are found in two dimensions, one are the actual problems themselves and one is the problems of the reform. The former was outlined above and the latter is the object of following chapter.

Key Issues and Problems of Reform

It goes without saying that the problems related to the armed forces resemble those of the civil structure. First and foremost, this is the case of corruption and complex structures, but other factors also play a role.

Institutional

Naturally, lags from Soviet structures have an impact, but as far as the MOD is concerned, it did not exist in Georgia, only the MOI and the KGB did. Therefore, the structure has been a truly Georgian creation, although with staff from older institutions.¹⁴² Georgian security actors of toady are mixture of old Soviet police officers, a mixture of voluntary defenders and regular bandits.¹⁴³ It is true, a process of appointing civilians to the top level of the MOD,

January-February, 2001 (TACAN stands for Tactical Air Navigation and whether it will include the portable TRN-41 or only the fixed 900 Model is yet to be seen.)

¹³⁵ *Army and Society in Georgia*, January-February, 2001

¹³⁶ *Army and Society in Georgia*, September-October, 2001

¹³⁷ Aladashvili (2001A)

¹³⁸ Darchiashvili, David & Pataraiia, Tamara (eds) (2001), *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, March-April, 2001

¹³⁹ Pataraiia, Tamara (2001), "Crisis Management Strategy in Georgia", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, March-April, 2001

¹⁴⁰ Aladashvili (2001A)

¹⁴¹ Aladashvili (2001A)

¹⁴² Matveeva (2003), p 27f

¹⁴³ Darchiashvili (2003), p 75

including the Minister of Defence, has been initiated.¹⁴⁴ Frankly speaking, the advent of this process is of such a modest intensity that it is impossible to analyse other things than statements of intentions. The impact is yet to be seen.

Economic

The economic problems of reform are two-faced. The first is, of course, lack of money for reform. Even the every day activities of the MOD are underfunded by some \$50 000 so there are great economic constraints already.¹⁴⁵ Second, there is so much illegal money to make from corruption that a reform would abolish. Both high-ranking officers and field officers have extra budgetary incomes. Sometimes these incomes are even related to the official MOD structure. As the transparency of budgetary issues is zero, other parliamentary institutions cannot monitor it. As an example, the MOD has spent a lot of money on computer software, business trips and insurances, that all are claimed to be of no other interest to the MOD than to support certain individuals.¹⁴⁶

Smuggling has, also, been linked to the MOD. The “Caucasian Route” has been the way to smuggle weapons from Asia to Europe, for example Grad missiles to Bosnia. The differences in Soviet and Western calibres have to some extent been a reducing factor.¹⁴⁷ As far as corruption within the military sphere is concerned, the level far exceeds the amount of people prosecuted for it. Yet - prosecutions do occur. Within the Border Guards, for example, over 200 low ranking officers and soldiers were dismissed from service during the last couple of years of the 1990s. The highest-ranking officer dismissed for corruption is the former Commander-in-Chief of the Georgian Navy, Rear Admiral Otar Chkhartishvili.¹⁴⁸

‘Mental Revolution’

Staff and servicemen of the MOD are a mixture of ex-Soviet soldiers, KGB-officers, policemen, Western educated officers, civilians and volunteers. This, naturally, makes the intellectual foundation of the MOD varied, but incoherent. This has a disadvantage of including too many various wills and ways of thinking, both militarily and politically. There is no unit identity, ethics or spirit. This would be an asset in some cases as it has the advantage of being easier to change. When US troops educate Georgian units, they get an opportunity to streamline the military training. As long as everyone within the organisation agrees on the new agenda, the level of impact is high. An interlinking process is that of confidence building.¹⁴⁹ Shota Sandukhadze agrees on the fact that mental lags from Soviet time are one of the most important things that must change.¹⁵⁰ It can be argued that the military and all governmental institutions naturally, should have a function and a way of working which builds confidence for its citizens. It is not until this has an impact that it is possible to talk about a real improvement in civil-military relations. Two political problems of

¹⁴⁴ Gurgidze, Paata (1999), “The Making of Reform: Interview with Revaz Adamia, chairman of the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee”, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, June 1999

¹⁴⁵ Chitaia & Zhvania (2003)

¹⁴⁶ Darchiashvili (2003), p 81

¹⁴⁷ Liklikadze, Koba (2001B), “Are Weapons Illegally Transited Through Georgia?”, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September-October, 2001

¹⁴⁸ Feinberg (1999), p 22

¹⁴⁹ Nodia, Ghia (ed) (1996). *Developing a National Security Concept for Georgia*, Tbilisi: The Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, p 60

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Shota Sandukhadze, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Parliamentary Control of Activities carried out by the Defence and Security Bodies under the Committee on Defence and Security at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June, 2003

reform that has briefly been touched upon, is the lack of stability and cohesion within the military sphere. Currently, the people of Georgia see the army as something evil. This must change, and secondly, the state needs to protect the rule of law inside the country.¹⁵¹

2.4 Russian Military Withdrawals

Georgia's military history reveals some of the puzzles of contemporary issues. In the early 1990s, Shevardnadze was in great need of foreign support for maintaining the territorial integrity of Georgia. Paradoxically, Russian President Boris Yeltsin came to the rescue on three 'conditions' that, in turn, were fulfilled. First, Georgia entered the CIS; second, Russia took on a role as a mediator and peacekeeper in Abkhazia and; third, Russia got four military bases in Georgia.¹⁵² By then, Russia was just in the developing phase of its doctrine concerning foreign bases. In 1992, Yeltsin and his advisers formulated two strategies. Either withdraw everything outside Russian borders, or transform them into Russian bases. The second strategy was adopted on 2 November 1993.¹⁵³ During this time, Yeltsin wanted over 30 bases on foreign territory as a way to get 'strategic depth'.¹⁵⁴ Although Georgia's conception of Russia's interference is negative, it is doubtful whether Shevardnadze would still be in office, had it not been for Russian support.

On February 3, 1996, Georgia and Russia signed a "Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourly Relations, and Cooperation", which was ratified by the Georgian Parliament on 17 January 1997. In addition, on 15 September 1995, Russia and Georgia signed the "Treaty on Russian Military Bases on the Territory of the Republic of Georgia". This treaty granted Russia access to bases on Georgian ground for at least 25 years. Russia was also to guarantee Georgia's border security and assist Georgia in reconstructing its military forces. What is most important, however, is that the treaty never has been ratified.¹⁵⁵ Since 1995, the policy has been extremely incoherent and rumour has it that local commanders are acting on their own initiatives. However, even if there, as it seems, are two policies, one by the President (especially during the reign of Yeltsin) and one by the Generals, Mikhai Gribincea concludes that the Kremlin sanctions everything. Therefore, there is only one policy - Kremlin's.¹⁵⁶ In Georgia's view, this military presence, which carried out by the "old-style sentiments of the Russian political élite", in combination with Russia's Abkhazia policy, is the "most irritating" aspect of Russia's Caucasian policy.¹⁵⁷ According to the Minister for State Security, the best way of reducing the Russian influence is by international pressure on Russia and having a great power as counter-balance.¹⁵⁸

The pro-Russian stand in Georgia was rather comprehensive a few years ago. Western military guidelines were even not allowed in training. Given the fact that the Russian

¹⁵¹ Darchiashvili (1997), p 21

¹⁵² Ekedahl, Carolyn M. & Goodman, Melvin A. (2001) (2nd ed), *The Wars of Eduard Shevardnadze*, Dulles: Bassey's, p 257f For a brief overview of Russia's relations with its neighbours, see: Larrabee, F. Stephen (2001), "Russia and Its Neighbours: Integration or Disintegration?", *RAND Reprint*, no RP-958

¹⁵³ Gribincea (2001), p 11 However, Feinberg argues that Russia as late as in 1995 had planned to withdraw all commitments from Georgia. Feinberg (1999), p 17

¹⁵⁴ Allison, Roy (1999), "The Military and Political Security Landscape in Russia and the South", *Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia: the 21st Century Security Environment*, Menon, Rajan; Fedorov, Yuri E. & Nodia, Gia (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/East West Institute, p 49f

¹⁵⁵ Feinberg (1999), p 17

¹⁵⁶ Gribincea (2001), p 20

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

divisions, despite its previous combat experience, were second-rate units,¹⁵⁹ it is not a mystery that the standard of training today is poor, even by old Soviet standards. The result is that Russia has utilised peacekeeping and its regular units in Georgia as a policy instrument short of war. Georgia's concessions consequently led to short-term gains but major strategic losses that by and large were due to Shevardnadze's policies.¹⁶⁰ After a speech by Vladimir Putin on 11 September 2002, Georgia officially pointed out Russia as an enemy of Georgia by stating:

The statement of the President of the Russian Federation of the 11-th of September 2002 demonstrated that Georgia is facing the next threat of aggression from the side of Russia.

The President of Russia gave assignments to the Staff Headquarters, the Ministry of Defense, Federal Security and Border Guard Services for the preparation of military operation on the territory of Georgia.¹⁶¹

This quotation serves as an illustration for the following chapter that assesses the Russian military presence in Georgia. The problem with Georgian, and partly also Russian policy, is that it is reactive instead of proactive. The effect is that predictability is decreased.

Russian Security Actors

As indicated, the Russian military presence in Georgia is two-fold. The first is the peacekeepers of the CIS that today only consists of Russians. The second is ordinary units of the Russian army.

CISPKF

The UN subcontracts the CIS Peacekeeping Forces, which consists of some 1500 Russian soldiers in Abkhazia and 500 in South Ossetia. This means that the UNOMIG has to rely on the CISPKF for protection which is somewhat bizarre as Russia has taken active part on the Abkhazian side in the conflict it is supposed to monitor. The result is, consequently, the international community legitimised that Russian presence. It is also worth mentioning that the Russian word and concept of peacekeeping - 'mirotvoret' - rather resembles a translation of 'peacemakers'. This caused not only linguistic concerns, but also real problems as Russian peacekeeping differs from international practice. One key fact that is argued to prove Russia's dubious approach to peacekeeping is that its units in Abkhazia mainly were the 27th and 45th Motorised Rifle Divisions that previously had served in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Afghanistan.¹⁶² Although much criticism has been heard about the Russian CISPKF, the situation has improved somewhat. Its mandate was renewed in June 2003 for an indefinite time, which in reality means until either side calls for withdrawal.¹⁶³ A related issue is that if the CISPKF were to be withdrawn, the UNOMIG would also withdraw, as it needs some kind of protection.¹⁶⁴ This is why it was renewed despite its negative connotation. The real issue today is that, although its mandate was recently renewed, that the CISPKF has little support

¹⁵⁹ Darchiashvili (1997), p 12

¹⁶⁰ Lynch, Dov (2000), *Russian Peacekeeping Strategies in the CIS: the Cases of Moldova, Georgia and Tajikistan*, London: RIIA, p 131, 143, 175

¹⁶¹ - "To the UN, the OSCE, The European Union, the Council of Europe, NATO and the Countries, Friends of Georgia", *Appeal of the Parliament of Georgia*, 12 September, 2002, no 1656,

http://www.parliament.ge/statements/2002/appeal_12_09_02_en.htm, 2003-05-07

¹⁶² Ekedahl & Goodman (2001), p 272f

¹⁶³ - "Document about Extended Mandate of Russian Peacekeepers is Ready", *The Daily Georgian Times*, 23 June, 2003, <http://www.geotimes.ge/gtnews.php?cat1=1#2144>, 2003-06-23

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

and no capacity to do anything.¹⁶⁵ This makes its presence in Georgia questionable also on other grounds than Georgian aversions towards Russia.

GRVZ

Russian presence in Georgia consisted during the mid-90s of 4000 troops on the Georgian-Turkish border and 11000 on the four bases in Gudauta, Vaziani, Akhalkhalaki and Batumi, collectively known as the Transcaucasian Group of Russian Troops – GRVZ. As indicated in the previous parts, the formal status of the troops is of a temporary nature and they have no right to carry out military operations.¹⁶⁶ Today the base at Gudauta is formally closed as an operative base but still hosts some 500 soldiers, although without heavy armaments. Furthermore, military base number 12, situated in Batumi on the Black Sea Coast, enjoyed great respect from the local people. Much of this is said to be due to the ruler of Adjara, Aslan Abashidze, who is a former Major General in the Soviet Army and who greatly supported the Russian forces in the region. The base is still in operation. Military base number 137 was Vaziani, located near Tbilisi. It was object of many cases of aggression towards the Russian presence due to its easily accessible location near Tbilisi. It is closed today and all Russian troops. The infrastructure was destroyed or withdrawn. Military base number 62 in Akhalkhalaki in Samtskhe-Javakheti is often referred to as either the ‘Armenian division’ due to the Armenian population of the region. Another nickname is ‘the garrison at the gates of heaven’, which is due to its location of 1700m above sea level.¹⁶⁷ It is in operation and takes a central role in Georgian security. The impact of these bases is discussed in greater lengths below.

Withdrawal Agenda

A principal problem with Russia’s policy in Georgia is, according to Temuri Yakobashvili, that Kremlin’s ideas of it are unclear. The Eurasian dilemma of Russia has an impact as well as Soviet and tsarist legacies and Russian theories of managing conflicts as proven wrong. “Setting the fences on fire” has been Russia’s policy along its borders, which has proven to be very destructive for Georgia, he argues.¹⁶⁸ There is a common belief in Georgia that the Russian military presence one of the most urgent problems in the Russian-Georgian relations. This goes both for the CISPKF and the GRVZ. It can be argued that Russia has a huge positive potential for solving the problems in Abkhazia, but it is not utilised. As stability would benefit Russia too, this is a contradiction to its eagerness to keep its presence.¹⁶⁹

The formal agreement on withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia was reached at the Istanbul Summit in 1999. By 1 July 2001, Russia was to withdraw from Vaziani and from Gudauta. The remaining withdrawal was not to take longer than necessary. In the meantime, Russia would get access to airfields and fly 48 missions a year for free. This proved to be a rather blunt part of the agreement since Russia claims that it needs some 15 years for withdrawal, while Georgia believes that three is enough.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ Danilov, Dmitrii (1999), “Russia’s Role”, *Accord a Question of Sovereignty: the Georgian-Abkhazian Peace Process*, London: Conciliation Resources, p 47f

¹⁶⁶ Patariaia, Tamara (2001), “Crisis Management Strategy in Georgia”, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development March-April, 2001

¹⁶⁷ Gribincea (2001), p 48

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Temuri Yakobashvili, Executive vice-President of the GFSIS, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

¹⁷⁰ Patariaia (2001)

It is evident that the process of withdrawal will take time. By and large, the process of withdrawal has had three phases. The agreement of withdrawal was reached on the Istanbul summit of the OSCE, and the first phase was initiated as of 19 November 1999 and lasted until 31 December 2001. During this phase personnel and equipment was withdrawn to Russia in accordance with the CFE Treaty. The second phase, from 1 January 2001 to July 2001, included the closing of Vaziani and Gudauta. Vaziani was totally closed and infrastructure destroyed or removed. Again, the Gudauta base still exists, as it was only closed as an operative base.¹⁷¹

The 11th Georgian Brigade took over Vaziani in 29 June 2001, since then no new negotiations between Russia and Georgia have taken place for over a year. This is the hallmark of the third phase. Georgia has, at three occasions, delivered notes to Russia on the topic, without any response. However, renewed negotiations was finally held in late May of 2003, where the future status of Gudauta was on the agenda.¹⁷² During May of 2003, also, the idea of withdrawing Russian troops from Akhalkhalaki to South Ossetia or Armenia was made public. Both Armenia and Ossetia has welcome Russian troops and state that they are prepared to host Russian bases.¹⁷³ The Speaker of the South Ossetian Parliament Stanislav Kochiev later confirmed this.¹⁷⁴ The first echelon of Russian withdrawal left Georgia for Armenia in June 2003 with military equipment, weapons and ammunition.¹⁷⁵ Whether any troops will be positioned in Ossetia is yet to be seen but it is seen as very unlikely. Suggested moves of Russian troops to South Ossetia would naturally only move the problem and not solve the situation.¹⁷⁶ Yet, there is not much Georgia can do about it and Georgia's standpoint is clear on the point that Russia should leave Georgian soil completely, including places that are not under total control from Tbilisi.¹⁷⁷

Key Issues and Problems of Withdrawal

When assessing the Russian military withdrawal from Georgia, it becomes clear that the underlying reason for its existence is an explanative variable worth studying. The *raison d'être* for the Russian bases are, as strange as it may seem, disputed, at least explicitly. By and large, there are three key obstacles to Russian withdrawal, namely strategic, ethnic and economic. To a great extent, the problems are similar for the CISPKF and the GRVZ, as both have served Russian purposes of being leverage on Georgian politics.

Strategic Problems of Withdrawal

When seeking the answer to the reason for Russian refusals to leave the bases in Georgia, four related perspectives can be identified. Firstly, the former Minister of Defence in Russia, Pavel Grachev, claims that securing the stability of the Caucasus is the key issue. Secondly, Andrei Kozyrev, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, highlights the protection of Georgia and Russia against the enemy powers that might arise in the power vacuum of the Soviet Union.

¹⁷¹ Gribincea (2001), p 272ff

¹⁷² Makharashvili, Mary (2003), "Fate of Russian Military Bases in Georgia Still Unresolved", *The Georgian Messenger*, 19 May, 2003, p 1

¹⁷³ - "South Ossetian President Wants More Russian Peacekeepers", *RFE/RL Newslines*, 25 March, 2003

¹⁷⁴ - "Russia Reportedly 'Considering' Bases in South Ossetia", *RFE/RL Newslines*, 28 May, 2003

¹⁷⁵ - "Russian Servicemen are Leaving Georgia", *The Daily Georgian Times*, 23 June 2003,

<http://www.geotimes.ge/gtnews.php?cat1=1#2144>, 2003-06-23

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Avtandil Ioseliani, Head of Georgia State Department of Intelligence, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Shota Sandukhadze, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Parliamentary Control of Activities carried out by the Defence and Security Bodies under the Committee on Defence and Security at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June, 2003

Vyacheslav Elagin, section Chief at the Russian Press and Information Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, suggests a third approach that points to the protection of the Russian-speaking population of Georgia. In addition he points to the protection of borders and Russia's economic interests in Georgia.¹⁷⁸ Yet, the Russian General Staff has had many concerns about the bases. They argue that they are costly, of poor quality and too far away from the Russian lines of defence, which makes them exposed. Therefore, the 'strategic reach' sought after is limited.¹⁷⁹ This fact is made worse by the Russian financial crisis, subregional cooperation that excludes Russia and the growing number of external powers as the US and Turkey. As argued previously in this paper, the Russian policy has not been coherent. Dov Lynch assessed the Russian policy, in relation to peacekeeping in the CIS, and came up with six reasons for Russian policy incoherence. He concludes that the Russian policy depends on:¹⁸⁰

1. The development in Moscow, bureaucratic fighting and shifts in civil-military relations.
2. Differences between departments in Moscow over peacekeeping and foreign policy.
3. Resource capacity beyond Russia's borders.
4. Development in target state.
5. Development if conflicts on the ground.
6. Development of international relations, e.g. in the CIS.

This sheds some light on the issue, but it can be said that there are more reasons for the Russian presence. Hence, Grinincea who examined the views expressed in *Zakavkaskie Voennie Vedomosti*, which is the paper of the Russian troops in South Caucasus, discovers the fourth view. He found eight positive (from a Russian point of view) key-points with the troops, namely:¹⁸¹

1. It can be a force against other states that wish to dominate.
2. They can stop an aggressor.
3. A new and expensive border in Russia does not have to be built.
4. It can serve as a buffer against Islam.
5. It is good for Armenia to with Russian bases in Georgia.
6. It has a stabilising function.
7. It may help Georgia to build a national army.
8. It helps to provide a work for at least 8000 locals in Georgia.

The four latter points are discussed further below. Concerning the four former ones, it is clear that Russia sees gains in this. States that "wish to dominate" refers both to regional great powers, as Iran and Turkey, but also to the American engagement. One could argue that four, or now two, Russian military bases would serve as inertia to other powers wishing to gain influence. There is nothing that supports this, at least not in the American or Turkish cases. Moreover, Iran has kept away due to Russian concerns, but it has less to do with Russian bases. As for the third point, their capacity, with or without Georgian assistance, can do little to stop an aggressor. If Turkey was to invade Georgia, Russian troops could put on a fierce but short fight, but further elucidation of such a scenario would here be too speculative. This connects to the fourth point, a buffer against Islam, which is a rather exaggerated reason. In

¹⁷⁸ Grinincea (2001), p 13f

¹⁷⁹ Allison (1999), p 50-55

¹⁸⁰ Lynch (2000), p 5-11

¹⁸¹ Grinincea (2001), p 77ff

Central Asia it may have some substance, but as Iran and Russia are cooperating on several levels, it is of minor importance. Azerbaijan is indeed a Shi'a Muslim State, but its religious stand is far from expansionistic or fundamentalist, and the argument also goes for secular Turkey. Finally, building a new border in North Caucasus would be costly, but given its geographical location, natural borders already exist. This study has not incorporated any calculations on this matter, but an indefinite presence in the 'near abroad' is also costly. Given the fact that most radar and monitoring equipment must be updated and that there are only three major roads between North and South Caucasus working all year around, the task does not seem overwhelming. However, that is out of the scope of this study to analyse further.

It is no secret that Russia opposes Georgian NATO aspirations and would go great lengths to prevent it from happening. One requirement for Georgia's accession is that its statehood is strengthened and that its territorial integrity is secured, which means that Tbilisi must control Abkhazia. Hence, if Russia aims to obstruct Georgia's strive to join NATO, the best thing to do is to make sure that the conflict in Abkhazia remains unsettled.

Ethnic and Regional Problems of Withdrawal

One of the most important, and frequently mentioned, issues related to Russian withdrawal is the 'Armenian-issue' at the 62nd base in Akhalkhalaki. Ethnic Armenians to a large extent, populate the region of Samtshke-Javakheti on the Georgian-Turkish border where Akhalkhalaki is situated. Even if Georgia and Turkey are on a friendly basis, Armenia has had some historical problems with Turkey, which underlies the attitude of Armenians in Georgia. Since Armenia and Russia are close allies, the Armenians in Samtshke-Javakheti are positive about the Russian presence. As Tbilisi does not devote much attention to the situation in the region, it is no surprise that Russia's influence is strong.

Armenian feelings of insecurity in Akhalkhalaki are due to two things. First the Georgian military capability and resources for protection are limited, which is indicated by this paper. Secondly, Tbilisi's policy on the topic has been incoherent and a lack of political wills to handle the issue has been evident. The Government in Tbilisi does not control the situation and many local officials and servicemen are involved in criminal activities, as smuggling. This has created a paramount distrust and in 1998, local Armenian paramilitary even confronted Georgian troops in the region. As long as Tbilisi's security guarantees are insufficient, Armenians see the 62nd base as a stabilising factor. However, as the Russian force is weak, also its deterrent capability is low.¹⁸² One example of the magnitude of this issue is highlighted by an episode on 14 June 2001. A Russian convoy, consisting of ten trucks, with military equipment was to go to Russia as a step of withdrawal. However, 300 local Armenians blocked the road in an attempt to stop it.¹⁸³

Tbilisi has tried in many ways to regain control over the area and in late May 2003, the last Armenian Judges in the regions (Georgian) court were dismissed by Georgia's Constitutional Court. The reason was that they failed a Georgian language test. However, people in the region hardly speak Georgian, but everyone speaks Armenian and Russian.¹⁸⁴ RAND underscore the seriousness of ethnic tension in the region while saying:

¹⁸² Pataria (2001)

¹⁸³ Gribincea (2001), p 279

¹⁸⁴ - "Last Remaining Judges in Georgia Dismissed", *RFE/RL Newslines*, 30 May, 2003

*In terms of ethnic strife with origins from beyond the region, further Russian attempts (beyond Abkhazia) aimed at fragmenting Georgia along ethnic lines are the most plausible source of potential severe ethnic conflict in South Caucasus.*¹⁸⁵

In this context it may be appropriate to mention that Armenia unlikely will have any part in destabilising the Samtshke-Javakheti region. Armenia's landlocked position ensures that positive ties with Georgia are retained.

As far as the Batumi base is concerned, the situation is different. The Russian base there does not possess the same kind of leverage on politics as in Abkhazia. There is no conflict in the region and the Russians enjoy great support from Aslan Abashidze. Although this friendship, between the local ruler and Moscow, has contributed to the marginalized role of the Georgian 25th Brigade in the region. However, the 'territorial conscription' of the 25th Brigade has reduced Tbilisi's control of the region, and strengthened Abashidze's power, but the problems of withdrawal are not as embedded as at the 62nd base.

Economic Issues and Problems of Withdrawal

The economic issues of withdrawal are two-fold. The first relates to the 'Armenian issue' mentioned above in point five and six, and the second to the costs of withdrawal. Firstly, the reasons for Armenian distrust of the Georgian government are not only related to incoherent policy. Social problems are endemic in Akhalkhalaki. The level of integration is very low and the quality of the 'democratic self-governing' is very poor. In addition, there is an information vacuum, as information on Tbilisi's actions not always reaches the region. As an example, national TV broadcasts are limited due to the geographic location of the city.¹⁸⁶

The region totally lacks major enterprises and most people work on small farms. Naturally this affects the economic situation for the residents of Akhalkhalaki. In combination with social problems, the situation is serious. Around 926 local civilians are employed at the Russian base and considering their families and relatives they support on the wage from the base, it has great economic impact. Estimations suggest that the base sustains 6-8000 residents, which is around 10% of the population of Akhalkhalaki. In addition, the base facilitates broadcasting of Russian TV, and as most Armenians do not speak Georgian, it becomes a main source of information. Finally, the only major hospital in the city is the military one.¹⁸⁷ Avtandil Ioseliani, the Head of Georgia's State Department of Intelligence, states that the economic issues related to the region are paramount. If the financial situation improves for the citizens, the need of Russia would decrease and Tbilisi would regain some of its influence.¹⁸⁸

While turning to the last two points mentioned by Gribincea, two things can be said. First, the Russian claims that the base is a remedy for economic problems is too optimistic. Russia's financial situation is in this respect terribly poor. It cannot even pay for the usage of the base. What is more, the financial situation of the base itself is in such condition that it has taken on cattle breeding and agriculture to sustain its soldiers with food.¹⁸⁹ The second thing is that the

¹⁸⁵ Szayna, Thomas S. (2003), "Potential for Ethnic Conflict in the Caspian Region" *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the US Army*, Olikier, Olga & Szayna, Thomas (eds), RAND Report MR-1598-A, Santa Monica: RAND, p 180

¹⁸⁶ Patariaia (2001)

¹⁸⁷ Patariaia (2001)

¹⁸⁸ Interview with Avtandil Ioseliani, Head of Georgia State Department of Intelligence, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

¹⁸⁹ Gribincea (2001), p 14ff, 41, 258f

soldiers and civilians at the base are paid in Russian Roubles, not Georgian Lari. This has had the effect of undermining the Lari in the region.¹⁹⁰

The cost of withdrawal is a key issue that has not to this date seen any solution. Georgian demands of a withdrawal within three years are met with little understanding in Moscow. Russia estimates that the costs for withdrawal would be around \$140 million. As said, without any additional means for the Russian military reform budget, 14-15 year is a feasible timeframe for withdrawal.¹⁹¹ Georgian estimations, which are based on Russian logistics handbooks, suggest that it would only take two years and eight months and cost less than \$30 million.¹⁹² Although, the UK and France has created a fund after the OSCE Summit in Istanbul with the objective to facilitate Russian withdrawal.¹⁹³ The US has donated \$10 million to this fund.¹⁹⁴ As David Smith does, it is also interesting to note that Russia has the funds for creating a new Rapid Reaction Force, within the Collective Security Treaty Organisation of the CIS, located in Central Asia.¹⁹⁵ Zviad Mukbaniani argues that Georgia is a 'bone' for the Russian military to play with and therefore political declarations are on no interests at all. The only way to regain the territorial integrity of Georgia is by utilising the international community as leverage on Russia.¹⁹⁶

2.5 Conclusions

The disparate issues discussed hitherto are found at many levels and many kinds of conclusions may be drawn. Reiterating details serves no purpose here and hence the broader situation will be addressed instead. Consequently, This part intends to summarise some key findings and pinpoint some conclusions in order to give an answer to the question posed in the introduction, namely: *what is the current status of Georgia's national security structures?*

Firstly, there are some fundamental problems of the current situation. The current lack of security, defence and foreign policy concepts in addition to the lack of doctrines poses one of the most serious challenges for Georgia when forming future policy. As indicated, change is under way, but the results are yet to be seen. As far as reform is concerned, it can be stated that system reform has been initiated without system thinking, which is due to the lack of a clear reform plan and contradictory assumptions of the actors involved. In addition, many of the problems that must be taken care of are of such a nature that the actors involved would loose, politically or financially, from reform and thereby the needed momentum for reform is missing.

Secondly, there are many ideas on the agenda but little ability and will for implementation. For the MSS, ideas include restructuring of to a Security Service; reform of areas of responsibilities such as economic crimes; new laws on redundancies; separation of military and civil intelligence parts; tackling internal criminal activities and extending of the process of replacing military staff by civil. For the MOI, removing of responsibilities of property protection and fighting corruption are on the agenda. In addition, the Border Guards and the

¹⁹⁰ Pataraiia (2001)

¹⁹¹ Gribincea (2001), p 276

¹⁹² Smith, David (2003), "Russian Partnership? U.S. Security Interests Converge, but Only to a Point", *Defense News*, 13 January, 2003, p 29

¹⁹³ Pataraiia (2001)

¹⁹⁴ Aladashvili (2001A)

¹⁹⁵ Smith (2003), p 29

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

Coast Guards will fall under the responsibility of the MOI. In general, improving the public image and enhance elements of democracy also within the security structures are mentioned. New laws are also suggested and even a reform of the constitution. While turning to military aspects, it can be said that reform is a part of NATO standardisation and several things are proposed (see also the next case study). Procurement is not prioritised and a reform of the drafting system is planned. There is no correlation between stated intentions and capabilities as far as responsibilities and task of the armed forces are concerned. In short, there exist an awareness of the needs and some vague ideas and political intentions on how to reform Georgia's security structures.

Thirdly, only a few points of reform and have seen daylight. It can, above all, be concluded that reform is in the initial stage. No clear trends can be seen yet. The process of replacing military staff by civil has reached the top level, but nothing more. Reforms of the actual structures are modest in intensity and slowly implemented, if at all. Changes in performance; civil-military relations, democracy or concerning laws and regulations are at this point so small that any evaluation is impossible. Results from new laws and concepts are yet to be seen. Most notable, however, are the improvements of the armed forces due to the GTEP and the change in MOD spending. The social situation of the army is not awarded attentions that correspond with the needs. Seemingly, the situation of the MOD structure is better than within other branches. This can be explained by the fact that it receives more attention and is less integrated with other power ministries. The mentality within the MOD is allegedly also more pragmatic and progressive than within other ministries. The limited military fighting capabilities is of lesser importance than the social and political situation is, as no open conflict or immanent risk of it exists today. In short, except for the GTEP, all aspects and levels of reform are just in its initial phase and no results are visible at this point.

Fourthly, Russian withdrawal is slow. It is no news that Russia has left the Vaziani base completely and closed Gudauta as an operative base, even if it still has some 500 troops at the latter. The 12th base in Batumi and the 62nd in Akhalkhalaki are in full operation. Negotiations on the issue of Russia's troops in Georgia show that the CISPKF's mandate is prolonged but the GRVZ should leave Georgia completely. Russia estimates that it will take some 15 years, while Georgian calculations points towards three. Some parts of withdrawal have been initiated and equipment moved to Armenia. Presently, there are no signs of positioning troops in South Ossetia. The problems of withdrawal are of economic, ethnic, strategic, political and regional nature. Unclear and incoherent policy both from Moscow and Tbilisi pose further problems. In short, almost half of the intended withdrawal has been undertaken but currently status quo is ruling and Russia seems unwilling to take necessary measures.

Finally, the problems of the national security reform are many and embedded. To a great extent the problems of the reform and the problems that the reform is supposed to improve are similar or the very same. Lags for the Soviet era do not explain everything but is a substantial part of the problems. Economic and political issues often coincide and dependence both at individual and state level has proven to be other aspects of inertia. Low wages is a core problem, but mentality issues are more important. In short, almost all problems remain unsolved and the prospects for the future are dark if no momentum is gained.

3 GEORGIA'S INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Georgia's geopolitical location has over the centuries proved to be an exciting place that often has been subjugated to imperialist powers from one direction or the other. The golden age of Great Georgia only manifests itself through national identity and history these days and as a small state in an unstable environment, Georgia has had to find its own way in the post-Soviet period. The aim of this case study is thus to explore and analyse Georgia's various alternatives for handling security at regional and international levels. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the question: *what are the current options and implications for Georgia concerning international security structures?* In turn, this study will cover a majority of both the official organisations, as the CIS, NATO and GUUAM as well as various proposed informal. This is no attempt to elucidate the judicial aspects of various treaties or to assess the stands of every state involved. Instead, the study intends to raise a set of key points and discuss them from Georgia's point of view in relation to its options. It also deserves to be mentioned that this constitutes a balance between what would be ideal from a general point of view, from a Georgian or Russian point of view et cetera.

3.1 Foundation for Cooperation

Thus, when assessing Georgia's search for a regional or international security structure, there are many factors that must be taken into consideration. Every state or political entity has its own demands and requisites. A table of the intra-Caucasian relations is found in appendix two. The strongest forces in the process of forming security structures naturally have most impact. Georgia is far from strong and can therefore not dictate the course of action of its neighbours, but it is interesting to note what is preferred from Georgia's horizon.

What are Georgia's Prerequisites?

Firstly, at the top of Georgia's agenda is a membership in NATO and the EU. As will be discussed further on, there are indications that ambitions are stronger than the will to take necessary actions. In any case, as this is explicitly stated by the regime, other security constellations are by definition of secondary priority for Georgia. Secondly, Georgia has positive relations with all states in the region, except with Russia. Therefore, Georgia could, in theory, cooperate with any of the regional states but to as little extent as possible with Russia. In relation to other regional problems, such as the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Karabakh, Georgia does not actively take side, but do support the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.¹⁹⁷ Thirdly, Georgia's weak situation makes it dependent on foreign support. According to Alexander Rondeli, three things – the weak statehood, the ethnopolitical conflicts and unconstructive foreign intervention, affect Georgia's security situation.¹⁹⁸ The US is strong and willing to assist. Irakli Menagharishvili even calls the cooperation with the US and EU as “the only way”.¹⁹⁹ That, in combination to NATO aspirations shows that Georgia's relations with the United States are of highest priority. Fourthly, even if Iran and Georgia are on a friendly basis, the strained relation between the US and Iran make Georgia reluctant to initiate cooperation on security, as the relations towards the US is most important. While waiting for NATO membership, other less ideal structures are offered to Georgia and

¹⁹⁷ Gegeshidze, Archil (2003B), Presentation and comments made at the international workshop titled “Problems of Economic Development of South Caucasus” by the GFSIS and Saskakawa Peace Foundation, 20-21 June, 2003, Tbilisi, Georgia

¹⁹⁸ Rondeli, Alexander (2003), “Risks and Opportunities in the Black/Caspian Sea Region”, *Context Caucasus*, no 1, 2003, p 7-12

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

regional states. As said, Georgia cannot create the structure only according to the premises above, but also need to consider other relation. Before examining some of the structures on offer, other considerations deserve attention.

Regional Considerations

Starting by looking at the Turkish approach. Turkey's policy in Central Asia and the Caucasus has shifted during the last decade. Initially, Central Asia was at a focus, but now Georgia and Azerbaijan gets most attention. This is much due to the fact that Turkish policy in Central Asia greatly failed. This failure had several reasons, for example:²⁰⁰

1. Costs of engagement were greater than gains.
2. The 'Turkish Model' of a secularised state with market economy gained little admiration.
3. Turkey's 'big brother-approach' was not appreciated and Central Asian officials did not understand their political situation.
4. Internal problems of Turkey took much attention.
5. Russian influences in Central Asia were stronger than expected as Russian elite controlled the economy, politics and energy etc.

It can be argued whether states learn from old mistakes or not, but a few conclusions might be drawn from those five point. First, concerning the new focus of the Caucasus, Turkey will make sure that its engagements pay off. This is partly shown in Turkey's aid to Georgia, which was addressed in the first case study. Secondly, Georgia is no real disciple of the Turkish State-model and will not consider being subjugated to other external ways cooperation except its first choices. At this point it is not a major risk, as the cooperation somewhat is at an equal level. Thirdly, Georgia should be prepared that, although the cooperation and relations at this point is extensive and rewarding, the situation may change if the domestic situation in Turkey changes. As the 'Kurdish issue' is highly affected by the situation in Iraq, Georgia should not rely and depend on Turkish support. Finally it can be said that even if Russian influence in Georgia is rather strong, the pro-Western approach of the regime might be stronger.

Currently, Turkey is the largest sponsor of the Georgian Army, apart from the US,²⁰¹ even if its ties with Azerbaijan are strongest. Turkey is providing Georgia with, for example, helicopters, training, money, equipment and education. The good relations are to a great extent dependent on the pro-Western stand of Eduard Shevardnadze.²⁰² Although security cooperation increases, there is a limit of the role Turkey can play. Turkey's former President, Süleyman Demirel, states that Turkey cannot take on any active role in Abkhazia or Chechnya, but only to passively provide humanitarian assistance.²⁰³ It is doubtful, however, whether this is an explicit policy of the Turkish state today. The key issue here is the Russian dimension. At this point, Turkey and Russia are more of economic partners, than geopolitical enemies, but a pro-Russian shift in Georgian foreign policy would change the situation, RAND argues.²⁰⁴ Indeed it would expose Azerbaijan and reduce the Turkish influence over

²⁰⁰ Larrabbe, Stephen F. & Lesser, Ian O. (2003), *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, RAND Report MR-1612-CMEPP, Santa Monica: RAND, p 100-102

²⁰¹ See the first case study of this paper.

²⁰² Larrabbe & Lesser (2003), p 104-115

²⁰³ Kinikhoğlu, Suat & Kanbolat, Hassan (2002), "Where to Now with Turkish-Russian Relations: An Interview with Former President Süleyman Demirel", *Insight Turkey*, vol 4, no 2, p 18

²⁰⁴ Larrabbe & Lesser (2003), p 108-115

the BTC-pipeline, but such a shift is unlikely given the strong Russian antipathies in Georgia. In addition, if pipeline routes of natural gas were diversified, Turkey would not be dependent on Russia. Today, cooperation between Russia and Turkey on the Blue Stream project of energy transportation in the Black Sea shows that there is no major hostility involved.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the other side of the coin is that Turkey is not only a member of NATO, but also a traditional enemy to Russia, which may have an impact. After all, the Russian troops in Georgia serves the purpose of protecting the border from Turkey. Pavel Felgenhauer emphasises the weakness of Georgian and Russian troops in Georgia and they can serve the purpose of being a trip-wire at best. If Russia wants to stop an armed invasion from Turkey, it has to be prepared to use nuclear weapons, he argues.²⁰⁶ The border is still heavily mined since the cold war even if the Georgian attitude towards Turkey is relaxed today. Turkey has allegedly been negotiating with Azerbaijan and Georgia on using their military bases.²⁰⁷ This is something that would affect the regional security dynamics and decrease Russia's influence and quite likely also further alienate Armenia from the regional states.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta, in addition, claims that the US also has initiated negotiations with Georgia and Azerbaijan, as a step of preparation for a campaign in Iran.²⁰⁸ Georgia's deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kakha Sikharulidze, quickly and strongly denied this.²⁰⁹ In fact, there is no evidence of any substance in that article. However, the impact of the article has been serious. Iran has even left formal protest notes to Baku²¹⁰ and it has been frequently cited in the regional press.²¹¹ David Smith, states that any such plans are completely wrong, as the situation in Iran cannot be solved in the same way as in Iraq, in the American view.²¹² It is debatable whether the article in itself was an attempt, intentionally or not, to affect regional politics but that was indeed the outcome of it, which highlights the fact that perceptions often is more important than reality.

As far as Russia is concerned, its position is pivotal. As the former ruler of the region, it has had a difficult time to let go of the South Caucasus as a sphere of influence. The reasons are partly accounted for in the previous study. In addition, there are some loud claims that Russia's true intents are to regain full control of the road and routes along the Black Sea, which is something that must be stopped.²¹³ Other express a slightly more diplomatic view by stating that the long-term goal of Georgia's relations with Russia is, according to Georgia's Minister for Foreign Affairs Irakli Menagharishvili, to develop a strategic partnership, become good neighbours and to undertake intensive trade relations. This must be made by increased mutual negotiations. The most crucial issue, however, is for Russia to develop

²⁰⁵ Olikier, Olga & Szayna, Thomas (eds) (2003), *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the US Army*, RAND Report MR-1598-A, Santa Monica: RAND, p 204

²⁰⁶ Felgenhauer, Pavel (2002), "Russian-Turkish Military Relations: Much Mutual Respect but Many Mutual Misgivings", *Insight Turkey*, vol 4, no 2, 2002, p 44f

²⁰⁷ O'Malley, William D. (2003), "Central Asia and the Caucasus as an Arena for Cooperation: Challengers and Contrains", *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the US Army*, Olikier, Olga & Szayna, Thomas (eds), RAND Report MR-1598-A, Santa Monica: RAND, p 251

²⁰⁸ Suslov, Dmitrii & Usejnov, Afir (2003), "Bush Skolotil Antiiranskuyu Koalitziyu: Dlya Udarov po Tegeranu Namren Ispolzovat' Territorii Azerbadjzana i Gruzii", *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 29 May, 2003, http://www.ng.ru/world/2003-05-29/1_coalition.html, 2003

²⁰⁹ - "Georgian Minister Denies Possible Use of Georgia by USA Against Iran", ITAR-TASS news agency, Moscow, 29 May, 2003, Reposted at GROONG Newswork

²¹⁰ - "Russian Media Tries to Stir up the Caucasus", *The Georgian Messenger*, 3 June, 2003, p 2

²¹¹ - "Iran May Become America's New Target in the Middle East", WPS Observer, 2 June, 2003, reposted at GROONG Newswork, 2 June, 2003

²¹² Smith, David (2003B), presentation on US Engagements in Georgia at the GFSIS, 23 June, 2003

²¹³ Interview with Avtandil Ioseliani, Head of Georgia State Department of Intelligence, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

domestically along its southern tier and regain the control over its territory.²¹⁴ When asked what is to be done for improving Russian-Georgian relations, Vladimir Putin said that the solution is simple. It is about preventing armed attacks on Russia from Georgian territory.²¹⁵ If this is the real issue, it would be hard to see why Russia objects when US forces are present in the region with the purpose of training Georgian troops for stopping this.

Iran's influence in the Caucasus, however, is limited. This relates both to capacity and will, in sum:²¹⁶

1. The states of South Caucasus dislike radical Islam.
2. Iran is focused on the Middle East.
3. Iran needs to consider the Russian view, partly because of their nuclear cooperation.
4. Iran (like Turkey) lacks the capabilities to dominate.
5. The US is containing Iran

The last point is a key issue. As all three states of the South Caucasus especially Georgia and Azerbaijan have close cooperation with the US, any form of regional cooperation must preferably be made under the consent of the US. Including Iran would have negative effects on the relation to the US. Unfortunately forecasts of a rapprochement between Iran and the US have been wrong. The negative relation is partly a result of the Iraqi war, but mostly a result of Iran's nuclear cooperation with Russia²¹⁷ and the claimed support for al-Qa'ida.²¹⁸

The Ukraine is also worth taking into the equation as it can be seen as risk indicator. If Ukraine would find itself in a situation where its independence is threatened, South Caucasus would start to worry. The Ukrainian relation with Georgia is positive at the moment.²¹⁹

It can, in addition, be mentioned that a RAND report from May 2003 searches for a scenario where the US Army would end up in a military conflict in South Caucasus or in Central Asia within a 10-15 year framework. The rationale of the report is to facilitate Pentagon's planning. According to RAND, a plausible scenario includes intensified conflict in Chechnya where Georgia gets involved after Russian military actions in Georgia. This is said to lead to US, Azerbaijani and Turkish support for Georgia's side and Armenian support for Russia's side.²²⁰ Georgian politicians do not agree that the scenario would lead to open conflict, but point out that this kind of activity is already going on.²²¹ Exploring this scenario further serves no purpose in this context, but it can be concluded that the regional situation is serious enough for Washington to pay military attention to it. Given this brief overview, it can be concluded that the prospect for finding a structure that every state agrees on is a difficult task where compromise is a key word.

²¹⁴ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

²¹⁵ Makharishvili, Mary (2003C), "Vladimir Putin on Georgia", *The Georgian Messenger*, 23 June, 2003, p 4

²¹⁶ Larrabbe & Lesser (2003), p 117

²¹⁷ - "Russia Holds onto Irans Nuclear Program", *ISN Security Watch*, 28 May, 2003

²¹⁸ - "Al-Qaida are Operating from Iran, Says US", *ISN Security Watch*, 22 May, 2003

²¹⁹ Narlı, Nedim (2000), "Ukrainian and Turkish Approaches to Settlement of Conflicts in the Caucasus", *Insight Turkey*, vol 2, no 3, 2000, p 154f For more information on the Ukrainian dimension, see: Bukkvoll, Tor (1997), *Ukraine and European Security*, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs

²²⁰ Olikier & Szayna (2003)

²²¹ - "American Analysts Forecast War in the Caucasus", *The Georgian Messenger*, 29 May, 2003, p 2

3.2 Economic-Political Structures

Occasionally claims are heard that structures, as the EU, should take on an active role in security management and cooperation. Therefore it serves a purpose to explore also economic-political options available for Georgia.

The EU - European Union

Naturally, Georgia's security is not a core concern for the European Union, but the EU is a partner and donor of many activities in the South Caucasus. EU's approach is yet vague and unclear. This can be explained by the fact that it is a result of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which is greatly marked by national interests and EU's limited capabilities.²²² The EU strategy is a regional one, which means that all states of the South Caucasus are jointly at a focus, especially in a conflict resolution perspective.²²³ By and large, the financial support goes via the TACIS programme that contains two parts.²²⁴ The first is the east-west transport corridor TRACECA and second part is the energy project INOGATE.²²⁵ In addition to this, the EU is an observer in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) and the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). Most actors consider EU's involvement as constructive and rewarding, not only due to its subsidiaries, but also because it threatens none.²²⁶ Regretfully, the Copenhagen Summit in December 2002 failed to mention the South Caucasus, which was a great disappointment for Georgia.²²⁷ One reason for EU's passive involvement in conflict resolution is that all regional conflicts are already discussed in various forums, such as the Minsk group. It therefore poses a risk of having too many foreign organisation that are might compete with each other. Currently, the EU has a role mainly as a financial donor. Yet, there are reasons to believe that that Georgia listens to the EU to a much lesser degree than to the US.²²⁸

It is true; EU involvement in regional activities has a positive connotation, but the prospect for Georgian membership is still in the future and membership does not make Georgia secure automatically. Nonetheless, if Georgia's aspirations of membership are serious, the efforts for meeting the necessary criteria will strengthen Georgia substantially. Thus the core of Georgia's security problems is reduced.

It is also interesting to note that the EU on the one hand sees a clear connection between the politics of energy and level of conflict in general. In addition, it acknowledges the risks of foreign interventions.²²⁹ On the other hand, EU supports and facilitates development within this sphere at the same time as it supports conflict resolution, but this may not be as strange as

²²² Interview with Annica Sving, Assistant Attaché at the Delegation of the European Commission in Georgia, Tbilisi, 21 June, 2003

²²³ Interview with Jacques Vantomme, First Counsellor at the Delegation of the European Commission in Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June 2003

²²⁴ See EU/TACIS web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/georgia/intro/index.htm, 2003-07-17

²²⁵ See INOGATE web site for more info: <http://www.inogate.org>

²²⁶ Müller, Friedman (2000), "Energy Development and Transport Network Cooperation in Central Asia and the Caucasus", *Building Security in the New States of Eurasia: Subregional Cooperation in the Former Soviet Space*, Dwan, Renata & Pavliuk, Oleksandr (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/EAST West Institute, p 190ff

²²⁷ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²²⁸ Interview with Jacques Vantomme, First Counsellor at the Delegation of the European Commission in Georgia, Tbilisi, 27 June 2003

²²⁹ Marquina, Antonio (1999), "The EU Policies Towards the Caucasus", *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no 29, Ankara: Ankara University – Faculty of Political Science, p 168

it might seem. The reason is that in the Caucasus, the roots of the conflicts are not related to energy.

In June 2003, a new small landmark was reached in the Georgia-EU relations when it was announced that a special EU appointee for South Caucasus would assess the future process.²³⁰ However, the process is in its making and the third session of the Georgian-EU Cooperation Committee in June 2003 had not much news on the topic. It was made public that due to Georgia's geographic location, it will not be included in the current round of discussions, even if the EU greatly support Georgia's strives.²³¹ On the 7-10 July 2003, a EU ministerial troika headed by Margherita Boniver, paid a visit to Tbilisi and reaffirmed its position on commitments to Georgia. Emphasis was also put on the importance of free and fair elections.²³² Boniver stated that Georgia has a long way to go but that there are some future prospects for EU-Georgian relations to move from friendship to family.²³³ Basically, there is not much news on the topic.

In a broader perspective, at least four things can be mentioned. Firstly, one argument, proposed by Zviad Mukbaniani, is that as long as the states of the South Caucasus cannot cooperate efficiently amongst each other, the EU will not dedicate much energy to it. Therefore, the conflict over Karabakh affects Georgia to a great extent and a solution must come if further integration into European structures is to be made. Secondly, a EU-membership for Turkey would be excellent in the Georgian view. By all means this would provide another leverage for EU strives and as the Georgian-Turkish border would be the outer EU border, the EU would be forced to pay attention to its problems and opportunities, some argue.²³⁴ Thirdly, assume that Georgia develops in every aspect necessary to such an extent that its situation and status would 'grant' a membership to the Union. If that happens – membership might not be as sought after any more because then; dependence and weak statehood would be history, the territorial integrity secured and foreign pressure under control. Thus - a negative correlation between need and possibility seemingly exist. Finally, one of Georgia's strongest assets in terms of exports are agricultural products. If there is one thing that EU does not need more of, it is agricultural products. In such a perspective, it would make more sense to increase trade with Russia.

The BSEC - Black Sea Economic Cooperation

After an idea in 1992, the BSEC was created in 1999 with the mission to facilitate transportation, visa regulations and to fight organised crime in the wider Black Sea region.²³⁵ In fact, the BSEC already has a military dimension. A Black Sea Naval Task Force (BLACKSEAFOR) has been set up by Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia and Romania and Bulgaria and can be deployed under a UN mandate. So far, this has never happened. Most actors have a positive view of the BSEC, which also can be explained by the fact that its involvement in military and security issues is limited. However, some Georgians believe that

²³⁰ Makharashvili, Mary (2003B), "Positive Assessments of EU-Georgian Relations", *The Georgian Messenger*, 19 June, 2003, p 1

²³¹ Gorgodze, Sopho (2003), "EU-Georgia Cooperation – Georgia Still Hopeful", *The Georgian Messenger*, 11 June, 2003, p 5

²³² - "European Union Troika Visits the South Caucasus", *The Georgian Messenger*, 8 July 2003, p 1

²³³ Makharashvili, Mary (2003D), "Georgia has Potential to Become an EU 'Family-Member'", *The Georgian Messenger*, 10 July, 2003, p 1

²³⁴ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²³⁵ Chechelashvili, Valeri (2002), "Black Sea Economic Cooperation: Achievements and Main Challenges Ahead", *Perceptions – Journal of International Affairs*, vol 7, no 2, 2002, pp 197-207

the BSEC is unserious and that any serious attempt to cooperate on security issues will be destroyed by Russia.²³⁶ However, there are suggestions for a wider function of the council. Michael Emerson, for example, suggests that the BSEC should expand its South Caucasus cooperation so that have the following elements:²³⁷

1. Conflict resolution and prevention.
2. South Caucasus community building.
3. An OSCE regional security system.
4. Including all of Russia, EU, US and South Caucasus.
5. Broader Black Sea-Caucasus-Caspian Cooperation.
6. Infrastructure investments.

There are few indications that this would be realised in the near future and no methods are specified. After all, security and conflict resolution cannot be a key issue for every organisation in the region. From Georgia's point of view, the BSEC could well serve as an alternative structure for economic cooperation in the time before EU membership. It has many benefits, low costs, both politically and economically and does not threaten any state. Thus, it is a way for Georgia to facilitate economic development in the westward direction. Yet, there are several weaknesses of the organisation. RAND points out a few:²³⁸

1. Weak leadership and poor policy coordination.
2. Heterogeneous members with ethnic tension.
3. Huge geographical distances, between Albania and Azerbaijan for example.
4. Most states are poor and in a developing stage of statehood.

To a great extent, this is true. However, the prospects for continuous development are positive and there are room for improvement and if the economic gains from cooperation increases, there are reasons to believe that at least Georgia's strives to further integration is plausible.

3.3 Military-Political Structures

The structures for security cooperation where Georgia can take part are several and of two types, one are the formal organisations, as NATO and GUUAM, the other are hypothetical suggestions proposed by various politicians.

The CIS – Russia's Suggestion

The CIS takes a central role in Georgia's search for a security structure - despite the fact that Georgia does not take part in the security cooperation of the CIS. By and large it is weak; has not archived much in ten years and is far from Georgia's first choice. Kemal Başlar poses an initial question by asking, "what is the CIS"? No one knows, as it does not resemble any other major organisation. Even if the CIS has peacekeepers the meaning is not the same as peacekeeping or peace enforcing in the notion of the UN. The UNOMIG is actually observing and monitoring the peacekeeping activities of the CIS (CISPKF). This underscores the discrepancy of peacekeeping as a concept. It is no surprise that Georgia does not consider the

²³⁶ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²³⁷ Emerson, Michael (2000), "A Stability Pact for the Caucasus", *Insight Turkey*, vol 2, no 3, 2000, p 29

²³⁸ Larrabbe & Lesser (2003), p 122

CISPKF as peacekeeper.²³⁹ Moreover, the CIS is no confederation or no commonwealth as the UK or the Francophone. It is no OSCE, NATO or Council of Europe.²⁴⁰ Thus it is something of its own and it has no 'role-model' to follow.

The member states include all former states of the USSR except the Baltic States and its members do not want a strong and potent organisation reminding them of the USSR. Therefore its very structure and authority has been created weak on purpose as the members have a right to veto or not to participate at all. During the last decade, it has reached over 200 agreements on military, political, economic and ecological issues, but still it lacks substance. Bilateral agreements have been more important than the larger structure. The reason is that the member states wishes to keep their manoeuvring space and emphasis their national sovereignty. Except Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine have been most reluctant to participate while Armenia and Kazakhstan are strong supporters of the organisation.²⁴¹ Azerbaijan and Georgia have not even ratified the Tashkent treaty.²⁴²

It is possible to distinguish a split between positive and negative attitudes within the CIS. The faction with negative attitudes towards the CIS consist of the 'GUUAM group' that tries to distance themselves from Russia and the CIS, and there is the Russian led faction of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that are more eager to cooperate.²⁴³ Drawing from this, there are reasons to believe that further development would take place only within the Russian led core group, whereas the GUUAM-faction would seek other ways to cooperate. It is old news that many states and analysts see the CIS as a Russian attempt to regain control of its former territory, which partly explains Georgia's aversion towards the CIS. In fact, Georgia had not planned to be a member at all, but during the Boris Yeltsin-era, Shevardnadze was in great need of foreign support and was forced to join under Russia's pressure. Pavel Baev claims that the Russia policy in the CIS has not been about cooperation, a few attempts in Central Asia in 1993 excluded. Instead, its main features in the Caucasus include:²⁴⁴

1. To force Azerbaijan and Georgia into the CIS.
2. Inconsistent engagement by Russia.
3. Blocking Turkey from influence.
4. Breaking the seemingly strong Confederation of Peoples of the Caucasus (KNK).

If these actions are to be evaluated, it can be said about the first point, that the intentions were realised in theory, but not in reality. This means that although they are participating members, there is a high level of reluctance. The second point is still valid, but there are tendencies of greater coherence. The CIS of today has little influence in blocking Turkey and the KNK is

²³⁹ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

²⁴⁰ Başlar, Kemal (2001), "The Commonwealth of Independent States: Decayed within a Decade", *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no 32, Ankara: Ankara University – Faculty of Political Science, p 101-110

²⁴¹ Başlar (2001), p 112ff

²⁴² For further elaboration on the topic, see: Allison, Roy (2000), "Subregional Cooperation and Security in the CIS", *Building Security in the New States of Eurasia: Subregional Cooperation in the Former Soviet Space*, Dwan, Renata & Pavliuk, Oleksandr (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/EAST West Institute, p 149f

²⁴³ Oleksandr (2000), "GUUAM: The Maturing of a Political Grouping into Cooperation", *Building Security in the New States of Eurasia: Subregional Cooperation in the Former Soviet Space*, Dwan, Renata & Pavliuk, Oleksandr (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/EAST West Institute, 48f

²⁴⁴ Baev, Pavel K. (2000), "Russian Policies and Non-policies Toward Subregional projects Around its Borders", *Building Security in the New States of Eurasia: Subregional Cooperation in the Former Soviet Space*, Dwan, Renata & Pavliuk, Oleksandr (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/EAST West Institute, p 131ff

not a major factor of power today. Additionally, as security issues are well guarded cooperation is often difficult. Except the obvious aversion towards cooperation with Russia, the reasons for the marginalized role of the CIS have been concluded in five points.²⁴⁵

1. Unclear structure and legal basis of the CIS.
2. Great level of freedom for its members concerning commitment and participation (Georgia is most reluctant to take part).
3. Problematic ways of decision-making and implementation.
4. Weak organs, as the Inter State Bank and Economic Court.
5. It is difficult to bring together weak and underdeveloped states.

Georgia has done little to extend to improve this and, as said, many of the vague features are created on purpose. The Russian-faction, however, has recently deepened the security cooperation substantially. The Georgian standpoint is that the CIS, at best, can be a forum where Presidents can express opinions and intentions.²⁴⁶

CSTO – Russia’s New Suggestion

All since 1992, the CIS has had an aspect of collective security, but while considering it useless, Georgia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan pulled out in 1999. The re-launch of a collective security treaty in may 2003, during a summit in Tbilisi, include five states - Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The official name is ‘Collective Security Treaty Organisation’ – CSTO. A part form collective defence and security, the treaty include opportunities for obtaining Russian equipment and weaponry to special prices as well as the opportunity to send officers on training in Russia. The collective defence is rather extensive. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, even compared the agreement with article five of the NATO charter on mutual defence. It is intended to be a counter-balance to NATO and analysts believe that joining means taking an anti-American stand on Russia’s side. *The Georgian Messenger* also points out that it undoubtedly lead to Azerbaijan being able to claim that Russia is a biased mediator in relation to Karabakh. Naturally, Georgia has a negative view of this creation and has, naturally, no intentions of joining.²⁴⁷

GUUAM – the un-Russian Suggestion

GUUAM consists of Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Moldova (before Uzbekistan joined in 1999 - ‘GUAM’). It is a pro-western formal organisation dating form 1996 that has been created as opposed to the CIS. In 1996, it was stated that a core issue of the organisation was to:

The essential part of cooperation will be the security of the Eurasian corridor where the GUAM Group and Central Asian Group have great possibilities for interaction.

*[...]to work together on four goals: (1) to minimize the effect of the Russian financial crisis on their countries; (2) to support each other against “growing challenges to regional security and stability;” (3) to cooperate with each other and international partners in the Europe-South Caucasus-Central Asia transit corridor project; and (4) to jointly lobby for accelerated development of Caspian oil deposits and the construction of multiple pipelines directly to international markets.*²⁴⁸

²⁴⁵ Başlar (2001), p 122ff

²⁴⁶ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²⁴⁷ Messenger Opinion (2003), “Georgia and the un-NATO”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 2 May, 2003, p 2

²⁴⁸ GUUAM webpage: <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>, 2003-06-02

All of the points outlined by GUAM are of core concerns for Georgian security and general development even today. In 1999, when GUAM had developed into GUUAM, the member states agreed on intensified security and military cooperation while stating the progress made at a summit:

*They agreed to continue consultation on establishing a joint peace keeping unit, to exchange information on military and regional security issues, and adopted a calendar of upcoming events within the GUUAM Ministries of Defense cooperation framework.*²⁴⁹

By looking at the member states, it can be said that GUUAM is not defined by geography or by socio-economic factors, but by international politics at large. Security is at the top of the agenda. GUUAM's treaty has therefore been interpreted as a flank document by Russia - especially as all members except Uzbekistan favour the US and NATO. It was created during the height of the Kosovo-conflict and NATO enlargement summit in 1999, which made Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov to speak about a *cordon sanitaire* around Russia. Even if it is so, the members try to state the opposite. For example, Tedo Japaridze said: "[t]his, for example, is the only group in which Georgia is a member and Russia is not. I do not mean that GUUAM is an anti-Russian alliance."²⁵⁰ This nevertheless serves as an example of Georgian perceptions of GUUAM's position vis-à-vis Russia. Still, the main goal as stated above is to support each other. From Georgia's horizon, the GUUAM is an excellent substitute to the CIS. It excludes Russia, includes all friendly states and has the blessing from Washington. In addition to this, the important issues of security and hydrocarbons are on the agenda at the same time as they have an opportunity to gain from economic cooperation.

In fact, the US once looked upon GUUAM with some annoyance as it brings about some problems concerning the CFE treaty and NATO expansion. Today, it promotes deeper cooperation, for example concerning Armenian participation, which relates to its conflict resolution efforts in Karabakh.²⁵¹ Despite of former grievance, which is of minor importance, the US is a strategic partner of GUUAM and in 2000 it was stated that it had:

*[...]four immediate objectives: (1) to promote East-West trade and transportation corridor; (2) to develop interaction within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and NATO's Partnership for Peace program; (3) to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region; and (4) to combat the trafficking in narcotics in their countries.*²⁵²

WMD proliferation is not a main issue in Georgia, but the agenda on trafficking goes hand in hand with other issues related to weak borders. This means that strengthening state borders for protecting Georgia's territorial integrity also have the positive effect of increased security in the aspect of trafficking and smuggling. The financial support by the US have been extensive too GUUAM. In 2002, for example, it consisted of \$20 million in foreign military financing grants, \$10 million in non-proliferation assistance and \$2 million for antiterrorism activities.²⁵³ Nonetheless, it is hard to know where GUUAM is going.

²⁴⁹ GUUAM webpage: <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>, 2003-06-02

²⁵⁰ Japaridze, Tedo (2001), "Remarks by the Ambassador of Georgia Tedo Japaridze at the CSIS Conference. GUUAM: What is the Future?" 11 July, 2001, GUUAM webpage: <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>, 2003-06-02

²⁵¹ Pavliuk (2000), p 33-49

²⁵² GUUAM webpage: <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>, 2003-06-02

²⁵³ GUUAM webpage: <http://www.guuam.org/general/browse.html>, 2003-06-02

There are many intentions of settling disputes and to co-operate, but little substance on how to do it. The UN and the OSCE do not want to share responsibilities for peacekeeping, but on the other hand they have potential for technical cooperation, the argument goes.²⁵⁴ Georgia's Foreign Minister, Irakli Menagharishvili calls for growth of GUUAM by using telecommunication and east-west transportation.²⁵⁵ Other views promote integration with the BSEC, as states as Uzbekistan are reluctant to deepened cooperation within GUUAM.²⁵⁶ Indeed, it is a problem if not all members agree on the agenda, but merging GUUAM with BSEC would not solve any of the problems that have emerged hitherto. Besides, such integration would make prioritisation even more difficult, as the geographical obstacles would infringe on the capabilities of the BSEC. For Georgia, the effects would not be as great as for Uzbekistan. Georgia's location is advantageous in this aspect, as it has the opportunity to take part in cooperation both eastwards and westwards. Yet, Menagharishvili's statement on growing with help of telecommunications only serves as an illustration of intentions. In reality it would be difficult to realise, and how it should be made is not declared. When asked how this is to be done, he argues that the regional stability must initially increase. After that further economic integration and cooperation on transportation can be made. Stability is the key before investments can be attracted and one option is to enhance border protection cooperation. In the end a free-trade zone is sought after.²⁵⁷ Thus, economic and security issues goes hand-in-hand. Even if 25% of Georgians have mobile phones, growth does not come by increased consumption, but from industrial development. Currently such a prospect is distant. In addition, how this would help GUUAM to develop and consolidate its position is not mentioned in public statements.

The latest developments in the summer of 2003 actually show that the US-GUUAM cooperation is intensifying. The 'GUUAM-US Framework Program' gives support for border protection. Also, the new decision to create a Virtual Centre and Interstate Information Processing System, which is meant to channelling laws between the states, shows the increasing proximity of GUUAM and US cooperation. In addition, there are some suggestions that Bulgaria and Romania would join, but nothing has been confirmed.²⁵⁸ On July 3, the members of GUUAM held a summit in Yalta, but only Georgia was represented by its President. Two objectives of the summit were to discuss the potential of a free-trade zone and the replacement of Russian CISPKE in Abkhazia by Ukrainians.²⁵⁹

By turning to military issues it can be mentioned that the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, Vilayat Guliev, does not promote a military development of GUUAM with peacekeepers, but does believe that security cooperation will increase when the CIS deepen its security dimension.²⁶⁰ It is here interesting to note that some statements, like this one is diametrically opposed to what GUUAM member states have agreed on and that is visible in the joint declarations cited above. It is nevertheless true that GUUAM development can be seen as a mirror of the CIS. It is no wonder that the CIS has problems with implementation of

²⁵⁴ Pavliuk (2000), p 43f

²⁵⁵ Menagharishvili, Irakli (2001), "GUUAM: Building for Security and Co-operation", *Insight Turkey*, vol 3, no 4, 2001, p 113

²⁵⁶ Schneider-Deters, Winfried (2001), "GUUAM: the Need for a Raison d'être", *Insight Turkey*, vol 3, no 4, 2001, p 115f

²⁵⁷ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

²⁵⁸ Makharashvili, Maya (2003), "GUUAM Discusses Regional Security in Tbilisi", *The Georgian Messenger*, 29 May, 2003, p 1

²⁵⁹ - "GUUAM Summit Held, but Without Four Presidents", *The Georgian Messenger*, 2 July, 2003, p 2

²⁶⁰ - "[Uzbekistan Reaffirms Membership to GUUAM...]...Which Downplays its Defence Focus", *RFE/RL Newslines*, 28 May, 2003

agreements when half of its members take ‘counter-measures’ within the framework of GUUAM as soon as the CIS has achieved something.

Another important aspect is that Georgia and Azerbaijan have NATO aspirations. This can result in that they do not fit in GUUAM anymore.²⁶¹ There is some substance in that idea, but since it will not be realised in a long time, it is of no constrain for GUUAM’s immediate development. Besides, NATO is not an identical organisation and issues related to trade is not on its agenda. It can therefore be concluded that for Georgia, NATO aspirations should not infringe on its participation in GUUAM.

Furthermore, Turkey and Poland have been interested in gaining status as observers. There are also prospects for GUUAM to enter the UN as an observer and the US-GUUAM summit in Tbilisi has been interpreted as a re-launch of the organisation where intensified cooperation can be realised.²⁶² A few new states joining as observers would have little impact on GUUAM’s development other than in symbolic terms. Yet, if Romania and Bulgaria would join, the constellation would change somewhat. For example, Uzbekistan, which is already the most sceptical of the members, would run the risk of being marginalized due to its isolated location in Central Asia. From Georgia’s point of view, Romania and Bulgaria would be an asset to GUUAM as they are strong states and have no conflicting interests with Georgia.

16+1 – GUUAM’s Suggestion

One failed suggestion for a security constellation was in 1998, when GUUAM was still GUAM. At that time, GUAM had the intention to merge with NATO and create a 16+1 system for security. However, NATO’s response was not more than lukewarm and NATO preferred bilateral agreements with the four states in a 16+4 system instead.²⁶³ This has continued after both NATO and GUUAM expansion and there are no immediate prospects for any closer cooperation. Naturally, the organisations would not merge to one, but instead to have a formalised and somewhat more horizontal relation. This would be positive for Georgia indeed, as it would increase NATO proximity and act as a catalyst for meeting the NATO criteria. Since conflict resolution within the CIS has been a major failure,²⁶⁴ other forums have gained importance. GUUAM has proved to be too underdeveloped in this aspect,²⁶⁵ and a strengthened CIS brings about a risk of Russian influence. Much faith is thus held in NATO along with EAPC, in addition to the OSCE.²⁶⁶

NATO – Georgia’s and Azerbaijan’s Suggestion

In 2002, the Georgian Parliament declared the joining the EU and NATO was the prioritised goal of the state.²⁶⁷ Since then a ‘white paper’ has been created as a guiding star in the

²⁶¹ Allison (2000), p 168

²⁶² Alkhazashvili. M (2003), “New Prospects for GUUAM”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 4 June, 2003, p 3

²⁶³ Pavliuk (2000), 42

²⁶⁴ See: Sakwa, Richard & Webber, Mark (1999), “The Commonwealth of Independent States”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol 51, no 3, 1999, pp 379-415 and also Olcott, Åslund & Garnett (1999), *Getting It Wrong: Regional Cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States*, Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, pp 77-107

²⁶⁵ Olcott et al (1999), pp 166-170

²⁶⁶ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

²⁶⁷ - “On Beginning of the Process of Accession to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)”, *Resolution of the Parliament of Georgia*, Tbilisi, 13 September 2002, No 1661,

http://www.parliament.ge/statements/2002/resolution_13_09_02_en.htm, 2003-05-01

political strives but the real political will is still missing.²⁶⁸ NATO is thus a top priority for Georgia. It is against this background strives for international cooperation must be seen and it requires a deeper look at the process of meeting NATO standards.²⁶⁹

The Georgian conception of NATO is in general positive within the whole political spectrum. However, there exist a discrepancy between optimists and pessimists on the speed of development. The optimistic faction, headed by Shevardnadze himself, believes that a membership is only a few years away. As this optimism is to be characterised as rather naïve, it has been interpreted as a way of scoring some additional points before the upcoming election,²⁷⁰ and as a way of gaining western support.²⁷¹ Zviad Mukbaniani, the Head of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Relations, is pleased that the support for NATO is so strong, but boldly states that he does believe that neither the public nor the majority of the politicians are aware of what NATO membership actually means, especially not in terms of responsibility.²⁷² In fact, the Georgian road to NATO is long and scattered with potholes.

In 2002, Georgia spent 0,5% of its GDP on the military forces, while NATO has a requirement of at least 2%. As a comparison, the neighbouring states spend more: Azerbaijan 3,5%, Russia 4% and Turkey 4,5%. In 2003, Georgia increased the spending to 0,79%, partly due to this very reason.²⁷³ The plan is to increase the spending to 1,2% in 2005, 1,5% in 2007 and 2% between 2008-2010.²⁷⁴ In addition, Turkey pays for Georgia's representation in NATO and the salaries for its peacekeepers in KFOR.²⁷⁵ It is, therefore, not strange that the process of developing a stable military force takes time, but actually, financial constraints are not the only obstacle. The previous case study outlines some of the problems related to the reform of the military in general. Naturally, these are the key problems also in this aspect. In addition, domestic politics also has an impact. In general, the improvements are meant to be made in three ways, according to Deputy Defence Minister Gela Bezhuashvili; namely by improving the organisational structure, by training of staff and finally, by standardisation.²⁷⁶ Georgia has a 29-point list of things to improve as a part of reform towards NATO standard. None has been completely fulfilled.²⁷⁷ At the time, Menagarishvili said to 'Rustavi-2' that "[n]o one from outside can assess to what extent we will be able to do it. It is task for us to accomplish, our homework, so to speak."²⁷⁸ This statement can serve as an illustration of Georgia's unwillingness to be patronized by other actors, but facts remain.

²⁶⁸ Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²⁶⁹ This case study focuses mainly on the political dimension of NATO aspiration. For a somewhat more detailed description of reform see the first case study.

²⁷⁰ Messenger Staff (opinion), (2003), "Timing is Everything: NATO Secretary General Visits Georgia", *The Georgian Messenger*, 13 May, 2003, p 2

²⁷¹ - "The Road to NATO: Dreams and Reality", *The Georgian Messenger*, 30 May, 2003, p 2

²⁷² Interview with Zviad Mukbaniani, Head of Committee of Foreign Relations at the Parliament of Georgia, Tbilisi, 1 July, 2003

²⁷³ See appendix six for an overview of defence spending for the last couple of years.

²⁷⁴ Interview with Nodar Kharsheladze, Advisor at the NATO Division, Department of Political-Military Relations, Georgian Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi, 19 July, 2003

²⁷⁵ Aladashvili, Irakli (2001), "Foreign Assistance to the Georgian Army", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, January-February, 2001

²⁷⁶ Tatishvili, Temur (2003), "Training before Joining the NATO", *Georgian Times*, 12 May, 2003, p 3

²⁷⁷ - "The Road to NATO: Dreams and Reality", *The Georgian Messenger*, 30 May, 2003

²⁷⁸ Devdariani, Jaba (2003), "NATO Interest in Caucasus Security Confirmed by Secretary General", *Civil Georgia* (reposted from Eurasianet), 20 May, 2003,

<http://www.civil.ge/cgi-bin/newspro/fullnews.cgi?newsid1053411075.33551>, 2003-05-30

During a visit to Tbilisi on 15 May by NATO's Secretary General, George Robertson, it became clear that NATO's approach is positive but indeed more realistic than the Georgian approach. Robertson emphasised that Georgian participation as peacekeepers in Kosovo has been successful and that the door to NATO is open, yet with a stress on the fact that the process is long and hard, even if Georgia's ace in this game of cards, is its favoured geopolitical location.²⁷⁹ The standardised and vague parts of the speech set aside, Robertson actually underscored that Russia must be included in regional cooperation by stating: "It is important, first and foremost, that all the different parties of the region show political will and good faith. And Russia must be involved in a constructive way as well."²⁸⁰ This can be interpreted in at least two ways. Either it means that the situation must be solved by involving Russia, or that the Russia already is involved but currently only in an unconstructive way.

Hard evidence that Georgia actually is of interest for NATO is that it will create a 'South Caucasus Coordination Unit' in Tbilisi, as Robertson announced during his visit.²⁸¹ During 6-8 May 2003, a military NATO delegation undertook the yearly assessment of the Georgian military forces. The Train-and-Equip programme of the Georgian military reform was considered to be the major improvement since last year.²⁸² If the efforts related to the military reform in Georgia are to be seen as an indication on the commitment for NATO membership – how is security cooperation within GUUAM supposed to be interpreted? In might run the risk of creating a Janus-position for Georgia where it cooperates with all and none at the same time. Security cooperation will then be extremely broad and wide, but never deep.

It is nevertheless clear that even if political concerns are set aside Georgian armed forces will not be up to NATO standards for a long time. However, there are in this respect three key issues that deserve some attention. First, even if it will take a long time, the efforts are not wasted. Every aspect of improvement bears importance and as long as the usage of it is of a defensive nature, it will serve the purpose of stabilisation. Second, there is nothing that indicates that the level of training and equipment must reach the levels of the US. Other Eastern European states that have joined NATO are still in the process of developing, Poland is one example. Third, as the improvement of the Georgian armed forces is dependent on US support, there is a natural limit of how much improvement there can be.

What is more, Georgia is weak and without support from America, Moscow could see a window of opportunity for increasing its control over Georgia. In relation to this, NATO expansion is a debatable topic that has great influence in the region.²⁸³ Russia may be lacking means for qualifying as a super power, but nevertheless has the ability to act against the US and NATO, in Roland Dannreuther's words, 'in an obstructionist manner'.²⁸⁴ According to Stephen Blank, this obstructionism and attempts to block NATO expansion is the key-

²⁷⁹ Bakradze, Gia (2003), "A Long Way to NATO", *Georgia Today*, 16-22 May, 2003, p 1f

²⁸⁰ Robertson, George (2003), "'Georgia and NATO': Enhancing our Partnership", *The Georgian Messenger*, 14 May, 2003, p 2

²⁸¹ Ekberg, Allison (2003), "NATO to Establish Coordination Unit in Tbilisi", *The Georgian Messenger*, 15 May, 2003, p 1

²⁸² Tashkevich, Christina (2003B), "NATO Military Experts 'satisfied'", *The Georgian Messenger*, 13 May, 2003, p 3

²⁸³ See: Croft, Howorth & Webber (2000), "NATO's Triple Challenge", *International Affairs*, no 3, 2000, pp 495-518 and Blank, Stephen (1999), "NATO Enlargement Between Rhetoric and Realism", *International Politics*, no 36 1999, pp 67-88

²⁸⁴ Dannreuther, Roland (2000), "Escaping the Enlargement Trap in NATO-Russian Relations", *Survival*, vol 41, no 4, 1999-2000, p 146

obstacle to good US-Russian relations.²⁸⁵ For Georgia, this is one of the strongest arguments for increased cooperation with America. The US play a vital role as in tackling Georgia's many domestic socio-political problems, which has had a financial situation, shattered by hyperinflation and financial crises.²⁸⁶ Rajan Menon even argues that as soon as Russia's economic situation improves, it will take on a more active role within its former territory.²⁸⁷ This is especially important since stability of the South Caucasus is a key to stability in the North Caucasus, in the Russian view.²⁸⁸ It must be remembered that Georgia is weak and "vulnerable to Russian power", many analysts argue.²⁸⁹

Indeed, the NATO-Russian Permanent Joint Council exists and seemingly works.²⁹⁰ However, serious issues, that really need to be solved peacefully, are too much to handle when the elements of *realpolitik* come at hand. As an example, in the Russian-US/NATO cooperation seemed to be making progress over security issues but during the Kosovo-crisis, it situation really changed for the worse.²⁹¹ Additionally, Western military engagements are not only limited by the will of NATO, but also of its actual capabilities. Even if Georgia and the Caucasus are important, it is still out of the core concerns for NATO and Western security - even if rhetoric points to the opposite. NATO and the US cannot, therefore, take on more than they can deliver.²⁹² Finally, it is worth remembering that even if, in the post-nine-eleven era, the enemy of the USSR is replaced by the spectre of terrorism, "American foreign policy today operates in the realm of choice, not necessity".²⁹³

Several Georgian MPs, involved in NATO issues, underscore that security does not arrive automatically by joining NATO, but by strengthening the state from within. In addition, there is a concern that if the process of reform is too slow, NATO's door might close.²⁹⁴ According to David Smith, former Ambassador, NATO and US support will not be withdrawn overnight, by a continuously failure to develop democratic features will undoubtedly change the relation for the worse. But - somewhat free and fair elections *are* a prerequisite for NATO accession. In addition he states that putting forward the 'Romanian argument' to NATO (which means that membership is the last resort for preventing a societal collapse) does not invoke any extensive commitments from NATO. It is a loser's argument.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁵ Blank, Stephen (2003), "NATO Moves East", *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, 21 May, 2003

²⁸⁶ See: Wang, Jian-Ye (1998), "From Coupon to Lari: Hyperinflation and Stabilization in Georgia", *Caucasica: The Journal of Caucasian Studies*, no 1, 1998, pp 195-198 The US further analysed in the next study.

²⁸⁷ Menon, Rajan (1998), *Treacherous Terrain: The Political and Security Dimensions of Energy Development in the Caspian Sea Zone*, The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), vol 9, no 1, p 10

²⁸⁸ Patariaia, Tamar (2000), "Problems of South Caucasus Regional Security", *The Kartvelologist*, Centre for Kartvelian Studies, Tbilisi State University, p 57

²⁸⁹ Lynch, Allen C. (2001), "The Realism of Russia's Foreign Policy", *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol 53, no 1, 2001, p 24 Also Abashidze, Medea (1998), "The Caucasus: Historical Background", *Caucasica: The Journal of Caucasian Studies*, no 2, 1998, p 12f

²⁹⁰ Dannreuther (2000), p 152

²⁹¹ Antonenko, Oksana, "Russia, NATO and European Security after Kosovo", *Survival*, vol 42, no 4, 1999-2000, pp 124-144

²⁹² Sakalsky & Charlick-Paley (1999), p 84, 96

²⁹³ Brooks, Stephen G. & Wohlforth, William C. (2002), "American Primacy in Perspective", *Foreign Affairs*, vol 81, no 2, 2002, p 26

²⁹⁴ Tashkevich, Christina (2003A), "MPs Warn Door to NATO May Close", *The Georgian Messenger*, 14 May, 2003, p 1.

²⁹⁵ Smith, David (2003B), presentation on US Engagements in Georgia at the GFSIS, 23 June, 2003

PfP – America’s Suggestion

Besides the ordinary and bilateral cooperation between NATO and Georgia, NATO is also engaged via the CFE programme Flank Zone Agreement, and through the PfP.²⁹⁶ The PfP is widely used as a tool for national assistance from the US, with the silent consent of NATO – “in the spirit of PfP”.²⁹⁷ While this has been the case for the last decade, the tide is turning now. The US support had characteristics of that some years ago, but after the launch of GTEP, most support is on bilateral basis. However, to Georgia’s regret, there is little evidence that the US is prepared to take on any responsibility in Georgia when it comes to commitment for security. There, multilateralism has a niche of its own. As the PfP foremost can be seen as a link between the NIS and NATO together with a form of training, rather than a structure of its own, it will be left aside.

South Caucasus Stability Pact – Turkey’s Suggestion

In June 2000, the Turkish President Süleyman Demirel suggested a stability pact, which until 2003 has not been realised. Russian involvement and tension in Karabakh is said to be the reasons for slow implementation.²⁹⁸ Yet, it has three distinguished features:²⁹⁹

1. Multilateral diplomacy in the borderlands of EU enlargement and the FSU.
2. Normative values codified.
3. Its foundation is mutual interests of regional actors with foreign aid.

Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan support it, which is a prerequisite for further development. Apart for these states, Turkey, Russian, the US, EU and OSCE and even Iran would have a role even if it were unspecified how. The meaning of normative values codified is vague and from Georgia’s horizon, common normative values with Russia might prove to be a challenge.

3+3+2 – Armenia’s Suggestion

Robert Kocharian, President of Armenia, suggested a somewhat feasible system a few years ago. The core of the system would be Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, which would have Iran, Turkey and Russia as guarantors. The EU and the US would be sponsors. This suggestion gained support in Georgia by Irakli Menagharishvili who at the same time pointed out the foundation of the system must be sovereignty and fixed national borders. A key problem is how the disputed areas can be a part of the system without an assumption of their future political status or by giving them de facto state status.³⁰⁰ Although similar to the structure above, it has a refined approach by underscoring the different roles of the neighbouring states. It therefore incorporates several of the features preferred by Georgia. Idealistic ideas of cooperation to promote peace aside, the idea of having Turkey and Iran, as balances to Russia would suit the Georgian model. If the EU and US contribute by supervising the system and provide financial support, it may be a sustainable creation, but it is doubtful if the will for cooperating with Iran and Russia is strong enough.

²⁹⁶ Bhatti, Robin & Bronson, Rachel (2000), “NATO’s Mixed Signals in the Caucasus and Central Asia”, *Survival*, vol 42, no 3, Autumn 2000, p 129f

²⁹⁷ Bhatti & Bronson (2000), p 132

²⁹⁸ Larrabbe & Lesser (2003), p 106

²⁹⁹ Emerson (2000), p 23

³⁰⁰ Motika, Raul (2001), “New Contexts for Regional Cooperation in Southern Caucasia”, *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, no 32, Ankara: Ankara University – Faculty of Political Science, p 298-300

3+3 – Iran’s Suggestion

Hassan Rowhani, Chairman of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran presented the idea of a 3+3 system in 2001. This would include the South Caucasus with Iran, Turkey and Russia as guarantors. In April 2003, the idea was re-launched by Kemal Karrazi, Iran’s Foreign Minister.³⁰¹ Georgia and Armenia are positive to the system³⁰² while Azerbaijan, as it has NATO ambitions, is negative.³⁰³ It is interesting to note that Georgia is positive, as the Azeri argument would go for it too. The main difference between the Iranian proposal and the Turkish is thus the exclusion of the United States. Indeed it would have advantages, especially for Russia and Iran, as they have a different view of America’s engagement in the region, than what Georgia has. Even if Georgia has a positive attitude towards the system, it is not on the top of the agenda.

Stability Pact for South East Europe – Romania’s Suggestion

Whether or not the suggestion for adopting NATO’s Stability Pact for South East Europe is supported by Romania’s government can be debated, but it was presented by its Ambassador at Large, Sergiu Celac. He stated that the similarities with the Caucasus and with the Balkans are many and several of the features can be transferred to the South Caucasus.³⁰⁴ During an interview, Emerson stated that the stability pact used in the Balkans is of little interests for the South Caucasus due to the geographical location.³⁰⁵ However, adopting the agenda of the stability pact in the Balkans does not mean that it will be extended eastwards, but that some of its principles can be applied on the situation in the Caucasus. Since this idea has not gained much attention, it can be assumed that it will not be realised.

Further Aspects on Georgia’s Search for Security

Naturally, there are other organisations in the wider region. One example is the Shanghai Five’, which is a group of states that includes Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It has security issues on the agenda, but is no framework for mutual defence. Some tasks seeks to:³⁰⁶

1. Solve border disputes.
2. Reduce troops along the borders.
3. Work as a force against Islam.
4. Promote the ‘eternal friendship’ between Russia and China.

Hence it is not a plausible option for Georgia today. In general there are some point that must be taken into consideration when forming a security structure. First of all, there is an issue of concept and terminology. Labels such as confederation, commonwealth or alliance and the strange horizontal and asymmetric relations within these constellations have proven to be of

³⁰¹ Fuller, Liz (2003), “Iranian Foreign Minister Resurrects South Caucasus Security-pact Proposal”, *RFE/RL Caucasus Report*, vol 6, no 18, 16 May, 2003

³⁰² - “Armenian, Iranian Foreign Ministers Met In Yerevan”, *RFE/RL Newslines*, 2 May, 2003

³⁰³ - “Azerbaijan Opposes Iranian Regional Security proposal”, *RFE/RL Newslines*, 5 May, 2003

³⁰⁴ Celac, Sergiu (2000), “Prospects for a Stability Pact for the Caucasus: Some Preliminary Speculations”, *Brainstorming session: The Future of the Caucasus after the Second Chechnya Conflict*, Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Brussels, 27-28 January, 2000, <http://www.ceps.be/Pubs/2000/Caucasus/Celac0100.php>, 2003-06-02

³⁰⁵ Michael Emerson cited in: -“Expert Discusses Prospects for Comprehensive South Caucasus Stability Pact: Q&A With Michael Emerson”, *Eurasianet*, 4 May, 2001, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/qanda/articles/eav040501.shtml>, 2003-06-02

³⁰⁶ Rumer, Boris (2003), “The Powers of Central Asia”, *Survival*, vol 44, no 3, 2003, p 61

importance.³⁰⁷ It can thus be concluded that problems of cooperation are found at several levels. Second, there are problems with seeing the South Caucasus as backyard; that truly prevents cooperation, the argument goes. Thirdly, there is a question of whether a stability pact should be formed before or after the regional frozen conflicts have been solved. Turkey's Foreign Minister claims that before is preferred, or otherwise the situation will resemble the Middle East.³⁰⁸ Fourthly, Motika argues that one problem is that all systems are too exclusive. Some are pro-West, some are anti-Russian, others are vague and in Central Asia some are based on Islam. They all are international but most problems they address are national or sub-national. Truly, this is something that is rarely accounted for and may well prove to pose a problem. Finally, the states forming a security system should not expect the US and EU to finance the structure if they do not get to have any influence.³⁰⁹

Concerning the Russian dimension, there is a discrepancy between the business élite and the politicians on the attitude towards South Caucasus, Alexander Rondeli argues. The élite have started to see the region as potential for investments, which may lead to a constructive development of the Georgian-Russian relations and active participation of conflict resolution.³¹⁰ It can in this context also be said that the Russian military establishment holds a positive view of Georgia at large, it is the Shevardnadze regime that is the problem, at least according to information given to Pavel Felgenhauer.³¹¹

3.4 Conclusions

As indicated in the introduction of this paper, this case study is intended to provide a brief descriptive outline of international security structures that Georgia considers for cooperation and thereby answer the question: *what are the current options and implications for Georgia concerning international security structures?* Underscoring options and key features of the options in combination have hopefully done this, although in a somewhat fragmented way. In addition, opinions held by some prominent security actors have been canvassed. Naturally, this form of research partly prevents any sustainable conclusions from being drawn. Nonetheless, pinpointing some aspects and summing up the findings can be made.

Firstly, Georgia's prerequisites are the profound delimitations of cooperation. As said, Georgia's weak statehood and dependence infringes on its ability to act and choose a course of action. Elements of pragmatism in Georgia's foreign policy are largely of a short-term nature. Additionally, the Russian-Georgian relation, above all, works as a catalyst for pro-western standpoints in Georgia. This is also related to NATO and EU aspirations in contrast to other regional constellations. The fundamental problem is hence that suggestions are made for security cooperation with the states that other organisations are meant to be against. As the bottom line of EU is exactly about cooperation between former enemies, similar ideas in the Caucasus should not be as far-fetched.

Secondly, concepts, doctrines and political will for cooperation are missing. As political priorities, except in the case of EU and NATO, are blurry, it can be said that Georgia participates in all and none organisation at the same time. The lack of a security concept and

³⁰⁷ Emerson (2000), p 28

³⁰⁸ Cem, İsmail (2001), "Prospects for Co-operation: Solidarity and Economic Development in the Caucasus", *Insight Turkey*, vol 3, no 4, p 96ff

³⁰⁹ Motika (2001), p 297f

³¹⁰ Rondeli, Alexander (2002), "Pipelines and Security Dynamics in the Caucasus", *Insight Turkey*, vol 4, no 1, 2002, p 14

³¹¹ Felgenhauer (2002), p 44f

coherent foreign policy in Georgia are other indications of the fact that the political will in the state is at best lukewarm. This is also a fundamental problem for Georgia. The statement of NATO and EU aspirations is one of the few clearly presented long-term explicit foreign policy objectives for Georgia. Georgia lacks both a compass and a map.

Thirdly, there is a multiplicity of theoretical options with a tendency to overlap. As every state and actor has put forward at least one suggestion for a model of cooperation, it is clear that although a variety exist, agreements and implementations are difficult and this variety is partly to blame. It can be assumed that the informal constellations will not develop to any strong structures. Political will is missing. Additionally, Georgia takes a somewhat Janus-like position when cooperation are initiated, discussed and approved of within several structures at once at the same time as a clear agenda is missing. This will likely affect legitimacy, predictability and credibility for Georgia. The cooperation is thus very broad and wide, but in not one single case deep. By this - focus is lost.

Fourthly, there are conceptual problems. Conceptual problems relate to two things, the first to organisations as such, for example it is not clear what kind of organisation the CIS should be. The second relates to the numerous regions with ethnic and political tension. In relation to these regions, definitions and concepts have a paramount impact. For instance all regions with tension must be included in forums of cooperation without the implications that definitions of their future status can bring about.

Fifthly, regional conflicts obviously pose a problem too. It is no news that the conflicts over Karabakh and Abkhazia among others prevent the regional states from cooperation efficiently between each other and within international security structures. This is no less true when it comes to aspirations for EU and NATO membership.

Sixthly, there are some naïve ideas about EU and NATO. There is nothing that indicates that a membership in EU and NATO will solve Georgia's problems automatically. Instead, there is a risk of laying the responsibility of security in the hands of an external actor. Georgia's main security problems are derived from weak statehood. But – strives for meeting NATO and EU membership criteria may enforce a process of development that will strengthen Georgia. Basically, strives for membership may be more rewarding the actual membership once received.

Finally, EU and NATO membership are far away. Declared political will and the political will of actually reforming the system in Georgia suffer from a huge discrepancy. In no aspect the reform has reached a stage where actual negotiations can be initiated. Yet, both organisations show interest in Georgia and greatly participate and facilitate Georgia's endeavours. The military situation is extremely low and so is the situation within the political and economic spheres too.

4 GEORGIA'S 'AMERICAN' SECURITY

The United States has during the latest decade extended its presence and influence in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, within every sector of society. Among other things, America is conducting “Train-and-Equip” (GTEP) programme for Georgian police forces, border troops and military units. Cooperation on issues connected to the hydrocarbon business and promotion of democracy is also increasing. In general, it is cooperation where both parts benefit and that contributes to a peaceful and stable development in the region. However, even if Georgia wants the US presence, it stands to reason that risks emanate from the strained relations between the US and the regional powers of Iran and Russia. If progressive development is to take place, such risks must be avoided. The aim of the third case study is thus to assess the consequences of one important way for enhancing Georgia’s security, namely the cooperation with the United States. Thus, this study seeks to answer the question: *what long-term issues and risks are connected to the US-Georgian security cooperation?*

4.1 Approaches to Cooperation

This chapter outlines the views held by Georgia and the US and, in addition, the strategic context of the Caucasus is highlighted.

The View from Washington

Washington’s policies towards Georgia have been characterised as a process in three phases. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 until 1994, the ‘Russia first’ strategy was prioritised and the South Caucasus in generally neglected. Defence and oil came onto the agenda in 1994. They stayed as the main concerns until the third phase in 1996 when the US took on a general strategic role in the region.³¹² According to Svante Cornell, the reason for the policy shift is first and foremost that the US came to understand the Russian capacity and condition, not in the least its military status.³¹³ In 1999, USAID defined the US interest in Georgia by stating that:

Two primary themes establish the underlying basis for U.S. foreign policy objectives in Georgia: (1) the requirement for a politically and economically stable Caucasus region at a geographic crossroads that borders states with potential volatility, such as Russia and Iran; and (2) the vital position of Georgia as a Caucasus transit country of oil and gas for the U.S. and the West.³¹⁴

Thus, throughout this study, these two points will return when the US commitments are addressed. It is not too parsimonious to say that the US wishes to control the situation in such a way that these two points can be handled. Archil Gegeshidze, former National Security Adviser to Georgia’s President, Eduard Shevardnadze, states that Georgia is important for the US, due to five things:³¹⁵

1. International prestige of the political leaders leads to pro western foreign policy.
2. Containment of Russia.
3. Promotion of peace in a region where Georgia is a key player.

³¹² Jonson, Lena (2001), “The New Geopolitical Situation in the Caspian Region”, *The Security of the Caspian Sea Region*, Chufirin, Gennady (ed), New York: Oxford University Press/SIPRI, p 18ff

³¹³ Cornell, Svante E. (2000), *Beyond Oil: US Engagement in the Caspian Region*, Working paper no 52, Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, pp 13-18

³¹⁴ USAID in Georgia (1999), *Strategic Plan Georgia – USAID/Caucasus*, p 9

³¹⁵ Gegeshidze, Archil (2003), “Georgia in Need for a New Strategic Agenda”, *Caucasus Context*, no 1, 2003, p 38ff

4. Georgia is the gateway for east-west transport, and a door against north-south.
5. Introducing western values in Eurasia.

Similar standpoints have been underscored by the RAND Corporation that states in a report from 1999 that Western/US objectives in the region are confined to:³¹⁶

1. Prevent regional hegemony.
2. Get access to energy resources.
3. Reduce risks of civil war or intrastate conflicts.
4. Discourage spread of militant and anti-Western Islamic movements.
5. Prevent spill-over effects to important regions, as the Persian Gulf.

As it seems, the two latter points are of minor importance for Georgia, which will be discussed further on. These issues can be understood as threats against the US in three ways: against the US society, against American corporations and financial institutions, and against the global security and stability - in short, against the American values. Additionally, it can be said that all of the points mentioned above 'qualifies' as issues of 'security'. This raises a general issue on the American Security approach. From the policy-makers' point of view, such a comprehensive security approach is difficult to grasp - and even harder to control. This makes prioritisation of *urgent* security needs difficult.³¹⁷ If focus is turned to what independent analysts say about Washington's side of cooperation, three things can be said.

Firstly, Rajan Menon argues that there are no vital interests for the US in the Caspian region (and therefore not in Georgia). Instead, it is the relation towards Russia that is worth considering.³¹⁸ Surely, the Russian dimension is pivotal, whatever the reasons of engagement may be. The US strongly opposes the Russian standpoint of the 'Russian sphere of influence'. In fact, in 1998, Steven Sestanovich testified in congress that the US "absolutely reject the idea of a Russian sphere of influence".³¹⁹ It is interesting to note that four years after this speech, Nicholas Burns, US Permanent Representative to NATO, officially declared the Caucasus as NATO's zone of interest.³²⁰ Hence it can be concluded that two major states have aspirations as a key player in the region. Nonetheless, if regional aspirations by either state are reduced to terms of power, the US is the capable actor, albeit with modest intensity in its undertakings. Russia has greater ambitions than the US, but lacks the means.

Also, during the summer of 2003, James Baker paid a visit to Georgia in that has been interpreted as another illustration of US' positive view of Georgia. Yet, there is an ongoing discussion on the true reasons of his visit. Foreign Minister Menagharishvili allegedly lied on the reason for the visit when he stated that it was because he wanted to meet with

³¹⁶ Sakalsky, Richard & Charlick-Paley, Tanya (1999), *NATO and Caspian Security: A Mission Too Far?* RAND Report MR-1074-AF, p 7

³¹⁷ Darchiashvili, David (2000A), "Trends of Strategic Thinking in Georgia: Achievements, Problems and Prospects", *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, Bertsch, Gary K. et al (eds) New York: Routledge, p 70f

³¹⁸ Menon, Rajan (1995), *Central Asia's Foreign Policy and Security Challenges: Implications for the United States*, The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), vol 6, no 4, pp 13-15 Also Arbatov, Alexei G. & Hartelius, Dag (1999), *Russia and the World: A New Deal – Policy Recommendations Based on the International Project 'Russia's Total Security Environment'*, East West Institute

³¹⁹ O'Halloran, Kathleen T. (1999), "A New U.S. regional Strategy Toward Russia", *Strategic Review*, vol 27, no 3, p 58 Steven Sestanovich was US State Department spokesman on FSU issues.

³²⁰ Burns, Nicholas, "NATO Admits in Public Caucasus and Central Asia are Within Sphere of its Interests", *RIA Novosti*, 9 May, from CDI Russia Weekly #205, 10 May, 2002

Shevardnadze. The reason is said to be to show how great Shevardnadze is seen in the West. The real purpose of the visit was to discuss the upcoming election the argument goes.³²¹

Secondly, the declaration of a new US National Security Strategy in September 2002 stated that all means are to be used when handling security issues in the post nine-eleven era.³²² This includes so-called ‘foot printing’, which is a strategy of having light, mobile and adaptable foreign bases at the frontier where new threats emerge. Georgia is an ideal place for that as its geopolitical location is close to many pivots of Eurasia and in addition the outer flank of NATO.³²³

However, from the American point of view, there are problems of convincing the US public and commercial lobbies of the greatness of a vague and long-term national strategy of promoting liberal values in the South Caucasus. This is, according to John McCarthy at Jane’s Intelligence Review, the reason for the frequent mentioning of the Caspian oil in public statements.³²⁴ It is true, most analysts, both journalistic and academic, reduce the core of cooperation to an American strive for oil. The fact that a stable and friendly Georgia may have other advantages, as being a geopolitical asset, is rarely mentioned. In this respect, there is nothing that indicates that the US part of the cooperation would not exist, had it not been for the Caspian oil.

Thirdly, cooperation can take many forms. It can be conditional or unconditional, for example if can depend on if some political prerequisites are fulfilled or not, Haass and O’Sullivan argue.³²⁵ The US, like the IMF and the World Bank,³²⁶ often demand economic reforms prior to giving financial subsidiaries to the region. The result is that the cooperation takes an asymmetrical form and reduces the Georgian side as a receiver, while the US is a donor and a conductor. As will be shown, this might be of minor importance for Georgia.

The View from Tbilisi

The Georgian approach to cooperation is, naturally, guided by its weak political, economic and military situation. Georgia is by and large dependent on foreign assistance, either from the US, from the EU or from Russia. If the American goals, outlined above, are to be reached, the US must take on Georgia itself.

Georgia’s blessing and curse is its geopolitical location. If the directions of the compass are considered, Georgia is the key state for east-west transportation and cooperation and, at the same time, the buffer between north and south. However, this is not much to offer if there are many security problems. Therefore, a substantial part of the cooperation between Georgia and the US is related to this field. The Georgian approach to security is, by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, formulated as:³²⁷

³²¹ Makharashvili, Mary (2003E), “What was the Real Reason for Baker’s Visit?”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 10 July, 2003, p 4

³²² *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, The White House, September 2002

³²³ Smith, David (2003B), presentation on US Engagements in Georgia at the GFSIS, 23 June, 2003

³²⁴ McCarthy, John (2000), “The Geo-politics of Caspian Oil”, *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, July 2000, p 24

³²⁵ Haass, Richard N. & O’Sullivan, Meghan L. (2000), “Terms of Engagement: Alternatives to Punitive Policies”, *Survival*, vol 42, no 2, 2000, p 114f. Also: MacFarlane, Neil (1999), *Western Engagement in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs

³²⁶ See: Bakradze, Gia (2001), “Donors Scrutinize County’s Performance”, *Georgian Today*, no 69, July 2001, p

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³²⁷ Georgian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.ge/defense.html>, 13 May, 2003

Georgia aspires to play a leading role in strengthening stability and security in the Caucasus region. "The Government of Georgia also understands the importance of protecting such vital assets as the oil pipelines running across its territory. For these reasons Georgia must possess capable military and internal security forces."

Georgia's armed forces will promote peace, stability, and democratization within the country, and will ensure national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

As late as in May 2003, Shevardnadze clearly presented his Westernised views in TV by confirming Georgia's course towards membership in NATO and the EU.³²⁸ In March he even stated that: "[i]n the past 10-11 years not a single country has rendered as much valuable assistance to Georgia as has the United States[...] I sometimes say that we would not have survived without it [US assistance]."³²⁹ Naturally, even if most politicians hold a positive view of the US, there are also negative conceptions. As an example, in late June 2003, a member of Revival political faction - Hamlet Chipashvili, requested that Georgia should reduce its defence cooperation with the US. This means that the Parliament must further discuss the issue.³³⁰

As is acknowledged in the first study of this paper, Georgia includes not only conflictual aspects in its, often inconsistent, national security, but also environmental issues, educational aspects, societal development, rule of law and creation of democratic institutions. These issues are not codified in a national security concept, but will be in the fall of 2003. There is, also, a lack of consensus in Georgia on national security between people in general and the élite. The strategic thinking within the élite echelons harmonises with Western ways of thinking. The public, in contrast, is mostly concerned with territorial integrity; ethnic violence; lack of rule of law and the financial crises.³³¹ A disharmony between the élite and the public concerning the conceptions of the US is a dilemma. If the US' strives for promoting democracy work, the ruling élite and the regime will consider public opinion. Thereby the US has realised its own departure from the region. That risk has to be reduced by creating a situation where there is improvement for the public, and not only as abstract ideas of security for the regime. There are many factors to take into consideration, especially the views of neighbouring states.

The Strategic Context of the Caucasus

The US has, presently, positive relations with all states of the South Caucasus, and rather negative relations with Iran and sometimes the Russian Federation. By and large, the inter-Caucasian relations differ. Georgia's relations with its neighbours are positive in all cases but the Russian.³³² Categorical division, exclusively of the states, is naturally a simplification, but as the US official relations with other entities than states are limited, it illustrates which relations the US, in first hand, must consider. In can be mentioned, however, that the Georgian autonomous region of Adjara has close links to Russia. This is also the case for the *de facto* independent region of Abkhazia. In addition, the region of South Ossetia also has a

³²⁸ - "V Nastoyashee Vremya o Menya Yest Garantia togo[...]: Intervyu Prezidenta Gruzii Eduarda Shevardnadze Telekampanii 'Rustavi-2'", *Svobodnaya Gruzia*, 16 May, 2003

³²⁹ Miller, Eric A. (2003), "Georgia Struggles to Develop National Security Framework", *Eurasianet*, 28 March, 2003

³³⁰ - "MP Requests Reconsidering Georgian-U.S. Cooperation in Defense Sphere", *Georgia Today*, 20-26 June, 2003, p 3

³³¹ Darchiashvili (2000A), p 67ff

³³² There is a simplified overview of the international relations of the Caucasus in appendix two

pro-Russian stand. The region of Samtskhe and Javakheti is populated with many ethnic Armenians that both fear Turkey and favour Russia. Taking the perceptions of several states and regions into consideration when initiating ideas on cooperation is difficult. The numerous alliances and quasi-alliances in the Caucasus pose difficulties for the US to be neutral at the same time as promoting Western democracy. By no means the course of action is settled in advance, but if the perceptions held by regional actors concerning the US intentions are negative, counter-measures might be taken. Zbigniew Brzezinski recently said, on the topic of US in Iraq, that: "[t]he United States has for the first time found itself at the height of its military might and at the bottom of its political popularity."³³³ If things are going in this direction for the US, at a global level, it entrench a view that constitutes the foundation of future policies.

As far as Georgia is concerned, Russian 'neo-imperialism', and allegedly attempts to undermine peace and stability in the South Caucasus is far from the main reason of the insecure situation, even if it is often considered so in Georgia.³³⁴ In all aspects, Georgia is a weak state as well as a weak power, Alexander Rondeli, argues.³³⁵ The RAND report also concludes that the major security threats come from internal instability, rather than from external powers.³³⁶ One can therefore conclude that the focus of US-Georgian cooperation should include both civil institutional building and military training. Yet, a common view among prominent Georgians is that the West must start to put an end to Russia's 'aggressive policies' against Georgia. It is, apparently, so aggressive in the post-Soviet space that Kazakhstan even moved its capital from Alma-Ata to Astana to prevent further Russian attempts to control the northern tier, at least according to the Head of Georgian Military Intelligence.³³⁷ Although, there might be other reasons for this, but it shows the conceptions that some actors have and act upon.

The risk of anti-Western Islamic movements, which has gained renewed support after September 11 and the recent war in Iraq, does not pose an immediate threat in the South Caucasus. Samuel Huntington, the often-cited prophet of the 'clash of civilisations', points out the Caucasus as a main 'fault line' where the clashes between Christianity and the Islamic world take place.³³⁸ Huntington's findings and arguments are not left unopposed. As an example, Cornell's account of the ethnopolitical conflicts show, there is no 'clash', but the conflicts in South Caucasus have other roots, as territorial, ethnic and most of all political.³³⁹ Yet, ethnopolitical and confessional problems exist in several regions, in both North and South Caucasus. The regions of Abkhazia, Adjara, South Ossetia, Meskheta, Samtskhe and Javakheti in Georgia experience a period of increased tension and need to be taken into

³³³ Quoted in: Shevtsova, Lilia (2003), "New Danger: Hyperpower on the Loose", *Moscow News*, 7-13 May, 2003, from CDI Russia Weekly #256 9, May 2003

³³⁴ Zubarevich, Natalia V. & Fedorov, Yuri E. (1999), "Russian-Southern Economic Interaction: Partner or Competitors", *Russia, The Caucasus and Central Asia: The 21st Century Security Environment*, Menon, Fedorov & Nodia (eds), New York: ME Sharpe/EastWest Institute, pp 119-144

³³⁵ Rondeli, Alexander (2000A), "Regional Security Prospects in the Caucasus", *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, Bertsch, Gary K. et al (eds) New York: Routledge, p 49f

³³⁶ Sakalsky & Charlick-Paley (1999) p 83f

³³⁷ Interview with Avtandil Ioseliani, Head of Georgia State Department of Intelligence, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

³³⁸ Huntington, Samuel (1997), *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, London: Simon and Schuster, pp 275-280

³³⁹ Cornell, Svante E. (2002), *Autonomy and Conflict: Ethnoterritoriality and Separation in the South Caucasus – Cases in Georgia*, PhD Dissertation in Peace and Conflict Research, Report no 61, Uppsala University, pp 21-57

consideration.³⁴⁰ Ethnicity or religion can also be tied closer to states (or state-like entities) by external circumstances. This is the case in the ongoing ‘second’ Chechnyan war. During the first war, confessional aspects had only a minor role, but due to assistance from states in the Middle East and due to the intensity of the war, its importance increased.³⁴¹ Additionally, Vakhtang Maisaia has explored the Islamic patterns in the region and argues that there are indications of increased links between elements of religion and geopolitics. He estimates that although the risks at the present situation are small, an increased element of Wahabbism would increase the risk of Huntington being right.³⁴² It can therefore be said that institutional building and development of economic structures will not *per se* solve all problems, as other forces may be stronger.

4.3 Institutional Security Cooperation

This chapter lays emphasis on the political and economic side of cooperation. In addition, a comment of the politics of oil is made.

Democratic Security

It is no surprise that the democratic and liberty status of the Caucasian states is poor, according to Freedomhouse.³⁴³ By promoting Western values of democracy and liberty, the US tries to tie Georgia to the Western value community, without allowing Georgia to gain too much influence in Western institutions. At the same time the US withstands Russian and Iranian attempts to gain influence. Naturally, many of the threats and risks mentioned so far are reduced through promotion of democracy, but it is not without its problems.

The aid given by USAID consists of five main parts. Private sector and market reform – 35%; health, humanitarian assistance and community development – 22%; democracy and governance – 16%; energy and environment – 14% and, finally, cross-sectoral activities – 13%. The total sum reached \$50,650,000 as of the FY2001.³⁴⁴ In monetary terms, Georgia and Armenia are the states that receive most aid per capita by the US, apart from Israel and Egypt.³⁴⁵ This has huge impact, as Georgia’s financial situation is extremely poor. It has largely failed to meet the recommendation by the IMF, which brings about a risk of failing to acquire new loans. Georgia’s dept is \$1,684,528,816 plus some \$90 millions undertaken by the state.³⁴⁶ However, an agreement has been reached with the IMF, so the risk is currently under control.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁰ Darchiashvili, David (2000B), “Ethnic Relations as a Security Factor in Southern Georgia”, *Central Asia and the Caucasus: Journal of Social and Political Studies*, no 1, 2000, pp 43-53

³⁴¹ Lieven, Anatol (1999), *Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power*, New York: Yale University Press, pp 355-368

³⁴² Maisaia, Vakhtang (2002), *The Caucasus-Caspian Regional Security Agenda in the 21st Century: Caspian Oil Geopolitics and Georgia*, Tbilisi: Global Print, pp 78-96

³⁴³ Freedomhouse, <http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2001/table6.htm>, 2002-05-05

³⁴⁴ USAID in Georgia – *Monthly Newsletter*, vol 1, no 1, 2001, p 1

³⁴⁵ *US Government Assistance to and Cooperative Activities with the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union*, FY 2000 Annual Report, January 2001 Submitted Pursuant to Section 104 of the Freedom Support Act, Office of the Coordinator of US Assistance to the NIS, appendix. Also Wright, John (2001), “America in Georgia”, *AmCham*, no 4, 2002, p 30

³⁴⁶ Alkhazashvili, M. (2003), “United States can Rescue Georgia from Default”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 7 July, 2003

³⁴⁷ Messenger Staff (2003D), “Agreement Reached with IMF”, *The Georgian Messenger*, 9 July, 2003, p 1

Yet it is clear that external economic support for reform can be a misguided form of aid as it does not give the expected impact if corruption exists.³⁴⁸ Since 90% of the Georgians believe that bribing an official is the only way of solving their problems,³⁴⁹ and that up to 92% of all officials are involved,³⁵⁰ the situation is serious. The Minister for State Security argues that the US is too focused on improving the situation within the civil society, when the governmental structures that need attention. According to him, this is due to the fact that the US sees the benefits as greater in doing this than improving the official structures. The most important assistance by the US has been the anti-terrorist training centre.³⁵¹

The Shevardnadze regime is, indeed, pro-US, which is something that greatly has facilitated the US-Georgian security cooperation. However, the emergence of the George Soros-sponsored 'it's enough' campaign recently rocked the boat. It is argued that due to the general election, to be held during the fall of 2003, American attempts are made to undermine the Shevardnadze government by this campaign. This argument is said to be supported by the fact that the mastermind of the 'it's enough'-campaign in former Yugoslavia was Richard Miles, currently US Ambassador to Georgia.³⁵² A replacement by Shevardnadze by anti-American forces would, naturally, decrease the possibilities for future cooperation, if the new President and Government were to be against the US. Nonetheless, as it is today, the whole political spectrum agrees on the benefits of EU and NATO membership. As opposed to last decade, Shevardnadze is often considered to be a part of the obstacles to reform - not a part of the solution. If that is the case, a new reform-eager and pro-US establishment might increase the possibilities for the US to reach its two goals discussed above.

There is, also, a deeper aspect concerning how the support for democracy is perceived. Often criticism of US support to undemocratic or authoritarian states can be heard, but as long as the support consists of improving the democratic, economic and societal situation, it is misdirected. François Heisbourg argues, on the topic of US policy, that from Bosphorus to Indus, there seems to be a zone whereas the 'need' for democracy and attention to human rights, is "less urgent than in places like China".³⁵³ The money flow to the region is accordingly unaffected by criticism.³⁵⁴ Does this mean that democracy must prevail over foreign aid? From the US point of view, this criticism is a double-edged sword. It can therefore be said, that although rhetoric and reality does not harmonise, it is sometimes a necessity and reality in the Russian view. On the other hand, perceptions are sometimes more important than reality. It must be remembered that the US support to Georgia is, in monetary terms, not purely focused on military security as \$50 millions are given by USAID and \$64 million via the GTEP, which was later added to by another \$12 millions. At this point, one cannot draw the conclusion that the US has a short-term tactical gain as a point of the cooperation agenda - even if Georgia opened up its air space for American air campaign in

³⁴⁸ Kikabidze, Koba & Losaberidze (2000), "Institutionalism and Clientelism in Georgia", *UNDP Discussion Papers Series*, no 3

³⁴⁹ Georgian Times editorial (2001), "People Dissatisfied with Government", *Georgian Times*, 13 July, 2001, p 2

³⁵⁰ *Corruption Survey in Georgia – Second Wave*. GORBI, June 2002, p 20

³⁵¹ Interview with Valerian Khaburdzania, Minister of State Security in Georgia, Tbilisi 30 June, 2003

³⁵² Pochkhua, Zviad (2003), "The US Government does not advocate the overthrow of the Shevardnadze Administration", *Georgian Times*, 12 May, 2003, p 4, 9

³⁵³ Heisbourg, François (2000), "American Hegemony? Perceptions of the US Abroad", *Survival*, no 41 vol 4, 1999-2000, p 12

³⁵⁴ Noreng, Øystein, (2000), "Rørledning er storpolitikk: Det nye spillet om oljen fra Kaukasus og Sentral-Asia", *Internasjonal Politikk*, vol 58, no 2, 2000, p 182

Afghanistan in 2001.³⁵⁵ David Darchiashvili points out that the US has two options in this respect, either to pursue strict conditionality or to ignore the “hollowness of Georgian democracy”. As the US has only labelled one political force in Georgia as progressive, the situation is locked.³⁵⁶

Although the Iraqi war shows the opposite: if the US is about to gain support for its actions abroad, let it be domestic or international, this dimension might have an impact on the outcome. Additionally, the logic of criticism is not coherent. To demand from a newly independent state that it has to be democratic before any cheques are signed could be seen as ideological blackmail. There is a common belief that spending money on democratic reform requires the urgent security needs to be met already. With several ‘frozen conflicts’ in the region, such categorical criticism may serve no purpose but to provide an argument for withdrawal of external actors. Who would benefit from that? Russia would indeed, at least in the short run, but that does neither produce a sustainable argument for the US, nor for Georgia. However, Gegeshidze underscores that as long as American interests in cooperation with Georgia is of a geopolitical nature, democratic aspects will be neglected. This means that corrupt forces may lay their hands of financial aid, but does not worry on implementation of the designated policies of democratisation.³⁵⁷

This study does not seek to detail all forms of economic or political cooperation between Georgia and the US.³⁵⁸ Yet, it must be remembered that what has started to happen this last decade, took almost a century in the West.³⁵⁹ Some argue that the likelihood of authoritarian policies in Georgia is strong and history shows that authoritarianism and economic recession in combination does not promote peace and prosperity.³⁶⁰ Although, a common view in Georgia is that the individualistic mentality will prevent any totalitarian tendencies from getting fortified. Democracy indeed lays the foundation for stability, but there is a risk of military issues overshadowing the situation and undermining the process of democracy.³⁶¹ If the liberal view on trade, often proposed by the US, is to be the carrier of growth and peace, too firm political control and prioritisation of security are counter-productive.

Albert Menteshashvili’s standpoint is that the Georgian entry into the European Council and as potential prospective members of NATO will be part of creating security and stability for the Caucasus.³⁶² Such a statement might be too optimistic in several ways. First, as a comparison, even if the US Senate sees NATO as an organisation guaranteeing peace in

³⁵⁵ Press Digest, *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September-October, 2001
http://www.cipdd.org/cipdd/_a&s/a&s2001/m0501.htm, 2003-5-01

³⁵⁶ Darchiashvili, David (2003), “Dilemmas for the Future of Georgia”, *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, 21 May, 2003

³⁵⁷ George, Julie (2003), “Georgia’s Strategic Balancing Act: Has Increased US Presence in Georgia affected Georgian-Russian Relations?”, *AmCham News*, no 3, 2003, p 10ff

³⁵⁸ For further information, see: www.usaid.org

³⁵⁹ Menon, Rajan (1998), *Treacherous Terrain: The Political and Security Dimensions of Energy Development in the Caspian Sea Zone*, The National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR), vol 9, no 1, p 8f

³⁶⁰ Spruyt & Ruseckas (1999), p 107 In contrast, UNDP show that authoritarian regimes does not always makes the life of the citizens worse of than during a democratic regime. The FSU is just one example. *Human Development Report 2002*, UNDP

³⁶¹ Blank, Stephen J. (2000), *US Military Engagement with Transcaucasia and Central Asia*, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War Collage, p 7 This risk was further highlighted in UNDP’s *Human Development Report 2002*, chapter 4, p 14, web edition

³⁶² Menteshashvili, Albert (1999), *Security and Foreign Policy in Central Asia and Caucasian Republics*, NATO-report

Europe - the Turkish and Greek entry into NATO increased the tension between the two states, not decreased it.³⁶³ Second, Georgia joining of NATO or the EU will not be realised in a long time. An enforced democratisation from above, or from the outside, may generate ethnic tension and economic polarisation, it can be argued.³⁶⁴ Indeed, entrenching democracy is a slow process. Occasionally or often it is deprioritised when a weak state is to distribute its scarce resources. It must also be remembered that there is not a stable relationship between democracy and peace.³⁶⁵ However, incorporating the search for democracy into the sphere of national security could lift democracy to a prioritised level. Yet, focusing on that is difficult if the regime is more interested in its own survival than in the long-term survival of Georgia as an independent and strong state.

Naturally, there is a difference between ‘traditional threats’ to states, and threats towards regimes. As a state is not a single unit, even if it is often presented as such, the government or ruling establishment can ‘securitise’ threats toward the regime and make them a prioritised goal of the state. This may enhance authoritarian elements. Tough, there is nothing in the US undertakings that show an awareness of this in Washington. If the US fails to recognise this discrepancy, it might aim most of its aid and resources to regime-related problems. Thereby, the support for democratic development is wasted.

What has been discussed thus far illustrates that another problem emerges if there is a discrepancy in the security logic in Washington and Tbilisi. Working in different ways can prove to be difficult if there is an assumption of priorities and agenda. Therefore, the US and Georgia should opt for a form of cooperation where this problem is reduced.

Security of Energy

As the policies of hydrocarbons are of importance, albeit not the main focus of this study, some of its broader aspects deserve to be mentioned. Firstly, secure transport routes, political stability and positive financial climate for investors are three key aspects of energy security, no matter if it is for the US or for Georgia. Numerous accounts and estimations on the existing amount of the resources of oil and gas in the Caspian region exist, but it is clear that potential and not reality, catches headlines. The case point is that Caspian oil can prove valuable on the margin. Although RAND overestimates the impact of oil, they do pinpoint two important issues. First, it underscores, unlike many journalists, that the US will not be a customer of Caspian oil. Secondly, it pinpoints a key thing by saying:

*The extent to which this matters given a global oil market is debatable, but the argument for diversification is made frequently enough to create a political reason to diversify, whether or not an economic one exists.*³⁶⁶

In this aspect, Georgia has a role as a transit country. Indeed, this bears importance when geopolitical considerations are given. Existing and prospected pipelines,³⁶⁷ for oil and gas, are widely spread across the region and many are the pros and cons for different options –

³⁶³ Krebs, Ronald R. (1999), “Perverse Institutionalism: NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict”, *International Organization*, Spring 1999, vol 53, no 2, 1999 pp 343-377

³⁶⁴ Blank (2000), p 8

³⁶⁵ Neil McFarlane in Rondeli, Alexander (2000B), “The Forces of Fragmentation in the Caucasus”, *Insight Turkey*, vol 2, no 3, 2000, p 76

³⁶⁶ Olikier, Olga (2003), “Conflict in Central Asia and the Caucasus: Implications of Foreign Interest and Involvement”, *Faultlines of Conflict in Central Asia and the South Caucasus: Implications for the US Army*, Olikier, Olga & Szayna, Thomas (eds), RAND Report MR-1598-A, Santa Monica: RAND, p 221

³⁶⁷ For a map of pipeline routes, see: INOGATE web site: <http://www.inogate.org/html/maps/maps2.htm>

economic versus politic ones.³⁶⁸ Pipelines are drawn within, or bypassed, conflicts and regions of tension, such as Abkhazia, Chechnya, Karabakh, Kurdistan, Central Asia and Afghanistan. Nevertheless, a frequently stated argument of oil falling in the wrong hands, as in the hands of Russia or Iran, lacks substance. Most of the oil has been or is already in the ‘wrong hands’ of Saddam Hussein’s or Moammar Qaddafi’s, from the US viewpoint. In fact, none of them have refused to sell oil to America.³⁶⁹

Secondly, a military engagement by the US, for the reason of protection of oil and gas, is by many analysts seen as highly unlikely.³⁷⁰ However, the deeper the US commitments are into the hydrocarbon sector, the more unlikely it is for the US to be neutral in a regional conflict. This problem is currently reduced implicitly by the US. The US military training of Georgian troops, which are discussed in greater length in subsequent chapters of this study, are useful when Georgia conducts training for pipeline security under the aegis of GUUAM. Thereby, America reaches its goals with only a minor level of risk.

Thirdly, oil and gas as political leverages have been utilised by Russia against Georgia. As a result, the US, by the USAID, has supported Georgia with financial means in order to decrease the Georgian dependence of Russia.³⁷¹ The BTC-pipeline currently under construction will naturally decrease Georgia’s dependence on energy from Russia and by that Russia loses an important leverage for its security policy in the South Caucasus. It can therefore be concluded that US-Georgian cooperation on developing infrastructure also is a contributing factor of security.

4.4 Strategic Security Cooperation

As the very nature of military security is serious, it deserves attention. This chapter will discuss and analyse the US-Georgian cooperation by outlining the strategic issues followed by a note on the GTEP. Subsequently the effects and risks are analysed. Finally a comment on exit strategies is made.

The Strategy of Geopolitics and Geoeconomics

It is clear that seeing the Caucasus as a buffer zone, as many analysts do,³⁷² follows the realist lines of geopolitics. This underscores the logic of north-south and east-west. By assisting Georgia, the US prevents Russian (and Iranian) influence in the region. While Russian capabilities are limited at this point, it will make Russia, according to Jaffe, only attempt to reassert itself in a way unfavourable for the US when it gets stronger.³⁷³ This indicates that the utility of the geopolitical buffer zone is only rewarding for the US in the short-run. It highlights what regional actors see as a zero-sum game. Even if this view is wrong and counter-productive,³⁷⁴ as long as regional actors hold this belief, even if they pretend not too, it has an impact. This distinction is often passed by in security analyses and deserves to be

³⁶⁸ For deeper analysis see: Dekmejian, Hrair R. & Simonian, Hovann H. (2001), *Troubled Waters: The Geopolitics of the Caspian Region*, New York: I.B. Tauris

³⁶⁹ Sakalsky & Charlick-Paley (1999), p 80

³⁷⁰ Chufrin (1999), p 227 and also: Sakalsky & Charlick-Paley (1999), p 95

³⁷¹ Boroumand, Serene (2001), “Energy Independence: Georgia Receives Great Boost from US Government”, *Georgia Today*, no 68, July 2001, p 4

³⁷² As an example: Ahmadian, Barham Amir (1998), “Caucasus: Geopolitical Buffer Region – a New Concept for Development”, *Caucasica: The Journal of Caucasian Studies*, no 2, 1998, pp 27-35

³⁷³ Jaffe, Amy (2001), “US Policy Towards the Caspian Region: Can the Wish-list be Realized?”, *The Security of the Caspian Region*, Chufrin, Gennady (ed), New York: Oxford University Press/SIPRI, p 146f

³⁷⁴ Jonson (2001), p 12

noted. It must, also, be said that, the US does not try to win any 'game' (great or not) by knocking out Russia or Iran, but instead to infringe their ability to act in the Caucasus. The US thereby increases the space for *its* political action. Paradoxically, this strive will, as argued, increase the risk level and the magnitude of threats substantially. It will, therefore, reduce the space for political action.

The east-west axis, symbolised by the transport corridor TRACECA, on the other hand, creates a geoeconomic advantage that makes the US' engagements logical, peaceful and legitimate. Nevertheless, if economic engagements increase in the future, it may reach a point whereas economic issues are awarded a security label, by any (or every) involved actor. It will, in that case, take on the role as a strategic goal, and the political and military strategic engagements will be tools for protection of economic interests. In a region where the internal security dynamics are conflictual, it will undoubtedly be dangerous.

Train-and-Equip and Beyond

The status of the Georgian military forces is extremely poor, not only in terms of training and equipment, but also in a general social aspect. Malnourishment is endemic in the army and between 2000-3500 conscripts desert every year. Lack of funds and food have enforced many military units to take on farming instead of training.³⁷⁵ American support is, therefore, of great interest for Georgia.

In wartime, Georgia falls under the responsibilities of the USEUCOM,³⁷⁶ but the current peacetime cooperation is conducted under special flag. During the summer of 2002, the US Special Forces 'Green Berets', among other units, launched a comprehensive foreign military training programme, covering all levels of the Georgian military forces from battalions and below. The initial cost of \$64 millions and duration of twenty month has been extended and another \$12 millions have been added. The units trained are first and foremost the grounds troops, but also units from the Border Guards.³⁷⁷ The training, which includes supply of arms and equipment, is conducted in public, in order not to impose an increased threat of covert operations against Russia.³⁷⁸ It is somewhat ironic that at the same time, unidentified Russian fighter planes carry out 'anti-terrorism' operations in the Georgian Pankisi Gorge, according to Georgian officials. As a consequence of this programme, some argue, Russia deliberately postpones the withdrawal of its 'peacekeeping' force in Abkhazia.³⁷⁹ At this point, nevertheless, there is nothing that supports the idea that Russia would not have postponed the withdrawal anyway. And, what is more important is that in May 2003, both Georgia and Russia signed a declaration on renewing the CIS mandate as peacekeepers.

As strange as it may seem, removing bureaucratic obstacles to cooperation is not always without implications. In late March of 2003, an agreement between Georgia and the US was

³⁷⁵ Chitaia, Maia & Zhvania, Nino (2003), "Georgia's National Security is at Stake as Chronic Hunger Fuels Desertion in the Conscript Army", for IWPR, 30 April, 2003
<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/infoservice/secwatch/index.cfm?service=cwn&parent=detail&menu=8&sNewsID=6445>, 2003-05-01 See, also, the first study of this paper.

³⁷⁶ Vyazemskii, V (2003), "Ob'edinennie Komandovaniya Vooroshennikh Sil SSHA", *Zarubejnoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, no 3, 2003, p 2-3

³⁷⁷ Shanker, Thom (2002), "Green Beret Vanguard Arrives In the Former Soviet Georgia", *The New York Times*, 30 April, 2002, p 16 (section A)

³⁷⁸ Diedrich, John (2002), "US Faces Tough Training Mission in the Caucasus", *Christian Science Monitor*, from CDI Weekly # 208, 31 May, 2002

³⁷⁹ - "Has the Time come for Russian 'Peacekeepers' to Leave Abkhazia?", *Daily News on Russia and the Former Soviet States*, 19 April, 2002, p 1

made on the American military presence. The agreement grants US soldiers the right to enter Georgia without a visa and allows them to carry weapons and military equipment without the ordinary custom procedure. A few of the clauses of the agreement contains information on:³⁸⁰

1. Using buildings and territories
2. Logistical support
3. Observing the law
4. Entry and leaving
5. Status of US military and civilian staff
6. Carrying weapons and military uniform
7. Taxing
8. Movement of aircraft and transport vehicles

In addition, Americans are granted immunity, which has upset many Georgians. They claim that Americans accidentally might injure Georgians without being held responsible for it. When Irakli Batiashvili, Head of the Parliamentary Committee for Defence and Security for commented on this issue, he said:

*As regards the question of why we granted such extensive privileges to the US military, I'd remind you that the US is a strategic partner for Georgia, helping us in building our military forces up to modern standards. It was just our moral obligation to appreciate this.*³⁸¹

Gia Baramidze, MP, and former Head of the Parliamentary Committee for Defence and Security also held this view and said.

*The Georgian Parliament took a very important and vital step by ratifying the agreement on military cooperation between the US and Georgia. The US is a strategic partner and their long-term program in the Caucasus region fully coincides with Georgia's long-term plans, based on which the two countries are close partners. Their relations rely on common interests, and Georgia took this step bearing these interests in mind.*³⁸²

Georgia is, thus, willing to go great lengths in order to meet the American demands on cooperation. This emphasis two things. First, it underscores the asymmetric relationship and, second, it shows that mutual interests have a price in terms of regulatory concessions. Nevertheless, these are the kinds of demands that America have in most states where they act and it is, therefore, not anything special in the case of Georgia.

What is more, none of the states in the Caucasus are considered to be official sponsors of terrorism,³⁸³ and contrary to media reporting, the US does not connect al-Qa'ida to Chechnyan rebels, or see the Chechnyan politicians as terrorists.³⁸⁴ Other groups, as the Hizb-ut-Tharir, do not exist to a noticeable extent either. It is interesting to note that a few month

³⁸⁰ Tatishvili, Temur (2003), "What is Written in the Military Agreement between Georgia and the US?", *Georgian Times*, 21 April 2003, <http://www.georgiantimes.ge/fullview1.php?id=712&cat1=6>, 2003-05-01

³⁸¹ Quoted in: Tatishvili, Temur (2003), "What is Written in the Military Agreement between Georgia and the US?", *Georgian Times*, 21 April 2003, <http://www.georgiantimes.ge/fullview1.php?id=712&cat1=6>, 2003-05-01

³⁸² Quoted in: Tatishvili (2003)

³⁸³ *Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism*, Report of the National Commission on Terrorism Pursuant to Public Law 277, 105th Congress, Federation of American Scientists: <http://www.fas.org/irp/threat/commission.html>, 2003-05-16

³⁸⁴ "US Policy on Chechnya", Steven Pifer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, Statement Before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Washington, DC, 9 May, 2002, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2002/10034pf.htm>, 2003-05-16

after this statement, Vladimir Putin proposed a opposing view by claiming that al-Qa'ida actually have connections in Chechnya.³⁸⁵ The following months, proof of this was undeniable presented as several members were arrested and, apparently, transferred to Guantanamo Bay.³⁸⁶ Although, it is worth noting that the counter-terror agenda of the US, in the region, has been present for several years. As early as in 1992, Georgian servicemen undertook training in the US.³⁸⁷ Even if this is a main goal of the American endeavours, it must be underscored that the education by the Green Berets and the US Marine Corp is not primarily about counter-terrorism; it is about standardised infantry tactics.³⁸⁸

In June 2003, Shevardnadze once again called for US support in relation to the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He stated that all conflicts in Georgia must be discussed in the context of anti-terrorism.³⁸⁹ This is clearly a political, rather than a military, statement. By defining the problem as one of terrorism, it gives legitimacy for handling it with extraordinary means. By definition any forms of negotiations with terrorists are politically impossible to carry out. Arguably, such statements would corner Shevardnadze in this issue and it might infringe on the possibilities to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Nevertheless, American commitments, with or without Georgian assistance, concerning 'anti-terrorist' activities or regaining Georgian territorial integrity, are not on the agenda. It does not matter is, occasionally, requests for such undertakings in Pankisi or Abkhazia are heard from Georgian officials.³⁹⁰ This is a case-point as it highlights three intertwined things. Firstly, it shows that the Georgian government wishes to increase the cooperation with the US far beyond what is agreed on. The government's considerations of Kremlin's opinions are thus low, to say the least. Secondly, it draws a clear line for American commitments. Finally, it highlights the fact that in the cooperation, America is the part that dictates the scope of the cooperation, not only financially.

The Kremlin Dimension

Georgian flirtations with NATO do not have a deterrent effect on Russian interest in Georgia, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Ivanov said in late September of 2002.³⁹¹ Even if Russia is weak, it is stronger than Georgia and still plays a major role in the region. In August of 2002, Russia held its largest post-Soviet military exercises in the Caspian region. The intention was allegedly to focus on the battle against terrorism and was not meant to be against any particular state, Russian officials declared.³⁹² Often, these kinds of exercises are interpreted in terms of power projection and a least it show that some of Russia's intentions. Yet, as late as spring of 2003, at the height of the Iraqi war, Vladimir Putin confirmed that Russia saw the

³⁸⁵ Putin, Vladimir (2002), "Russian President Vladimir Putin's Statement on Situation in Pankisi", 11 September, *Daily Reports on Russia and the Former Soviet Republics*, 12 September, 2002, p 2-3

³⁸⁶ - "Al-Qaeda Presence in Georgia's Pankisi Valley", *Daily Reports on Russia and the Former Soviet Republics*, 21 October, 2002, p 3

³⁸⁷ Ekedahl, Carolyn M. & Goodman, Melvin A. (2001) (2nd ed), *The Wars of Eduard Shevardnadze*, Dulles: Bassey's, p 275

³⁸⁸ Ekberg, Allison (2003), "GTEP: and then What", *AmCham News*, no 2, 2003, p 20f

³⁸⁹ Messenger Opinion (2003D), "Shevardnadze Waits for U.S. Assistance on Abkhazia", *The Georgian Messenger*, 13 June 2003, p 2

³⁹⁰ Pochkhua (2003), p 4

³⁹¹ "Georgia's Accession to NATO Does not Worry Russia, Says Defence Minister", *Itar-Tass*, 19 September, 2002, from CDI Weekly # 223, 20 September, 2002

³⁹² "Russia Flexes Muscles in the Caspian with Large-scale Military Exercises", *AFP*, 1 August, 2002, from CDI Weekly # 217, 2 August, 2002

GTEP as a net gain for Russia.³⁹³ It is nevertheless true; the risks of upsetting Russia, is of no concern for Georgia, at least not in the light of the cooperation with the United States. The reason for that is, in the view of Temuri Yakobashvili, that it does not matter what is done along the borders of Russia. If Russia does not control the area, it will not approve of anything of such kind and therefore Georgia can pursue whatever policy it prefers.³⁹⁴

In a long-term perspective, if one assumes that the US is 'rewarded' permanent access to air force bases in Georgia as a result of its military and financial assistance. This would have a great impact on the relations in the region. First, it would not be appreciated by Russia to have even more American soldiers positioned along its southern tier. Second, by this, the US could reach not only Russia but also the Middle Eastern countries from the north. If further wars were taking place in the Middle East, such access would be an asset for the US, especially since Saudi Arabia is reluctant to support such actions. This assumption may not be as far-fetched as it might seem and at least the idea is worth some consideration, no matter if the article in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, quoted in previous case study, has any substance or not.

Yet another episode that supports the argument of the importance of perceptions, is the statements by Irina Sarishvili from the Governments Bloc political Party in mid-June 2003. She states that Russian Special Service (unspecified which of them, presumably SVR) is conducting covert operation with the intention to destabilise Georgia. Sarishvili, in relation to the Kmara-campaign, launched this idea in spring of 2003 and she stated that Moscow's intention was to replace the Shevardnadze regime. Furthermore, she argues that Russia had planned the operations for August but it was carried out earlier than planned due to the tension in the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia. It was said to be followed by increased criminal activity and discrediting of Georgia in world affairs along with increased domestic tension. The Russian General HQ's plan is, according to Sarishvili, to support Chechnyan General Ruslan Gelaev and the invasion by his 1000-men strong army into Georgia on which the Russian Army would follow. Sarishvili claims to know the identity of the actors involved, but has so far refused to make it public. Additionally she accused Vladimir Putin, as he is the one that gives orders to the General HQ. Due to the claims by Sarishvili, The Georgian Messenger calls for stronger actions by the government, to handle pro-Russian actors in Georgia and clear up its relations with Moscow. However, Tbilisi needs Moscow's help in handling refugees from Abkhazia and if it is shown that there is no ground for these accusations, it can be concluded that Sarishvili only tried to score some additional points before the general election.³⁹⁵

'Commitment by Default'

This leads to the idea that American interests, vital or not, are not directly connected to survival, but relate to US foreign policy in general, as Zbigniew Brzezinski discusses.³⁹⁶ He poses a set of broad questions concerning the American endeavours in Eurasia which include the following three:

*What kind of Russia is in America's interest, and what and how much can America do about it?
What are the prospects for the emergence in Central Eurasia of a new 'Balkans,' and what*

³⁹³ George (2003), p 10ff

³⁹⁴ Interview with Temuri Yakobashvili, Executive vice-President of the GFSIS, Tbilisi, 24 June, 2003

³⁹⁵ Messenger Opinion (2003), "Who Stands to Gain from Destabilization", *The Georgian Messenger*, 18 June, 2003, p 2

³⁹⁶ Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1997), *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers

As indicated, this bears importance and the first case has partly been discussed already. A hostile, or at least non-cooperative Russia is of no gain neither for the US, nor for Georgia. However, the Georgian-American cooperation, especially on security, does nothing to reduce the likeliness of such a development. Concerning the second question, the cooperation is fruitful. A strong, stable and democratic authority in Tbilisi would decrease any problems with 'balkanisation' and given a stronger economic situation, Georgia would be able to handle the Russian presence without suffering from the yoke of dependence. Finally, Georgia is not a part of any coalition that threatens the US. Emergence of such structures is yet not plausible. However, there are other risks worth penetrating.

François Heisbourg defines three main risks of the US foreign policy. First, the US can be seen as overemphasising the use of force. Maybe this is not the case in Georgia, but a military presence will certainly have a similar effect on Russia. Second, even if that is the case, the 'trigger-happy sheriff' maybe reluctant to come, when called upon. Finally, the US can be seen as a paper tiger, unwillfull to make sacrifices other than for its own vital interests.³⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the US can be a 'trigger-happy sheriff' and a paper tiger at the same time. Extending this idea further, one risk is that the US reluctantly will end up in a military conflict by its very presence. Even if the US commitment to military affairs, or as guarantor of peace and stability, is neither explicit in rhetoric, nor as a hidden agenda - deepened presence will enhance the risks. This could happen in two ways: first, as a situation where the regional states invite the US to take on an active military role; second as a 'commitment by default'. The first case is rather unlikely as America has refused such proposals, but the second idea is worth exploring.

'Commitment by default' is thus a risk derived from the plain fact that the US has troops for educational purposes. Having troops on foreign ground provides a military target and they will likely be protected as such, even if their role in the region is of a passive and peaceful nature. Its very presence thereby poses a risk. RAND comes to a similar conclusion and highlights that if the US is engaged in a region with political tension, this does not only affect them, but the US affects the situation too. In addition, the US has responsibilities towards the local Government that must be considered when exit strategies are formed.³⁹⁹ As indicated, if Georgia fails to develop into a democratic state, the US will withdraw most of its commitments, David Smith argues.⁴⁰⁰ However, Menagharishvili states that this is of no concern when cooperating. The reason is that if Georgia so does, the problems are so overwhelming that US support takes only a marginal role.⁴⁰¹

Even if the US does not end up in a conflict, as discussed above, the opposite scenario is risky too. The US is trying to win the hearts and minds of the Georgians by showing a huge interest in the region and provides aid and expertise in many ways. This creates a situation of trust and cooperation with shared goals and joint ventures for promoting security with common allies and against common enemies. By applying a cognitive aspect, the 'realist' setting of

³⁹⁷ Brzezinski, (1997), p 48f

³⁹⁸ Heisbourg (2000), p 13f

³⁹⁹ Oliker (2003), p 225

⁴⁰⁰ Smith, David (2003B), presentation on US Engagements in Georgia at the GFSIS, 23 June, 2003

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Irakli Menagharishvili, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Georgia, Tbilisi, 26 June, 2003

conflictual dynamics may create a situation where the expectation of a presumed ally rises more than what the US is willing to handle. This involves two risks. The first is that Georgia cannot count on US support when it needs it, which will affect future relations. The second is that if one regional state presumes that Georgia has military support from the US, the existing security dilemma gets stronger. Cognitions become consolidated. This will infringe Georgia's possibilities to interact with other states in the region.

Exit Strategies of Cooperation

As mentioned previously, there is no point in ending Georgian-US cooperation for the sake of it. However, the forms of cooperation will undoubtedly change over time. Alan Dobson raises the question of such a withdrawal in general. He argues that exit strategies must be related to a consolidation of archived goals.⁴⁰² Three options come at hand for the US. First, withdrawing all aid, support and commitment from the region. Second, handing over all security 'responsibility' they have been engaged in to a third party, either a regional state or an organisation like the OSCE or the UN. The final option is to consolidate the own presence in a long-term perspective. This bears importance as shifts in the alliances and quasi-alliances are based on perceptions. If the setting changes – it will also affect the US' plan of priorities. In either case, the US might single-handedly withdraw from cooperation, if its prioritisation changes. RAND concludes:

*And whatever choices the United States makes in coming years, as long as it remains involved in the region at all, its local unrest, conflict, and economic and political problems, themselves possibly exacerbated by the evolving situation in Afghanistan, will complicate U.S. military and other efforts in Central Asia, South Caucasus, and beyond.*⁴⁰³

Michael Emerson, states that as the US is much more involved in the Near East than the EU is, it has greater prospects from having an impact. Furthermore, he states that that from now on, the US has, basically, two options, as far as conflict resolution is concerned. The first option is to support Georgia in peace mediation over Abkhazia and promotes its NATO aspirations, which naturally have the disadvantage of agonizing Russia. The second option is to take on the role as one of three actors along with Russia and the EU. As Russian interests in solving the frozen conflicts are few, Emerson believes that this scenario is less plausible.⁴⁰⁴ Likewise, Kathleen O'Halloran argues that "[t]he U.S. should adopt a strategy that assures it will retain the flexibility to choose when and where to use its power and influence, at what time."⁴⁰⁵ In sum, this is a core of the asymmetric cooperation between Georgia and the United States.

4.5 Conclusions

By pinpointing the findings of this study, it can be said that an unfavourable perception of the US by a regional actor is not *by definition* a threat to security or a strategic problem. Still, the effects of these 'soft' perceptions are indeed related to security as they underlie political action. Accordingly, these 'soft' risks can move into the 'hard', physical realm. Subsequently, it might cause other problems and thus deserves attention from policy-makers. These problems can be related to Georgia, the US or both. In any case, it would affect future

⁴⁰² Dobson, Alan P. (2002), "Dangers of US Interventionism", *Review of International Studies*, no 28, 2002, p 594f

⁴⁰³ Olikier (2003), p 240

⁴⁰⁴ Messenger Opinion (2003C), "Who Will Settle Caucasian Conflicts?", *The Georgian Messenger*, 16 June, 2003, p 2

⁴⁰⁵ O'Halloran (1999), p 65

cooperation. There is nothing in this study that shows any of such a danger that cooperation should be reduced.

It must be remembered that a threat is something negative that might happen in the future. Although 'might happen' is not the same as existing intentions to realise it, it can be argued that everything or anything might happen. When an actor's intention exists along with capacity to realise a threat, it becomes an issue of priority. This poses a risk that is a function of the consequences of what might happen and the probability for it to happen. If the consequences or probability is fatal and/or high, there is a high level risk.⁴⁰⁶ These risks are not only related to the threats themselves but also to how they are perceived. Even if intentions are rarely known, risks need to be assessed, as the consequences may be serious. However, even if the probability of several independent parameters or consequences is high, it does not make the total outcome probable.⁴⁰⁷ More important, there is a risk of error due to mistake or misinformation, but also, a risk of being ignorant or having informative vacuity.⁴⁰⁸

In order to facilitate understanding of the strategic problems related to Georgian-American security cooperation, this chapter divides the issues discussed hitherto into the 'soft' perceptive problems and the 'hard' realist ones. By this, this chapter seeks to answer the question posed in chapter one: *what long-term issues and risks are connected with the US-Georgian security cooperation?* Nonetheless, a few general comments can be made. First of all, the two objective of US policy in Georgia have been at a focus of this study and it has attempted to highlight the implications related to this. Potential positive outcome of the Georgian-US cooperation has thus been deliberately neglected and must be the object for further study. Moreover it can be concluded that the cooperation has a great impact both in military and civil aspects. Concerning 'soft' security issues, three main things can be said.

Firstly, the US-Georgian security cooperation may create expectations related to future commitment. The very presence of the US can create expectations that the capabilities and intentions of Washington cannot or do not want to handle. It has been shown that Tbilisi would preferably see an enhanced level of commitment possible by military means. In addition to this, the US runs the risk of being seen as either a 'trigger happy sheriff' or a 'paper tiger'. Indeed, this is no new situation for American foreign policy, but it would also affect Georgia if regional actors have a negative impression of the cooperation - especially if it is unjustified. High stake commitment by the US is unlikely, even if Georgia so wishes. This emphasises an asymmetrical aspect of the cooperation.

Secondly, the US can, once again, be seen as a supporter of authoritarian and corrupt regimes. However, it has been discussed above that dogmatic adherence to democracy might be counter-productive. Nevertheless, as long as the Georgian-American cooperation covers substantially more than support for the regime, such criticism is out of context. Besides, Georgia's elements of authoritarianism are low and attention is given to decrease the level of corruptions. Therefore there are reasons to believe that this point is of minor importance.

Finally, there can be a discrepancy in the understanding of Georgian security by Washington and Tbilisi. Georgian and American conceptions of security must harmonise if the

⁴⁰⁶ Furustig, Hans & Sjöstedt, Gunnar (2000), *Strategisk omvärldsanalys*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp 26-28

⁴⁰⁷ Agrell, Wilhelm (1998), *Konsten att gissa rätt: Underrättelsevetenskapens grunder*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, p 186

⁴⁰⁸ Rescher, Nicholas (1998), *Predicting the Future: An Introduction to the Theory of Forecasting*, New York: New York University Press, p 67

cooperation is to be successful in the long run. This is one of the most fundamental aspects that all forms of cooperation must take into consideration. From what has been said it is clear that in most cases, this harmony is limping severely. In addition, efforts must be made to convince the public of the general advantage of cooperation, otherwise it endangers the positive outcome of cooperation.

If the 'hard' issues are under the magnifying glass, four things emerge. *Firstly, the advent of a new security context may change the venue of cooperation.* In the quasi-alliance system, the US interferes at the regional level, which will create a new security context as both an internal, and external, transformation occurs. By and large, the US is a part of the Israel-Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan axis. The other axis consists of Russia-Armenia-Iran. Judging from the US objectives in the region, it can be said that this is what Washington prefers. A serious implication may arise if this worsens Georgia's position towards any of the regional states. As it seems, Georgia is willing to take that risk.

Secondly, the US could be ending up in a conflict by its very presence. It has been argued that the US strategic engagement in Georgia brings about risks that may have not existed otherwise, although the US' troops are of a modest size so far. The deeper and wider the military presence is, the higher the risk is. There is yet nothing that highlights this risk as far as military actions are concerned, but if the commitments are deepened and widened, it must be taken into the equation.

Thirdly, handling of what is thought of to be a zero-sum game. When the US as a strong and in the region unthreatened, state cooperates with Georgia on regional security matters it provides stability. Only if it is carried out in a way that does not bring about higher risks than before, the progress is given. It is clear that several actors, especially Russia, consider the undertakings in the Caucasus as a highly prioritised zero-sum game. This needs to be handled in order to prevent a renewed, and costly, regional power struggle but the US and Georgia do little in this aspect.

Finally, commitment is a double-edged sword. No commitment is safe for the US as it can end up being in the middle of a conflict. At the same time, its presence can stabilise the situation. The intentions or capabilities to realise threats are not accounted for in this study and the actual level of the risks mentioned cannot be assessed, as the methodological tools are insufficient for such a quantitative undertaking.

FINAL REMARKS

It can be said that drawing any specific conclusions from the three case studies in this paper would serve no purpose, as they are all different in style and content. However, a general impression is that although Georgia has been trying to organise its security for over a decade, it is too early to judge and evaluate the reform and actions undertaken. Assessments above largely indicate that there are several steps in a reform. First an awareness of the needs of reform must emerge. Secondly, problems must be identified and thirdly an agenda or action plan must be formulated. Fourthly, implementation should be made and finally an evaluation is possible. This study has looked at all of these five points and in relation to that, two things can be said. Firstly, the first step has been fulfilled, while the second and third is emerging in a vague and unclear way. The fourth and fifth step has with a few exceptions not really been launched. The prospects for the future greatly depend on the forthcoming laws, regulations, concepts and doctrines and most of all on their implementation. Apart from this, and what has been stated above, further speculations will not be made.

APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 - Acronyms

AFP	Agence France Presse
APC	Armoured Personnel Carrier
APF	Azerbaijan Popular Front
BBC	British Broadcasting System
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation
CAST	Centre for Anti-terrorism and Security Training
CDI	Center for Defense Information
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
EBRD	European Bank of Reconstruction and Development
FOA	Försvarets Forskningsanstalt, since 2001 FOI
FOI	Totalförsvarets Forskningsinstitut
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTEP	Georgian Train-and-Equip Programme
GUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova
GUUAM	Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Moldova
ICCS	International Crime Control Strategy
ISAB	International Security Advisory Board
IHT	International Herald Tribune
IGO	International Governmental Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INOGATE	Interstate oil and gas transport to Europe
MBT	Main Battle Tank
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MSS	Ministry of State Security
MVD	See MOI
NATO	Northern Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBR	National Bureau of Asian Research
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSS	National Security Strategy
NUPI	Norsk Utenrikspolitikk Institutt
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PPP	Purchase Power Parity
RFL/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
RIIA	Royal Institute of International Affairs
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TRACECA	Transport Corridor Europe, Caucasus, Asia
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USMC	United States Marine Corps
WB	The World Bank
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

Appendix 2 – Intra-Caucasian Relations

Table 2: Intra -Caucasian Relations

	USA	Russia	Azer.	Arm.	Georgia	Iran	Turkey
USA		P/N	P	P	P	N	P
Russia	P/N		N	P	N	P	N
Azer.	P	N		N	P	N	P
Arm.	P	P	N		P	P	N
Georgia	P	N	P	P		P	P
Iran	N	P	N	P	P		P
Turkey	P	N	P	N	P	P	

P = positive relation, N = negative relation, P/N = altering positive/negative

Appendix 3 – Paramilitary Groups etc.

Existing Paramilitary Groups and Militias

Chechens: Allegedly, Chechen fighters cross the Georgian border in numerous places, but mainly to the Pankisi Gorge. Georgian authorities have since 2001 launched several unsuccessful campaigns to regain control over the gorge. Arab fighters on the Chechen side have also taken a refugee from Russian military in the Gorge. This is a major source of instability and a prioritised need for the government to handle.

Private Security Companies: Although the rules and laws concerning private security companies are unclear, several exist. Occasionally they have enjoyed police status by bribing officials in order to get around the regulations on the right to carry arms.⁴⁰⁹

‘Aslan Abashidze’s Force’: Currently, the ruler of Adjara, Aslan Abashidze, has his own MSS and MOI in addition to his loyal personal guards. The Georgian 25th Motorised Rifle Brigade located in Adjara has also been suspected of having loyalty to Abashidze rather than to Tbilisi, as it mainly consists of Adjarians. An indication of the autonomy of the local forces is that they occasionally carry out military exercises without notifying Tbilisi in advance.

Forest Brothers: This is a Georgian guerrilla in Abkhazia and Mingrelia, led by David Shengelia. Claims are heard that they are cooperating with the Abkhazian ‘enemy’ in order to make money on smuggling in Gali and Zugdidi.

White Legion: Mixture of bandits and freedom fighters armed with grenades, machine guns and mines. Located in Abkhazia.⁴¹⁰

Hunter Militia Battalion: This is a small group found in the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia, which formerly served the MOI and the MOD.

Mingrelian and Svanetian Groups: Small groups of guerrillas and armed bandits that usually do not leave the forests of Mingrelia and Svaneti.

Association of Georgian Patriots: This group created by Zarandia is comprised of old supporters of Gamsakhurdia. Currently the stand on Shevardnadze’s side and is lightly armed and can be hired for various tasks, rumours claim

Parents: Located in Javakheti, it consists of Armenians that oppose the Georgian military presence in the region and support the Russians.⁴¹¹

Feydan: The existence of this group has not been confirmed other than by the Alia Newspaper. It is said to be located in Javakheti and trained and equipped at the Russian base in Akhalkhalaki.⁴¹²

‘Kakheti Group’: As a response to the tension in Pankisi, local residents set up a paramilitary force that now is dissolved. However, the former members still are in the possession of weapons and occasionally helps the local authorities in Telavi.⁴¹³

Former Paramilitary Groups and Militias⁴¹⁴

National Groups

Mkhedrioni: Group created by Djaba Ioseliani who currently, after having been released from prison, was appointed by Shevardnadze as security chief of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline project. Consisted of some 2500 servicemen and later merged with official Georgian structures.

⁴⁰⁹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 76

⁴¹⁰ Matveeva (2003), p 27

⁴¹¹ Darchiashvili (2003), p 90

⁴¹² Darchiashvili (2003), p 90

⁴¹³ Darchiashvili (2003), p 90

⁴¹⁴ Demetriou, Spyros (2002), *Politics from the Barrel of a Gun: Small Arms Proliferation and Conflict in the Republic of Georgia (1989-2001)*, Occasional Paper, no 6, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International Studies, p 7

Imedi – Hope: 200 men strong group that had the role of an armed branch of the political party ‘Popular Front’. Now it is a part of the National Guards.

Tetri Georgi – White George: Faction of the Mkhedrionis that later joined the political organisation of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in the early 1990s.

Falcon Legion: Some 50 men that in the late 1980s refused to join the Soviet Army.

Tetri Artsivi – White Eagles: Militia during the South Ossetian conflict in 1990-91. It comprised of some 120 men that later merged with the National Guards.

Orbi: Old paramilitary group that joined the National Guards.

Zviadist Forces of a National Guard Faction: Group of 2200 men.

Sachkhere Squadron: A 200-500 men strong group from Western Georgia that in the 1990s was incorporated in the National Guard.

In South Ossetia

South Ossetian OMON: 700-800 men that made the foundation of a special purpose military unit under the responsibility of the South Ossetian authorities.

South Ossetia Secessionist National Guard: 2200 men strong in early 1990s.

South Ossetian Republican Guards: Group of less than 100 men.

Adamon Nykhas: Armed wing of the political opposition in South Ossetia.

In Abkhazia

Abkhaz Secessionist National Guard Regiment: Some 4500 soldiers.

Aidgylara Militia: A 100 men strong armed wing of the political opposition to the government in Abkhazia

Abkhaz Ministry of the Interior Battalion: Internal troops of the unrecognised government of Abkhazia. Consisted of several hundred soldiers.

Abkhaz Volunteers (Russian/Cossack mercenaries): Group of up to 4500 men in 1991-1993.

Appendix 4 – Georgian Military in Abkhazia

Georgian Military Forces in Abkhazia in 2001.⁴¹⁵

Guard Company

Strength: 60

Equipment: 4 APCs (BTR-70), 1 self-propelled anti-aircraft artillery system 3CU-23-4 'Shilka'

Communications Company

Strength: 50

Equipment: 4 military vehicles P-142, 1 P-145

Army Ground Troops

Located: East, West and Central

Strength: five motorised rifle battalions, one rapid reaction unit, two reconnaissance battalions, two armoured battalions and three artillery units.

Equipment: 35-40 MBTs (T-54, T-55, T-66), 80 APC/AIFVs (BTR-70, BMP-1, BMP-2, BRDM-2), 100 Artillery units (D-30, D-44, C-60, KC-19, T-12, BM-21 "Grad" MRLS)

Air Force

Strength: 250

Equipment: Planes: 1 MIG-21, 1 Su-25, 2 L-39, 1 Yak-52; Helicopters: 2 Mi-8

Navy

Located: 1st div: HQ in Sukhumi
2nd div: HQ in Bitchvinta

Strength: 1st div: 70
2nd div: 25

Equipment: 1st div: 2 Patrol boats (Grif), 9 Fishing vessels (Volga), 1 Motorboat
2nd div: 8 Civil boats, 2 Howitzers (85mm D-44), 1 APC/AIFV (BRDM-2)

Air Defence

Located: 1st div: HQ in Ochamchire
2nd div: HQ in Agudzera
3rd div: HQ in Bitchvinta

Strength: 1st div: 90 on paper (50 in reality)
2nd div: 160 on paper (60 in reality)
3rd div: 70

Equipment: 1st div: 9 Anti-aircraft artillery (ZU-23-2), 1 100mm anti-aircraft gun, ~10 Shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles (Strela, Igla)
2nd div: 4 Self-propelled anti-aircraft artillery (ZSU-23-4 Shilka), 2 100mm anti-aircraft guns, ~12 Shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles (Strela, Igla)
3rd div: 3 Anti-aircraft artillery (ZU-23-2), 3 57mm anti-aircraft guns (S-60), ~8 Shoulder-launched surface-to-air missiles (Strela, Igla).

⁴¹⁵ "Kviris Palitra" No. 44, October 29-November 4, p. 9 2001 - Press Digest, "Are Weapons Illegally Transited Through Georgia?", *Army and Society in Georgia*, Center for Civil-Military Relations and Security Studies; Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, September-October, 2001

Appendix 5 – National Security Council

The law of Georgia on the National Security Council ⁴¹⁶

Article 1. National Security Council

In Accordance with Article 99 of the Constitution of Georgia the National Security Council is established to build up military forces and to organize defence of the country and it is headed by the President of Georgia.

Article 2. Status of the National Security Council

The National Security Council is the consultative body of the President of Georgia for taking decisions on the strategic issues of building up military forces, organizing defence, domestic and foreign policy relating to state security, stability and law and order providing. The Constitution of Georgia determines the composition, authority and procedure of activity of the National Security Council by this law and other legislative acts.

Article 3. Authority of the President of Georgia.

The National Security Council:

- a) Provides the elaboration of national security conception
- b) Considers the main issues of domestic and foreign policy relating to providing of state defence and security
- c) Considers the programs of building up and strengthening military forces and provides the organization of its implementation
- d) Studies and analyses the situation and perspectives in regions of international conflicts
- e) Elaborates the proposals on cooperation of Georgia with collective security systems
- f) In accordance with international agreements and treaties concluded with and by Georgia considers the issues of participation of Georgia in measures of security providing out of the bounders of the country
- g) Considers the issues of permitting the entry, use and movement of military forces of other state on the territory of Georgia for the purpose of state defence in special cases and cases envisaged by law;
- h) Elaborates drafts of law and other normative acts on defence and national security issues;
- i) Annually submits the strength of military forces to the Parliament of Georgia;
- j) Considers the issues of readiness of military forces for action and mobilization
- k) Prepares the directive documents of the President of Georgia - Supreme Commander in Chief of military forces in order to implement the planned tasks
- l) Coordinates military scientific-research activity
- m) Considers the perspectives of functioning and development of military industry
- n) Considers the issues of training and distribution of military personnel, performance and mobilization of military duties;
- o) Coordinates the activity of defence, state security and law enforcement institutions in strategic issues on providing security, law and order and stability
- p) Controls the activity of ministries, state departments, corporations and other state bodies, state governments of Autonomous Republics and institutions of local government in the field of security and defence
- q) On the base of labour contracts invites scientists and specialists from organizations, scientific-research institutions, economical, legal, sociological and political centers
- r) Elaborates and submits to the President of Georgia the complex of measures on exposure, prediction, prevention and naturalization of domestic and foreign threats against vital interests of the country;
- s) During a state of emergency elaborates proposals for prevention or elimination of hard political, social, economical, ecological and other consequences
- t) Organizes and controls the elaboration and implementation of necessary measures for reliable defence of objects of vital importance and their safe functioning;
- u) Considers the issues relating to the declaration of a state of war or a state of emergency by the President of Georgia
- v) Considers the issues relating to the appointing of the representative of the President in the region of emergency situation
- w) Implements other authorities envisaged by Georgian legislation

Article 4. Composition of the National Security Council

The members of the National Security Council are: the President of Georgia (the Head of the Council), State Minister of Georgia, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defence, Minister of State Security, Minister of Internal Affairs and the Secretary of the National Security Council.

⁴¹⁶ “The Law of Georgia on the National Security Council”, National Security Council, Adopted on May 24, 1994 by President Eduard Shevardnadze, <http://www.nsc.gov.ge/EN/main.htm>, 2003-05-30

The President of Georgia appoints these and other members of National Security Council.
The Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia, the Chairman of the Autonomous Republics of Abkhazia and Adjara directly participate in the activity of the National Security Council.
The Secretary of the National Security Council is the Assistant to the President on National Security Issues by his\her position.

Article 5. The authority of the Secretary of the National Security Council

The Secretary of National Security Council:

- a) Provides the organization of the activity of the National Security Council
- b) Heads the Apparatus of the National Security Council
- c) Submits the structure and regular staff of the Apparatus of the National Security Council to the President of Georgia
- d) Prepares sittings of the National Security Council
- e) Controls the implementation of orders and decrees of the President of Georgia and his other acts on national security issues
- f) Coordinates the activity of permanent and temporary joint commissions established by the National Security Council
- g) Signs labour contracts and orders of the National Security Council on expert analytical works
- h) Signs official documents in the framework of his\her competence

Article 6. The Rule of Consideration of Issue in the National Security Council

The President of Georgia gathers the sittings of the National Security Council.

The member of the National Security Council elaborate recommendations on issues considered for the purpose of taking decisions by the President of Georgia.

Article 7. Joint Commissions of the National Security Council

The National Security Council established permanent or temporary joint commissions on functional or regional ground in conformity with the main tasks of its activity.

The permanent or temporary commission by proposal of the National Security Council is headed by the member of the national security council or a person authorized so by the President of Georgia.

The authority, procedure of establishment and activity of the commissions of the National Security Council is determined by regulations, approved by the President of Georgia.

Article 8. The Apparatus of the National Security Council

The Apparatus of the National Security Council provides organizational- technical and informative-analytical activity of the National Security Council. The Secretary of the National Security Council heads the Apparatus.

The President of Georgia approves the structure of regular staff and regulations of the Apparatus of the National Security Council.

Appendix 6 - Budget Figures of the MOD

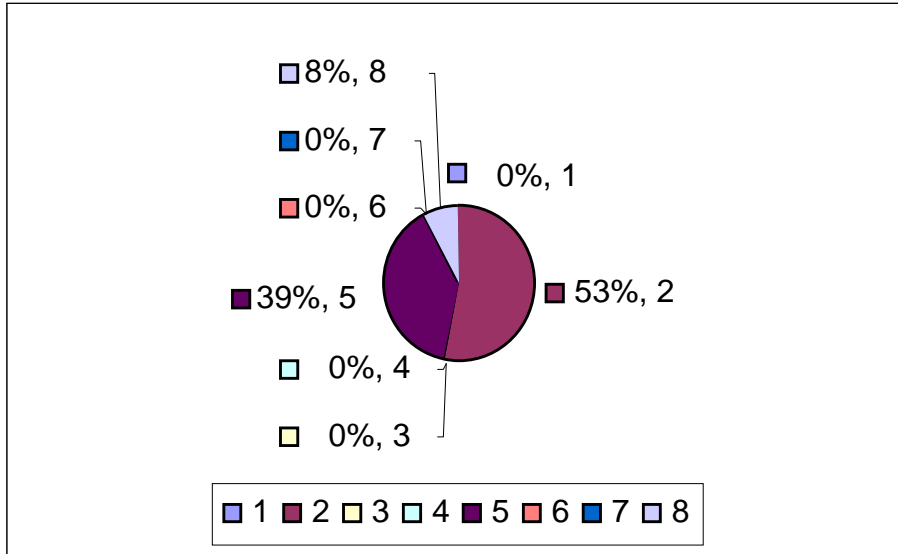
Table 3: Budget of the Ministry of Defence

Year	Expected GDP, Million.	% of GDP	Million. GEL
1999	5 600.0	0.98	55.00
2000	6 300.0	0.69	43.75
2001	6 800.0	0.5	34.60
2002	7 300.0	0.52	38.5
2003	7 800.0	0.87	67.9

Source: State Budget of Georgia.

Appendix 7 – MOD Spending 2001⁴¹⁷

Figure 1: Budget Spending of the MOD 2001



Source: State Budget of Georgia

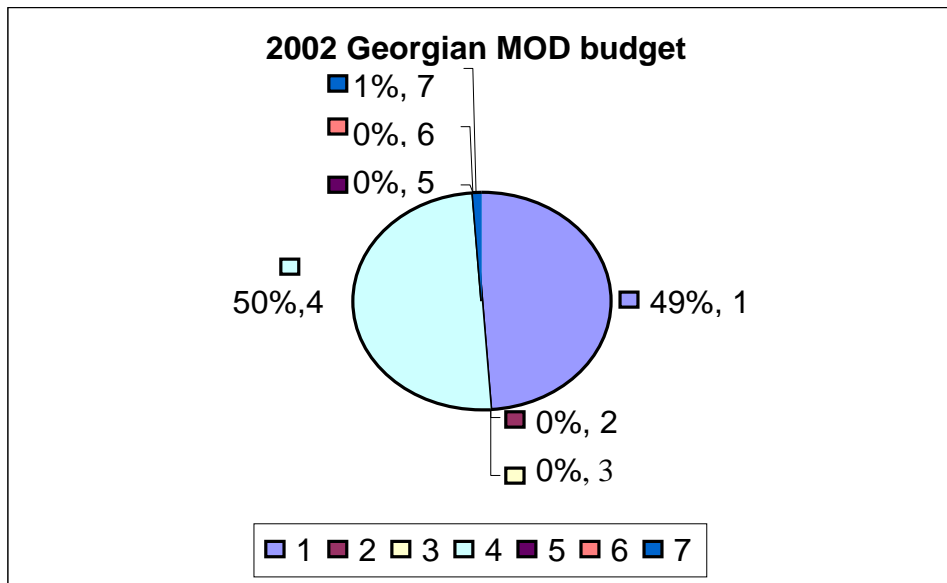
Explanation of diagram:

1. Procurement of materiel
2. Payroll of the Defence Forces
3. Upkeep of conscripts (excluding salaries)
4. Rents
5. Other operational expenses of the Defence Forces
6. Peace-keeping
7. Costs of value added tax
8. Other expenditure of the administrative branch

⁴¹⁷ This diagram was prepared by Tamara Pataria on the basis on the state budget.

Appendix 8 – MOD Spending 2002⁴¹⁸

Figure 2: Budget Spending of the MOD 2002



Source: State Budget of Georgia

Explanation of diagram

1. Payroll of the Defence Forces
2. Upkeep of conscripts (excluding salaries)
3. Rents
4. Other operational expenses of the Defence Forces
5. Peacekeeping costs
6. Costs of VAT
7. Other expenses of the administrative branch
8. Procurement of materiel

⁴¹⁸ This diagram was prepared by Tamara Patariaia on the basis on the state budget.

Appendix 9 - Defense Forces, April 2003⁴¹⁹

GROUND COMBAT VEHICLES

Tanks

31 T -72 main battle tanks
59 T-55

Armored Combat Vehicles

68 BMP -1
13 BMP-2
18 BRM-1K BRDM-1/BRDM-2 BTR-50
1 BTR-60
18 BTR-70
3 BTR-80
144 MT-LB
5 BRB-3

ARTILLERY

Guns/Howitzers/SP

60 122-mm D-30 towed howitzer
1 100-mm KS-19 towed anti-tank gun
85-mm D-44 towed field gun
3 152-mm 2A36
10 152-mm 2A65
1 152-mm 2S3 SP
1 203-mm 2S7 SP

Multiple Rocket Launchers

16 122-mm BM-21 Grad Mortar
17 M-120 120-mm

MISSILES

Anti-tank

AT-3 Sagger /AT-4 Spigot
Russian 9K11 Malyutka/9K111 Fagot

AIRCRAFT

Fighter/Attack

7 Su-25 Frogfoot
5 Su-17 Fitter (non-operational)
9 L-29

Helicopters

10 UH-1H Iroquois, transport
4 Mi-8 Hip transport
3 Mi-24 Hind attack
2 Mi-2 Hoplite training

Training

10 L-39C Albatros Transport
1 Tu-134 VIP
6 An-2 transport
2 Yak-40 transport

Surface-to-Air

(75 launchers including:)

⁴¹⁹ Information mainly from: - *The Military Balance 2002-2003*, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies

SA-2 Guidline (Russian S-57 Dvina)
SA-3 Goa (Russian S-125 Neva)
SA-5 Gammon (Russian S-200 Angara)

Radio Direction Finding Systems

4 P-18
1 19J6
2 P-15
2 P-12
2 PRV-16

Rocket Launching System

2 L-125

VESSELS

Patrol Craft

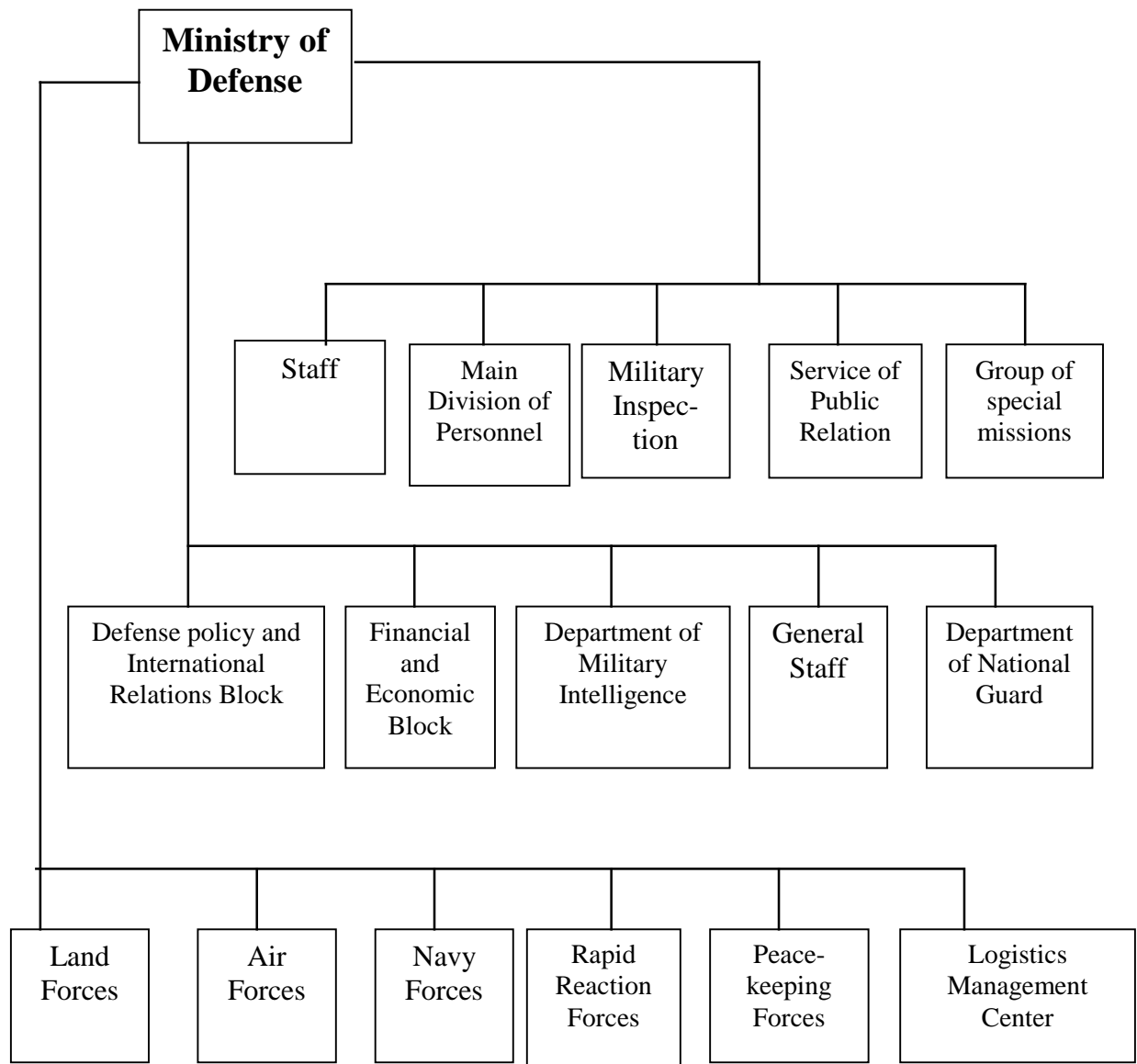
1(+2) LINDAU (Type 331) class (Germany)
2 DILIOS class

Coastal Patrol Craft

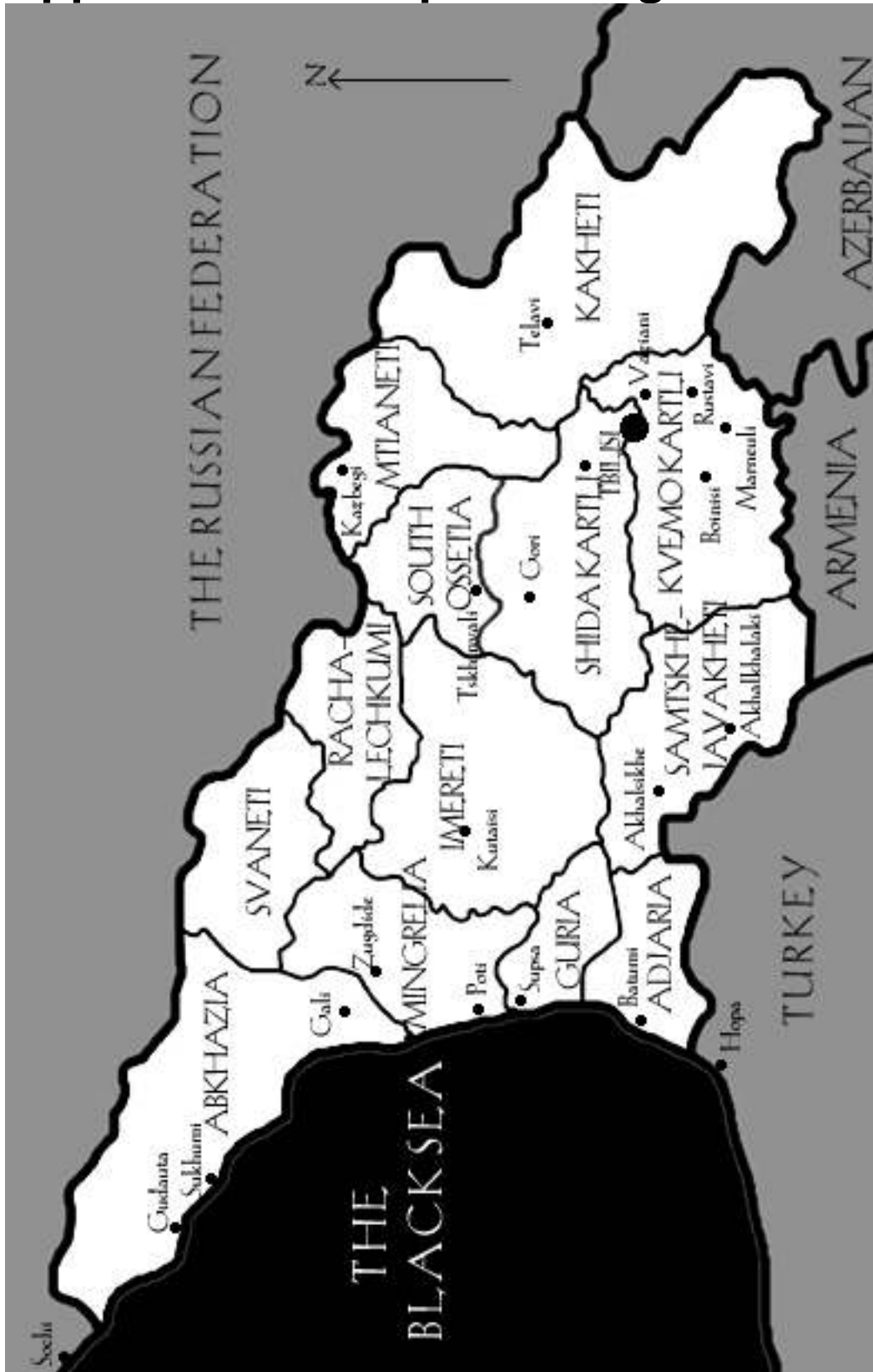
2 Mk. 5
1 Commander ship
3 Artillery ship
1 Artillery-Rocket launcher ship
2 Artillery boat
1 Paratrooper ship
1 Paratrooper boat
1 Large patrol boat
1 Diving boat
1 Cruiser boat
1 River boat
1 Hydrographic boat

Appendix 10 – MOD Structure

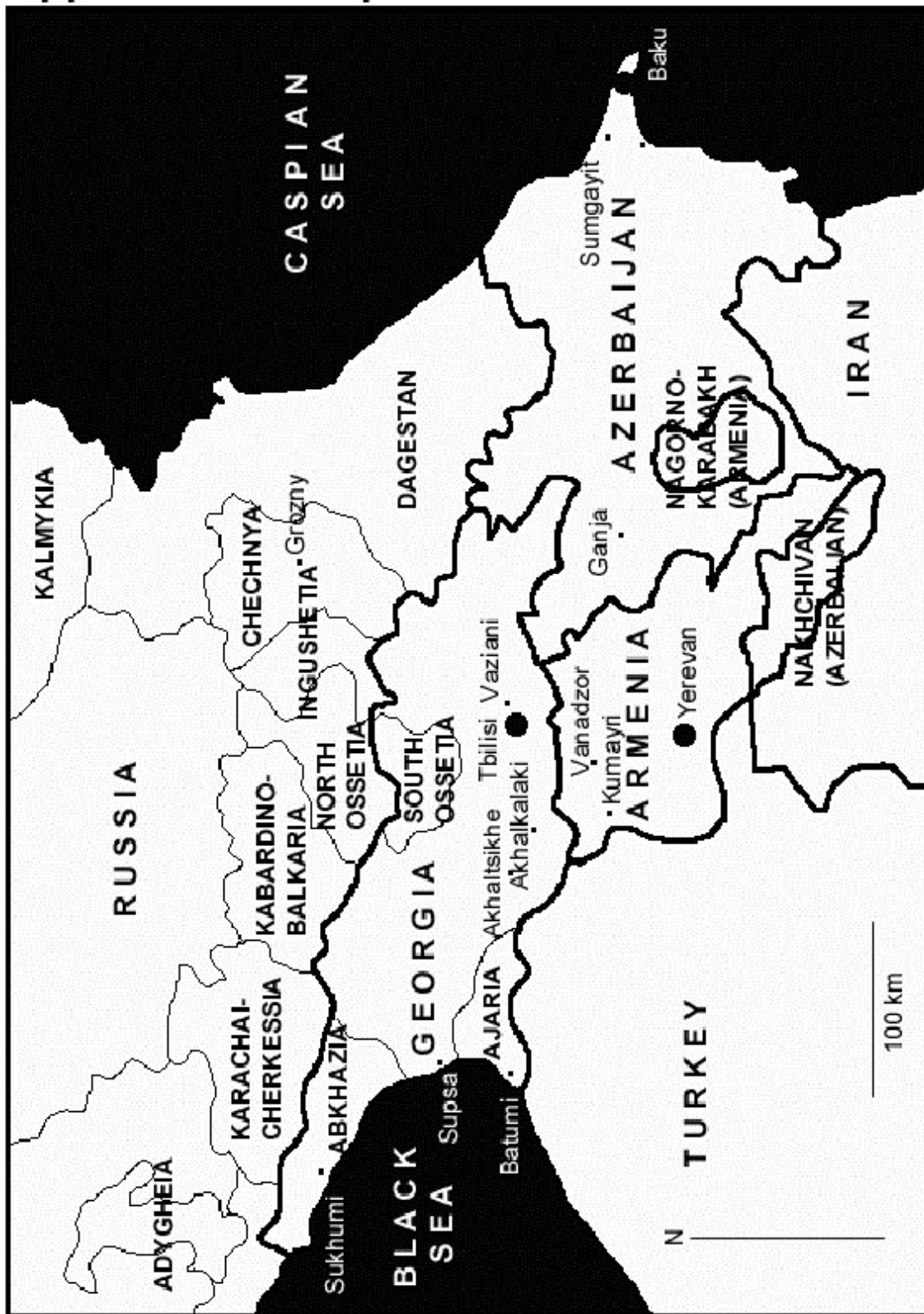
Figure 3: Structure of Georgian Ministry of Defence 2002



Appendix 11 – Map of Georgia



Appendix 12 – Map of the Caucasus



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