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## **STATUS REPORT ON SECURITY SECTOR GOVERNANCE IN GEORGIA**

### **Expert Interviews on State and Prospects of SSR in Georgia**

Security Sector Governance in Georgia is a topic which is certainly not easy to explore. First of all there is no up-to-date literature, at least none which considers the entire complexity of the relevant aspects and elements influencing security sector governance and security sector reform (SSR) in the country. Second research work on security sector governance relevant issues looks like a patch-work quilt. There is no comprehensive evaluation of the standing of security sector reform: Studies mainly focus on singled-out aspects and the various threads are not brought together, at least not in a way which would allow an evaluation of the overall situation of security sector governance in Georgia. The closest to those needs comes the Center for Civil Military Relations and Security Studies (CCMRSS) in Tbilisi. The research work of David Darchiashvili and Tamara Pataraiia provides crucial insights and profound background information on security sector relevant issues.<sup>120</sup>

In order to bring the threads together and to gain a basic overview on the current state of security sector reform in Georgia, a stock taking, based on expert interviews was launched in September 2002. Up-dates have been made continuously, the latest in January 2004.

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<sup>120</sup> Recent contributions are for example: David Darchiashvili, Implementation of Parliamentary Control over the Armed Forces: The Georgian Case. In: H. Born, M. Caparini, K. Haltiner, J. Kuhlmann (eds.): Democratic Governance of Civil-Military Relations in Europe: Learning from Crisis and Institutional Change. Berlin: Lit-Verlag 2004 (forthcoming). And: Tamara Pataraiia: Civilians in National Security Structures in Georgia. Paper Presented at the Working Group Meeting: Civilians in National Security Policy, Geneva, November 2-4, 2002.

In the overall 24 interviews have been carried out with Georgian experts, involved in security sector related issues, working within the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), the Georgian Military Academy, furthermore with parliamentary staffers including members of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security, with members of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and with Military Journalists. Most of the interviews (13) have been carried out in Tbilisi, in September 2002, some (5) in Zurich, Switzerland during the 5<sup>th</sup> International Security Forum in October 2002, furthermore one interview during a Conference on Border Management in March 2003 in Geneva, Switzerland, two interviews at the Workshop on "Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus – Challenges and Visions", held in Reichenau/Rax, 21-24 November 2003. And finally three interviews have been carried out by e-mail communication in January 2004 in order to get an up-to-date picture of the situation after the "velvet revolution" and the January 4 presidential election.

Basis of the interviews have been several questionnaires used as frameworks for assessing SSR. The evaluation, presented within this paper is based on a small selection of broad and general questions on the current state of SSR in Georgia, prospects for the upcoming years and also on recommendations and priorities seen by the experts in view of the reform process.<sup>121</sup> The objective was, to get a broad overview on the assessment of the state and prospects of Security Sector Reform in Georgia by local experts, working within the field of security policy. The picture given is deliberately focused on those factors and aspects of SSR, which are – according to the interviewees – currently relevant and therefore have an impact on the ongoing developments.

It is not the aim of this paper to give a comprehensive overview on the state of all security sector institutions in Georgia and neither on the history of Security Sector Reform and the process of building up the Georgian Armed Forces. Details on state security services and

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<sup>121</sup> Please find questionnaire: "General Assessment SSR in Georgia" attached to this article.

institutions might be found within the White Paper of the MoD<sup>122</sup>. A profound background on developments in view of the reform of the security sector and the building up of the Georgian Armed Forces can be found in the research work of David Darchiashvili and Tamara Pataraiia, without whose support and encouragement this project would not have been possible.

### **Problems, Challenges and Obstacles**

Given the current situation in Georgia there is an overwhelmingly long list of aspects, which can be seen as major challenges to SSR. The interviewees name most various and different obstacles. Angles and perspectives of those assessments are quite different, but in the main points agreements are obvious. The various aspects can be structured into three categories:

- Basic problems: The broader context of SSR and Armed Forces reform;
- General Problems in view of Security Sector Reform;
- Specific problems in view of reforming the Armed and other Security Forces.

### **Basic Problems: The Broader Context of SSR and Armed Forces Reform**

As widely accepted the reform of the security sector can not be seen without the frame of general democratization within a country. This is why we have to look first into basic problems of democracy-building in Georgia before going over to general problems of SSR.

#### *Democratic Structures and National Mentality*

“The problem lies within the system.”<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> White Paper of the MoD, Georgian Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi 2002.

<sup>123</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

More than 12 years after the breakdown of the soviet system, democratic structures have still not been sufficiently implemented in Georgia. The situation is quite similar to those in other transition countries: Legislation seems to be principally sufficient and is formally based on Western models, whereas the real challenge lies in implementing and enforcing the law.

The implementation of democratic structures becomes even more difficult, since the whole system is determined by personal relationships rather than by well defined democratic procedures. (For details on this phenomenon see below). The majority of the interviewees stressed, that the mentality and with it the whole climate in the country has to change before it might become possible to built up sustainable democratic structures.<sup>124</sup>

Another factor is the general weakness of state management culture which makes the situation considerably worse: Those in power have basic problems to properly manage the system.<sup>125</sup> State structures support corruption, i.e. the existence of only one account for each ministry makes management and control of revenues and expenditures extremely difficult.

### *Clientelism and Corruption*

“The legacy of clannish thinking is one of the most significant obstacles to development.”<sup>126</sup>

“If there wouldn’t be any corruption, Georgia would be fine within ten years.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>125</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>126</sup> Koba Kikabidze, David Losaberidze, Institutionalism and Clientelism in Georgia. Unpublished article. Tbilisi, 2002, page 2.

<sup>127</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

Most crucial elements which prevent a continuous transition to democracy are certainly clientelism and the widespread corruption, both phenomena which are running like red threads through the entire Georgian state sector, political system and society. Since those structures are not only contra-productive to any democratization, but also determine the broader context of security sector reform, those phenomena merit to be looked at closer.

In Georgia the soviet totalitarianism produced a bizarre symbiosis of the specific bureaucratic system mixed with traditional values and a certain *modus vivendi* in the population, which is determined by traditional clannish relationships. As a result, the interdependence of social mentality – mirrored especially in the way of thinking and behaving of the public officials, but also the society at large – and the institutional development of the state system becomes a crucial dilemma.<sup>128</sup> The relationships between the officials and their subordinates determine the state structures as well as the state authority.<sup>129</sup> Those “...clientele relationships in Georgia ... still play the most important role both in everyday life and in the political processes of the country.”<sup>130</sup> As a result, policy objectives rather support the development of oligarchic groups than encourage national development and as follows the political system is profaned and restricted.<sup>131</sup>

The primary problem, resulting from clientelism is corruption, which has an obvious systemic character and is in Georgia generally seen as “the rule of the game”.<sup>132</sup> Whereas corruption has been grown significantly since the end of the Cold War<sup>133</sup>, the phenomenon is well known already since the first years of soviet rule and grasped at the latest from the

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<sup>128</sup> Kokabidze, Losaberidze 2002, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-8.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., pp. 4 and 7.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

beginning of the 1960s all levels of Georgian society, especially the ruling “nomenclatura” and the “red directors” of the state enterprises.<sup>134</sup>

The clientele and corruptive structures may most illustratively be described as a pyramid, with a very small level at its top which is formed by the president and his family clan and then the biggest and broadest levels at its bottom which are formed by those elements of the society which have the least power and authority. “Money making” depends on the level within the pyramid: The higher the level, the more authority and the more money can be made. Those in power are depending on this pyramid, since this societal structure is helping them to stabilize their position. Therefore it seems understandable that a real intention to fight corruption can not be stated yet. Deeply rooted corrupted interests throughout the political and societal structure prevent serious and effective measures.<sup>135</sup> Whereas some state, that there is hope to fight corruption, since the pyramid seems to get “holes”<sup>136</sup>, others say, that there is no way to fight it at the current stage and that the only way is, to wait for an alternation of generations.<sup>137</sup> There is no doubt that only a long term process may see first positive results.<sup>138</sup>

### *Public Involvement in the Democratization Process*

“They don’t clearly understand what democracy means.”<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Alexandre Kukhianidze, Criminalization and Cross-Border Issues: The Case of Georgia. Paper presented at the Workshop “Managing International and Inter-Agency Cooperation at the Border”, held in Geneva, March 13-15 2003, p. 2.

<sup>135</sup> Referring an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>136</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>137</sup> These prognoses are referring to “lessons” from history, i.e. on the transition of states towards capitalism. The US is an example in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of last century. According to these prognosis, the only hope is offered by the time passing by: The mafia-members are increasingly investing their money in “clean” and legal businesses, which help to create new and legal jobs. They send their children to renowned universities abroad. The children get accustomed to another “style” of living and behaving and of “making money”. Later on they bring this “style” back home and the mafia-structures slowly recede.

<sup>138</sup> Referring to interviews with several members of Georgian NGOs.

<sup>139</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

Within the last 12 years “democracy” is tiptoeing around Georgia like a shy and obscure ghost, who does not want to come in, sit down and make himself visible. At least for Georgians this picture may arise. The golden word “democracy” has been repeated by western advisors like magic formulas and still it is not clear what is behind this abstract phenomenon, which sneaks around and still is hiding carefully behind quite obvious and self confident co-visitors: economic crisis, corruption and political chaos. No wonder, that something which is as vague and obscure, and which does not bring any obvious incentive nor benefit, is clearly seen as something which one might easily do without. With other words: the tiptoeing ghostly visitor may – in the eyes of the one or the other Georgian - easily stay outside.

After the hardships of the last decade it seems to be understandable that society-at-large sees “democracy” as failure and “democratic values” as nothing which is worth to strive for. Even if those values would be accepted and understood as something valuable, the citizens would not feel that their involvement could help implementing those values in societal life.<sup>140</sup> This mentality is a part of the soviet legacy which still has not been overcome.

Furthermore it seems to be quite understandable that in their fight to survive economic and political crises people look first of all after their own needs and requirements, are generally oriented towards family, relatives, and friends rather than towards public life.<sup>141</sup> As follows the society is quite “nuclearized” and as a result there is a weak socialization of citizens in terms of understanding “community”.<sup>142</sup>

Another reason for public’s retreat from involvement into any reform and democratization processes is to be found in the general lack of the rule of law in the country which is going along with a widespread

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<sup>140</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>141</sup> Kukhianidze 2003, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>142</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

mistrust in the government.<sup>143</sup> For those, not being already totally indifferent to political developments, the government is mainly seen as direct enemy to the general public.<sup>144</sup>

Civil-Society is still hardly developed and only very marginal involved in democratization and reform processes. One of the main problems is, that a “disorganized NGO community<sup>145</sup> and mostly incompetent and still insufficiently developed media<sup>146</sup> lack necessary resources to exercise decisive influence over the government”.<sup>147</sup> Furthermore, the society ignores the reform process, since “reforms are, as a rule, launched and implemented by upper echelons or nomenclatura. The society is not much involved in this process and perceives any change as

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<sup>143</sup> The United States Information Agency (USIA) carried out opinion polls, showing the dramatic increase of public mistrust towards the government during the last few years.

<sup>144</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>145</sup> “There are some 5,000 civilian associations and 500 foundations registered in Georgia, however, only 10 to 15% can be considered true Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).” See NATO PA: Background Document to the Rose-Roth Seminar, Tbilisi, Georgia, 27-29 September 2002, p. 6. “Only 50-60 of them are active. Most often they are very small.” Quotation by member of a Georgian NGO. Even the most well-established and powerful organizations face financial problems, and depend entirely upon foreign grants or donations. Most NGOs are based in the capital while outlying regions are often ignored. Despite these weaknesses, the NGO sector in Georgia has gained influence both over policymaking and public opinion in the past few years.” NATO PA 2002, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>146</sup> “There are approximately 200 independent print outlets nationwide, some eight TV stations in the capital and more than 45 regional TV stations, 17 of which offer daily news. Radio and a few daily newspapers remain the major source of information for peripheral regions that lack electricity. Poor finances force most print outlets to labour under the influence of political ‘sponsors’ while television is the most popular source for news broadcasts.” NATO PA 2002, op. cit., p. 7.

“Georgian media operate with a greater level of freedom compared to counterparts in most post-Soviet countries. However, there are cases of state-sponsored breaches of freedom of speech as well as incidents of violence against journalists.” NATO PA 2002, op. cit., p.7.

<sup>147</sup> Archil Gegeshidze, Security Strategies for Georgia. A Georgian Perspective. Remarks to the AGBC Forth Annual Conference “Development Strategies for Georgia”. Washington: 2001, page 3.

an action directed against it.”<sup>148</sup> Civil-society building, a task which has been taken up by several NGO’s, has to suffer from a lack of cooperation, coordination and continuity within NGO involvement.<sup>149</sup>

The enhancement of public involvement within the democratization process is a Sisyphean task, which has to deal with the major challenge to explain to society-at-large, that “democracy”, which is perceived as failing on a day-to-day base is nevertheless in the long run no failure, but a crucial value to strive for.

### *Influence of the Security Environment*

Beside the above mentioned internal aspects, also external threats and influences by the security environment determine the broader context of security sector reform in Georgia: Those threats, most of all the Russian threat to Georgian territory, but also the frozen conflicts in the autonomous regions are seen as basic negative factors to SSR in Georgia. The permanent pressure most of all prevents that enough capacities and energies are left available for reforms.<sup>150</sup>

On the other hand those factors may imply a certain ambivalence: incidents, like the Russian bombing of the Pankisi gorge, also seemed to have enforced Georgian will to further cooperate with the West and to come as close to NATO integration as possible, which is for the time being the most important incentive for the Georgian government to implement required reforms.

Furthermore the security threats enforce the longing for general security and for a strong and professional army. Therefore they also positively influence the will to reform the Armed Forces, but at the same time hinder a consequent reduction to their natural size. A negative influence is certainly, that the one-sided focus on a reform of the Armed Forces

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<sup>148</sup> Liklikadze, Losaberidze 2002, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>149</sup> Referring to an interview with a Member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>150</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

prevents a necessary reform of other security forces, i.e. border guards and police forces.

## **General Problems in View of Security Sector Reform**

After having had a look on the broader context, we may shift towards general problems of security sector reform itself. The following chapter reflects the most vehemently and repeatedly stressed aspects:

### *Lack of a Security Strategy and a Reform Concept*

“The biggest problem is that the reform process is not well understood. There is no consensus what SSR would mean for Georgia and there is no precise programme for reforms. Only recommendations from foreign experts.”<sup>151</sup>

The lack of a national security strategy and a precise concept for SSR in Georgia is probably the most fundamental obstacle to any effective reform. Whereas some exceptional statements<sup>152</sup> allude to an internal, not yet published long-term plan for reforms, most of the interviewees<sup>153</sup> insist, that there is still no concrete reform-programme and only recommendations of foreign experts i.e. from the International Security Advisory Board (ISAB)<sup>154</sup> available.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Quotation from interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>152</sup> Referring to interviews i.e. with a member of the Georgian Defence Academy and a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>153</sup> Referring to interviews with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament and a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<sup>154</sup> “The International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) was established by a memorandum of Understanding dated 14 April 1998. ISAB is an independent body, working directly to the Government of Georgia. In accordance with the MOU, ISAB submitted a draft Report, with recommendations, to the national Security Council at the six-month point. After out-of-committee consideration the Secretary of the National Security Council informed ISAB that the content and recommendations of the draft Report were broadly acceptable. He also requested ISAB to elaborate an outline schedule for implementation of the recommendations, and to submit the final Report at the twelve month point.” See:

Nevertheless, first tentative steps towards a reform plan have been taken: The White Paper of the Ministry of Defence<sup>156</sup> includes brief outlines on Georgian defence policy, defence structures, personnel policy, logistics, defence budget and the relation between Armed Forces and society. Furthermore it contains information on roles of the Armed Forces, military co-operation, the various defence and security forces, the general staff, civilian personnel, the military service and education system, information on defence planning, defence finance and military legislation. It takes stock of the current state of institutional changes, and gives a very broad idea in which direction a general reform should go. However, the White Paper is far from being precise enough to provide clear guidelines and priorities. The Paper has obviously been drafted in order to demonstrate a certain transparency in giving an overview of the current state of the security sector. It obviously lacks a national vision and concrete information how the very broad defined goals should be transferred into missions.<sup>157</sup> Georgia's strategic interests are set out briefly on only one page and are vaguely, partially and rather inconsistently mentioned within the introduction of the paper. Following the White Paper, interests are to be found in regional stability and cooperation, a modernization of its Armed Forces and an interest in "moving Georgia closer to the Euro-Atlantic community of nations"<sup>158</sup>. Merely stating that the Georgian Armed Forces should be "NATO-compatible" leaves open how this will affect the allocation of scarce fiscal resources or the priority of reforms. The rest of the White Paper is descriptive and does not provide guidance for further reforms. According to an expert, the "White Paper 'puts the cart before the horse'. Without the delineation of Georgia's strategic interests and

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[www.cpirs.org.ge/Archive/ISAB.html](http://www.cpirs.org.ge/Archive/ISAB.html); 06.04.2003. The report is to be found at: [www.cpirs.org.ge/Archive/ISAB.pdf](http://www.cpirs.org.ge/Archive/ISAB.pdf)

<sup>155</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>156</sup> White Paper of the MoD, Ministry of Defence Georgia, Tbilisi 2002.

<sup>157</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament

<sup>158</sup> See White Paper of the Georgian Ministry of Defence, Tbilisi 2002, page 3.

objectives the paper is void of any indication of where Armed Forces reform should be heading.”<sup>159</sup>

Another effort towards the conceptualization of SSR has been taken in view of the elaboration of a reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia. Problems and challenges are different here, but also enforce the impression of the creation of a patchwork quilt rather than a strategic implementation of a clear national security strategy.

Bringing it to the point one could put it like that: Georgia has a lot of general recommendations in view of SSR, provided by international advisors. What Georgia does not have is an adaptation of these recommendations to the country’s situation and background and it also lacks concrete directives in view of a practical implementation of the reform.

Nevertheless there are signs for improvements<sup>160</sup>: A member of the International Security Advisory Board recently<sup>161</sup> confirmed that a draft of the National Security Strategy is finalized. However it is not published yet and one can not tell if the new government will agree on the current version.

For those involved in the reform process it is still extremely difficult to understand what SSR should mean for Georgia and how an implementation could look like. For those, having at least a broad idea what a reform could or should imply, there is an obvious lack of consensus. Taking for example the Armed Forces: On the one hand it is an accepted fact that the reform should imply a downsizing to its natural size. On the other hand, taking the current security threats into account, the readiness should be increased.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> An assessment by Marina Caparina, Senior Fellow at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>160</sup> See also the chapter on achievements and positive trends.

<sup>161</sup> At the Workshop on Security Sector Governance in Southern Caucasus in Reichenau/Rax, November 21-24 2003.

<sup>162</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

As a next step it is of crucial importance to agree on a common concept which is based on a broad consensus within the country, having in mind that “SSR implies that the national leadership has gone through a process by which the strategic interests of the country have been assessed, and implications identified for key sectors of the state. That is, there is an understanding and consensus on which areas need to be tackled for reform that flows from the highest levels of the political leadership, based on a comprehensive view of the strategic and national interests of the state.”<sup>163</sup>

A consistent guideline in view of security structures and institutions as well as in view of goals and missions would be a basic starting point to SSR in Georgia. As long as those guidelines and directions are absent, effective reforms will remain a crucial challenge.<sup>164</sup>

Most of the experts agreed that it is not a lack of expertise or experience but the absence of political will which prevents the implementation of a national security strategy<sup>165</sup>.

#### *Lack of Political Will of the Executive Power*

“The most important obstacle is the lack of political will.”<sup>166</sup>

“Certain people don’t have any interest in a concept.”<sup>167</sup>

Following the views of some interviewees, it was clearly the lack of political will of the former government that hindered a serious progress of the reforms.<sup>168</sup> The experts explicitly stressed the negative role the

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<sup>163</sup> An assessment by Marina Caparina, Senior Fellow at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, Switzerland.

<sup>164</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>165</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>166</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>167</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>168</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist and several members of Georgian NGOs.

president himself was playing in that aspect. Whereas Shevardnadze officially pushed the reforms in view of meeting the MAP requirements, he was obviously not in a rush to give consistent directives to implement them.

This leads to another factor: the role of the president in defence and security issues versus the role of the parliament: The head of the executive power clearly dominated political life in Georgia. The parliament was much weaker than the presidential power:

“...The President can and does ignore the opinion of parliamentarians concerning various issues of security and defence policy.”<sup>169</sup>

Whereas legislation speaks for parliamentary control of the security sector, reality shows a different picture, for example in view of the oversight on defence spending:

“The parliament hardly fulfils its main obligation in security and defence policy: budgetary control.”<sup>170</sup>

Two reasons for the neglect of this obligation might be mentioned: At first there is still little knowledge and understanding on how defence resources are allocated and spent.<sup>171</sup> A second reason is, that the “Parliament does not have the right to amend the budget without the consent of the president, who is the only person authorised to submit official budgetary drafts or amendments. The legislature has only two options – to agree the overall figures or to reject the entire draft. To reject the draft would require enormous political effort and compliance with numerous conditions, and so far legislators have not resorted to such measures. Nor was any action taken on the many occasions when

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<sup>169</sup> Hans Born, Recipients’ Views on Interparliamentary Assistance: A Short Report on the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Georgia – Three Case Studies; In: Hans Born/Marina Caparini/Philipp Fluri (eds.), Security Sector Reform and Democracy in Transitional Societies. Proceedings of the Democratic Control of Armed Forces Workshops at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Security Forum, Geneva, November 15-17, 2000. Baden-Baden: Nomos 2002, p. 61-67; p. 65.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

the parliamentary taskforce responsible for reviewing the power ministries<sup>172</sup> spending on classified activities found that it knew no more than the other deputies.”<sup>173</sup>

Generally it can be stated that the authoritarian style of Shevardnadze’s leadership definitely played a considerable and negative role in security sector governance in Georgia. The crucial importance of the presidential elections on January 4<sup>th</sup> as well as of the very role the new Georgian president will play in security sector governance does not need to be stressed.

Furthermore the “Parliament’s weak role is one indication that democratic control is still incomplete. The civilian element of control is also underdeveloped, as the Ministers of the Interior and of Defence, and the heads of the security departments are all generals<sup>174</sup>. The President and the Secretary of the National Security Council are almost the only civilians with any real power at the top levels of the executive.”<sup>175</sup> It can be stated that one of the basic pre-conditions of a democratic oversight of the security sector<sup>176</sup>, a “dividing line” between the political and military leaders does not exist in Georgia.

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<sup>172</sup> The defense ministry, ministry of internal affairs and the ministry of state security are the so called “power ministries”.

<sup>173</sup> Darchiashvili David, 'Georgia: A Hostage to Arms' in Matveeva, Anna & Duncan Hiscock (eds.), 'The Caucasus: Armed and Divided - Small arms and light weapons proliferation and humanitarian consequences in the Caucasus', London: Saferworld, 2003, p. 86.

<sup>174</sup> Until recently, the first exception to this rule was the new Minister of State Security Valery Khaburdzhania.

<sup>175</sup> Darchiashvili 2003, Op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>176</sup> For background information on the theory of civil-military relations, see i.e. the classical works of Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: the Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. New York: Vintage books 1964, 1<sup>st</sup> edition 1957 and Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe 1960.

### *Lack of Civilian Expertise*

The above stated lack of civilian oversight was not only caused by the strong authoritative role of the president and the partly militarized leadership. A second reason is also to be found in the lack of civilian expertise on security and defence related issues. This holds true for civilians in the ‘power ministries’ as well as for the Members of Parliament. As example might be mentioned the apparent lack of knowledge on defence resources allocation by Members of the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee which hinders to fulfil their oversight and control functions. This absence of knowledge and expertise on security sector related issues is deeply rooted in former soviet times, when there have not been any civilian experts on defence issues at all. Like in most transitional countries it is still a basic challenge to build up the necessary expertise from scratch.<sup>177</sup>

### *Problems in Defence Budgeting*

It goes without saying that the lack of adequate financial means forms a major obstacle to SSR. Nevertheless some of the interviewees clearly see financial problems as painful but as secondary compared to other factors, which have been mentioned above, i.e. the lack of political consensus and will to implement the reforms.<sup>178</sup>

In view of the Defence Resources Management Department within the MoD, the lack of adequate resources forms of course a continuous hardship within the budgetary process. However it is only one in a long row of various problems:

“It is hard to argument for funds if they don’t have a basis.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>178</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>179</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

A first basic challenge to determine a clear defence budget is caused by the above mentioned lack of a clear and binding security concept. Therefore those, working on the budget within the MoD state the urgent need of a clear security strategy and a binding concept in order to be able to argument for funds and to get a guideline how to set defence resources priorities.

A second problem in defence budgeting is, that there are no clear and reliable figures on the state income, microeconomic prognosis and socio-economic parameters available. This is why it is extremely challenging to set a frame for the budget. Generally military expenditures only take a very small proportion of the rather vaguely calculated Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>180</sup>

A third challenging factor is, that the Georgian state has only one main treasury, one account for all ministries. This makes transparency extremely difficult and gives free way to corruption.

Furthermore a fourth obstacle is that personal influences within the Defence Resources Management department negatively affect the budgetary process:

“Personal influence is the disease of the moment.”<sup>181</sup>

The budgeting process is still influenced by problems of mental interoperability amongst those in charge. Some people in the MoD understood how inconvenient the increase of transparency might become and started to fight a new and more transparent budgeting system.<sup>182</sup> Personal influences are currently a major problem not only in view of

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<sup>180</sup> 0,2-0,3 percent in comparison to the average 2-3 percent of NATO states.

<sup>181</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<sup>182</sup> The PPBS (Programme Process Budget System) has been implemented in 2001 and gives hope for more transparency in defence spendings. See details in following chapter on achievements.

defence budgeting but generally a widespread phenomenon within the country.<sup>183</sup>

Nevertheless some signs for improvements could be found in the introduction of the new budgetary system:

The Programme Project Budgeting System (PPBS) has been implemented in 2001. It can be seen as a first step towards more transparency on defence spending. Until 2001 defence budgeting contained only figures without any explanations. In 2001 for the first time exact and clear defined categories for expenditures have been introduced. The MoD has been one of the first ministries, introducing the system and counts on positive experiences made within other countries with the new system, i.e. within the Baltic States. During 2003 British advisors supported the Georgian MoD in implementing the PPBS system.

When talking to a MoD official in September 2002, the assessments on the prospects of the new system have been quite positive: Despite having a strong opposition within the own department and ministry the new system was generally seen as irreversible. “There is no way back, the implementation will continuously proceed.”<sup>184</sup>

One year later the situation proved much less euphemistic: The Parliament didn't adopt the programming budget, because of a row between the MoD and the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance cut the budget, which had been prepared according to the new system in a way that it had to be drafted from scratch. The 2003 budget which had been proposed as 129 million Georgian Lari by the MoD was finally adopted with 78 million Lari. After these severe cuts, the MoD failed to prepare a revised budget applicable to the PPBS approach. The defence expenditures are currently spent according to the old procedures. The development is obviously in the interest of MoD officials not to change

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<sup>183</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<sup>184</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

the established soviet type procedures and therefore not to help reducing the level of corruption.<sup>185</sup>

### *Misuse of International Assistance*

“50% of EU funds simply vanished in Georgia.”<sup>186</sup>

Whereas international aid is supposed to have a quite positive influence on SSR, it is on the other hand confronted by major obstacles and problems: The apparent misuse of international assistance and an obvious lack of coordination in those programmes can be considered as crucial draw-backs in view of a reform of the Georgian security sector. Just as a small example of the disastrous dimensions of the above described corruption in the country, it might be mentioned, that about 50% of international donor’s contributions tend to vanish in private pockets instead of being used for the sake of democratization and development of the country.<sup>187</sup> Ammunition and equipment, originating from international assistance programmes, have for example been found quite often on bazaars rather than in the barracks; Trucks and special transport equipment have been used by the general staff instead of units within which they were needed and originally supposed to be used. Coordination problems also hindered efficient results: Ammunition and equipment has been delivered, but there was no infrastructure to store it properly.<sup>188</sup>

As a cause of misuse and lack of proper results the interviewees stated a continuous fear that international assistance would break off and leave a chaotic and hopeless situation behind.

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<sup>185</sup> Referring to a recent assessment by a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>186</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

<sup>187</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

<sup>188</sup> Referring to an interview with a parliamentary staff member.

## **Specific Problems in View of Reforming Armed as well as other Security Forces**

Since it is not possible to look within this paper at all developments in view of building up as well as reforming security forces in Georgia, just some glimpses on three main actors: the Armed Forces, Police Forces and Border Guards.

Generally the picture in Georgia is quite similar to those which are well-known from other transitional countries: The personnel size of security forces is twice or thrice as high as necessary and useful, effectiveness at the same time thrice as low as you even can imagine. The last aspect is a result of various issues, i.e. the lack of discipline, and professionalism<sup>189</sup> along with the absence of appropriate education and training<sup>190</sup>, extremely low salaries and a rather high demoralization. Low payments and the lack of basic social securities encourages personnel of law enforcement bodies to abuse their power positions for private income generation by bribery, corruption and other illegal activities.<sup>191</sup> This is why society-at-large is far away from even considering to trust or to respect the country's security forces.

Given the long list of challenges, the question arises where exactly to start with a reform. When looking at western models or let's say, when checking out security sector success stories, one might rather get depressed: How should this gap be bridged? To overstress the point: It is hard to imagine how Georgian security forces may become strong, disciplined, smart, wealthy and respected in one go. Starting with the reforms step by step might sound a little bit more realistic but is – at the same time not possible. There is no strength without discipline and education, no discipline and motivation without appropriate salaries and no respect without all the other aspects taken together.

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<sup>189</sup> Referring to interviews with several members of Georgian NGOs.

<sup>190</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist.

<sup>191</sup> See also the chapter on police forces.

## *Armed Forces*

The reform process of the Georgian Armed Forces (GAF) gives - most of all because of the immense international assistance – some reason for hope in prospective positive results.

Nevertheless fundamental problems have to be overcome: The absence of a national security strategy as well as the lack of professional experience negatively influence the reform process.

“The current military still lacks both professional experience and a coherent strategy addressing national threats.”<sup>192</sup>

Furthermore the formation of the military did not follow any strategic considerations but rather personal influences:

“...The Georgian army has been developing according to individual politicians' or the military commandment's ambitions rather than to a state programme.”<sup>193</sup>

Furthermore the “army suffers from frequent structural and staff changes. Finally, what is currently built up follows yesterday's, in particular the Soviet army's, model in miniature.”<sup>194</sup>

“Today's Georgian army is not ready to check possible threats to the country's national security.”<sup>195</sup>

The combat readiness of the Armed Forces is quite low and given the lack of professionalism and strength, the public at large has little respect for the Georgian military.”<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Shukuko Koyama, Security sector reform in Georgia. Saferworld, London, 2002, p. 7.

<sup>193</sup> David Darchiashvili, The Army-Building and Security Problems in Georgia. Tbilisi 1997, p. 3.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

Financial problems still crucially affect the restructuring process of the Armed Forces. Downsizing implies financial and social impacts, which can't be properly addressed yet. Retired militaries' integration into civilian life often fails and results in their participation in corruption and other illegal activities. Beside the lack of financial resources, the absence of motivated and educated officers is also seen as a major problem to a reform.<sup>197</sup>

“A hungry, untrained army cannot defend its country.”<sup>198</sup>

The financial situation aggravated in a way that not only the reform process is affected but also very basic aspects of maintaining the army. Desertion rates increase tremendously since conscript soldiers face chronic hunger. The families of the conscripts have to organize food supply in order to prevent their sons from starving. Those who don't get any help from at home have to steal food in order to supplement their meagre rations.

Hunger is certainly one of the main reasons – but not the only one – for the high level of desertion within the Georgian Armed Forces. Soldiers face poor nourishment, shortage of uniforms and medical supplies, low wages and unsafe accommodation.

Under those circumstances military units can no longer afford to be fully manned. Even in conflict prone and security priority regions like the Pankisi Gorge units are manned to only thirty or forty per cent of the required strength. In 2002 the military recruited just one third of the conscripts in need. Young Georgians on their part try to avoid military service by all means, i.e. by buying an official 12-month deferral.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist.

<sup>198</sup> Irakly Seshiashvili, director of the Georgian NGO “Rights and Freedom”. Quoted after Maia Chitaia and Nino Zhvania: Hunger, Desertion plague Georgian Army. Georgia's national security at stake as conscript soldiers face chronic hunger. In: Institute for War & Peace Reporting IWPR's Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 176, April 25, 2003, p. 3.

<sup>199</sup> See Chitaia, Zhvania 2003, op. cit., p.2.

A member of a Georgian NGO brings it to the point when stating that the military leadership recognizes that an army which is manned by starving soldiers cannot fight effectively. “So they never train them...As a consequence, the army is not battle-trained. A hungry, untrained army cannot defend its country.”<sup>200</sup>

### *Police Forces*

“Why dying for nothing?”<sup>201</sup>

According to statements of the deputy minister of the Interior, there are currently up to 60 000 police officers in Georgia. Other estimations range about at least 40 000 policemen.<sup>202</sup> An urgent necessary reduction of the personnel implies the same financial and social impacts as mentioned above in view of the Armed Forces.

Since the official salaries of police officers are extremely low it is widely accepted that they make money by bribery and corruption and that they are carrying out extortion and racketeering against individuals and small business.<sup>203</sup>

Options for private income-generation make the profession of a police-officer quite attractive and since there are no major restrictions to become a police officer (usually by bribing the officials in charge), the number of police personnel is still growing. It seems to be self evident, that a policeman, who does not even earn enough to support his own family, would not start fighting corruption or illegal mafia activities, following the motto: “Why dying for nothing?”. Economic problems are therefore closely related to a basic absence of a professional ethic and also a crucial lack of motivation. Result is a quite high demoralization of Georgian police.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>200</sup> Irakly Seshiashvili quoted after *ibid*.

<sup>201</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>202</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>203</sup> Darchiashvili 2003, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>204</sup> “Violations of human rights, torture, illegal arrests, extortion of money from business people, drivers and criminals, bribery, falsification of the results of

The lack of appropriate access-restriction to the profession also determines the absence of adequate training and education.<sup>205</sup> Foreign assistance programmes started to offer training courses for Georgian police officers. Most of the courses focus on Human Rights related aspects. OSCE Training Programmes started to broaden the perspective and offer training courses on specific issues, i.e. domestic and gender-based violence.<sup>206</sup> Human rights training courses for police officers have been organized by the Swedish government in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme and the Public Defender's Office. Donors and human rights oriented non-governmental organizations promoted human rights issues among police officers. But still, police academy classes on human rights are not compulsory for graduation or promotion in the police organizations.<sup>207</sup>

Basic results of the lack of professionalism and education, along with frequent criminal activities are the crucial absence of a trustful and respectful relationship between citizens and police. Lack of professionalism and corruption among police officers is named as one of the major reasons, why government lacks legitimization, respect and reliability from the general public.<sup>208</sup> For many Georgians, police forces mainly exist in order to support the state authority and those in power rather than the citizens.<sup>209</sup> Since the state law enforcement bodies fail to establish the rule of law within the country, the clan system and other mafia structures started to provide their own informal justice mechanisms.<sup>210</sup>

Since they range among the most important supporters of the ruling elite, police forces are consequently excluded from any serious reform

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investigations, involvement in crimes and assassinations became the usual practice of the police forces.” Kukhianidze 2003, op. cit., p. 6-7.

<sup>205</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO

<sup>206</sup> See: OSCE begins training for Georgian Police Officers on combating domestic violence. To be found at: [http://www.osce.org/news/show\\_news.php?id=3330](http://www.osce.org/news/show_news.php?id=3330)

<sup>207</sup> Koyama 2002, op. cit., p.13.

<sup>208</sup> Referring to an interview with a Member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>209</sup> Koyama 2002, op cit, p.8.

<sup>210</sup> UNDP Human Development Report: Georgia 2000, UNDP Country Office, Tbilisi, p. 72, cited after Koyama 2002, op cit, p. 9.

attempts.<sup>211</sup> “For many years, the MOI was the stronghold of the ruling elite and enjoyed the unofficial right to engage in illegal activities.”<sup>212</sup> “Until very recently, the state leadership took no effective measures to stamp out such practices. The Council for Anti-Corruption Policy set up by the president had little impact.”<sup>213</sup>

An effort towards an improvement of the situation has been finally taken in February 2002, when the Georgian president established an Interagency-Commission (based on a presidential decree, issued on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2001), which had to elaborate a concept for a reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia. The current version of the reform concept has been put online along with a series of recommendations by foreign experts and institutions (i.e. recommendations by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe). The concept is publicly available via the website of the Georgian supreme court<sup>214</sup> and starts with the promising insight that “The process of democratization and reforms of the Police in Georgia can only be based on firm political will”<sup>215</sup> and furthermore states that “The police should comply with the demands of democratic society in order to represent the institution – the guarantor of the democratic state.”<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Refer to Koyama, op cit, page 8.

<sup>212</sup> Darchiashvili 2003, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>214</sup> See: <http://www.supremecourt.ge/english/About.htm> → Public Information → Reform Commission of the Law Enforcement and Security Agencies → Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia.

<sup>215</sup> See concept of the Georgian Police Reform, page 1. Annex XI to the Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia. To be found at: <http://www.supremecourt.ge/english/About.htm> → Public Information → Reform Commission of the Law Enforcement and Security Agencies → Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia.

<sup>216</sup> See Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia, page 13. To be found at: <http://www.supremecourt.ge/english/About.htm> → Public Information → Reform Commission of the Law Enforcement and Security Agencies → Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia.

On the one hand the concept is much more precise in giving measures to improve the performance of Georgian law enforcement agencies than any other paper before; on the other hand, it has not been adopted yet as formal document. It still has to be approved and signed by the president in order to become a binding and official guideline. Even if the concept will be adopted, it won't guarantee a successful reform process, since the power ministries as well as the procurator's office are reluctant to any reforms within their agencies.<sup>217</sup>

Nevertheless, statements of the minister of Internal Affairs Narchemashvili on the need for reform raise some hopes. "Narchemashvili argues that he belongs to a new generation of lawyer-reformers and would like to leave a positive legacy. Some district police officers were dismissed. However it is difficult to say whether the reforms are genuine or if this is merely a tactical move by the police."<sup>218</sup>

### *Border Guards*

"The Pankisi Gorge incidents showed how much border incidents and a lack of efficient border controlling is affecting national, transnational and international security."<sup>219</sup>

Generally it can be stated that poorly equipped, hardly trained and meagerly paid Georgian Border Guards are not able to sufficiently and effectively control the country's borders<sup>220</sup>. Failures in border-management had in recent times major impacts on the country's security: Chechen rebels crossed the borders, entered the Georgian territory and found refuge in the Pankisi Gorge. Russia, accusing Georgia of supporting Chechen rebels and terrorists, started bombing Georgian territory. The incident has shown how much failures in border-management and controlling may affect national as well as international security.<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Quotation of an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>218</sup> Darchiashvili 2003, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>219</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>220</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>221</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

Smuggling and trafficking at Georgian borders forms an additional and general problem, especially since Georgia does not confirm the secessionist territories Abkhazia and Ossetia as external territories. Georgian authorities do not employ Border Guards at these borders, because if they would do so it would be considered as recognition of the independence of the secessionist territories. Therefore those borders are not controlled as inter-state borders and especially prone to any trafficking, drug and weapon smuggling activities: “Corruption, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and weapons, terrorist acts and participation in smuggling through their territories became a profitable business for all sides of conflicts: Russian, Georgian and Ossetian criminals, peacekeepers, law enforcement bodies, and Georgian partisans in Abkhazia.”<sup>222</sup> It has been clearly stated that “smuggling and organized crime through Abkhazia and South Ossetia can be minimized only in close cooperation between Georgian, Abkhaz and Ossetian law enforcement bodies.”<sup>223</sup>

In 1999 the OSCE Mission to Georgia was mandated to observe and report on movements across the Chechen segment of the Georgian-Russian border. The mandate was enlarged to further segments in 2001 and 2003. Within the cooperation programme the OSCE border monitors are accompanying Georgian Border Guards while fulfilling their daily duties.

In June 2003 a 100.000 euro grant from the European Union was used to purchase equipment for Georgian border guards in order to improve the joint border monitoring of the department of the Georgian State Border Protection and the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation.

However those grants and aid programmes seem to be a drop in the ocean in view of the tremendous amount of illegal activities along mostly unprotected Georgian borders.

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<sup>222</sup> Kukhianidze 2003, op. cit. p. 8.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

## Achievements and Positive Trends

Despite major challenges and obstacles, there have been positive developments and considerable steps into the right direction. A focus will be set on four relevant trends: an apparent tendency towards transparency enhancement, a positive and ongoing process in training and professionalisation of the Armed Forces, general promising signs for a slow but continuous system change and efforts to adapt and coordinate international assistance.

“The threats are at least transparent.”<sup>224</sup>

As a crucial positive starting point one might state that none of the mentioned challenges to SSR are seen as absolute or insoluble problems and in comparison to the still vivid soviet past, an extremely important step has already been taken: The threats and challenges are transparent<sup>225</sup> and therefore have a chance to be addressed and tackled. The pressure to further elaborate a national security concept as well as to adopt a binding SSR-concept is increasing and coming from all kind of political actors: NGOs, parliamentary staffers as well as various members of the MoD demand a transparent and precise programme, as well as binding and reliable directives and guidelines.

“In general I would be optimistic about the reform process... If we conduct reforms effectively we would be able to join MAP.”<sup>226</sup>

The decision of the National Security Council to elaborate the cooperation with NATO seems to give hope for an acceleration of the process. The government is well aware, that the reforms are a crucial condition for entering the preparatory phase to join MAP.<sup>227</sup> It is clearly

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<sup>224</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>225</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>226</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>227</sup> NATO Membership Action Plan

seen, that the quite powerful incentive of joining MAP can't be reached without a quite swift and effective implementation of necessary standards.<sup>228</sup>

Therefore we may state a starting point which is not as bad as might have been assumed: There is a general will to proceed with the reforms and a concrete knowledge on the traps which are to be found on the way.

### **First Signs of System Improvement**

“The pyramid is getting holes.”<sup>229</sup>

According to some interviewees there are first signs of a general system improvement. They state a general societal transformation process, which is irreversible and also affects the security sector relevant structures. They are positive that the transition process towards a democratic society will successfully proceed.<sup>230</sup>

It has been stated, that first “holes” have been occurred within the “corruption-pyramid”, mainly caused by the dismissal of highly corruptive personnel and their replacement by members of a “new generation”. Ministers as well as head of units within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Security became exchanged after having been heavily involved in criminal activities.<sup>231</sup> The new appointed officials in charge seem not to be involved in illegal processes and obviously try to stay out of the usual mafia-pyramid. The leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is said to be dedicated to reforms. Those examples for transformation and an alternation of political

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<sup>228</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>229</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>230</sup> Referring to an interview with a Member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and to a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>231</sup> Minister Targamadze, the founder of the MOI empire has been dismissed and replaced by his deputy, Koba Narchemashvili. See also: Darchiashvili, 2003, op. cit., pp.76-78.

generations are made public and seem to give a certain hope for an improvement of the situation.<sup>232</sup>

The downfall of Shevardnadze and his clan will certainly also have positive effects. The Shevardnadze clan in itself was the most apparent symbol of the corruptive and clientele society. As long as the leader of the state was the most obvious representative of those negative structures no change could be expected.

### **Achievements in Transparency**

Considerable improvements are to be noted in view of transparency of security structures as well as of defence spending. Especially mentioned should be the concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia, the MoD White Paper, the new PPBS<sup>233</sup> budgeting system which is providing more transparency in defence spending and finally a quite close cooperation of the MoD with NGOs and interested public.

#### *The Concept of the Reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services*

As already mentioned before, the concept of the reform of the security and law enforcement services, elaborated by an Interagency Commission, has been made publicly available with a series of relevant expert's and institution's recommendations, including recommendations adopted by the Council of Europe on the role of public prosecution in the criminal justice system, recommendations on the Police Ethics Code, furthermore concepts of the reform of investigation and of the reform of procuracy, a concept of the police reform, a concept on the reform of the ministry of state security etc. The web-publication of the concept as well

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<sup>232</sup> Referring to interviews with a military journalist and a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as members of Georgian NGOs.

<sup>233</sup> See the chapter on defence budgeting.

as other relevant material<sup>234</sup> might be seen as a first step towards a public dialogue and public involvement in the reform process.

### *The MoD White Paper*

As stated above, the White Paper is seen as a first step towards more transparency and public involvement in security related issues. At the same time it has been criticized for not going far enough, i.e. for not containing a more precise reform concept<sup>235</sup>. Nevertheless it can't be neglected within the chapter on achievements. Most of the interviewees mentioned it proudly as a first and remarkable step into the right direction, especially as a sign that the government understood the importance of transparency in view of defence and security related issues.<sup>236</sup> Looking on the paper from the perspective of somebody with a soviet past background, it is a huge step towards transparency, public involvement and participation in the reform process. And seeing it in relation to the historic background, where transparency and public involvement were simply not imaginable, one may also understand the motivation the paper triggered within the strategic community. Not only MOD officials and parliamentary staffers, but also members of NGOs, working within the field of security policy and civil-military relations, relate this paper with a considerable hope, that the real reform process finally and irreversibly has started.

### *Increasing Transparency in Defence Spending*

Above the quite optimistic assessment of the introduction of the new PPBS budgeting system is mentioned which is supposed to provide enhanced transparency in defence spending. It has also been stated that meanwhile the process of introducing the system is blocked. Despite this

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<sup>234</sup> See: <http://www.supremecourt.ge/english/About.htm> → Public Information → Reform Commission of the Law Enforcement and Security Agencies → Concept of the reform of the Security and Law Enforcement Services of Georgia.

<sup>235</sup> Referring to an interview with a Member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>236</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

drawback the system should not be described as entirely failed. Taking the circumstances into account it does not make sense to expect that such a process is going smoothly without any drawbacks. Even if it will take a certain time, one may state that a first and important step is done and that at least with some pressure of the international community, the process of introducing the new system will be irreversible.

### *Cooperation with NGOs and Interested Public*

The tense relation with Russia but also the engagement of the West in security related assistance programmes - especially the American Training and Equipment (T&E) programme<sup>237</sup> - caused a quite high public interest towards defence and security related issues. This can be seen in a quite extensive media coverage on defence issues. Some papers even dedicate up to one fourth of their coverage to defence related information.<sup>238</sup>

Understanding the importance of a public understanding and interest towards the reform issues, the MoD follows a quite open policy towards interest and active involvement of NGOs and the general public.<sup>239</sup> Admitting, that MoD issues are still not transparent enough, at least some departments try to be as open as possible. They keep a good and close relationship to NGOs, appreciate their interest and keep them updated on new developments.<sup>240</sup>

### **Training and Motivation for the Armed Forces**

The reform process of the Armed Forces is stated to be well proceeding while considering NATO standards as well as general western advice as basic guidelines. Western advisors are not only appreciated as trusted

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<sup>237</sup> The over 60 million worth of assistance is provided to train and equip about 2 000 Georgian soldiers within the overall framework of American anti-terrorism campaign.

<sup>238</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist.

<sup>239</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<sup>240</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

and respected experts but also seen as main source for motivation and hope in success of any reforms.<sup>241</sup>

The obvious engagement and interest by the West, which found a new peak in the American Training and Equipment Programme (T&E programme) considerably increased the motivation to continue with the reform process and is generally seen as crucial basis for a professional army-building process.

The over 60 million worth of assistance is provided to train and equip about 2000 Georgian soldiers within the overall framework of the American anti-terrorism campaign. Members of the Armed Forces as well as of other security forces are undergoing the intensive training programme, which is supposed to result in a first basis for a well trained, reliable and disciplined army.<sup>242</sup> Media echo as well as expert views on this programme show the importance of such a project, not only in view of training and professionalisation of the Armed Forces, but much more in view of the motivation which has been triggered by this new sign of international engagement and support.<sup>243</sup>

### **Coordinating International Assistance**

Western assistance is clearly seen as fundamental for any success in SSR and it has been understood, that a crucial matter of concern is the proper use of foreign aid. First steps have been taken to arrange programmes which help to coordinate different support projects and try to guarantee their most effective use. An example of those positive coordination-efforts has been launched by the Parliamentary Defence and Security Committee, which arranged meetings with the military attachés of those countries, supporting Georgia in its reforms in order to start a comprehensive coordination of useful assistance programmes, which

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<sup>241</sup> Referring i.e. to an interview with a Member of the Georgian Defence Academy and to several members of Georgian NGOs.

<sup>242</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist and to a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>243</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist and to a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

also take into account the current infrastructure, as well as capacities and challenges caused by corruption. The feedback on those meetings has been quite positive.<sup>244</sup>

A Swiss pilot project has also been mentioned, which takes into account corruptive structures by purchasing necessary equipment in Georgia and handing it over directly to the departments in need without involving any money transfer.<sup>245</sup> Those pilot projects may help to avoid mismanagement in view of international assistance and help to built up sustainable donors' involvement in the process. Seeing those efforts as valuable steps within the reform process it should of course be mentioned that an effective coordination finally only can take place when clear priorities are set by the government.

### **Prospects for the Future and Factors for Success and Failure**

“Reforms will be definitely implemented. It only takes time.”<sup>246</sup>

We asked the interviewees on prospects for the future and factors for success and failure in view of a democratic governance of the security sector. The following picture is a selection of the most important factors, which determine the future reform process.

Generally there have not been any crucial doubts in a final success of a democratic reform of the security sector, even if it is admitted, that it probably would take quite a long time to implement the democratic changes. However there are a lot of uncertainties in view of concrete prospects of the next years and quite a lot of different variables and factors, determining anticipated developments:

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<sup>244</sup> Referring to an interview with a parliamentary staff member.

<sup>245</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).

<sup>246</sup> Quotation from an interview with a Member of the Georgian Defence Academy.

## The Role of International Assistance

International support in SSR is clearly seen as most fundamental factor in view of a successful implementation of the reforms in future. The following quotations of our experts' statements mirror their concerns in this direction:

“The prospects of security sector reform depend on the involvement of international aid. Our own forces and energy are not strong enough. We need Western assistance on educational and strategic level. If the assistance will remain, the SSR has a chance to progress. In case Western support would stop, no chances would be left for any progress.”<sup>247</sup>

“During the past years we saw what Georgia can do by itself: We saw that we can do nothing! We need the Americans and their Training and Assistance Programmes.”<sup>248</sup>

“I hope the Americans don't let Georgia down. They are stakeholders now.”<sup>249</sup>

There is no doubt, that the Georgian perspective clearly sees international support and assistance as basic factor and absolute necessary pre-condition for the success of Security Sector Reform. Georgians seem to be convinced, that, if the West would let them down and stop supporting them a total failure not only in view of a reform of the security sector but also of democratization in general is to be expected. Furthermore it has been repeatedly stressed how important a general support and cooperation concerning democracy-building and a basic development of the whole country would be. Hopes are especially linked to Turkey, Germany, US, France, Switzerland, as well as to UN, EU and NATO. Assistance is especially appreciated and needed with regard to training, education and qualification of militaries as well as civilians. Those assistance programmes are seen as basis for any future

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<sup>247</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>248</sup> Quotation from an interview with a Member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>249</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

prospects of SSR in Georgia.<sup>250</sup> In view of a time-wise perspective most experts are convinced, that international and especially American interest in Georgian SSR clearly helps to speed-up the process.<sup>251</sup>

## **The Role of National Motivation**

”We need readiness and motivation from our side.”<sup>252</sup>

”We have to sit down like the Estonians and say ‘We have Zero’ and start building everything from the scratch.”<sup>253</sup>

”For 200 years we had no state, no army...Now it is most important to get a strategy. That is very difficult, because we have to start from Zero-position. But we will try...”<sup>254</sup>

International Assistance is certainly a crucial aspect in view of Georgian security sector reform but an even more important point is the role of national motivation and self-confidence within the reform process. Like in Estonia or Latvia also in Georgia the state and governance structures have to be built from scratch. Those states naturally face crucial additional challenges in reforming their Armed Forces and security structures than long established states. The interviewees quite often alluded to the magic number “Zero” when referring to this fact. The awareness of having no own historical experiences on which they could built up an own success-story appears as a quite strong psychological burden. “Zero” experience and knowledge is clearly seen as a “Zero” basis for the “reform”. Quotation-marks are used here because it has been stressed out, that “reform” is not the right expression. There was

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<sup>250</sup> Referring to interviews with a member of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), with several members of Georgian NGOs, with a parliamentary staff member and with a member of the Georgian Mission to NATO within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>251</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>252</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>253</sup> Quotation from an interview with a Member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament.

<sup>254</sup> Quotation from an interview with a Member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

more or less nothing to reform in Georgia. The first roots of the Georgian Armed Forces appeared spontaneously without any strategy or concept within a chaos situation at the beginning of the civil war. Therefore the interviewees' statements refer to a complete new construction of the security sector rather than to its "reform".

This magic figure "Zero" is a quite relevant factor in Georgian SSR and nothing can counter it but national motivation and self-confidence. However, statements on confidence in Georgia's own will and energy to successfully proceed on the democratic path have been quite rare.

While the interviewees hardly mentioned any conviction to be able to rely on the own national will and energy, "International Assistance" or "Western support" are dominating expressions which have been repeated like magic formulas when talking on a prospective success of Georgian Security Sector Reform.

### **The Role of Political Goodwill**

Speaking on national motivation in a country where the nation's fate is almost exclusively determined by governmental actors there is no way to forget about the political good will of the government as crucial factor, determining the future of Georgian SSR:

"The prospects depend on how far the politicians are willing to move the reforms."<sup>255</sup>

Basically nobody seems to doubt that capacities and knowledge for the conceptualization is available. However, finally everything depends on the political will to give concrete directives and elaborate a consistent strategy, which could be used as binding guideline for all those involved in security sector reform. Such an official obligation and commitment would have to be launched and seriously promoted by the government. As long as there is no binding and officially adopted security concept

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<sup>255</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

available, no effective improvement of the situation can be expected.<sup>256</sup>  
The role of the new government will be crucial in this regards.

### **The Role of Political Stability**

A most crucial factor for the democratization of the security sector is – needless to say – the political stability in the country during the upcoming years. Everything depends on the ability and willingness of the new government to proceed with the democratization process and the implementation of the reforms. The presidential election in January 2004 as well as the first months under the new government will provide a test of the stability of Georgian democracy.<sup>257</sup>

The international community is obviously ready to support Georgia by all means in securing the stability in the country: Several million euros have been for example pledged by OSCE participating states for the “Georgia Elections Assistance Programme”.<sup>258</sup>

### **General Democratization and Change of Mentality**

“If the democratic change in Georgia will be successful, the governance of the security sector will also have a chance to change in a positive and democratic way.”<sup>259</sup>

The general importance of democratization and democracy-building as a basis for a democratic governance of the security sector has been stressed quite often. And furthermore for a general democratization a change of mentality is seen as crucial pre-condition. As stated before soviet legacies still have strong influence and impact on all kind of societal and political life and prevent democratic changes.<sup>260</sup> The future

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<sup>256</sup> Referring to interviews with a Member of the Defence and Security Committee of the Georgian Parliament and with several members of Georgian NGOs.

<sup>257</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>258</sup> See: OSCE States pledge almost four million euros for assisting Georgia in 2004 elections. Article to be found online at:  
[www.osce.org/news/show\\_news.php?ut=2&id=3792](http://www.osce.org/news/show_news.php?ut=2&id=3792).

<sup>259</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

<sup>260</sup> Referring to an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

of the general transformation process will determine the future of a democratization of the security sector and the other way around.<sup>261</sup>

## **Priorities and Recommendations for SSR and International Involvement in the Reform Process**

The interviewees have been finally asked on priorities and recommendations in view of the implementation of SSR in Georgia. The recommendations will be split into national and international implications. The first aspect considers actions and steps to be taken on a national level. The second aspect considers implications for international assistance and support.

### **Implications: the National Dimension**

A first range priority is the adoption and promotion of a national security concept as well as a concrete and precise concept for the security sector reform in Georgia. The reform plan has not only to list NATO requirements for joining MAP or list recommendations of foreign advisors, but also has to take into account the basic question: “What actually does SSR mean for Georgia?” and “What are the implications for a binding implementation of such a reform?” Those considerations should include the following questions: “What are the main obstacles to Georgia’s democratization? What are the primary challenges to its security? Are the current military, police, border guard and intelligence structures capable of responding effectively to those challenges? Why not? What are the priority areas for a reform? What are the domestic and institutional barriers to a reform? etc.”<sup>262</sup> The concept should be precise in view of structures, institutions and responsibilities and give concrete directives for implementation to accountable persons in charge.

The conceptualization of SSR should build up on a national consensus. Therefore all kind of political actors as well as the general public have to

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<sup>261</sup> Referring to an interview with a military journalist and to a Member of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD).

<sup>262</sup> Assessment and recommendations by Marina Caparini, Senior Fellow, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, Geneva.

be involved in this process. Requirements as well as developments must be made transparent. Transparency has to be promoted in view of all SSR-related aspects. Successful cases should be promoted in order to motivate actors as well as the general public.

Not only the Armed Forces, but also other security forces, most of all police forces, have to be reduced to its natural size and be restructured in a most professional way. Increased salaries and social securities should be provided in order to prevent corruption and illegal activities of the personnel. Furthermore civilian, especially parliamentary control over the armed and other security forces have to be guaranteed. The implementation of Disarmament-, Demobilisation, Reintegration- and Retraining- programmes is of crucial importance.

Restructuring processes in the government must focus on the separation of responsibilities and improved decision-making processes. Some experts also suggested an improvement of legislation and a reform of the court system. The need of the establishment of a proper crisis management system has also been stressed out during the interviews.

### **Implications: the International Dimension**

International Community has to give up its one-sided focus on the support of the reform of Armed Forces and has to strengthen its assistance in view of a reform of internal security forces, especially the police forces. This is especially important since the Police forces are at the very heart of a society and interact with public and societal life on a daily basis. As law enforcement body they form the direct arm of the government and therefore strengthen or weaken directly governmental legitimization. Democratization has no chance without a reformed police, since democracy has to be based on the rule of law.

Also crucial is a training and reform of the border guards. An effective border management system will help preventing conflicts with neighbouring countries. A reformed and more effective border management system will also help preventing smuggling and trafficking

and is therefore not only of importance for Georgia, but for the whole region.

Training and educational programmes have to be launched and/or further supported. Further training is crucial in view of all kind of military, political and other societal actors. Programmes should be focused on Armed Forces, Internal Security Forces, including Police and Border Guards, but also on civilians in defence structure, including civilians within the ministries, parliamentarians, and civil society in general. Therefore the Military Academy as well as other institutions need to start long-term training programmes for civilians in Military Affairs. Civic education-programmes should be conceptualized in view of general democracy-building but also in view of democratic civilian involvement in security issues.

A crucial support should be provided in view of parliamentary involvement and oversight of the security sector. International assistance has to help strengthening knowledge and expertise among parliamentarians and staffers with the help of specialized training programmes.

A general support of civil society building is in need. A further retreat of the public has to be prevented. International assistance has to invest in civic education and civil society building. It is crucial to help making democracy as well as democratic oversight over the security sector understandable. The role of donors in this respect is crucial: they must send clear messages, that political leadership as well as civil society are all participants in efforts to improve security. Furthermore donors should seek local organizations with ties in the Georgian community, in order to bring SSR into the own local agendas.<sup>263</sup>

International assistance is generally and basically in need of cooperation and coordination. Various programmes and efforts have to be coordinated and re-evaluated in view of efficiency. Despite “conditionality” is quite often considered as politically incorrect,

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<sup>263</sup> See Johanna Mendelson Forman: “Promoting Civil Society in Good Governance: Lessons for the Security Sector”. DCAF Working Paper Series No. 29, page 15.

international assistance should be at least conditional on i.e. respect for the rule of law and human rights.<sup>264</sup> A certain political will and at least a basic processing of the reforms, not only in view of Armed Forces and MoD, but in view of all security forces and their related agencies, should serve as measure for the assessment of prospective support programmes. Democracy-Building has to be supported in general. A system of democratic and understandable values has to be established in order to support a change of mentality. Root causes of bad governance of the security sector have to be considered in the assistance programmes. Therefore i.e. enhanced support of anti-corruption programmes would be in need.

Financial aid and support with technical equipment has to take corruption into account, i.e. assistance has to be adapted: direct hand over of equipment rather than money transfer to in-transparent accounts.

Assistance in stabilizing the security environment and settling frozen conflicts in the Caucasus region would help providing a solid basis for reforms. Long term international back-up against aggressive territorial infringements would help to free resources and invest them in democratic reforms of SSR rather than in efforts to enlarge combat readiness.

Trainings and seminars on professional state-management are in need, as well as assistance in creation of a state-management culture.

### **Conclusion: Reforming the Reform**

“The Security Sector Reform in Georgia is in need of a reform. The current reform is leading to nowhere.”<sup>265</sup>

One of the main conclusions from the preceding chapters might be that the security sector reform in Georgia is in need of a reform. Considering the main points of what was said before, one might conclude, that such a

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<sup>264</sup> Born 2002, op. cit., p.66.

<sup>265</sup> Quotation from an interview with a member of a Georgian NGO.

reform should have an external as well as an internal dimension. One also might call it an international and a national dimension.

### **The International Dimension**

The international assistance has to shift its focus. On the one hand it is taken for granted that SSR must be seen in a general frame of democratization and democracy-building and can't be promoted as a separate issue (as well as the other way around democratization itself is not possible without an effective reform of the security sector). Nevertheless this insight seems not to be mirrored in international assistance programmes. International support is still focusing on a reform of the Armed Forces, which is certainly an important factor for the country's and region's security. However another crucial factor is the countries democratization. Crucial elements in view of democratization are internal security forces and law enforcement bodies as direct links between government and society. Without a reform of Georgian law enforcement bodies, especially police forces, general democratization will not be able to succeed.

A basic and most important conclusion is that international assistance has to considerably reinforce its support of a reform of the police and internal security forces. Given the crucial importance of police forces within a society - and especially a society in transition -, donors have to become aware of the implications and bundle efforts and energy to help transforming the internal security actors.

Furthermore an intensified cooperation and a coordination of SSR-relevant programmes would be in need – always having in mind, that SSR can't be seen as singled-out factor. Therefore not only mere security sector related, but also general assistance in democracy-building would have to be taken into consideration when coordinating relevant assistance.

Such coordination would also help to develop a joint assistance policy, which would eventually be able to link support to a minimum of concrete results. We don't mean that support should stop in case reform

would not be implemented fast and successful enough. But pre-conditions in view of assistance programmes must more clearly be promoted as incentives to further proceed with the implementation.

Coordination would also help evaluating success and failure of support programmes. It might help determining the further direction of assistance, especially in view of the given background, i.e. the corruptive structures.

### **The National Dimension**

International assistance can't help reforming the security sector without national motivation. Domestic will is crucial for the reforms.

So far Georgia has made a good start, mirrored i.e. in the Defence White Paper - despite its flaws – and in the Police Reform Concept, both considerable exercises in transparency. Furthermore Georgia is an active PfP partner and open to international advice, assistance and models, i.e. to be seen in the adoption of western legislation and the PPBS budgeting system. Nevertheless, receiving advice and assistance is not enough. A country and most of all its government should know where it wants and needs to go. It is not sufficient to wait until Georgia is told by NATO how and what to reform. It is of crucial importance to undertake itself the step to identify the specific national interests and requirements and then build a political consensus on a respective reform plan.<sup>266</sup>

Political goodwill alone is maybe the first and foremost important aspect to trigger a positive process, but it also would not be able to succeed without a broad national consensus, getting a back-up by all kind of political actors as well as the general public. And here again one should stress the importance of transparency on the one hand and civil-society-building on the other. National security including the reform of the security sector must become a transparent issue, discussed and promoted publicly. The role of civic education on those issues as well as on general democracy related aspects is of crucial importance.

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<sup>266</sup> Assessment by Marina Caparini, Senior Fellow at the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva, Switzerland.

Whatever the reasons for the failure to take the necessary steps towards a concrete reform plan are – domestic constraints, persistence of old-guard nomenclatura in key positions, clientelism and corruption etc. – the step has finally to be taken - and this by the country itself.

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<b>Questionnaire: General Assessment of Security Sector Reform in Georgia</b>	
<b>QE1</b>	<b>In view of a reform of the security sector in Georgia, what would you say are in the moment the most challenging obstacles/problems?</b>
<b>QE2</b>	<b>Seeing the SSR as a process, what would you say, are the prospects for the upcoming years?</b>
<b>QE3</b>	<b>What are in your opinion the priorities in SSR? Which are the most important most crucial next steps to be taken?</b>
<b>QE4</b>	<b>If you would be asked for your personal recommendations in view of SSR, which advice would you give, which alternatives would you suggest etc.</b>

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