


Advanced Research Workshop “South Caucasus: Making the Best Use of External Assistance for Stability Building and for Co-operation with NATO”

September 21–23, 2003, Vilnius, Lithuania

 n 22-23 September 2003, The Ministry of National Defence held an international advanced research workshop “South Caucasus: Making the Best Use of External Assistance for Stability Building and for Co-operation with NATO” in Vilnius at the Hotel Crowne Plaza. Defence Minister Linas Linkevičius proposed arranging such a conference during his official visit to Georgia last summer. The idea also received approval from NATO experts, and financial assistance was granted to organise the event.

Representatives from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and NATO member states – Denmark, Great Britain, the United States of America, Poland, Norway, Turkey and Germany as well as officials from the European Union, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Alliance attended the conference.

The discussions at the advanced research workshop focused on whether the experience of the Baltic States could be used by the countries of the South Caucasus, which would be the best ways to support

stability building in the South Caucasus region and transmit the experience of co-operation with NATO. The representatives of the South Caucasus region admitted that the complicated relationship with Russia puts an obstacle to this.

“We want to project stability in this region,” said Lithuanian Defence Minister Linas Linkevičius. “At this conference we want to introduce the “menu of concepts”, from which the countries of the Caucasus region would choose what to apply at home”.

“What could be better than the school of NATO and the European Union members? We are ready to share this experience with you,” said Alvydas Medalinkas, Adviser to the President of Lithuania for Foreign Policy, to the guests from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

When reasoning why the Baltic States should convey their experience to the countries of the Caucasus, Sir Garry Johnson, Chairman of the International Security Advisory Board, said that the two regions are similar by size and also share the Soviet experience. “There are several

differences as well. Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia have different foreign policy goals, and the relations between these countries and Russia are also more complicated. Still, we need to move from talking to practical work,” said the Chairman of the International Security Advisory Board.

“The Baltic States and the Caucasus region are different in many ways. Their culture and traditions differ. These were probably the most different regions in the Soviet Union. However, the relations between the Caucasus region and Russia pose the main obstacle to co-operation,” underlined George Manjgaladze, Director of Defence Policy and International Relations Department at the Georgian Defence Ministry.

The relations between Georgia and Russia are strained due to several factors. The prevailing opinion in Georgia is that Russia indirectly supports the Abkhazia region, which seeks separation from Georgia. The Russian leadership accuses the



Mr Bruce Jackson, President of the Project on Transitional Democracies, addresses participants of the Workshop.

Georgian authorities of tolerating the Chechen fighters, which are allegedly hiding in Georgia from the Russian federal forces.

The Azerbaijan-Armenian relations are overshadowed by the military conflict over the Nagorno Karabakh region in Azerbaijan, which only ended in late 1980s in a fragile truce. On the pretext of defending ethnic Armenians, the Armenian armed forces took over the region and have controlled it since.

Lithuania has signed military co-operation agreements with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and has also financed one-year-long studies of a Georgian officer at the Baltic Defence College in Tartu. One Armenian officer and one Azerbaijani officer have also been invited to study at this educational establishment.

Georgia has drawn up a plan for co-operation with the three Baltic States in 2003-2004, according to which Lithuania grants assistance to Georgia in develop-

ing a crisis management system and a national integration programme as well as in revising the military structures. Latvia provides consultations to Georgia in the areas of national security strategy development, military training and acquisitions, and Estonia – in the fields of defence management and democratic control, development of the legal framework and public relations.

The Lithuanian Defence Ministry introduced the initiative of regional military co-operation between the Baltic States and the South Caucasus region several years ago. The Defence Ministry has drawn up a project on Stability Building in the South Caucasus, according to which Lithuania seeks to share its experience in the field of security and to promote regional co-operation between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Welcome speech by H. E. Linas Linkevičius, Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania

Excellencies, Honourable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We in Lithuania are very pleased to have this opportunity to host this workshop, which is dedicated to the discussion of the situation in and around Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. This may come as a surprise to you, but, for many reasons, we in Lithuania and in the Baltic States consider the South Caucasus region important to us.

Because of our recent history, the Baltic and the South Caucasus countries have a very good understanding of each other. I would even say that, all differences not-

withstanding, there is a lot of mutual sympathy and cordiality between our countries at both state level and among individuals. All contacts, which I and my Lithuanian colleagues had with representatives, be it of Georgia, Armenia or Azerbaijan, were marked by the spirit of genuine friendship and mutual understanding. Thus, I am sure, there is much more between the Baltic and the South Caucasus regions than the geographical distances would suggest.

On several occasions I was discussing with my Latvian and Estonian colleagues the possibilities for enhancing security and defence co-operation with the states

in South Caucasus. I am very glad to conclude that we are in full agreement that our countries and Armed Forces should do what they can in order to assist these three nations with their democratic transition and military reforms.

Moreover, when I was meeting Minister Tevzadze as well as my counterparts from Armenia and Azerbaijan, we always had very open discussions on security situation in the South Caucasus region. We fully realise the complexity of the security situation there. However, as a result of these meetings I became even more convinced that there is a large number of functional areas where Lithuania as well

as Latvia and Estonia could usefully share their experience with our colleagues. These are first and foremost related to mutual confidence building, development of our national armed forces and co-operation with NATO.

To put the co-operation process on the right track, Lithuania last year signed defence co-operation agreements and bilateral defence co-operation plans with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. We hope that both the scope and the quality of our co-operation will be increasing every year. In fact, we are already witnessing an ever-growing number of contacts at different levels and in various areas. These range from meetings of Presidents (President Paksas and his delegation have just returned from a visit to Georgia and Armenia) and Parliamentarians to film festivals and business contacts.

At the same time, we neither underestimate the difficulties related to the transfer of our experience nor forget the differences in the security situation in the

Baltic and the South Caucasus regions. The progress will neither be fast nor easy. But this, I believe, we should regard as a challenge and not as an insurmountable obstacle.

Even with all the political will, Lithuania's capacities are limited. Our outreach programmes for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are still in an early development stage. We are moving towards finding the best ways for our concrete input and improved bilateral co-operation. We will need active and sincere engagement of all major players that are active in the region and we hope that our efforts will complement those of NATO, EU, OSCE and individual countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This workshop organised together with NATO Science Committee, Baltic Defence College and with the support of the United Kingdom is part of our endeavour to develop better understanding of

the situation in South Caucasus. We believe that this workshop will provide an excellent opportunity for representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to present their plans for the future. In organizing this event we sought to invite all major international players, including states, international organizations and non-governmental institutions. This will help us to look more closely at the situation in the South Caucasus region and try to remove collectively the barriers to co-operation.

I am very glad that so many senior representatives agreed to attend and speak at this workshop. I hope that it will further increase our understanding of the security situation in the South Caucasus. Also, we hope it will attract more constructive engagement by external players. And last but not least I hope that the representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia will benefit from presentations on the experience of the Baltic countries.

Could Baltic Experiences be Applicable to the Countries of South Caucasus?

Mr. Kristian Fischer, Deputy Permanent Secretary of State for Defence, Ministry of Defence of Denmark

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all thank you very much for the invitation to this important workshop, and in particular I wish to thank you, Minister Linkevičius, for having initiated this workshop. Indeed it is commendable that Lithuania shows a strong interest in the security and defence developments in other regions and among other PfP-partners.

Vaclav Havel once said that “politics is not only the art of the possible, but that it also has to be the art of the impossible”. In the beginning of the nineties, very few believed that it would be possible

to welcome the three former Soviet republics into NATO after only a bit more than a decade after they regained their independence. We all know that this is first and foremost the merit of the political leadership in the three Baltic states that have made a tremendous progress in all sectors of society, especially during the past decade.

And for me – thinking back on the days in the early 90’s, where we in the Danish Ministry of Defence embarked on a number of bilateral and multilateral initiatives – of which many were focused upon the Baltic Sea Region – this has been one of the most rewarding experiences of

my professional life. We saw the opportunities of making a difference – and sought to contribute to exploiting these new opportunities. Being here in Lithuania – together with Latvia and Estonia soon becoming members of NATO and the EU – is therefore very nice, indeed!

I have found it useful to give a short presentation about Denmark’s experiences in the field of defence co-operation with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. In fact, there are a number of lessons learned from the Baltic co-operation that could be useful. And there are lessons learned that

might be considered useful in co-operating with countries of the South Caucasus and with other partners.

In my presentation I will touch upon:

- Denmark's lessons learned with respect to the content of the Danish-Baltic co-operation and multinational co-operation with the Baltic countries;
- The process itself;
- The importance of clear ownership of the projects, and lastly;
- The need for multinational co-ordination and co-operation.

Background for Danish co-operation with the Baltic countries

But first, allow me to say a few words about the background for the Danish-Baltic co-operation. We started our co-operation with the three Baltic countries very soon after they regained their sovereignty. Within the defence and security field, the co-operation between Denmark and the Baltic states was initiated in 1993.

For Denmark it was politically a natural choice – we had never accepted the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States.

The three Baltic countries were obvious partners and neighbours in the Baltic Sea region, and therefore also a cornerstone for the establishment of a safer and more stable security situation in our own region. Furthermore Denmark, being a small country itself, could more easily relate to the Baltic countries.

Naturally in the beginning the co-operation was not very deep, and the activities were very much taking place within the area of what can be best described as traditional 'Defence Diplomacy', such as visits and exchanges at various levels. However, our co-operation quickly developed into more substantial activities. Today, defence co-operation between Denmark and the three Baltic countries is organised into almost forty different projects and a number of non-project related activities.

Specific lessons learned: the content of co-operation

One important area of co-operation is training and education, including training and education of Baltic officers in Denmark, establishment of Officer Schools and other specialised schools in the Baltic States, and substantial support to the Baltic Defence College. Besides BALTDEFCOL, Denmark also took a very active part in other multilateral projects, such as BALTBAT, BALTNET, and BALTRON, together with NATO allies and other partners. Lesson learned: investment in human capital is absolutely essential.

Furthermore, Denmark has donated smaller or larger amounts of material and weapon systems. (As examples let me mention the donation of a fire support system to Lithuania that includes 72 artillery pieces and the donation of the former Danish inspection ship, "Beskytteren", which is now sailing under the Estonian

flag as “Admiral Pitka”). And since we do not have a large defence industry nobody could suspect us of trying to find new markets for Danish products. Lesson learned: it is important not to be perceived as having hidden agendas!

A third main area of Danish-Baltic co-operation is the co-operation on training and education of troops, and Danish-Baltic deployments in peace support operations. So far the Baltic states have deployed close to 2500 troops alongside Danish troops to the Balkans since 1994.

Participation in peace support operations was not only the right choice to make, but also a brave choice, not least taking into account the overwhelming public focus on self-defence capabilities in the Baltic states back in the early and mid-90's. In this connection I would also like to mention the substantial contributions by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to the operation in Iraq and operation “Enduring Freedom” in Afghanistan. Who

would have thought it possible just a couple of years ago? It is only right to say that these sizeable contributions are truly remarkable – and a very clear illustration of the role of security providers played by the Baltic countries. Lesson learned: it makes it easier for donor countries to justify bilateral and multilateral programmes to their own parliaments and the public when such substantial progress is achieved.

The co-operation has been developing gradually over the years. The initial Defence Diplomacy activities were indeed relevant and important. However, very soon it became apparent that it is necessary to develop fundamental self-defence capabilities. For these newly re-established independent states, defence forces and systems had to be built up practically from scratch.

The primary focus of the Danish defence co-operation with the Baltic countries quickly developed into building up defence capabilities that were also relevant

for NATO, including the countries' capability to contribute to peace support operations, as mentioned before.

Today, NATO's Force Planning process is to a very large extent the guideline for Danish-Baltic co-operation. Most of the new initiatives in our bilateral and multilateral co-operation now have clear links to NATO integration. Lesson learned: NATO and national guidelines must be complementary – but they are not always so!

A very important point in connection with the content of the Danish-Baltic defence co-operation was the need for a gradual development from assistance to co-operation. The content and level of co-operation should also be precisely tailored in order to meet the recipient country's real needs. The speed and size of co-operation programmes has sometimes been too ambitious and inadequate with Denmark's capacity as well as the absorption capacity in the recipient country.

Lessons learned: the process

At the process level it has sometimes proved to be difficult to sustain an unchanged political interest in and support for some of the projects. This is especially true when it comes to multi-year projects. For that very reason the ability to adapt a project or a specific area of co-operation to a changed environment and the real situation has proven to be important. To this aim, flexible use of milestones has proven to be a useful tool.

Another important aim is that co-operation within a certain area should not be maintained just for the sake of co-operation or as an old habit. Co-operation should have a clear content and a well-defined aim. If these conditions are fulfilled, the end result of a project will be more “natural” and logical.

To sum up, the key words in connection with the defence co-operation process are clearly defined goals, flexibility

and dynamism. To this end the so-called “Project approach” has proven to be an indispensable tool. Denmark introduced the “Project approach” in 2000, which has allowed us, together with the Baltic countries, to frame a number of activities into long-term projects and relate these to the Baltic countries’ national needs, long-term defence planning, and to NATO requirements. The project approach has also allowed us to establish a more efficient evaluation of our co-operation and thus make the necessary adjustments in order to maintain the above-mentioned flexibility, dynamism and cost-effectiveness.

Lessons learned: Ownership

A third area where lessons could be learned is the area of ownership, which in the case of the Baltic countries is often referred to as “Baltification”. I will be brief here, but would like to emphasise that “ownership” is absolutely crucial for success.

It is very important to engage the recipient country in the project at the ear-

liest stage possible. This means as soon as the recipient country has developed sufficient capabilities to gradually take over the ownership (BALTDEFCOL is a textbook example!).

The gradual Baltification of a project is important. Experience has shown that it ensures continuity in the project. Furthermore, early commitment on the part of the Baltic states ensured that projects developed adequately to the specific needs of the recipient country. It is also important to justify the spending of resources on projects in donor countries.

Lessons learned: co-ordination

Let me finally touch upon the co-ordination of the Danish-Baltic defence co-operation, especially multinational co-operation and co-ordination.

Good co-ordination serves different purposes. First of all co-ordination creates ties between donors and recipients, i.e. professional networks. It also engages

both parties in a common process that aims at formulating common goals and a common responsibility. I believe that this contributes to enhanced integration of the recipient country and to a mutual understanding which can strengthen co-operation inside NATO as well as regionally.

Secondly, and this might seem quite obvious, co-ordination ensures a more efficient co-operation and better use of scarce defence resources. It also helps to avoid unnecessary duplication between the assisting countries. However, and this applies to international co-operation as well, one of the pitfalls can be a country's need to profile itself among the donor countries. Here again it is important to engage the recipient country in the process. To this end the Baltic Security Advisory Group (BALTSEA) was created.

Conclusion

I hope that with this presentation of lessons learned from the Danish-Baltic co-

operation I have contributed to the discussions on how to work together with the countries in the South Caucasus.

I would like to add one important thing: donor or assisting countries often learn just as much as the countries we seek to assist! On our part in the Danish MoD, we had to learn how to “export” our knowledge and tailor it to needs of the recipients. We also had to learn a lot of practical skills, such as arranging international meetings, not to mention chairing them. This was a real challenge, also for me on my debut in 1994 as chairman of a large international meeting – BALTBAT MoU negotiations!

As my last remark allow me to thank the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Defence Ministers and their predecessors. Without your personal engagement and stamina none of this would have been possible. As Defence Ministers you and your staffs had kept faith in the NATO project for more than ten years, and your personal commitment has been the driv-

ing force behind the effective and fruitful defence co-operation among our countries. Countries such as Denmark might have been “catalysts”, but catalysts need to have an accommodating environment. This has certainly been the case with the Baltic countries. That has made our common tasks so much easier. A steady and pragmatic course has led to very impressive results.

How the EU Can Contribute to Security and Stability in South Caucasus?

Mr. Harri Kämäräinen, First Secretary, Assistant to the EU Special Representative to South Caucasus

On July this year the European Council took a joint action and decided to appoint Ambassador Heikki Talvitie as the EUSR for South Caucasus. This in itself is a clear signal that the EU is keen to pay more attention to the situation in South Caucasus and willing to play a more active role in the region.

The task of the EUSR is to contribute to the implementation of the policy objectives as defined by the Council of the EU and to give his support to the work of EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana in the region. The primary task of the SR will be:

a. To assist Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in carrying out their political and economic reforms. The main focus will be in such areas as the rule of law, democratization, human rights and good governance.

b. The EUSR should also prevent and assist in the resolution of conflicts in accordance with the already existing mechanisms and through good co-operation with key national actors neighbouring the region.

c. The SR will prepare for the return of peace to the region by trying to promote the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

d. The representative will also act in order to encourage and support intra-re-

gional co-operation between the states of the region, for instance, on such issues as economy, energy and transport. His aim is also to make the already existing tools and mechanisms of the EU to become more effective and visible in the South Caucasus.

In order to fulfil the above mentioned tasks, the SR was given a mandate that authorises him to:

a. Develop contacts with governments, parliaments, the judiciary and civil society groups in the region in order to encourage Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to co-operate on regional issues that could be of common interest to all three coun-

tries. Such issues could be, for instance, common security threats, the fight against terrorism, trafficking and organised crime.

b. The SR is also supposed to assist in conflict resolution and especially to improve the possibility for the EU to support UN and OSCE institutions and mechanisms for conflict resolution in the region.

e. And finally, on a more political level within the EU, the EUSR is to assist the European Council in developing a comprehensive EU policy towards the South Caucasus.

As was already mentioned, the SR shall work in close co-operation and liaise with other international actors in the field, in particular the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

The recent appointment of EUSR is not the only proof that the EU wants to enhance stability and democracy in the region. As a matter of fact there have been a number of projects and activities going on since the beginning of the 90és. One

of the tasks of the EUSR is to co-ordinate and streamline these various external actions of the EU in the region.

The Partnership and Co-operation Agreements between EU and Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were signed in 1999. These agreements provide a good basis for further enhancing the co-operation between the EU and South Caucasus and between the countries themselves. Through the PCA and the EU assistance programmes the EU remains engaged in helping countries in the South Caucasus tackle their problems on a practical level.

In May 2004 the EU is going to enlarge and will accept ten new members. This will bring even greater potential to the co-operation between the EU and countries in the South Caucasus. One can already predict that the importance of the PCA agreements as the cornerstone of EU relations will only increase.

As early as in 1991 the EU Commission launched a programme called Tech-

nical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States – more commonly known as TACIS programme. This programme is aimed at enhancing market economy and democracy in those countries. TACIS projects include mostly technical assistance, information exchange, education and expertise. Besides purely national projects, the TACIS includes also regional projects, such as:

- TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia)
- Regional Programme - transboundary projects in the fields of infrastructure, environmental protection, internal and legal affairs
- EBRD investment preparation facility
- Nuclear Safety Programme
- Inogate - Interstat Oil and Gas Transport to Europe
- Food Security Programme
- Joint Environment Programme.

All in all, during the first ten years the Commission has given to Armenia

- 290 million in assistance through the TACIS programmes. The assistance to Azerbaijan is worth

- 330 million and to Georgia
- 350 million.

Through these assistance programmes the Commission has been able to facilitate for instance:

- the building of railroads, road network, oil- and gas pipelines;
- enhancement of institutional, administrative and judicial reforms that have made it possible for Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan to join the Council of Europe and WTO;
- humanitarian aid programmes for IDPs and refugees;
- co-operation with Armenia in order to close the Medzamor nuclear power plant.

As has already become clear, there are a number of significant ongoing assistance programmes and aid projects. However, in the end it is the respective countries themselves that are responsible for the

success of these projects. The long-term future of the South Caucasus depends very much on increased intra- and extra regional co-operation. Only by making the best use of wider synergies will the countries of the region be able to exploit their potential. Each country is responsible for its own success. They should expect no miracles, only assistance and support if the wish for political and economic transformation remains genuine and is reflected in their concrete actions.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission to Georgia

Lt.Col. Joe McDonagh, Military Adviser, OSCE Mission to Georgia

Introduction

The OSCE Mission to Georgia was established in December 1992 at the invitation of the Georgian Government. The invitation followed the signing of the Sochi Agreement in June 1992 by the Russian Federation and Georgia. The Agreement introduced measures to facilitate the peaceful resolution of the Georgian - Ossetian conflict including a cease fire and the withdrawal of heavy calibre weapons from the zone of conflict. It brought open hostilities between the two sides to an end. The conflict started when Georgia abolished the autonomous status of South Ossetia as it existed during

the Soviet era and when the South Ossetian side proclaimed independence from Georgia as the Republic of South Ossetia. The self-proclaimed Republic of South Ossetia has never received international recognition.

The Mission's early focus in the country was on the Georgian - Ossetian conflict, but it has since expanded considerably to include aspects of human dimension as well as the monitoring and reporting of movements across the border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. The Mission is currently involved in the following areas which are directly linked to politico-military aspects of security:

- Monitoring the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF) in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict
- Collection of small arms in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict
- Promotion of a Special Police Co-ordination Centre (SCC) in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict aimed at enhancing co-operation between the law enforcement bodies of the two conflicting sides
- Monitoring the border between Georgia and the Republics of Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan of the Russian Federation
- Recycling and destruction of stockpiles of ammunition and bombs on former military bases in Georgia
- Destruction of dangerous chemicals

located on former military bases in Georgia

- Assisting in building a strong civil society as a long-term stability concept
- Human rights in Abkhazia and supporting the UN-led peace process

Mandate of the Mission

The Mission's mandate covers three areas of activity:

- 1992 Conflict Resolution in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict
- 1994 Human Dimension for the building of a strong civil society
- 1999-2003 Conflict Prevention (Border Monitoring Operation)

Georgian-Ossetian Zone of Conflict

The Mission has been implementing its conflict resolution mandate in the zone of conflict since its deployment to the region in December 1992. From 1992 to 1997 the Mission operated from Tbilisi, as the necessary conditions for the establishment of a permanent presence in the zone of conflict did not exist. In April

1997 the Mission finally opened its Field Office in Tskhinvali where two Mission members, a diplomat and a military officer, are now deployed on a permanent basis.

In accordance with a decision of the Joint Control Commission, the body set up under the Sochi Agreement as a mechanism to facilitate the peaceful negotiation of the conflict, a Joint Peacekeeping Force (JPKF) was deployed in the zone of conflict in July 1992. The force consists of three battalions, one from Russia, one from Georgia and one from North Ossetia - Alania. The JPKF is supported by a group of observers from each of the three contingents. The JPKF in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict represents a unique model of peacekeeping operations, as the contributing sides to the force were active participants in the conflict. The JPKF is the main source of stability in the zone of conflict and it ensures stability by deploying observation posts, mobile and permanent checkpoints throughout the zone. It also supports and

maintains a high level of co-operation with the law enforcement agencies from the Georgian and Ossetian sides.

The Mission's military activities in the Georgian-Ossetian zone of conflict are mainly concerned with monitoring the security and military situation in the area, co-operation with the Joint Peacekeeping Forces (JPKF), reporting on breaches of the cease fire, confidence building and providing an instrument of early warning. The work is carried out by means of daily briefings and meetings with the JPKF, weekly meetings with the law enforcement agencies from both sides, monitoring patrols throughout the zone of conflict and the collection of small arms and ammunition in co-operation with the JPKF.

The Mission is implementing a number of confidence building measures in the zone of conflict as part of its efforts to support the process of conflict resolution.

Since January 2002 the Mission has been actively engaged in the implementa-

tion of small community based projects in the zone in exchange for the voluntary hand-in of weapons and ammunition by the local population. The weapons and ammunition are handed in to the JPKF for registration and storage. Under the supervision of the Mission the weapons and ammunition are finally destroyed in the presence of the law enforcement agencies. The projects are funded by OSCE participating states and the main focus of the Mission is on confidence building, getting the two communities to work together on initiatives that are of benefit to them both. To date eight projects have been completed, two are ongoing and at least seven are under consideration. The projects represent a wide range of activities, including road repair, irrigation canal repair and the provision of medical equipment for hospitals and clinics. While the program is still in the early stages of development, it has considerable potential for reaching out to the people who need assistance most and for the development of confidence building between the sides.

In terms of enhancing security in the zone of conflict, the weapons collection program aims at achieving the following:

- To reduce the amount of weapons and ammunition in the hands of the local community
- To promote confidence building measures between the sides and to impress upon them that there is an alternative to conflict
- To assist in rebuilding small but key components of the infrastructure which have been damaged or destroyed during the conflict
- To further promote the presence of the OSCE in the zone of conflict

One of the key elements of conflict resolution and confidence building is the provision of a high standard of policing. While there is a high level of co-operation between the JPKF and the law enforcement agencies of both sides, there is a growing need to build and nurture the confidence of the local population in the law enforcement agencies. Such confidence in the law enforcement agencies will even-

tually lead to more stability and a feeling of safety and security in the region. This feeling of stability, safety and security can also have a very positive effect on other aspects of the resolution of the conflict, in particular the complicated issue of the return of refugees and IDPs. Additionally, there is a need to tackle the high level of criminality which exists in the post-conflict era.

In recognition of these factors the Mission facilitated the setting up of a joint Georgian-Ossetian Special Police Co-ordination Centre (SCC) in 2002 and with the assistance of EU funding the SCC was provided with the necessary technical and financial support to become an operational police unit.

The Mission is now in the process of formulating measures to further enhance the operational capacity and effectiveness of the SCC. Following a recent analysis by international police experts the Mission will be recommending that the SCC should become more involved in com-

munity policing by means of patrolling, increased interaction with the local population and should operate as a police unit focused on preventative rather than reactive measures. The provision of internationally recognized police training will also be recommended.

Border Monitoring Operation

The Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) was first established in December 1999 in response to a request from the Georgian Government for assistance in preventing a spillover of the Chechen conflict into Georgia. As a result of the Chechen conflict, a considerable number of Chechen refugees crossed the border into Georgia and were moved to the Pankisi Valley sixty kilometres inside Georgian territory, where they settled. There were reports and allegations of Chechen fighters using the influx of refugees as cover to cross the border and use the Pankisi Valley as a place of rest and recuperation as well as a staging point for attacks on targets inside the Russian Fed-

eration. These allegations which caused further tensions in the already fragile bilateral relations between the Russian Federation and Georgia, prompted the Georgian Government to seek the assistance of the OSCE in order to prevent an escalation of the situation.

The OSCE Mission responded quickly to the request for assistance and deployed monitors to the segment of the border between Georgia and the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation. However, this deployment of border monitors only covered a small portion of the border where crossings could take place and in 1992 and 1993 respectively, monitors were deployed to cover the Ingushetian and Dagestan segments of the border. The Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) now consists of more than 140 monitors covering a 280-kilometer stretch of border between Georgia and the Russian Federation.

The Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) is deployed in eight patrol bases in its area of responsibility. The main task

of the BMO is to observe and report on all movements across the border either on foot, by vehicle or by air. Observation is carried out by means of foot, vehicle and air patrols, and by deploying temporary and permanent observation posts at various locations along the border. The BMO is equipped with the most modern communications and observation equipment including night observation, thermal imaging devices and satellite communications. Using this array of modern equipment it is possible to send live pictures of border activity to the Mission HQ in Tbilisi. Monitoring is conducted in all weather conditions. Security for the unarmed OSCE border monitors is provided by security detachments from the Georgian Border Guards.

The presence of the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation (BMO) has enhanced the operational capacity of the Georgia Border Guards who have received a sizeable amount of technical support such as vehicles, protective clothing and uniforms from OSCE participating states.

The OSCE presence in the area has also facilitated the improvement of contact between the Border Guards of the Russian Federation and Georgia.

Recycling and Destruction of Stockpiles of Ammunition and Bombs

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of Russian troops from military bases in Georgia large stockpiles of ammunition, bombs and missiles remained on the bases. The size of the stockpiles still remaining on the bases has been calculated in terms of thousands of tons of all types of artillery ammunition, air to ground bombs and surface to air missiles. In addition to being an environmental and safety hazard, the stockpiles of ammunition and bombs pose a considerable threat to security in the region where a number of conflicts are ongoing within a few hundred kilometres of the bases.

At the 1999 OSCE Summit in Istanbul, Georgia and Russia signed a Declaration

on the Withdrawal of Russian Forces and Equipment from Georgia.

Arising from the 1999 Istanbul Declaration, the OSCE instituted a voluntary fund to assist with the withdrawal of Russian Troops and Equipment from Georgia and to deal with its consequences.

The first project to be implemented by the Mission within the framework of the voluntary fund was completed in 2002 and it involved the conversion of 500 tons of Melange rocket fuel into fertilizer. The conversion of the rocket fuel eliminated a serious safety and environmental hazard posed by the Melange in Western Georgia.

In February 2003 the Mission commenced the implementation of an ammunition and bomb recycling and destruction programme aimed at eliminating all stockpiles of ammunition, bombs and missiles from Georgian territory. The Georgian Government designated the former military base at Dedoplistskaro as the Ammunition Recycling and Destruction Centre of Geor-

gia for this purpose. As there were no facilities in Georgia capable of carrying out the complex task of ammunition dismantling, the project had to start with the renovation of a special workshop to carry out the various activities involved in ammunition dismantling. In addition the design, manufacture and installation of equipment necessary to carry out the various project activities was completed. The workshop now has the capacity to dismantle artillery ammunition, to recycle the recyclable components and to destroy the components that cannot be recycled. For example, the Centre is reprocessing nitro-glycerine gunpowder and converting it for industrial and commercial use. Other components of artillery ammunition are being recycled and converted for industrial use.

A demolition range for the destruction of dangerous and unstable ammunition and bombs was constructed on the former military airbase at Shiraki.

It is planned to install specialized equipment in the near future in order to give

the Centre the capacity to carry out one of the most important aspects of ammunition recycling, that is, the extraction of TNT from ammunition projectiles and bombs.

Neutralization of Dangerous Chemicals

The Mission is currently in the process of finalizing the details of a new project within the framework of the OSCE voluntary fund which will neutralize and destroy dangerous chemicals including napalm located at former military bases in Georgia. The project will also rehabilitate polluted lands of the bases where the dangerous chemicals are either buried or left lying in the open and exposed to the extremes of Georgian weather conditions.

Human Dimension Activities

The Human Dimension activities of the Mission are concerned with addressing long-term security priorities. The Mission is focusing on strengthening sta-

bility in Georgia by facilitating processes which enhance social inclusiveness and effective participation by the population in decision-making. The Mission also monitors the performance of the judiciary and the penitentiary system with regard to human rights. Through continued efforts to strengthen public confidence in pluralistic democratic development and its commitment to inclusive decision-making, the rule of law and protection of human rights, the Mission promotes an essential alternative to informal and unsustainable mechanisms undermining the ability of society to address the problems that continue to interfere with its efforts to resolve the conflicts that characterise Georgia.

Conclusion

In Georgia the Mission is implementing the most comprehensive security policy mandate that the OSCE can offer.

Through its multifaceted and practical approach and strong involvement in both

Georgian and regional security, the Mission is effectively making a considerable contribution to the regional security environment as well as easing the tensions in the Georgian-Russian bilateral relations.

With its focus on both short term and long term security priorities, the OSCE represents the longest-serving international apparatus of security and confidence building in the Caucasus.

National Security Policy and Defence Structures' Development Programme of Armenia

Major General Arthur Aghabekyan, Deputy Defence Minister of the Republic of Armenia

After Armenia declared its independence in 1991 the development of our national security policy has been following a natural course. The national security system of Armenia has unavoidably been influenced by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, regional developments, policy implemented by the countries of the region, and the general influence of international processes. We can say that 12 years' experience of nation building has identified some general concerns about our national security. Today we are developing a serious legislative basis for the regulation of security concerns. The National Assembly of the Republic of

Armenia has initially approved the bill on national security elements, the government is working on the development of concepts on social, economic, information, military security and other areas.

Representing the national security policy of Armenia let me focus on those military-political and foreign factors, which form the basis of our national security system.

***International military-political
co-operation***

Simultaneously with the foreign complimentary policy adopted by Armenia,

we consider well-balanced international military-political co-operation as the main principle behind our national security policy.

Today we are living in such times when a separate country cannot individually take care of its security needs and avoid the general trends of the developing regional and international co-operation. Given the volume, the extreme and unforeseeable nature and the degree of danger of the present challenges to our countries' and nations' security, we just have to co-operate in the security area both in bilateral and multilateral international frameworks.

Armenia is building its security policy on a multilateral co-operation basis, aimed at the creation of multilevel guarantees. We actively participate in military-political integration processes in the framework of the CIS Collective Security Treaty, and implement a broad military co-operation programme with Russia. At the same time Armenia is developing constructive co-operation with NATO in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and Partnership for Peace programme. Today, opportunities have been created for the implementation of real military co-operation programmes with the United States. At the same time we hold consultations on security issues with Iran.

Furthermore, Armenia has announced several times that it is ready to establish normal relations with Turkey without any preconditions. We are even ready to co-operate with Azerbaijan in the areas of economy, distribution of natural resources and communications.

In my view, such an open co-opera-



Armenian delegates during the discussions

tion policy will contribute to the relief of tension and improvement of mutual confidence. As you can, see we co-operate with countries and security systems the policy of which can be even assessed as contradictory. We aim at balancing the interests of all military-political powers,

and try to avoid conflicts and new dividing lines, arms race and strategic competition in the region.

Summarising the main foreign elements of our national security policy, I would like to identify five main directions.

1. Co-operation in the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation with a stress on bilateral military co-operation with Russia.

I would like to introduce the following remarks on Armenian-Russian military co-operation:

- it is not targeted against third countries, and only serves to support Armenia's national security,

- co-operation has started and is going on with mutual agreement between Armenia and Russia, and with the existence of common interests,

- the development of Armenian-Russian military co-operation and especially the deployment of a Russian military base in the territory of Armenia is conditioned mainly by the unbalanced policy of Turkey in the Caucasus, which is aimed at isolating Armenia in the region,

- some elements of Armenian-Russian military co-operation and the presence of a Russian military base in Armenia can be reviewed by mutual agreement only in the case of the weakening of tension and balanced policy implemented by Turkey in the region.

2. The deepening of co-operation with NATO as an organisation, and with NATO member countries in the framework of bilateral and multilateral programmes.

The course of enhancement of our co-operation with NATO is conditioned by our wish to have a certain role and portion in the process of reaction to the present international and Euro-Atlantic regional security challenges and is aimed at:

- providing political dialogue and co-operation with NATO on international security issues,

- the establishment of units interoperable with NATO forces for participation in international peacekeeping missions and other initiatives,

- using the Partnership for Peace programme for the development of the reform programmes of the Armenian Armed Forces,

- the creation of a basis for military-political and military co-operation with NATO member and partner countries,

- the participation in regional co-operation, humanitarian and other

programmes in the framework of NATO PfP and other initiatives.

3. Military-political co-operation with the United States in the areas of the fight against international terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and other areas.

The co-operation with the United States is directed at the establishment of an atmosphere of stability and balance in the region. As major areas of co-operation with the United States I would like to identify the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, military education and training, peacekeeping, the modernisation of the command and control system of the Armenian Armed Forces and humanitarian demining.

I would also like to mention the clear tendency of establishing a strategic partnership between Russia and the US as a positive security factor for the South Caucasus region.

4. The deepening of military co-operation with NATO member and partner countries in a bilateral format - an important element of co-operation with NATO and the European Union.

In this respect I would like to underline our effective co-operation with Greece in military education, peacekeeping, combat training and other areas. Especially, as a result of our consistent co-operation with Greece, today we have the opportunity to participate in NATO-led peacekeeping operations. We have also established partnership relations with Italy, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania, Germany and France.

5. Co-operation with OSCE, European Union and other European military-political structures, strengthening of regimes outgoing from the CFE Treaty and Vienna Document, viewing it as an important system for the preservation of military balance in the region.

The co-operation with European bodies is considered an important element in

the national security of Armenia, in terms of our strong commitment to integration into the European family. Thus, we see economic and military-political co-operation with European organisations as a necessary precondition for integration into the European security system.

6. Regional co-operation - we have always expressed our readiness to implement the undertaken initiatives, but there are some obstacles related to the policy of Azerbaijan.

Our attitude is this: it is necessary to make regional co-operation serve for the weakening of tension and the creation of favourable preconditions for the resolution of conflicts. Especially, we consider reasonable co-operation in the areas of the de-blockading of transportation routes, the distribution and use of natural resources, information exchange and other such areas which are not directly linked with the conflict. As a successful example of regional co-operation I would like to mention the Pfp exercises conducted in Georgia in 2002, in which Ar-

menian and Azerbaijani units participated, while Azerbaijan refused to participate in the same exercise in Armenia in 2003.

Development programmes of defence structures

Since the first years of Armenian independence the Armenian Armed Forces have tried to preserve the best traditions of the Soviet system and structure, adjusting them to our national features. The Karabakh conflict and the specific political situation of the region were the main factors behind our decision to carry out step-by-step reforms avoiding radical and fundamental reform programmes. Simultaneously, against our will we became engaged in conflict and as a result a number of officers of our Armed Forces acquired real combat experience. I am convinced that we have managed to create a unique defence system which is adequate to our national conditions, geographical position and security threats, and the Armenian Armed Forces with their combat power are able to resolve the current tasks we face.

In future, of course, we plan to review the numbers in our Armed Forces and initiate more radical reforms, but for the time being our aim is to modernise the existing system. We are led by the principle that it is necessary to create a modern army step-by-step, realising that it is not an easy task in the conditions of the modern trend of the development of military technology. We can state that the Armenian Armed Forces in respect of combat readiness show quite high effectiveness in the exercises in the framework of the Collective Security Treaty and NATO/PfP.

Consistent efforts are also made in the direction of the democratisation of the Armed Forces, civil control, and the improvement of mobilisation mechanisms. Soon the law on Alternative Military Service will be approved. Gradually, more transparent relations are being established with the public and mass media.

With regard to the military educational system, the process of officer training for

the Armed Forces of Armenia is implemented in the military educational institutions of Armenia and partner countries. In Armenia we have a Military Institute where we train motorised-rifle and artillery officers, a Signal Officers School and an Aviation Institute (aviation engineers). I think it is necessary to mention that Armenia was one of the former Soviet republics where there were no military educational institutions during the Soviet period. As a result, all the current infrastructure has been created due to our own efforts.

We train and qualify our officers in the Russian Federation, Greece, the United States (intelligence, communication, defence management, artillery), Italy (infantry) and China (infantry). I am glad to note that we are starting to develop co-operation in the area of military education with Lithuania, and soon we will send two officers to Lithuania to participate in the Captains' course there. On this occasion I would like to express my gratitude to the Ministry of National

Defence of Lithuania and personally to Mr Linkevičius.

In the educational programmes of the Military Schools we gradually import such subjects, which introduce not only Russian but also Western experience. The English Language Training Centre established in the Military Institute with the support of the British Council is starting to operate quite successively. It gives all cadets an opportunity to acquire an elementary knowledge of the English language with the perspective of future development.

We also use the opportunities provided by the Partnership for Peace programme courses organised by NATO Commands and different countries on the military educational process.

I am confident that multilateral co-operation in the area of military education will contribute to the implementation of more flexible defence reforms drawing on extensive international experience.

Additionally, for coming reforms we attach great importance to PARP. Armenia joined PARP in 2002. An Armenian Peacekeeping Battalion and National Demining Centre take part in the programme, 24 Partnership Goals have been formulated. The Armenian Peacekeeping Battalion is now in the formation stage. Personnel are regularly trained in the Kilikis Peacekeeping Training Centre in Greece. Starting from January 1, 2004, one platoon of the Armenian Peacekeeping Battalion will be sent to Kosovo to participate in NATO-led peacekeeping operations within the structure of the Hellenic Brigade.

With the support of the United States the National Demining Centre is already equipped with modern equipment, and continuous training is conducted under the command of US instructors. As you know, our region is engaged in conflicts and is experiencing a lot of problems with mine-affected areas. Therefore we intend to make the best use of the Centre for the needs of our region. We have already

started talks with the United States on the possibility of sending a group of Armenian deminers to Iraq.

We also attach considerable importance to the programmes of modernisation of the command system of the Armed Forces, viewing it as one of the main preconditions for the general progress of the Armed Forces. In particular, we plan to fully modernise our military communication system in the near future and in this respect we have some agreements with the United States in the framework of the Foreign Military Funding programme (FMF).

Finally I would like to stress that the relief of tension and settlement of conflicts can serve as the best stimulus for enhancing the effectiveness and speed of defence reform processes in the South Caucasus countries.

National Security Policy and Plans for Development of Defence Structures*

LtCol Kakha Katsitadze, Chief of J-5, General Staff, Republic of Georgia

My report's aim is to consider the aspects that determine the difficulties of the forming of national security policy and the force building in Georgia and to present the ways to solve these problems. I'd also like to show the importance of establishing secure area in Georgia and South Caucasus for entire European security.

The Legacy

In Georgia till today the processes of the beginning of 1990-ies effect the implementation of national security policy and the force building. Despite that that since elapsed enough time, the facts and events

of that period have great, generally negative effect on processes in Georgia.

The first of all it's a civil war of 1991-1993. It not only inhibited forming of the state and especially the army, but also caused the deflection of mental ballast of the nation. Our society still can't emerge from the stress caused by the civil war /Our society is still under stress of the civil war.

There are a lot of precedents of civil war in the newly established independent countries in history. Not only in former colonial countries but also in such states as Greece - in 1820-ies or Ireland - in 1920-ies. In both countries bloody civil

wars followed the achievement of independence. The fact of these civil wars itself and their after-effects /consequences/ determined future development of the states during the years.

Though, in Georgia we can find /detail/ some specific factors which distinguish us from Ireland or Greece. In this case first of all we must remark that after the civil war warlords captured the power in Georgia. Though, till today criminal activities of paramilitary groups and warlords arouses /inspires/ fear of "men in uniform" in the most part of Georgian society. Now Georgia indeed has a regular army (its readiness and shape is a sub-

* Editorial note: text of this presentation is not edited.

ject for another discussion), but negative psychological stereotypes formed by those criminal activities of paramilitaries and warlords is often transferred on today's Georgian regular army.

The second aspect, which is even more connected with a process of establishing of Georgian state and especially the army, is the facts of ethnic-conflicts and their results. The most demonstrative result of these conflicts is about 300.000 refugees in Georgia. Because of economical difficulties social integration of them is very problematic. Another result is "a syndrome of lost war", which is apparent not only in the society, but also in the army. The nation doesn't believe that government is able to solve Abkhazia case. At the same time Abkhazian problem creates a collision in force planning - it still isn't decided what kind of balance must be chosen between political and military directions to solve Abkhazian problem positively for Georgia.

Uncontrolled Abkhazia is also a big economical problem. This uncontrolled



Georgian delegation at the Workshop

territory is a best place for all kind of contrabandists, smugglers and criminals. By the way there are a lot of facts when Russian so called peacekeepers instead of protecting the civilian population are dealing with contrabandists and assisting in illegal business. We can say the same

about Russian so-called peacekeepers deployed in the second ethnic-conflict zone in Georgia - Tskhinvali region.

The third main aspect, which cramps establishing security and normal army building process in Georgia, is the pres-

ence of Russian military bases and forces on our territory. When I say “Russian forces” I mean not only field forces of Russia (dislocated in Ajara, Akhalkalaki, Gudauta regions of Georgia), but also so called Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions.

Presence of Russian military bases in Georgia hasn't any legal basis. These military bases don't guarantee security in Georgia at all, and their presence even is a threat of Georgian national security. In private discussions Russians remark that the main objective of these bases is to confirm the area /sphere/ of Russia's geopolitical influence. It's remarkable that today in Russia the most vulgar version of geopolitics, instead of communism ideology, becomes a new ideological base for various power structures. Of course there's nothing positive for security and national interests of Georgia in such moods in Russian society and political or military officials' circles.

However that according to 1999 Istanbul summit negotiations about with-

drawal of Russian military bases must be already completed, accordance between Georgia and Russia till isn't attained. Russia demands to leave these bases in Georgia up to 11 years, as they say because of technical problems. Together there are about 2000 Russian personnel on these bases, other 3000-4000 men working there are local population who serve on the bases by contract. I think it's clear that relocation of 2000 personnel doesn't need 11 years. But for Russian generals independence of Georgia is an interim fact and just a displeasing accident, which, as they hope, will be improved in short time by reincorporating of Georgia (of course opposite of our will) in modified Russian empire. Belief in such modification and reincarnation is clearly appears from various interviews of Russian military officials.

Unfortunately, unacceptably slow temps of building of independent Georgian state, inspires Russia to cherish such a hope. That is why head political officials of Russia think that Georgian state

will soon fail and the country become a sweet “piece of cake” for Russia. The main problem in this situation is our weakness, not the strength of Russia at all. Until such a weakness of Georgian State will not be overpowered, there isn't any sense to talk about efficient security or military policy.

The processes in North Caucasus and especially in Chechnya also affect the security and military building in Georgia. The Chechen War affects situation in Georgia in various directions. At first, Caucasus substantially is an entire system and any kind of changes of any element of this system inspires certain changes in the other elements. Second, the hostilities are conducting directly near Georgian state border and what's important, in poorly controlled areas, because of geographical circumstances – high mountains, rough terrain. Both sides – Russians and Chechens are trying to use this particular situation: Chechens – to hide, Russians – to accuse Georgia in helping the rebels. Russian Air Forces bombed Georgian ter-

ritory several times, what caused civilian casualties. In addition, ethnic Chechens – so called “Kists” live in Georgia during the centuries in border region. The most of them are peacefully integrated in Georgian society. Though, Kists till today have close contacts with their Chechnian relatives in Russia. That’s why after both – first and second Chechen campaign thousands of Chechens crossed Georgian border and took refuge in Pankisi gorge where their native Kists live compactly. The most part of these Chechens of course were real refugees, but as it often happens everywhere in such situations, between refugees there also were some criminals, rebels and extremists. Accumulation of such a big and different mass of people in the narrow Pankisi gorge destabilised situation in the region. Local criminals easily established contacts with various criminal groups from other parts of Georgia and soon Pankisi region became a centre of kidnapping, drug business and other illegal activities. After special operation of Georgian police and military forces in Pankisi situation changed posi-

tively, but till absolute normalisation of the situation in the gorge, the region will continue spreading of its negative influence on whole country and remain as a threat of national security.

Another negative factor in the building of national security and army is a low degree of civilian integrity. It isn’t surprising after two civil wars and two ethnic conflicts in the country during 13 years, especially when we are talking about a post-communistic society, where there is a too poor tradition of resolving of national problems by consensus.

Along with negative aspects, which interferes army building in Georgia, there are also some positive moments. First of all it’s a great support and aid from Georgia’s western partner countries. The aid only in the frame of “Train and equip” program amount 64 million US dollars. There were and still is a great support in establishing of naval forces and also in reformation of military education system. Britain and Turkey are helping us to

achieve NATO standards in the Military Academy; with the support of Germany opened the centre of training and preparation of professional sergeants; decades of Georgians were sent into NATO countries to get military education or practical training.

The second positive aspect is that despite of tensions caused by North Caucasian conflict, because of international background and some other factors the threat of a full-scale aggression against Georgia from any neighbour country is too small. The fact, that there isn’t a virtual /real/ threat of full-scale aggression, allows us to define our priorities more concretely and extend their realisation in longer time. But this process must be definitely adjusted and accomplished in the concrete periods of time.

The third positive aspect is that most part of Georgians supports our desire of integration into NATO structures. At the same time there are not any serious political party or group in Georgia, which

is openly against of this integration and almost all of them clearly supports the integration of Georgia into North Atlantic Alliance.

How we imagine process of planning of military policy and national security policy considering these realities? According of the will of the most part of the nation Georgia chose common course of integration into NATO structures. According of this principal decision there must be composed a general document, which we can identify as “National Security Conception”. Perhaps this document must not be a long-range plan, because the integration of Georgia into NATO will completely change Georgia’s security environment and the countries main objectives. But the existence of such document is necessary, because it’s a basic document and all other strategy planning documents must be derived from it.

Next more detailed document must define the unity of political, diplomatic, economical, military etc. actions, which

are necessary for realisation of the national security conception. We can call such document – “National Security Strategy” or a big strategy. Even more concrete must be a document, which defines defence policy. We can edit it as an extended variant of “White Book” (in Georgia there already exists two editions of it) or as a special book or review. On the basis of defence policy principles must be created even more detailed document – “National Military Strategy”, which will define our armed forces’ organisation, needs, how the army must be used, trained etc. My direct duty is to work on such document, so later I’ll introduce my personal opinions about this subject.

Of course it only one possible variant of planning system and it’s possible to consider any other variations.

Now let’s talk again about principles of national military strategy. The Strategy of Georgian Armed Forces are been planning in purpose to realise the political interests & military missions of the

country. It is based on the basic State-development principle according to which Georgia is not an aggressive-type state and has not the interest of annexing of other territories. The inviolability of National Borders & defence of internal life-orders/forms has been of essential meaning for it.

For this, Georgian Military Strategy scopes to defeat the adversary not by eliminating it’s forces in the Decisive Battle, but to establish, following the principle of minimal sufficiency, the defensive system that makes adversary change the decision of direct aggression. But, if such aggression is though set in force, then to damage the enemy in the degree that makes it stop military activities and to acknowledge the status-quo – something before the war.

Our final mission is to achieve and maintain the better peace than that before the aggression. The contemporary military thought knows two types of Military Strategy – strategies of direct and indirect activities. The goal of the former

is eliminating the antagonist armed forces throughout one or more decisive battles and occupying its territory. The latter strategy scopes, by means of different indirect activities (military as well as non-military), to degrade adversary's armed forces' battle readiness, to exhaust it and paralyse its will for battle conducting. The goal of indirect strategy is that the after-war peace must be more convenient for this strategy implementing party than that condition before the war.

Given the missions stated before our Armed Forces, the basic goal they face is to defend our national territory. Georgian Military Strategy scopes not so much to eliminate antagonist forces and occupy their own territory but to achieve our political goals. Our objective is, in case when aggression avoidance seems impossible, to leave the war with not worse status quo (in optimal case - better) than that before the war. Accordingly, The Georgian Military Strategy carries not direct, but indirect character. At the same time, the combat-readiness maintenance

of our Armed Forces has a top-priority in comparison with any other mission.

The basic thesis of the National Military Strategy of Georgia is comprised in its non-traditional character. We prefer those activities based on not "cut-and-dry" measures, initiative and creation of high-level ambiguity situations. The main goal of our strategy is to achieve the condition when in such highly ambiguous context our political leadership & entire Army-Command is capable to rule the chaotic situation and make more quick and adequate reaction on adversary's forces.

The main objective of our Strategy is to create the maximum stand against the antagonist's mission-realisation and vice-versa - creation of highly convenient conditions for our mission-realisation. We have to leave attempts to win in the decisive battles, but to disorganise, de-co-ordinate the enemy & break its Will. While implementing such strategy, activities concerned as auxiliary in classical strategy (ambush, raid, diversion, mine-war etc) gain

the same meaning as main activity-types of classical strategy (attack and defence and their elemental types).

Following to the above-mentioned, we will try to defeat the enemy not in one or more decisive battles but through lingering, less-scale activities. This principle is mainly fundamental while full-scale aggression, but may be applied to medium- and low-scale conflicts if modified.

The Strategy of Georgian Armed Forces is committed to breakdown adversary-forces' durability and evolve own success.

In physical terms the adversary's durability breakdown implies:

- Disorganisation of adversary's positions, making them to continuously change the front and the battle-composition, and to continuously reshuffle their forces. Frustration of their mechanisms of command and organisation.
- Disarrangement of adversary forces, decentralisation of its main components, dissipation of their activity directions, de-co-ordinate their activities.

- Paralyzing enemy's logistical and support systems, cutting links with their main military units

- Bring their communication systems in out-of-order conditions. Constriction the main and auxiliary forces' manoeuvres. The threat-creation in deep rearward.

In psychological terms the adversary's durability breakdown means:

- Adversary's moral decay;
- Weakening its combatant-value;
- Paralyzing its forces and the will breakdown, that is achievable by pursuing the adversary that it's activities are irrational and dead-end, forces are disorganised, opposition is unreasonable and its each next step is fated to fail.

Psychological durability breakdown is directly depended on physical pressure. Direct, frontal onrush increases adversary's combatant-value, sinews its morale and resistance skills. While attack in the rearward, main forces disorganisation, slow, gradual exhausting of resources, creation the high-level am-

biguity and command disorder helps to psychological breakdown of the adversary.

The success-development factor means the undertaken pressure results to gradual bringing to decisive condition. This kind of activities desire creative initiative, original minding and non-standard decision-making.

To implement it's missions, the Strategy of Georgian Armed Forces tries to establish the kind of organisation and structure, determined by following principles:

- The easy-command principle - this means the reasonable minimum of under-command units in the structure. This will decrease the information-source-number and create advantageous conditions for correct and in-time decision-making.
- Maximal diversity principle - implicates the balance of under-command units capable to provide them definite independence through the unexpected situations arose while wartime activities.
- Durability principle - means such balance of under-command units that in

wartime activities these units ought not to disintegrate into the parts difficult to reintegrate.

The realisation of our National Military Strategy requires relevant techniques and equipment. To match the strategic objectives with techniques and equipment must be one more principle of our military planning.

Achievement of aforementioned strategic purposes is possible only if exceedingly high level mobility of Armed Forces is guaranteed. After firearms forthcoming, there were two factors that has been determining success in any conflict - manoeuvre and fire-might, or more exactly, - the how effectively was there applied a balance of both these factors. It is impossible, without mobility, to implement the aforesaid strategic missions. At the same time, mobility must be supported by traditional as well as by non-traditional means. Naturally, in full-scale conflicts, the main supporter of mobility will be the auto- and mechanised technique, while in

low-scale conflicts using the traditional means is not expelled, including mule and cavalry. Simultaneously, the physical readiness of the personnel will be of decisive meaning because they must be able to implement quick or double-quick marches. For this, we need to follow the scientifically adopted meal-norms and regulations, desired level of physical readiness and other similar showing. It is also desired the personnel presupposed for low-scale conflicts to be familiar to cavalry training. The strategic mobility must be essentially distinguished from positional or mobile activities during the battle.

The Action Autonomy – autonomy means the skills of independent activities in conditions when the main bases are eliminated or unreachable. Simultaneously, similar to abilities of decentralised activities (see below) autonomy may be meaning- and function-full only if it is embodied in the scheme of general strategic plan. Subdivisions and structural elements must be adapted for long-time military activities, preferably on

own resources. The logistical and other infrastructure must be established in peacetime period.

The essential condition for actions' autonomy is command-decentralisation. This means that lower commanders receive missions from upper commanders but the decisions of how to implement these missions they make independently and carry responsibility on them. Except the command flexibility, this system will provide the lower commanders with necessary mental and behaviour stereotypes and will increase the level of their responsibility. This kind of decentralisation implicates the following principles of our military strategy: decentralisation means the ability of relatively long-duration activities with relatively small groups. At the same time, such decentralisation does not mean the anarchy. Any kind of activities by decentralised groups is justified only if they're implemented within the frames of general strategic plan, even in those conditions of breakaway of these groups from the main logistical or other basis.

The actions' - autonomy and command-decentralisation must be implemented within one main scheme, which determines activities co-ordinated in terms of time and space. Matching the activities with this main scheme is something that the Army Highest Command must determine. Also, for quick decision-making and quick contact with autonomously acting units, the Highest Command (HC), everywhere if necessary, has a direct contact with these units and the latter also have their own channels to contact the Command.

While acting in decentralised and autonomous way, factor of reliable communications become of decisive meaning. From the HC side, it will be possible to rule these kind of activities only in case uninterrupted bilateral communication is supported. For this, military as well as civil infrastructure must be used. The experience of local conflicts must be generalised and required doctrine must be composed.

Logistical Support – the aforementioned strategy-principles are not realisable

without desired logistical support. The types of military activities that our Army may shoulder in future require extremely specific logistical system. High flexibility must be the main character of it and centralised as well as regional and local support elements will be combined in it. It is essential to net the local logistical storerooms in peacetime period to provide the Armed Forces with necessary needs in wartime period for aforesaid strategy goals implementation.

Royal Engineers - this is one of our main priorities. The experience of local, especially Chechen, wars show that advanced-netted engineering positions are of decisive meaning while defensive operations are conducted especially taking in account our relief texture. Simultaneously, the engineering operation such as mine-war is exceedingly meaningful especially when the military activity outgrows in low-intensity conflict. Accordingly, it is necessary for our strategy to prepare definite engineering barriers in advance, including those for conducting

autonomous positional activities on the one hand, and that not only Royal Engineers but also the most part of Armed Forces personnel possess the knowledge of mine-war, on the second.

Evaluation of Georgian Military Co-operation with Partner Countries and Institutions

Mr George Manjgaladze, Director of the Defence Policy and International Relations Department, Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Georgia

Gorgia's defence policy is intended to deter, and if necessary to resist any threat of aggression towards Georgia. Georgia seeks to reinforce its security through defence co-operation with friendly countries and organisations. However in the event of aggression, the Georgian Armed Forces (GAF) must be able to resist an attack while seeking international assistance to resolve the situation.

Roles of the Georgian Armed Forces

To support this policy, the GAF have

the following roles:

- to identify and assess possible military threats to the security of Georgia
- to ensure the territorial integrity of the state by defending land, sea and air boundaries against aggression
- to deter any attempt to overthrow or change the constitution and institutions of the state by force
- to participate in search and rescue operations, and support disaster relief operations
- to perform arms control missions
- to participate in international peace-keeping operations
- to conduct military co-operation in

accordance with international agreements and conventions

The main goal of the existing international bilateral and multilateral defence co-operation is to provide foreign assistance which is needed to fulfil the necessary conditions for NATO integration, as well as establish effective armed forces. These tasks cannot be fulfilled by national resources only.

Georgia has bilateral co-operation agreements with 20 countries: the USA, Turkey, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, France, Italy, Romania, the Czech Repub-

lic, Poland, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Moldova and China.

US assistance is very important for the ongoing reform process of the Georgian Armed Forces. Currently, the United States conducts the biggest bilateral military project in Georgia, namely the Georgian Training and Equipment Programme. The US allocated US\$65 million for this programme. Three battalions have already been trained under this programme (Commando, Mountain and 113th light infantry battalion), with one further battalion still awaiting training. It aims to prepare 4 Georgian Battalions to meet NATO standards, in particular so that they are able to conduct company-sized daylight and limited night operations. The units should also be capable of using the equipment needed to provide operational capabilities. I would like to take this opportunity to mention that Georgia highly appreciates the assistance of partner countries and Lithuania in particular, in case of material support for GTEP.

The UH-1 Helicopter Programme provides the necessary funds for pilot training in the US, using money donated by America's UH-1 squadron. The programme provides air support to the Georgian Armed Forces in operations of different scale. Currently, UH-1 squadron is successfully supporting the training of battalions in GTEP. Georgia has also become a member of FSSP (Fair Share Sustainment Program), which will give us the possibility to establish the plans, and ability of future development of UH-1 Helicopter Programmes.

The International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme is a highly specialised military training programme for more than 70 Georgian officers in such fields as platoon leader basic courses up to special training for high ranking officers.

The new Contracting Consultants programme will post US experts to the MOD, GS and units, to assist in areas of personnel management, administration,

finance and logistics. This programme can be considered as an important tool for establishing the planning process in GAF. The consultants will advise relevant Georgian staff on concrete issues and elaborate recommendations and development plans. For practical training of personnel of the Georgian Armed Forces the US will provide mobile training teams which successfully conducted trainings on tactical and operational levels.

Currently we are working on the establishment of future plans of development of GTEP-trained battalions. Also very important is to develop plans for other military units to get them up to the same level as the current GTEP training battalions. With the assistance of the United States we plan to establish a new programme to train Georgian trainers and instructors, enabling us to do our own training in the future.

Georgia is working on establishing precise plans, aimed at using US assistance in material and personnel training fields in

accordance with the needs of the Georgian MOD. In particular the IMET programme can be effectively used to train the necessary number of personnel in appropriate specialisations to fill the existing gaps in personnel. This issue will be discussed in a future bilateral meeting in the US.

Turkey has been providing significant support to the Georgian Armed Forces since 1997, in particular financial and technical assistance for infrastructural reconstruction and training, and the development of specific military units. Turkey assists in conceptual and material issues for the National Defence Academy. We highly appreciate the Turkish assistance in the establishment of a new, modern standard education programme at the National Defence Academy. Turkey provides special military training of Georgian personnel in Turkey. More than 150 Georgian officers were educated in different military institutions. Turkey supports a Georgian peacekeeping platoon in Kosovo, which is currently on its eighth tour of duty.

Georgian MOD has to plan the number of personnel and their specialization for future training in Turkish Military Institutes, taking into account the new structure and quantities of the Georgian Armed Forces.

With the support of Germany we created a new programme and established an NCO training centre. Germany continues to provide material support to this centre, and a German advisor has been posted to support its development and monitor the educational process within it. Also very important is Germany's assistance on the issue of the modernisation of logistics aimed to establish a NATO-standards logistics system in the Georgian MOD.

Georgian personnel underwent special training in German Military education centres. 180 Georgian officers were educated in different military institutions. Georgia highly appreciates the assistance which Germany provides for Georgian Peacekeeping Company in Kosovo. The

first company is currently on duty, its first rotation is planned in November.

Georgia is working on the creation of an NCO system in the Georgian Armed Forces. We need to have a long-term and detailed plan, in accordance with which a necessary number of NCOs will be trained annually.

We also need to use the more effective plans of the German advisor in the modernisation of our logistics, in particular to enable the implementation of given recommendations, because we understand that it is impossible to build NATO standard armed forces without an appropriate logistics system.

The United Kingdom supports an English language training programme at the Georgian MOD, as well as a special one-year officers' training programme at the National Defence Academy. A special group of advisers from Great Britain is posted to the Georgian MOD to assist Georgia in planning, programming and budgeting issues.

Great Britain also provides assistance for the training of Georgian Officers in Britain, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, training officers, NCO, and high level officers in general security and other areas.

Due to the reduction in the current number of personnel in the Georgian Armed Forces, Great Britain has begun running a new programme in Georgia, namely a resettlement programme for ex-military personnel. The programme begins in December 2003, and will be based in a special training centre in Tbilisi. It will involve the participation of experienced British instructors. Great Britain has allocated US\$10 million dollars for this purpose.

We are working on a plan to reduce the number of personnel in the Georgian Armed Forces. It must be a long-term process to enable the successful launch of the aforementioned resettlement programme.

Due to a lack of Georgian officers with English language training, we plan a long-

term programme aimed to use more effectively British assistance in English language training to fill the existing gap.

Greece provides military training for Georgian officers at a peacekeeping centre in Greece. There is a special advisor posted in the Georgian Navy who is launching new projects for the reconstruction and modernisation of our Maritime Forces. This is a long-term process in accordance with the modernisation of Georgian maritime forces to current NATO standards. Greece also plans to provide technical and material aid to establish a new telecommunications system in the Georgian MOD.

Georgia must use Greek assistance in its navy more effectively to plan the process of developing the Maritime Forces as well as implement recommendations by the Greek advisors.

France provides military training for Georgian officers in France. France assists the Georgian MOD in the medical area.

Georgia highly appreciates this assistance, and it is planned to continue and enlarge co-operation in this field. During the bilateral negotiations it was decided to establish a mountain combat training centre in Georgia. France will assist in its sustainment, and post the necessary number of trainers and advisors.

Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia support special military training courses for Georgian officers, and provide aid for GTEP. Lithuania and Estonia have supported the National Defence Academy by providing special training systems. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia provide significant aid, sharing their experience on NATO integration, particularly the establishment of the legislative basis and conceptual issues.

Romania, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Hungary assist Georgia in such fields as material support, personnel education. They have also supported the Georgian Training and Equip Programme.

NATO-Georgian Co-operation

The North Atlantic Alliance represents the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic Security. But NATO isn't just a political-military organisation. During the decades of its existence it has played a key role in establishing Europe as the cohesive organism with common political, economic, security and even cultural values and interests. Today NATO is the main guarantor for protecting democracy and other western values, and for their further expansion.

Georgia enjoys a very productive partnership with the North Atlantic Alliance. We are co-operating with NATO in a 19+1 format and through EAPC/PFP, IPAP/PARP, and we have benefited very much both from the political and defensive point of view.

Co-operation with NATO is considered of great strategic importance for Georgia. It is one of the main objectives

of Georgian foreign policy to become a NATO member. The reform of the Georgian Defence system is geared towards NATO standardisation. Moreover, NATO offers concrete assistance to its partner countries in their reform processes.

Georgia's participation in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council is an important link in the political co-operation with NATO. It offers Georgia an opportunity to get political consultations and tangible assistance for important political and security issues.

Since 1994 Georgia has participated in the PFP programme, giving the Georgian Armed Forces a good opportunity to enhance their professional skills as well as gain experience in co-operation with foreign military units.

29 Partnership Goals have been defined for Georgia in the framework of PFP. They cover all the fields which need to be modernised in order to establish NATO standards in the Georgian Armed Forces.

Therefore the accomplishment of these Partnership Goals is considered a priority.

Georgia's participation in peacekeeping operations is one of the examples of successfully completed partnership goals. In addition to a Georgian peacekeeping platoon operating within the Turkish brigade, an infantry company was sent to Kosovo to serve within a German brigade in May 2003.

Georgia's participation in the Planning and Review Process underlines the strong determination of its government to complete successfully the reforms of its armed forces. Our involvement in PARP largely contributes to increasing the interoperability of our armed forces with NATO.

The Prague summit is considered to be a crucial stage in NATO-Georgian relations. In that summit Georgia's president declared our intention to become an essential member of NATO. Since then, Georgia has been the first state to join NATO's Individual Partnership Action

Plan (IPAP). IPAP is considered as a step forward towards NATO membership.

Another step forward in NATO-Georgian relations is Georgia's participation in the Air Situation Data Exchange programme (ASDE). This programme will give Georgia complete access to information on NATO integrated air space and will be used to fully control the Georgian air space. Currently we are working on the Memorandum of Understanding between Georgia and NATO, under the terms of ASDE.

At the same time Georgia has developed the North Atlantic Integration State Plan in order to coordinate work in all governmental agencies. The specially organised Euro Atlantic Integration State Committee is monitoring the whole integration process.

International Security Advisory Board - ISAB

Georgia is cooperating with the ISAB in order to achieve its objectives in secu-

rity sector reforms. ISAB was established at the request of the Government of Georgia. ISAB defined four main areas as a basis for reform development:

- Security policy
- State security structures
- Defence
- Strengthening democracy

The ISAB has already issued four reports. The first three mostly contained recommendations, but the last one draws the line and summarises all the achievements of the past three years as well as the existing problems still to be settled. The ISAB concludes that in many ways the general security situation of Georgia has improved, but the next two years will be crucial to the future of the country, and the reform process has to become so deeply imbedded that it should be considered irreversible.

The mandate of ISAB has been extended until 2005. It will issue a further progress report in the first half of 2004 and a final report early in 2005. These reports will provide commentary on the progress

made towards meeting the goals set out at the beginning.

Regional Co-operation in the South Caucasus

The current situation in the Caucasus is quite deferent from the conditions in the Baltics, where we can see an excellent example of regional co-operation. The Caucasian countries have to overcome many obstacles to establish this kind of co-operation, in particular internal conflicts, conflicts among the states, the Russia-Chechnya conflict, etc. It must be emphasised that involvement of some forces in these conflicts is more a destructive element than the key to solution.

As already mentioned, the implementation of a co-operation model in the Caucasus, as already exists in the Baltics, would be very difficult. The overcoming of existing conflicts and provision of stability is the main prerequisite for the establishment of regional co-operation in the Caucasus.

A very important issue is a new initiative and more active involvement of forces, which already have authority and confidence and seem appropriate to all three countries of the South Caucasus. In this case, we can consider the US, European and Euro-Atlantic countries and institutions.

These are the necessary and important elements needed to establish peace and stability in the Caucasus, as the existing so-called 'traditional forces' in the region have neither the political will, nor the authority to reach this goal.

One example of regional co-operation to be considered is regular meetings of defence ministers of Georgia-Armenia and Georgia-Azerbaijan. It could partially contribute to establishing regional co-operation and securing peace. However, as I mentioned before, to achieve co-operation and stability in the region, we need active involvement of the partner countries.

Conclusion

In conclusion let me focus on the links between the topics I have covered.

Firstly, let me assure you that the aid and support provided by the partner countries to the Georgian Armed Forces is necessary and fruitful. At the same time it has to address directly the needs of the Georgian Armed Forces. The current initiatives by our partners in different fields do not always meet the needs of Georgian Armed Forces.

Therefore, the Georgian Armed Forces must develop priority goals in order to direct the assistance provided by the partners towards problems that need to be solved at the moment.

The main obstacle of not having such goals is the absence of a National Security Concept, Military Doctrine and Strategy and subsequent conceptual documents.

This problem arises not only in bilateral co-operation. The drafting of such conceptual documents is also the requirement of the Euro-Atlantic Structures.

The establishment of a National Security Concept and other hierarchical conceptual documents is included in IPAP as one of its main goals. At the same time ISAB is acknowledged as an advisor in this issue.

In order to reach the final goal, Georgia is conducting the reform process of its security sector. One of the most important institutions to be influenced by this reform is the Georgian Armed Forces.

We understand that Georgia is an essential part of the European and Euro-Atlantic region, and an overall important issue for Georgia is to become a member of the European and Euro-Atlantic organisations. Georgia should not only become security consumers, but security providers as well.

Evaluation of Bilateral and Multilateral Defence Co-operation and Assistance

Colonel Najaf Gambarov, Deputy Commander of the Military Academy of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Co-operation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and NATO began on 4 May 1994, when our country joined the Partnership for Peace programme. Taking into consideration that participation within the PfP establishes extensive possibilities for political, economical, cultural, military and military-political co-operation with NATO members and partners, as well as for integration into the European structures, the Republic of Azerbaijan has been making active efforts to implement an Individual Partnership Programme with NATO. It has also been systematically bringing its military forces in line with NATO standards.

A State Commission on Co-operation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and NATO has been established. Its purpose is to coordinate the efforts by the appropriate ministries and agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan to develop a common programme of co-operation within the PfP.

Liaison Officers of Azerbaijan Armed Forces in the Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC) as well as the Military Representative of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces at the Military Committee have been appointed.

To develop co-operation within the PfP as well as gain experience within NATO's

Multinational Staff structures, three officers of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces are currently serving as part of the Staff Partnership Elements in the International Military Staff (IMS) in Brussels, the Joint Transformation NATO Command, Atlantic in Norfolk, USA and the Regional NATO Command, South Europe in Naples, Italy. Another officer is serving the interim period at NATO's Defence Planning and Forces Planning Agency in IMS.

The following structures have been established and are functioning:

- Division on Coordination of links to NATO responsible for the STANAGS

and coordination of the mission to implement the Partnership Goals undertaken by the Republic of Azerbaijan in the framework of the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP);

- the National PfP Training Centre where the PKG are active. Courses and workshops on crisis management, regional and global security, NATO principal documents are conducted here for officers of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces. In future with the assistance of NATO members and partner countries the National PfP Centre will be reorganized into a Regional PfP Training Centre and will be certified by NATO. Also, the STANAGS Commission has been established at the Ministry of Defence.

To further understand PfP's goals and missions among soldiers, in particular among young officers, the NATO/PfP Department has been established in the Azerbaijan High Military Academy. It provides a training programme for cadets undergoing 3rd and 4th year training.



Delegates of Azerbaijan during Workshop discussions

One of the priorities of co-operation between the Azerbaijan Armed Forces and NATO is to participate in PARP and to implement the Interoperability Objectives (IOs) and Partnership Goals (PGs) undertaken by Azerbaijan.

As a result of measures conducted

within the PARP, the units of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces which interact with NATO forces have been adapted to NATO standards and can be used in the NATO-led Peace Support Operations (PSOs). To interoperate with NATO forces in the Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs),

the Republic of Azerbaijan has allocated a peacekeeping company, a medical platoon, an engineer platoon, and a helicopter team (two helicopters) for this purpose.

At present, a PKG battalion is being established. Since September 1999, as a part of KFOR, the PKG unit of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces has been taking part in peacekeeping and support operations in Kosovo.

Since November 2002, as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the peacekeeping unit has been active in Afghanistan.

Since this August, as part of the Allied Coalition Forces, an Azerbaijani peacekeeping contingent has been active in Iraq.

One Azerbaijani officer has been appointed to complete his active service in the US Central Command (USCENTCOM) in Tampa, Florida. Another officer has been appointed to serve in the Allied Coalition Forces HQ in Iraq.

Azerbaijan considers its integration into the Euro-Atlantic Security Systems as one of the most significant priorities of its foreign policy.

An Individual Partnership Programme of the Republic of Azerbaijan with NATO is being developed and is approved on an annual basis. As one of NATO's most active participants, Azerbaijan annually participates in more than 300 NATO exercises. Many NATO activities including exercises, workshops, courses, conferences and meetings of expert groups are held in Azerbaijan. The Cooperative Best Effort 2004 Multinational Exercise is expected to be held in Azerbaijan next September. It will be the first time such an exercise is to be conducted in platoon format with the engagement of the Mediterranean Dialogue states. The amount of weapons used and the strength of personnel engaged is expected to be two-to-three times more than during the same exercises of previous years.

In the past, close contacts have been forged with the NATO School (SHAPE

NSS) in Oberammergau, Germany, the NATO Defence College in Rome, and PfP Training Centres in Turkey and Sweden. Officers of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces take an active part in exercises conducted in such training facilities. Co-operation is being implemented with foreign language training centres in Turkey, Hungary, Germany, Great Britain and Slovenia. Over one hundred Azerbaijani soldiers have completed courses in English, French and German at these centres.

French and Italian language study courses were established at the Embassies of France and Italy for our soldiers in the Republic of Azerbaijan. English language study courses were established at the Military College of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces with the assistance of the British Council.

Soldiers of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces are currently training in the high military educational institutions of NATO members Turkey, the USA and Italy. Cadets are currently completing their train-

ing in military academies in Turkey and Italy.

The Republic of Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the development of bilateral co-operation with NATO members in the defence area. Co-operation agreements have been signed with Lithuania and Bulgaria which in 2002 were invited to become members of NATO. Co-operation with Estonia is also expanding.

To speed up the implementation of the Partnership Goals and the development of forces to become interoperable with the Alliance forces, Turkey has been providing assistance to Azerbaijan. As a result of a waiver of the 907 Amendment, a number of co-operation programmes with the US have started such as the International Military Education and Training (IMET), Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Defence Assessment, Regional Air Initiative (RAI), US Co-operation with the Partners, Joint Security Caspian Training (JSCT), Modelling and Simulation, and Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR).

The fruitful bilateral relations of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces are being developed successfully. This includes programmes of bilateral co-operation with Turkey, the USA, Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Pakistan, China and a number of other states. Each year, within the 'Azerbaijan-Turkey-Georgia' format, exercises are conducted in each of these countries to secure oil pipelines and exchange experiences in such areas as military building, military education, mobilization of resources, civil-military co-operation (CIMIC), air movement management. The three countries also exchange expert groups. Also, members of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces undergo training in military-educational institutions of Pakistan and China. Representatives of the Azerbaijan Armed Forces regularly participate in different military industry exhibitions organized in the Turkey, Pakistan, Romania, and United Arab Emirates.

Co-operation in the GUUAM is very important. It aims to consolidate sover-

eignty, political independence and positions of Azerbaijan and Georgia on the international level as well as to further the development of these countries. The GUUAM association is a natural organisation of states which share common problems in such areas as policy, commercial relations, border and customs issues, dealing with emergency situations etc.

Today, as an equal member of the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and an associated member of NATO's Parliament Assembly, Azerbaijan supports co-operation based on bilateral and multilateral grounds with all states, including those in the South Caucasus.

At present, however, regional co-operation in the format of the three states of the South Caucasus modelled on a similar co-operation among the three Baltic countries is not being developed, because one of those states, namely Armenia, has committed an act of aggression against

another state and occupied 20 per cent of its territory, and has forcefully expelled more than million of its population from their permanent places of residence. These people have become refugees in their own country and most of them are living in the harshest conditions in tents. Armenia keeps its Armed Forces in the occupied territories and periodically violates the cease-fire regime. This war is continuing to this day. Because of a destructive position adopted by Armenia negotiations aimed to resolve this conflict are in deadlock. Nobody should expect Azerbaijan to accept the loss of its territories. Azerbaijan will never agree to cede an inch of its territory to aggression. We will be ready to cooperate with Armenia only after an unconditional implementation of four resolutions of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), withdrawal of occupation troops from the Azerbaijan territories, return of refugees to the places of their permanent residence, and restoration of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

As for regional co-operation, Azerbaijan carries out its close co-operation in different areas with such countries as Turkey and Georgia. We hope that in the very near future, after the conflict is solved and stability is achieved throughout the region, Azerbaijan will develop comprehensive co-operation with all countries of the region.

Evaluation of Bilateral and Multilateral Defence Co-operation and Assistance

Major General Arthur Aghabekyan, Deputy Defence Minister of the Republic of Armenia

Armenia's foreign policy tries to provide balanced opportunities of co-operation for countries and systems that have interests in the region. Based upon this principle, the Ministry of Defence builds its foreign military policy and military co-operation programmes.

Mainly, we view the Collective Security Treaty and co-operation with Russia as an important element of Armenian security. We consistently develop our co-operation in the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, with the United States and Greece in bilateral format, periodically run consultations with Iran and, on a wider regional level,

with the European Union and countries in the Middle East and China. This means we are trying to implement a balanced policy, aimed at creating an atmosphere of multi-level security and stability.

Now allow me to introduce briefly the main military co-operation programmes in the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, with NATO members and partner countries.

Armenia's participation in NATO programmes

Armenian leaders have said on many occasions that co-operation with NATO in the framework of the Partnership for

Peace programme is viewed as an important element of Armenia's security. At the same time, Armenia has expressed a readiness to share the responsibility for security in the Euro-Atlantic region, and, to the extent of its capabilities, participate in antiterrorist initiatives, peacekeeping operations and regional co-operation programmes.

The participation of Armenia's Ministry of Defence in NATO's Partnership for Peace programme has been instrumental in both the enhancement and development of more purposeful co-operation. As a result of an implemented defence policy during recent years both a quantitative and qualitative increase of Armenia's

participation in the PFP programme has been noticed.

We carefully follow the changes happening in the framework of NATO. The political and military leadership of Armenia has expressed the viewpoint of Armenia on the tendencies of development of regional co-operation programmes and mechanisms of the fight against terrorism declared in the framework of NATO in 2002-2003, ensuring Armenia's readiness to actively participate in both antiterrorist initiatives and regional programmes.

Armenian-NATO Individual Partnership Programme

While preparing the Armenian-NATO IPP, Armenia's Ministry of Defence gives priority to the following areas: peacekeeping, language training, defence policy and strategy, exercises, military education and training and military medical service. During recent years the Ministry of Defence of Armenia has elaborated and imple-

mented its participation in the PFP programme mainly based on these areas.

Peacekeeping

The issue of the participation of Armenia's peacekeeping units in Kosovo is now in the practical stage. All issues related to the Armenian rifle platoon's participation in NATO-led peacekeeping operations in Kosovo within the structure of the Hellenic Brigade starting from 1 January 2004 have now been resolved. The General Chiefs of Staff of Armenia and Greece have signed the relevant memorandum. According to the assessment of the inspector's team from the Greek Armed Forces, the combat and professional skills of Armenian peacekeepers are high.

Planning and Review Process (PARP)

Today, prerequisites have been created for the activation of co-operation with NATO. In particular, Armenia joined

PARP on 10 October 2003. Our goal within PARP is to create national peacekeeping forces and a demining centre according to NATO standards for participation in a NATO/PFP exercise and with the purpose of real engagement in peacekeeping operations in the nearest future.

According to the 24 Partnership Goals, Armenia expresses its will to prepare one motorised company, three combat support platoons (reconnaissance, mortar, grenade), a demining platoon, NBC protection group and an emergency unit for participation in NATO exercises and peacekeeping operations by 2006, and to adjust the structure of its peacekeeping battalion to NATO standards.

Although we took a long time to implement these PGs, we can now see that we have units ready for real co-operation with NATO. As I mentioned, an inspection team from the Armed Forces of the NATO member country Greece has already as-

sessed our peacekeeping platoon and concluded that it is ready to participate in NATO-led peacekeeping operations. We are also holding active talks with the US on the matter of Armenian engagement in the Iraq post-war reconstruction process. In particular, this year we plan to send three doctors and 10 deminers trained in the national demining centre to Iraq.

Assistance requirements

To implement the PGs we need some assistance for PARP infantry battalion and demining platoon, as well as for their staffs (at the same level as for NATO units).

In particular we need NBC protection, reconnaissance, decontamination equipment, vaccines, night-vision equipment, simulators, medical equipment, assistance in the modernisation of air-lift facilities and equipment, professional (logistic, staff, command) and language courses and training literature.

Cooperative Best Effort 03 exercises, regional co-operation within NATO/PfP

As you know, Armenia hosted the NATO/PfP exercise Cooperative Best Effort 03 in June 2003. The conduct of the exercises in Armenia served as an important preparatory stage for our expected participation in NATO-led peacekeeping operations, because almost all services and branches of the Armenian armed forces were engaged in it, giving us a chance to assess the real level of interoperability with NATO forces. We can view the exercises as a sort of test for NATO-Armenian co-operation, which was successfully overcome.

I would like now to assess the regional role of the exercises. Every exercise should include elements of regional co-operation and we were expecting participation of all the countries of the region. In this respect, we welcome the participation of Turkey and Russia in the exercise. The

co-directors of the exercises were representing the armed forces of Turkey and Armenia, countries which do not even have diplomatic relations, and I would say this co-operation was very successful.

We were especially happy with the participation of Russia, which usually avoids PfP exercises, and if I am not wrong, it was the first time they participated in such an event. In general, we must welcome the obvious progress in co-operation between NATO and Russia, in terms of international co-operation and the development of regional programmes in the South Caucasus. For the first time in the history of PfP exercises, observers from the Mediterranean Dialogue countries were present in Yerevan. As Lieutenant-General Quintana, commander of NATO Joint Command South, mentioned in his letter sent after the exercise, this event revealed new qualities and approaches in co-operation between NATO countries and partners.

Although Azerbaijan did not participate in CBE 03, and usually avoids par-

ticipating in activities organised in Armenia, even in the frames of such joint programmes as PfP, we will not consider this fact when making the decision on our possible participation in CBE 04, to be held in Azerbaijan. The Armenian Ministry of Defence has already announced its readiness to send a unit for participation in CBE 04. I think military-to-military contacts between conflicting countries can positively influence confidence building. The activities of regional co-operation, especially in the military area, can contribute to the reduction of differences between regional countries, the establishment of an atmosphere of confidence and the creation of a favourable basis for the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Therefore we welcome the initiatives to activate regional co-operation undertaken by NATO recently, and Armenia is ready to join those programmes.

I think regional co-operation in the framework of NATO/PfP can be efficient in the areas of the fight against terrorism

and WMD proliferation, demining, disaster relief and a number of other areas.

Armenia is ready to cooperate both with Turkey and Azerbaijan in some areas in the framework of regional co-operation, and supports such co-operation without any preconditions. Obviously, the present state of Armenian-Turkish relations is an obstacle to regional co-operation in the framework of NATO Partnership for Peace programme. The nearest NATO sub-regional command, which is in fact responsible for the development of such co-operation, is based in Izmir in Turkey, a country with which Armenia does not have diplomatic relations. In this respect, it is desirable that Turkey adopts a constructive position towards Armenia in the framework of NATO.

Bilateral co-operation with NATO members and aspirant countries

In the framework of co-operation with NATO we attach great importance to bi-

lateral military co-operation with NATO member countries, viewing it as an important factor for integration into NATO defence structures. Mainly, we are implementing bilateral military co-operation with Greece, making our participation in Kosovo's peacekeeping operations a welcome reality.

As of 2002 we have started defence co-operation programmes with the United States in the areas of the modernisation of military communication systems, peacekeeping and specialised military education. Last year we have sent seven Armenian officers to the military educational institutions of the United States. We are implementing co-operation in the area of language training with the UK Ministry of Defence. We have started co-operation in the area of military education with Italy, and through bilateral active contacts we are studying the possibilities and perspectives of co-operation with Germany and France. I would like to add that we are implementing effective co-operation with Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria which

will be joining NATO soon. Our conference today, as well as exchange visits of the Ministers of Defence of both countries last year and our co-operation programmes are concrete examples of our co-operation with Lithuania.

Programmes implemented in security area with the United States

The United States is one of our most important partners in the area of defence and security co-operation, and I can qualify our relations with the US as an important element of Armenia's national security.

In 2000 Armenia signed an agreement with the United States on co-operation against the proliferation of WMD, which we view as an important initiative aimed at supporting regional security.

In 2001 we established a National Demining Centre with the support of the United States, where between 50 and 60 deminers are trained. After the demining

of the border areas of Armenia we plan to use it for regional purposes, contributing to mutual trust.

Until 2002 military co-operation with the US was limited by article 907 of the Freedom Support Act, adopted by US Congress. I would like to mention that article 907 was directed against Azerbaijan to ban US governmental assistance to that country but a special instruction made by State Department put a balance between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Defence co-operation area.

After the waiver of article 907 our co-operation with the US in the area of defence progressed considerably. Armenia received US\$3 million in 2002 and US\$4 million in 2003 within Foreign Military Funding, and we plan to use this assistance for the modernisation of our command, control and communications system. In 2002 seven Armenian officers were sent to US military schools and we expect to enlarge the programme this year. We also realise a defence co-operation pro-

gram in the framework of the State Partnership Program with the National Guard of Kansas. The State Partnership Program will be directed mainly towards peacekeeping and military medical service. I would also mention the US contribution in PFP co-operation, in particular in the organisation of exercises.

After 11 September 2001 Armenia supported the US in its antiterrorist initiatives to the extent of its capabilities providing air corridor and intelligence information, and now we continue to discuss the possibilities and perspectives of enhancing co-operation in this important area as a contribution to international security, in both bilateral and multilateral formats. As I mentioned before, this year we plan to send a group of deminers and doctors to Iraq as a support to US and international efforts.

I am confident that our defence co-operation programmes with the US serve for the security of Armenia and the region as a whole.

Military Co-operation with South Caucasus Countries

Mr. Rafal Seniuch, Deputy Director of the Department of International Co-operation, Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Poland

Iwould like to thank honourable organisers for this invitation to the beautiful city of Vilnius and for making it possible to present to this distinguished forum some reflections about co-operation between the Polish Ministry of Defence and the South Caucasus countries.

When in 1990 in this beautiful capital of Lithuania I participated in a conference on forming democratic organisations in the former USSR, the Caucasian countries were engaged in conflicts, whether over Nagorny Karabakh or Abkhazia. Thirteen years have passed, and unfortunately the region can still be described as

unstable due to tensions and conflicts. From the Polish point of view it is necessary to remember that the Soviet totalitarian regime kept a tight rein on these conflicts. The fall of the Soviet Union caused a rebirth of antagonisms. This situation made it possible for Russia to play the role of an arbiter and mediator which in turn allowed it to keep the republics engaged in conflict in its zone of influence.

In spite of many efforts and international hopes, this conflict still shows its "vitality". In spite of political will declared by all sides to the conflict, we realise that compromise solutions will require considerable time.

We are aware of the increasing importance of the South Caucasus states for NATO policy – also in relation to new threats for international security (development of global terrorist connections, weapons of mass destruction and illegal trade in weapons). The strategic aim of NATO policy will be first of all to strengthen the independence and stabilization of the states in that region. This could be done by supporting democratization of political life and internal reforms. More active engagement of NATO in Transcaucasia also depends on its relations with Russia which perceives this region as its zone of influence.

In the second part of the 90's the Polish leadership in the OSCE contributed to a positive picture of Poland in the Transcaucasian region. It helps a lot with the development of co-operation with the states of that region.

To our view, relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia are very important (given the interest in the diversification of natural energy resources, e.g. transporting petroleum from the Caspian Sea to Western Europe via Georgia and Ukraine). They were strengthened by their will to be closer to the Euro-Atlantic and European structures and implementation of democratic standards.

So far, relations between the defence departments of Poland and the Transcaucasian states were rather limited. Regular military co-operation had not been established. Out of the three states of the South Caucasus region, only Georgia has established bilateral military relations with Poland. I would like to mention here the Polish-Georgian military traditions (some

Georgian officers served in the Polish Army between WW I and WW II).

The legal basis for this co-operation is an Agreement between the Polish Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Defence of Georgia on bilateral military co-operation, signed on 11 December 1996 during an official visit (so far the only one) of representatives of the Georgian Ministry of Defence to Warsaw. Since then only occasional relations between our representatives took place. The Polish side has announced, taking into account its possibilities, about its participation in a programme to assist Georgia: the Georgia Train and Equip Programme.

Other relations were connected first of all to participation of Polish officers in peaceful missions in Georgia (UNOMIG) and OCSE mission on the Georgian territory. At present we have 8 officers serving as observers in Georgia.

In February 2002, the Georgian side expressed its interest in developing co-

operation between the Defence Departments of Poland and Georgia. A meeting with the Defence Vice-Minister of Defence Policy did not take place but it would be a good idea to organise it next year.

The activities of the Georgian side increased a lot since the end of the previous year. Issues of military co-operation development were raised several times by representatives of Georgia during meetings in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence.

At present a Georgian proposal about training several Georgian officers in Polish military schools (areas: NATO integration experience, achievement of Allied standards) is being considered by the Polish Department of Defence.

Our Ministry of National Defence asked via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Georgian side to specify its expectations relating to the areas of training, its scope, types of instruction and financing

arrangements regarding the stay of the Georgian officers.

The Polish side has announced, taking into account its possibilities, about its participation in programmes to assist Georgia. The specific range of participation by Poland in the so-called *Georgia Train and Equip Programme* was represented in April 2002 in Stuttgart at a conference on delivery armament and military equipment to Georgia.

Two of our representatives from the Military Centre of Normalisation, Quality and Codification, Ministry of Defence, took part in a workshop in Tbilisi, organized by the Georgian Ministry of Defence on 22-27 April 2003.

In May and June, Charge d' Affaires of the Georgian Embassy in Warsaw informed us that the authorities in Tbilisi were considering a possibility of dispatching Georgian soldiers to the Polish zone in Iraq. It was also confirmed that the Georgian side awaits the arrival and stay

of Polish military specialists who could instruct Georgian soldiers and develop our bilateral co-operation. We expressed our initial readiness for this project.

It appears that an analysis of the Georgian Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) is important in this context.

The existing relations between the Polish Ministry of Defence and the Defence Departments of Azerbaijan and Armenia have been limited to meetings of representatives of both sides. In the second half of 2002, Azerbaijan and Armenia expressed their interest in establishing bilateral co-operation in this field.

In November 2002, the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan presented a proposal for a military co-operation agreement.

During meetings in November 2002, the Armenian Ambassador in Warsaw proposed establishing co-operation between the departments of defence of both countries and expressed his country's readi-

ness to receive military experts from Poland to determine possibilities for future bilateral co-operation. This visit has not yet taken place.

In reply to the Azerbaijani project, the Department of International Co-operation of the Polish Ministry of Defence has prepared drafts of military co-operation agreements. Such agreements could also be proposed to the Georgian side. It would make it possible for our countries to co-operate in many areas, not only the military field. The proposed draft agreements also regulate the issue of secret information protection which is absolutely essential for proper military-technical co-operation, as well as co-operation in the fields of industry and defence.

Poland, as a NATO member and a future member of the European Union, intends to play an active role in strengthening safety and stability in the South Caucasus. Last year's visit of the Polish President to Georgia is an example of our engagement and support for the pro-West

orientation of the countries in that region.

In the NATO forum it is important to support both Azerbaijan and Georgia initiatives aiming at strengthening their bonds with NATO. This could have a stabilizing effect both on their internal situation and the situation in the region as a whole. In accordance with the EAPC recommendations we are concentrating on economy and defence issues, planning in emergency situations, co-operation in the field of safety and environment protection.

In the framework of the Partnership for Peace programme we will be participating actively in projects with these states which aim to:

- transform and restructure their armed forces;
- train their personnel (language skills are very important);
- prepare their personnel to carry out peaceful missions;
- define strategy and defence policy;

- introduce NATO-compatible procedures (command and control, logistics, medicine, adequate degree of language skills, adaptation of infrastructure).

Among projects addressed to Armenia we would like to draw your attention to the following issues:

- establishment of civilian, democratic control of the armed forces;
- training of civilian staff (representatives of the government and parliament) by presenting a range of military structures in democratic countries and the functioning of international structures;
- language training for military and civilian staff;
- training in concepts and approaches to problems related to security policy.

We appreciate the initiatives for the Partnership for Peace programme which strengthen the efficiency of co-operation of the GUUAM group (partners: Azerbaijan, Georgia and our strategic partner Ukraine). We welcome with satisfaction the co-operation with Azerbaijan,

Georgia and Ukraine which is getting closer and is establishing close ties with the Euro-Atlantic political and safety structures.

This brief overview of co-operation between the Polish Ministry of Defence and the Defence Ministers of the South Caucasus countries is a good illustration that in the present world security is indivisible, and stability in one region influences stability in other regions, even geographically distant ones. The success can be even greater when countries of a given region are guided by common values. We are very happy to observe this process in the Central and Eastern Europe and South Caucasus.

Speech by Mr. Evaldas Ignatavičius, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Lithuania

Since the restoration of independence, Lithuania has sought to build a modern European state committed to the principles of democracy, civil society, respect for human rights and implementation of market economy-oriented reforms. The Euro-Atlantic community has recognised these efforts by Lithuania and invited the country to join NATO and the European Union.

To be a responsible member of the international community, Lithuania has to demonstrate its resolve to assist others, just like the Western countries have assisted us after we restored independence.

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The enlargement of the EU and NATO in 2004 will complete a significant stage in the integration processes taking place in Europe. Logically, these processes are moving further to the Eastern Europe. The agenda of the EU-Russia strategic partnership, the establishment of the Russia-NATO Council and the EU's Wider Europe/New Neighbours policy, to be applied in respect of the countries bordering the enlarged EU, are all proof of this.

Eyes are also turned to the South Caucasus. The success of reforms in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan is becoming increasingly significant with a view to the future EU membership of Romania and

Bulgaria and Turkey's moving closer to the EU.

Not only Lithuania is raising this issue. The European Union has appointed the Special Representative for the South Caucasus (Mr. Heikki Talvitie, Finland), who will be responsible not only for intensifying the role of the EU in searching for ways to resolve conflicts and in the post-conflict rehabilitation period, but also for assisting the European Council in drawing up the general EU policy regarding the South Caucasus.

Lithuania supports active involvement of the EU in the South Caucasus region. We believe that the New Neighbours Ini-

tiative should in the long run cover the South Caucasus as well.

In the context of Euro-Atlantic co-operation, Lithuania considers co-operation with the countries of the South Caucasus as projecting the security and stability achieved in the Baltic region to the other regions of the Euro-Atlantic area. Such efforts also contribute to the function of dialogue enhancement and co-operation with all partners in the Euro-Atlantic area, provided for in NATO's Strategic Concept.

The Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAP), suggested to the new democracies by the NATO Prague Summit as a form of shaping the relations between these countries and NATO in the coming years, are most promising. We could draw on our experience of participation in NATO and partner co-operation programmes and act as an advisor in this area.

To summarise, Lithuania intends to ensure active co-ordination with NATO

and the EU to achieve greater effectiveness of this activity. At the same time, this would be Lithuania's contribution to the development and implementation of NATO and the EU strategies for co-operation with this region – that is, the shaping of our own future active role in these organisations.

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Lithuania has brought to the South Caucasus region the idea of inter-regional co-operation. This is yet another means of transmitting our experience and encouraging co-operation between the three countries of the South Caucasus and normalisation of their relations with neighbours.

As regards the situation in the region, it should be said that we are not naïve and we are aware that the “frozen” conflicts in Nagorno Karabakh, Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, the unsettled relations between Armenia and Turkey and the lack of mutual trust between the countries of the South Caucasus and Russia pose the

major obstacle to co-operation. We propose to take both roads: from conflict resolution to co-operation and from co-operation to conflict resolution.

We have learnt through our own experience that regional co-operation not only helps to solve the internal problems in the region but also provides with a possibility to ensure a qualitative leap in the region in pursuing common goals. A two-day international seminar “Experience of Baltic Regional Economic Co-operation and Its Application in the South Caucasus Countries”, held in December 2002 together with NATO Economic Committee, served as an excellent proof of this. Despite the scepticism of certain partners regarding the feasibility of such co-operation, Lithuania still believes that 3+3 is a highly promising format that would allow pursuing various goals.

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Over the recent years, the non-governmental sector in Lithuania has also turned its attention towards the region, which

has been parallel to, and sometimes even stronger than political co-operation. Events are held both in Lithuania and in the South Caucasus countries (in 2002, the Self-Government Training Centre launched in Azerbaijan an introductory project on municipality management and local programme implementation and a regional forum “Decentralisation in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia” in Georgia; the Lithuanian Institute of Democratic Development, together with the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held on 4-8 September 2003 an international seminar on democracy reinforcement for youth NGOs of the three countries of the South Caucasus; on 20-23 September 2003, the Lithuanian Atlantic Treaty Association (LATA) organised in Tbilisi an international seminar “Let's Build a Bridge: Experience of Co-operation of the Baltic Region NGOs for the South Caucasus”, representatives of the Kaunas NGO support centre will travel to the South Caucasus together with the representatives from other Eastern European NGOs to familiarise themselves with

the needs of the South Caucasus NGOs and possibilities for co-operation).

This is yet another proof that our efforts to co-operate with the countries of the South Caucasus are not accidental or “plucked out of the air”. This is a natural foreign policy effort, which meets the new geopolitical situation of Lithuania.

Way Ahead

Ms. Zeyno Baran, Director of International Security and Energy Programs, The Nixon Center, USA

Importance of the South Caucasus region

The South Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) is a strategically important region as the transit point from Europe, and is at the heart of America's evolving "Greater Middle East" vision, which considers weak or failing states as serious security risks as they can easily become terrorist breeding grounds. While Afghanistan and Iraq are now clearly top of the policy agenda, anchoring this region into the Euro-Atlantic alliance is a major US goal for the next several years.

For this vision to succeed, the conflicts that have remained "frozen" for almost a decade have to be resolved. The

status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia leads to human suffering and enormous loss of human potential and thwarts economic development. Radical Islamist or terrorist groups that want to transfer militants, drugs, arms, and weapons of mass destruction into Europe could also penetrate these gray zones.

South Caucasus is also significant for the completion of Europe as it expands eastwards. In May the European Union will have 25 members, but Europe's enlargement will not end with this round. In addition to pivotal countries like Turkey and Ukraine, the South Caucasus also needs to be included in the greater Europe. If they are left out, they would inevitably come back under Russian sphere of influence.



Zeyno Baran addresses participants of the Workshop

Russia's relations with South Caucasus are especially important for the transportation of Caspian oil and gas to Western markets. This region will play an increasingly important role for European energy needs. There is already an oil pipeline going from Baku to Tbilisi, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline that is being built will tie Azerbaijan and Georgia to NATO ally Turkey. A parallel gas line will be constructed shortly. With continued US support for the East-West energy corridor, increasing amounts of Caspian oil and gas will reach Europe via Turkey, as well, via Black Sea pipelines through possibly Ukraine, Romania, and Greece into Europe. Caspian oil and gas can play an important role in increasing non-OPEC, non-Middle Eastern energy supplies to European and global markets.

Challenges Ahead

While pipelines will help tie South Caucasus to Europe, they are simply tools. This region's long-term success will depend on how these three countries develop in-

ternally. Today they are in varying degrees trying to move away from Russian monopoly power, while establishing positive neighbourly relations, but their success will depend to a large degree on their level of economic and democratic developments.

Government Legitimacy

The US has been actively engaged in South Caucasus and provided financial and technical assistance for over a decade, but so far the results are mixed. The future of this region will depend to a large degree on the October 15 presidential elections in Azerbaijan, followed by November 2 parliamentary and the 2005 presidential elections in Georgia. It will prove increasingly difficult for these countries to sustain high levels of U.S. attention after 2005 if their reforms have not progressed by then to the level of the Baltic states of today. Unfortunately, we are already seeing worrisome signs.

The US cares about democracy, not just in words or as an idealistic pursuit, but

as an important element for long-term security and stability. The 2003 March parliamentary and May presidential elections in Armenia were highly contested with thousands protesting and President Robert Kocharyan does not have much legitimacy. A weak president without public support cannot make important reforms and make important concessions, like it is needed in Karabakh.

In Azerbaijan it is extremely important to have free and fair elections so that the next President can have legitimacy. There is no history of peaceful transition in Azerbaijan since 1991 and the October elections will hopefully be a turning point where a President will come to office after elections and hopefully also serve his full term. Heider Aliyev ruled in Azerbaijan for over 30 years, and had experience and authority to manage various clan and tribal networks and established strong rule. Holding free and fair elections is almost a "must" for the incoming president as whoever takes office will have a tough time solidifying his

power and control over the whole country and various clan and business interests.

The elections and post-election developments in Azerbaijan will have an impact on other Muslim countries. This Muslim, democratic, secular, pro-Western, oil rich country's success or failure as a close US ally will be seen as a benchmark for prospects of democratization in the Islamic world, especially in oil-rich ones.

In the short term it will also have impact as a precedent for the Georgian elections, which are also very important for Georgia's future direction. It is important to appeal to Eduard Shevardnadze's quest for a positive historical legacy. Lithuanian President Rolandas Paksas' recent visit was very timely in this regard. All concerned parties must discourage individual Georgian politicians from employing private armies or militia groups as tools of political influence, especially during an election. These militia groups have in the past led to disasters like Abkhazia.

Conflict Resolution

We cannot seriously start discussing conflict resolution in South Caucasus until after the elections are over in Azerbaijan and Georgia, which means early 2004. To make real progress, we may also need to wait for Russian President Vladimir Putin's presidential elections in March 2004. We also need to keep in mind that the status quo has its own stability and any serious attempt to resolve the conflicts will in the short term create domestic instability, as there are personal and criminal interests involved in these managed conflict zones. The South Caucasus governments have little legitimacy to make serious concessions. This is why active US and NATO engagement is required to expand security and stability in the Caucasus.

These conflicts can only be solved if there is a wider security umbrella. The options for such an umbrella that confront Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia

are either Russia and the CIS or Europe/NATO and the United States. Turkey can play a stabilizing role, should the countries of the South Caucasus continue to pursue a Western vector of development. The Baltic States can also play an important role by drawing on their historical experience in dealing with Russia and implementing democratic and market economic reforms.

Azerbaijan and Georgia both harbor ambitions to join NATO. Aliyev publicly stated this aspiration for the first time in April 2003. Shevardnadze has talked about Georgia's aspirations for eventual NATO membership since 2001, and most recently stated that "NATO needs us because of our geo-strategic situation: our country provides exit to Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea and from there to Central Asia and China."

Armenia's strategic aspirations seem a little less clear. Armenia has strengthened its security relations with NATO's Partnership for Peace program and with the

United States during the past two years. However, Russia is gearing up the new Collective Security Treaty organization, which brings together Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Armenia's historically close military cooperation with Russia may obstruct its NATO aspirations and prospects.

International Organizations

So far the UN and the OSCE were not able to produce significant results in the resolution of South Caucasus conflicts, and I think it is because of strong Russian presence in these organizations. As long as the peacekeeping operations and conflict management remains in Russian monopoly, it is hard to imagine the Kremlin wanting to change the status quo.

In Georgia, Russia seeks a "peace dividend" in Abkhazia, but only once Shevardnadze is no longer president. Many in Moscow still strongly dislike him because of his role in ending the Soviet

empire and his subsequently strong support for Georgia's strategic orientation toward the United States and Europe. The meeting between Presidents Putin and Shevardnadze at Sochi last spring, however, may indicate a growing desire in the Kremlin to pursue a peace dividend sooner rather than later. The Sochi discussions indicated that Moscow might view a peace dividend in Abkhazia as including continued Russian military presence in Georgia, ownership of the energy infrastructure and the opening of the strategic railway from Russia via Abkhazia and rest of Georgia to Armenia and perhaps Iran to establish a North-South corridor.

Other international organizations such as the EU, GUUAM (Georgia-Ukraine-Uzbekistan-Azerbaijan-Moldova organization) and BSEC (Black Sea Economic Cooperation), cannot handle Russia on hard security issues. The EU does not want to upset Russia, and still has difficulty conceiving the South Caucasus countries as potential EU members. The EU is focused on the new members it will absorb, but it

also needs to be engaged in wider security threats like proliferation and terrorism and interests like trade and energy.

Given that the NATO May 2004 summit will be in Turkey which has long experience with NATO and strong interests in the stability of the South Caucasus, it can be an invaluable ally. Close engagement with Turkey would also bring the Baltics, the Balkans and the Caucasus countries closer along the East-West axis. This secular, pro-American Muslim country's help in Iraq and ongoing assistance in Afghanistan is also essential for NATO as its concept of security is adapting to new challenges. Moreover, Turkey is the only regional power that can balance Russian and Iranian interests in the Caucasus in a pro-Western way.

Another security issue for the region is Iran, which is increasingly becoming a problem for the region's stability. Iran and Armenia have close relations, even though Azerbaijan is a Shiite Muslim country like Iran (when looking at this region, it is important to understand that

there is no axis of “Muslim versus Christian”). Over time, with its access to the West via Turkey and Azerbaijan hindered, Armenia had to get closer to Iran. In case of serious tension between Azerbaijan and Iran, or pressure on Tehran from the U.S., Iran may try to enlist Armenia’s help.

Armenia is trapped in the Russian-Iranian axis; it is important to release the tension and avoid the creation of competing North-South and East-West axes. And opening the Turkish-Armenian border, the “last Cold War border,” would ensure exactly that. With such an opening, and Armenian-Turkish economic and political relations resuming, Russia would lose its strategic hold on South Caucasus and Iran’s ability to negatively influence the region would be reduced. While Turkey has made some positive statements about the border opening in the spirit of “bringing down the walls of old Europe,” Ankara cannot take this step until Karabakh is resolved. Any attempt to open the border without the resolution of Karabakh will be a waste of time.

Way Ahead

While this region is very important, the US is distracted with Iraq, Afghanistan and the ongoing war against terrorism. At the beginning of 2004 Washington will focus on Presidential elections of fall 2004. The South Caucasus countries need to engage the US and NATO soon, or the window of interest from Washington will close, thereby increasing the risk of resumption of conflict in the region.

Karabakh (and Abkhazia) can only be resolved with a legitimate and strong president (read: someone who will reform the economy, strengthen democracy and invest in human potential) in Azerbaijan and Georgia. The South Caucasus has been in a transition for the last ten years; the period between 2003 and 2005, “the election period” will determine the future of this region. Armenia did not high points; the international community needs to make sure that the elections in Azerbaijan and Georgia are closer to Eu-

ropean standards, instead of Central Asian ones.

It is not a given that the South Caucasus will see it in their interest to develop as a “region,” as was the case with the Baltic states. It is very possible that Azerbaijan and Georgia would continue and increase their East-West energy, transportation and communication cooperation via Turkey, Ukraine and other Black Sea countries, and leave Armenia behind. The Azerbaijani-Georgian-Turkish pipeline security cooperation has already created the foundations for close partnership and soon Kazakhstan will join this group as well. There is also GUUAM, which has Azerbaijan and Georgia as its member but not Armenia. For long-term stability, however, it is important to make sure Armenia is not left out of regional economic developments.

If this region continues to move towards deeper integration with the Euro-Atlantic alliance, it is inevitable that some in Russia will see this trend as a threat to

its own national security interests. Therefore it is important to put South Caucasus into the bilateral US-Russia Dialogue and encourage the Kremlin to see stability and prosperity of South Caucasus to be in Russia's interest as well. There was a Joint Declaration on Counter-Terrorism Cooperation the two presidents reached in May 2002 in Moscow, which included solution of Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia as well, but the Russian side so far has not seen any incentive to really resolve them.

While Bush-Putin dialogue may be positive, we should not ignore Putin's upcoming elections. Russia's military/industrial complex is not happy with Putin's "accommodations" to the United States, and has started to take a stronger position in the Caucasus. I do not see the US pushing back at Russia until after Putin's elections, but afterwards US direct involvement will be essential to start providing a new security umbrella in the South Caucasus – until their NATO membership. The conflicts can only be resolved

under the security umbrella of a mutually trusted country or organization. To make sure the US gets closely engaged in the region after March 2004, the election and post-election period and reforms in South Caucasus need to show a positive trend and some key policy concepts need to be resolved.

First, the US has no strategy or rather no tools to prevent Russian energy sector expansion into the region as long as the region remains corrupt and market economy weak. Russia is re-establishing its control over the gas and electricity networks in Central Asia, the Caucasus, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and even the Baltic States. UES, Gazprom and Lukoil are in a much stronger position today and American and other Western companies simply cannot compete with them in this post-Soviet infrastructure, where all the Soviet countries were interlinked with Moscow at the center. In Yerevan Gazprom has already established monopoly on gas supplies to Armenia, and a few months ago it reached a similar deal in Georgia.

While the Baltic states also have energy dependency on Russia, they nonetheless managed to move away from the Russian sphere of influence and can thus both help the South Caucasus with policies, but also keep US, EU and NATO aware and engaged in the potential risks of all these future NATO and EU members having their energy infrastructure under Russian monopoly.

A second issue that needs to be clarified is "territorial integrity" concept and how it will be applied in South Caucasus. If there is a regional declaration of "commitment to territorial integrity" and a clear mechanism of enforcement, then:

- Russia will stop worrying about Chechnya eventually becoming independent;
- Iran will stop worrying about ethnic Azerbaijanis eventually breaking up their state and joining with the Republic of Azerbaijan;
- Turks will stop worrying about the Kurds creating an independent state in Iraq;

• Azerbaijan will have a stronger case in Nagorno-Karabakh. At the same time, Nagorno-Karabakh is different than the other three because Azerbaijan “lost” this land in a war. A more applicable solution may be “land for peace” for Nagorno-Karabakh, but with Armenia leaving all the other occupied territories. In turn, the Turkey-Armenia railway would also be opened up.

Such an approach can only work under very strong international enforcement. Otherwise, especially in case of the Azerbaijani/Armenian negotiations, it would be too risky a step for Armenia: Turkey can always close down the railways, but once Armenia leaves territory it got after war, the only way to get it back would be with war.

In both Abkhazia and Nagorno-Karabakh it is important to identify the minimum needs and maximum wants of key players, including interests of the criminal groups that like the status quo. Moreover, while confidence-building

measures are very important, they will not get far unless they are backed by concrete steps.

A third and related issue would be Turkey’s continued move towards Europe. If Turkey starts accession talks with the EU, Armenia would feel much safer. Right now Russia is mistrusted by Georgia, Iran is mistrusted by Azerbaijan and Turkey is mistrusted by Armenia; once Turkey gets a clear EU prospect, Armenian distrust will decrease greatly and Turkey will have much greater ability to help with the region’s stability and security.

It is significant that this meeting is held in Lithuania, which can above all help Georgia deal with Russian pressure and draw on experience of Lithuania and its neighbours in Latvia, Estonia, and Poland in transforming their societies. The spirit of freedom burned brightly for 70 years in the Baltics, and erupted into political freedom a decade ago, and is now resulting in the Baltics’ full incorporation back into the European family. The suf-

fering and success of the Baltic States can be instructive for the states of the South Caucasus. After all, it was Shevardnadze who resigned as Soviet Foreign Minister in disgust, following the Soviet Union’s brutal attack on the Vilnius Television Tower. But ironically, in November 2001, Georgians swarmed into the streets for the first and only time, protesting an attempt by certain Georgian ministers to shut down an independent TV station. Shevardnadze responded by sacking those ministers, and avoiding violence.

It was significant that Lithuania declared its intention to lend support to Georgia in its ambition to join European and NATO structures of various levels. Georgia is the most eager and most advanced one of the three South Caucasus countries to join these organizations, but it is important to pull Armenia and Azerbaijan closer to this direction as well as to have long-term security, stability and economic prosperity in Europe’s new borderlands.

Summing Up

General Sir Garry Johnson, Chairman of ISAB

It was noted that conditions in the Caucasus are different to those pertaining in the Baltic when the Baltic States began their modernisation process. Internal, 'frozen' conflicts in the South Caucasus make regional co-operation more difficult, and all three states are weakened by the wars which followed their regaining independence. The security situation in Chechnya gives Russia a serious interest in the security of the region and, unlike in the Baltic States, the South Caucasus States cannot count on close support from a number of friendly neighbouring states sharing the same strategic policy objectives.

Nevertheless, there are similarities which make the transfer of experience an attractive proposition. The three states are,

in each case, of roughly similar size. They both form a linked sub-group within a recognised region. They all share a common heritage of incorporation within the Soviet Union, giving them similar problems to overcome. They all share a desire to modernise themselves on Euro-Atlantic lines. The Baltic States have successfully achieved this latter goal and are soon to become full members of NATO and the EU. They are therefore in a unique position to give advice based on their own experience, which is not available elsewhere.

However, the Baltic States shared a common over-riding strategic objective of complete and swift integration into the structures, organisations and institutions of the Euro-Atlantic community. For a



Gen. (R) Sir Garry Johnson sums up results of the Workshop

variety of reasons these goals have not been as clearly articulated by the South Caucasus states, with the exception of Georgia, which is making its orientation increasingly plain to see. And, although some advice and assistance is being provided by international organisations and external countries, no great enthusiasm has been shown by the Western community as a whole in assisting the nations of the South Caucasus to become their full partners. This situation may change when the present round of expansion of NATO and the EU is completed and the future relationships of those organisations with neighbouring regions and states are reviewed.

Leaving aside the main political factors, there are pressures on the states of the South Caucasus to modernise themselves which cannot be ignored. These states have all opted to join a modern, market economy. The whole of the security structure, especially defence, must therefore be put on a cost-effective financial basis as part of a functioning state

economy. Waste of resources must be eliminated and structures must be adapted to provide quality, not quantity, as their output. The defence sector must fight for its budget allocations with the other ministries of the government, not expect them as its rightful portion. The states share a common dependence on the energy industry which will encourage co-operation in such matters as pipe-line security. In joining the market economy nations are asked to share the values of that community. All three South Caucasus States are members of the Council of Europe and the demands of that organisation and of the EU in areas of governance, justice and human rights will force changes in previous patterns of behaviour. All three states have a common interest in achieving effective adaptation to these standards.

Concerning the pace of change and the target timings for achieving integration, it was noted that NATO was unlikely to wish to admit states with unresolved internal conflicts and that the EU would require aspirant states to have secure,

monitored borders as a pre-requisite condition for application. These conditions must be urgently addressed by the South Caucasus States, whose delegates in turn stressed the need for international involvement in their resolution of these problems. It was agreed that this could be a lengthy process, but that internal modernisation and regional co-operation, where possible, should, and could, be taken forward in the meantime in preparation for eventual developments. It was also noted that, in the short term, the Istanbul Summit, which would ratify the admission of the next round of NATO membership, would be a significant opportunity for the NATO nations to express an intent with regard to future relationships, as would the next IGC of the EU.

Delegates were made aware of the assistance being provided by international organisations and supporting countries. The NATO partnership programmes were developing steadily and the OSCE was providing security and stability benefits

of great value in a limited area. It was felt that coordinated EU activity could be improved and the appointment of an EU Special Representative for the region was seen as a positive sign.

With regard to the transfer of Baltic experience and the provision of assistance, it was agreed that this should avoid entanglement in the bigger political issues and that it should concentrate on providing practical, effective advice and assistance which did not overlap with other programmes from larger nations, and where the unique experience of the Baltic States could be put to best use. Areas such as the design of civilian MODs, defence management programmes, legal drafting for defence legislation, classified information security and officer and NCO education, including the contribution of the Baltic Defence College, were seen as possible areas for concentration of effort. The necessity of making urgent progress in these areas was noted as was the importance of assisting Georgia to complete the security sector reform programme on

which it had embarked. The next two years were seen as being critical for overall progress to be demonstrated.

Finally it was noted that it was the responsibility of the South Caucasus States to formulate their own requirements for assistance from the Baltic States and there was a need for greater co-ordination of work within and between the two groups of states. The willingness of the Baltic States, particularly Lithuania, to play a leading part in this process was welcomed. Delegates hoped that the work of the meeting would now be carried forward to expert groups and expressed themselves ready to gather again at a later stage if requested to do so.

Delegates wished to express their thanks to the Ministry of Defence of Lithuania for calling the conference, for the efficient support of all the administrative staff and for excellent hospitality.