

SOZIALWISSENSCHAFTLICHE SCHRIFTENREIHE

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Armenia's and Georgia's Security Agenda

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Georgia's Defence and Security Problematic Situation

List of Deficiencies

1. **The Breach of Trust.** Before the outbreak of the August 2008 war administration of President Mikheil Saakashvili invested heavily in building and developing the Land Forces. Perception of Georgia's population concerning the strength of the country's armed forces was favourable. Contrary to the public positive perception the August 2008 war and its aftermath highlighted variety of deficiencies in Georgia's defence and security matters and damped the public enthusiasm and support for the Georgian Armed Forces (GAF). The latter including its reserve component performed badly during the war. As a result, *a breach of trust* between population of Georgia and its military *emerged as one of the most important deficiencies* (author's italics). Unfortunately for Georgia and its population a breach of trust has not yet been properly addressed.
2. **Lack of Dialogue.** In addition to a breach of trust there is also lack of dialogue between military in general and officials of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in particular and the population of Georgia on defence and security matters. In case of any potential confrontation and/or conflict with Russia administration of President Saakashvili will need to have a full support of Georgia's population and not just its military segment. Therefore, a breach of trust and a lack of dialogue need to be urgently addressed and not delayed for whatever reasons. Furthermore, any delay increases those deficiencies.
3. **Reserve Component.** Reserve component constitutes the missing link between population of Georgia and military. Performance of reserve units during the war was badly organised and, as a result, very chaotic. In addition, reserve units were not equipped and armed for combat operations. Between the August 2008 war and autumn 2010 various forms to reform reserve system were extensively discussed but very little was accomplished. In autumn 2010, recruitment for the Army Reserve began again. The new wave of recruitment is taking place on the *experimental basis* (author's italics). As a result, it is not yet known whether the new system is successful or not.
4. **Sense of Phobia or Paranoia.** Another important deficiency that not often emphasised is a sense of phobia or perhaps paranoia which exists between officials of the MoD and Georgia's community of defence and security experts. The military officials need to see clearly the difference between an open sources documents on Georgia's defence and security matters and confidential information. After speaking to Georgia's defence and security experts the author realised that officials working at the MoD don't really understand that there exist a certain blurring line between the two types of information. Matters of national security are important

but they don't need to be exaggerated. To overcome that deficiency a layer of competent and highly professional bureaucrats within the MoD needs to be retained and strengthened and not dismissed from or moved to a new department after every reshuffle at the ministry

5. **Frequent Reshuffles and Their Implications.** Previous frequent reshuffles of the Minister of Defence and the Chief of Joint Staff (CJS) and their bureaucracy severely damaged cohesion and work of the most important defence and security institutions of Georgia. It is counterproductive to start work from scratch at both defence and security institutions after reshuffle. It needs to be emphasised and reiterated that Georgia cannot afford a luxury of having not competent, reliable and trustworthy team of defence and security experts. The same military experts together with experts from Parliament and the National Security Council (NSC) need to work hand in hand to accelerate approval of strategic documents such as Strategic Defence Review (SDR) and National Security Review (NSR) and to press ahead with their subsequent implementation. According to report of the Geneva-based Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), under the new military strategy, which builds on the lessons learnt from the August 2008 war, the armed forces should be drilled and trained to use both conventional and non-conventional defence tactics, to take part in international peacekeeping and stabilisation operations. However, it is hard to comment on the draft of the new National Security Concept since it has not yet been officially approved.¹ The draft of the new National Security Concept was not approved as late as August 2011. And that despite the fact that the August war happened three years ago.
6. **Failed Coordination.** Coordination between the Air Force and the Land Forces resulted in failed performance during the August 2008 war. Following that deficiency the decision was made to integrate the Military-Air Force with Land Forces. Although the integration process was completed it remains unknown to what degree it was successful or not. Nevertheless, it is evident that it is of utmost importance to have well-educated, well-trained, well-armed, mobile, efficient and highly professional forces. This task requires not just good planning but very creative thinking. Namely, how under the budget constraint that discussed further below, such a difficult task can be accomplished.
7. **Unofficial Western Arms Embargo and Its Implications for Georgia.** Georgian people cannot win war against Russia by throwing stones against armoured infantry vehicles or tanks. At the same time during the war a large number of military equipment was either lost or left on the battlefield. The latter was subsequently taken over by the Russian troops. After the war as a result of unofficial Western arms embargo Georgian military has been unable to replenish much of its military capacity. As a result, home-made arms and ammunition need to be manufactured. Although Moscow will say that Georgia has no right to arm itself and such arming by the West constitute an act of provocation Moscow purchases variety of arms from

¹ Theona Akubardia, "Security and defence policy development" in Tamara Pataria (ed.), *Democratic control over the Georgian armed forces since the August 2008 war*. DCAF, 2010; pp. 13-14.

the European Union (EU) member states. Such a policy of Moscow can undoubtedly be called Policy of double standards.

8. **Bloated army size and lack of professionalism.** Although aftermath the August 2008 war the decision was made to reduce the size but improve efficiency and professionalism of the GAF it remains unknown whether this task was accomplished. As a result, we need to be very careful in analysing various statements made by President Saakashvili and members of his administration. Official statements often don't match the deeds.
9. **Failed Performance of the National Guards.** The other discrepancy exists between on the one hand wish to restructure the National Guards that performed badly during the August 2008 war and to provide the Guards with functions of Civil Defence and, on the other, the situation on the ground. It was proposed that the newly restructured National Guard will be responsible for management of emergency situations and territorial-logistic issues. According to Givi Targamadze, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security, given the fact that for the present moment no such system of Civil Defence operates in Georgia, civil defence infrastructure will be initially built to insure the safety of civilians in emergency situations. To do this 'We will need to enact a few legislative changes.'² No such changes were enacted thus far.³ In other words, that deficiency remains unaddressed.
10. **The Unfulfilled Promise of President Saakashvili.** The promise made by President Saakashvili in July 2010 to 'reverse the process' of defence budget cuts has not yet materialised. Between 2008 and 2011 the defence budget was cut by more than 50 per cent. The funds were redirected from arms acquisitions to education and training. Still, it remains unknown whether redirected funds contributed to a better military education and training. It can be said that the defence budget might be further cut by about 10 per cent over the next two years. In part, because of the forthcoming parliamentary elections in 2012 and the following up presidential elections in 2013. In part, because Georgia's economy remains vulnerable to external factors.

To conclude, it is hard to say whether the lean budget leads to mean performance. It is nevertheless possible to say that military have to live according to financial means standing at their disposal. In other words, maintaining maximum efficiency and taking into account limited financial manoeuvrability. This is a very tall order for the Financial Department of the MoD. It requires, however, not financial competence alone but different thinking and approaches to solve above-discussed deficiencies. Furthermore, without thorough implementation of decisions to improve those deficiencies no improvement can be expected in Georgia's defence and security agenda.

² <http://www.mod.gov.ge/print.php?lang=1&Id=748&type=1> – online on 28 October 2010.

³ E-mail to the author from Manana Begiashvili, assistant to Archil Osidze, Head of Staff, Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security, 21 July 2011.

Comparative Study: Armenia's and Georgia's Defence and Security Agenda

Key Points

*At the moment and for the foreseeable future defence and security agendas of Armenia and Georgia remain far apart from each other. In case of Armenia, its alliance with Russia, which is the enemy of Georgia, precludes any convergence in defence and security matters between the two countries.

*Despite that predicament Georgian government would be well-advised to maintain cordial and peaceful relations with the Government of Armenia. There is, however, several venues where two countries already co-operate.

*The role of the United States and Russia regarding the two countries differs profoundly. Even if the American policy towards Georgia under President Barack Obama has become a low-key and low profile, the United States has not abandoned Georgia altogether; although it appears so. As regarding Armenia, the US policy remains rather marginal as a result of the explicit signal and reaction coming from Moscow, namely 'Don't interfere in our sphere of influence.' Policy of the European Union is appreciated, but governments of the two countries have a clear idea that Europeans have neither levers over decisions made in Moscow nor real credibility to impact those decisions. There is neither overall agreement between the United States and the European Union regarding policy towards Georgia.

*As a result, Armenia and Georgia have to manoeuvre themselves and seek international and regional co-operation. The latter as will be mentioned below remains very elusive.

*As for the former, even with fairly moderate defence budgets the two countries participate actively in various military missions in the hot spots. Their active participation significantly contributes to their defence and security agenda and bolsters their respective military.

*The two countries relations with the European Union, Russia and the United States vary from ambiguous to openly hostile and friendly. The same can be said about the relations between the European Union, Russia, the United States and Georgia and Armenia.

Introduction

It is important to underline that the open sources pertained to research on Armenia's defence and security agenda are very scarce. In part, because such agenda considered very delicate to deal with and in part, the agenda is overlooked. By and large research on Armenia focused on the Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan and its international ramifications. Very few studies have been conducted on comparative analysis of Armenia's and Georgia's defence and security agenda. On the other hand, open sources prior to the Russian-Georgian war of August 2008 and its post-war ramifications were extensively analysed both in the United States (US) and the European Union (EU).⁴ Furthermore, since Georgia was and remains highly motivated to join North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) defence and security agenda of Georgia came under close scrutiny by the NATO member states. As a result, Armenia's and Georgia's defence and security agendas were treated differently and the open sources information pertained to the two countries agendas was and remains of not equal value.

Although Georgia and Armenia are neighbours and friends, they are not necessarily partners and allies. Their defence and security policies are not compatible and as long as Armenia remains an ally of Russia the situation will not change. Whether Georgia can wean Armenia from Russia appears at the moment unlikely, since the former has not much to offer to the latter. Furthermore, as long as the military ties with Russia remain the bedrock of the Armenian defence strategy, Georgia stands no chance bringing Armenia to its side.

The report highlights the two countries' convergent and divergent interests. It can be said that there is more divergence in relations between the two countries than convergence. There are enough reasons for that and they are further elaborated in the report. The report also deals with the role of the US and Russia regarding the two countries hard security agenda and focuses on the role of the EU as a provider of soft security. There is no competition between the role of American and Russian on the one hand and the role of the Europeans on the other. After all perceptions of Georgians and Armenians of the Great Powers in their neighbourhood differs. There is, however, a palpable tension between the role of the US and Russia in Georgia and Armenia. In Georgia, the US government despite President Barack Obama low-key policy and a

⁴ To mention just few, see for instance: Jon Chicky, "*The Russian-Georgian war: Political and military implications for US policy*" in *Policy Paper* (February 2009) online: http://www.isdp.eu/images/stories/isdp-main-pdf/2009_chicky_the-russian-georgian_war.pdf; pp.1-19; Archil Gegeshidze, "*Post-war Georgia: Resetting Euro-Atlantic aspirations?*" in *Caucasus Analytical Digest*, no. 5 (16 April 2009) online: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=99100>; pp. 5-10; Johanna Popjanevski, "*International law and the post-2008 status quo in Georgia: Implications for Western policies*" in *Silk Road Paper* (May 2011) online: http://www.isdp.eu/images/stories/isdp-main-pdf/2011_popjanevski_international-law-and-the-post-2008-status-quo.pdf; pp. 1-64. Hereafter cited as Johanna Popjanevski, "*International law*".

certain distance from the events that take place in Georgia remains committed to Georgia's Euro-Atlantic orientation. On the other hand, Russian government has not given up its policy on the regime change in Georgia. Whether as Emil Danielyan pointed 'Armenian leaders can maintain delicate balancing act, which has been a key element of Armenia's foreign policy' and for how long remains an open question.

The Two Countries' Convergent and Divergent Interests

Regional co-operation as concept is used frequently in order to emphasise and stress the necessity and importance of such co-operation. However, when we refer to co-operation in defence and security matters between Georgia and Armenia in particular, we discover a basic lack of such co-operation between the two countries. I dare say that there is more of suspicion in Georgia about intentions of Armenia. In addition, Armenia perceived in Georgia and by the Georgian military as Moscow's ally unable to maintain its own military independence. Perhaps such a view is a bit far-fetched but that is how the reality picture seen from Tbilisi. On the other hand, as Sergey Minasyan, deputy director of the Yerevan-based Caucasus Institute (CI), points Armenia is warily looking after intensification of relations between Georgia and Turkey plus Azerbaijan. The Armenian government consider some steps taken by Georgia (for instance, construction of the rail corridor between Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi and Baku) as an attempt to worsen communication and transportation isolation of Armenia. Another problem is delimitation of the state borders between two countries. Those borders in their current shape are relics from the Soviet era and, as a result, problems related to their settlement have not yet been sorted out.⁵ In addition, we can discern a certain drift in the two countries' relations. As a result, the leadership of two countries pay little attention to their saying and don't listen to each other view. Does it mean that the divergent interests prevail and there is little chance to bridge them over? At the moment it appears so. Whether it is likely to change in the medium- and long-term remain to be seen.

For instance, Armenian analysts say that Georgia's recent move to block a transit route via Georgia for Armenia-bound *Russian supplies* (author's italics) at the 102nd Gyumri military base did not come as a surprise [since the move was already in the making and the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia further accelerated the move to block a transit route, author's comment]. Nevertheless, an independent political analyst Yervand Bozoian and director of the Yerevan-based Regional Studies Centre Richard Giragosian agreed that the Gyumri conundrum

⁵ For a complete article, see <http://noev-kovcheg.ru/mag/2011-14/2696.html>. Armenian authorities consider construction of the rail corridor, which circumvents Armenia, economically unjustified. For further information, see *Povestka vneshnei politiki Armenii 2011: Analiz ekspertov Analyticheskogo Tsentra po Globalizatsii i Regional'nomu Sotrudnichestvu*. (Agenda for Armenian foreign policy 2011: Assessment of experts of the Analytical Centre on Globalisation and Regional Co-operation). Yerevan: Edit Print, 2010; p. 37. Hereafter cited as *Povestka*.

suggests that Armenia should pay more attention to strategic planning. Giragosian said that '[T]he lessons for Armenia at least is to be always planning and preparing for various scenarios, in advance, and not after, a crisis or challenge.' [Belated reaction to the post-crisis and/or post-challenge is a common feature, however, advanced planning and preparation is characteristics of a very few nations, author's comment].

Bozoian pointed to what he described as Armenia's and Georgia's mutual *lack of attention* (author's italics). He suggested that had Yerevan devoted more attention to bilateral relations with Tbilisi, the Georgian parliament might have been more attuned to the fact that closing the transit corridor would adversely impact Armenia. In the recent past, neither country has seen its national interests *as tightly aligned with that of its neighbour* (author's italics). Tbilisi, though, apparently made some attempt to discuss the military transit issue with the Armenian government before suspending the agreement. On the eve of the vote of the Georgian parliament, Minister of Defence Bacho Akhalaia travelled to Yerevan at the invitation of Armenian Minister of Defence Seyran Ohanyan. Official comments were limited to standard pledges about co-operation and the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts.⁶ Minasyan clarified official comments and noted that as a result of negotiations between ministers of defence the Georgian side guaranteed that suspension of the Georgian-Russian agreement pertained to military supplies for the Russian military base in Armenia alone. Suspension of the agreement has not in any way affected transit of military supplies for the *Armenian army* (author's italics) through territory of Armenia. As a result, it can be stated that a transit route incident has neither affected security of Armenia nor impacted Armenian-Georgian relations.⁷ Nevertheless, incident irked leadership of the two countries and has not contributed to the two countries' relations. The author's conclusion supports Bozoian point, namely mutual lack of attention and its potential consequences.

Sergey Minasyan noted that Armenian officials generally prefer not to speak publicly about delicate topics that touch both on Yerevan relations with its one friendly neighbour in the Caucasus, Georgia, and on its strategic alliance with that neighbour's enemy, Russia. He said that 'Such issues are not being discussed openly.'⁸ Perhaps the time is ripe to discuss such issues in an open and frank manner in order to dispel mistrust and be aware of each other intentions. Whether governments of the two countries are ready for an open and honest dialogue is not known to the author. What is known to the author is that the first international training at

⁶ Marianna Grigoryan, "Armenia: A look at military transit alternatives to Georgia" in *Eurasianet* online: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/63384> - online on 28 April 2011. Hereafter cited as Marianna Grigoryan, "Armenia".

⁷ <http://noev-kovcheg.ru/mag/2011-14/2696.html>. Ghia Nodia noted that Government of Georgia accepts the lease of the Gyumri military base as one of the things it cannot change. As for the threat of Russian-Armenian military co-operation it could be reduced by maintaining good relations with Armenia. Tbilisi also assumes that Armenia's co-operation with Russia is not aimed at Georgia. "Dilemmas in Georgia's new regional policy" in *REP Roundtable Summary* no. 3 (2011) online: <http://website.informer.com/visit?domain=icbss.org&url=http://icbss.org> - online on 16 February 2011; p. 5.

⁸ Marianna Grigoryan, "Armenia".

Sachkhere Mountain Training School was held in 2006 for military servicemen from *Armenia* (author's italics), Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. The training was a great success and stirred immense interest.⁹ In addition, middle rank officers from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan attend courses at the Gori-based National Defence Academy of Georgia.

What are the other constraints, which prohibit Government of Armenia to speak publicly about delicate topics that touch both? Well, perhaps they are political and military constraints, which are discussed below.

Political and Military Constraints Under Which the Two Countries Operate

***The Role of the US and Russia in Terms of Hard Security and the Role of the EU as a Soft Security Provider**

There is a clear distinction about the role of Great Powers in the region. The US and Russia perceived by Georgia and Armenia in a very different light. For Georgia Russia was and remains the major obstacle for joining NATO. However in case of Armenia, some circles in the EU, the US and Russia perceive Armenia as the weakest chain in the security link in South Caucasus. Although Armenia politically independent state, in terms of defence and security it is incapable to survive on its own without military assistance from Russia. This issue is discussed further below. On the other hand, Georgia and Armenia perceive the EU as the major sponsor of economic development and champion of human rights and democratic development. As such the EU perceived by the two countries as the provider of soft security. According to Zaur Shiriyev, a foreign policy analyst at the Centre for Strategic Studies (CSS) in Baku, the EU 'soft power' strategy has seen little follow-up action, despite the European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2011 'On the need for an EU strategy for the South Caucasus,' which stressed that 'Frozen conflicts are an impediment to the economic and social development and hinder the improvement of the standard of living in the South Caucasus region, as well as the full development of the Eastern Partnership of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); whereas a peaceful resolution of the conflicts is essential for stability in the EU Neighbourhood.'¹⁰ Although EU has tried its hand in the post-August 2008 war conflict resolution it has not been successful.¹¹ In addition, the EU has been ambiguous on the issue of whether Russia's military presence in the occupied territories of Georgia amount to occupation. While individual member

⁹ *Defence Today*, issue 28 (October 2009) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/vcfhjrieqseng.pdf>; p. 2. *Defence Today* is a monthly supplement published on a website of the Georgian Ministry of Defence (MoD). Hereafter cited as *Defence Today*. As far as the author knows there was no follow-up for the training after the 2006 event.

¹⁰ For a complete article, see "The EU in the South Caucasus: Statement fatigue?" in *Today's Zaman*, 27 September 2011; p. 14.

¹¹ Johanna Popjanevski, "International law", pp. 15-17; pp. 57-58.

states have made references to the occupation of Georgian territory, the EU has yet to adopt *a common line* (author's italics) on the issue of occupation. The Head of the European Commission (EC), Jose Manuel Barroso, stated in a speech that the EU 'will never come to terms with Georgia's occupation,' but *failed to identify Russia's role as an occupying power* (author's italics).¹² That is the crux of the matter. As long as Barroso does not state explicitly that Russia remains the occupying power in Georgia other statements have very little value. The role of the EU will be dealt further below.

***The Role of the US in Armenia**

After 11 September 2001 the US Congress lifted a ban on granting military assistance and co-operation to Armenia and Azerbaijan. The US annually provides support to Armenia (on average between US\$3 million and US\$5 million annually) for military purposes. The means are allocated within the framework of the American International Military Education and Training (IMET) programme. Those means are mostly spent on programmes of military education (including preparation of the Armenian military for the participation in peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo), creation of the Mine-Cleaning Centre, language and medical courses etc. The *exclusion* (author's italics) is the procurement of the American communication means for using them in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia (RA).¹³ In early March 2011 it was reported that the US plans to deliver US\$8,750 million military and security assistance to Armenia. Of that sum, US\$4,450 million has been intended for Armenia under Assistance to Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia (AEECA) programme, US\$3 million under FMF, US\$450,000 under IMET, US\$850,000 under Non-proliferation, Anti-Terrorism, De-mining and Related Programmes (NADR). US\$2,500 million of the funds allocated for Armenia under AEECA, the whole of the funds allocated under NADR (US\$850,000) will be spent on combating weapons of mass destruction (WMD), US\$660,000 allocated under AEECA and US\$3 million under FMF on stabilisation process and reforms in security sector, while US\$750,000 allocated under AEECA on combating trans-national crimes and US\$540,000 on reducing conflicts.¹⁴ In other words, US assistance remains minimal and is unlikely to have a greater impact on the Armenian military in a short-term. The longer term consequences are difficult to forecast since much depends on relations between Armenia and Russia in defence and security matters.

¹² *Ibid*; pp. 17-18. Failure to implement the Six-Point Cease-Fire Agreement between Russia and Georgia makes the EU look weak, incapable on insincere. David Phillips, "Implementation review: Six point ceasefire agreement between Russia and Georgia" in *The National Committee on American Foreign Policy and Institute for the Study of Human Rights (ISHR) Columbia University* (August 2011); p. 5. Hereafter cited as David Phillips, "Implementation review".

¹³ For a complete article, see Sergey Minasyan, "The dynamics and tendency of the relations between the Republic of Armenia and the US: Conceptual analysis" online: http://www.noravank.am/eng/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=5796 – online on 1 September 2011. According to the *Armenian Weekly*, in the fiscal year 2010 the US House of Representatives bill kept Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to Armenia at US\$3 million and IMET assistance at US\$450,000. For a complete article, see <http://armenianweekly.com/2009/07/12/house-adopts-48-million>.

¹⁴ <http://www.news.az/articles/politics/32891> - online on 14 March 2011.

***The Role of Russia in Armenia**

On the other hand, Russia provides weapon systems with the same price tags as it sells to the Russian Army. It is very difficult to say whether Russian military assistance to Armenia is tangible since there is no information in that regard, however, it is of utmost importance for the Armenian defence and security interests. According to *Eurasianet*, in late February 2010 the Armenian parliament ratified the creation of a rapid reaction force under the aegis of the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). However, the legislative debate in Yerevan proved to be contentious, with opposition leaders expressing concern about the possibility of Armenia involvement in a potential regional conflict. Opposition Members of Parliament (MPs) pointed out that pact provisions would *potentially set Armenia against neighbouring Georgia* (author's italics), which fought a brief and disastrous war against Russia in August 2008. Stepan Safarian, head of the opposition Heritage Party's parliamentary faction, said that *'the agreement to set up rapid reaction forces obliges Armenia to take a military action against Georgia on Russia's behalf in the event of a repeat in hostilities between Tbilisi and Moscow'* (author's italics).¹⁵

Furthermore, Russia and Armenia have agreed to deepen their already closed military ties. Amendments to a bilateral 1995 defence treaty were signed during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Yerevan on 19 and 20 August 2010. The amendments, publicised by both sides, extended Russia's lease on a Soviet-era military base head quartered in the north-western Armenian city of Gyumri by 24 years, until 2044, and enhanced its role in the South Caucasus state's security. About 4000 Russian troops stationed there will now not only protect the 'interests of the Russian Federation,' but also 'ensure the security of the Republic of Armenia' jointly with the Armenian army. Serzh Sargsyan, President of Armenia, said that the extended agreement expands their 'Sphere of geographical and strategic responsibility.' He added that 'the activity of the Russian military base was until now confined to the external border of the border of the former Soviet Union (FSU). That restriction has now been removed from the treaty's text.'

President Sargsyan also emphasised that the amendment treaty commits Moscow to supply the Armenian armed forces with 'Modern and compatible weaponry and special military hardware.' [The precise type of these weapons is not yet known.] A separate memorandum signed on 20 August 2010 by the Russian and Armenian Ministers of Defence, Anatoly Serdyukov and Seyran Ohanyan respectively, envisages the creation of joint ventures specialising in repair and maintenance of military hardware (presumably Russian-made) located in Armenia. The latter document apparently resulted from a visit to Armenia in July 2010 by a team of Russian military

¹⁵ For a complete article, see <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/news/articles/eav0223a.shtml> - online on 22 February 2010. According to the author not the pact provisions but rather Article 2, Paragraph 3 of the agreement, namely that the CSTO forces tasked with the following goals: expanding its forces on the territory of each of the CSTO member states with demonstration of preparedness to use its military might; participation in deterring and countering military offensive including aggression, localisation of the armed conflict is likely to set Armenia against neighbouring Georgia. See http://www.businessrealty.ru/pravo/DocumShow_DocumID_166242.html - online on 14 June 2009; p. 2. The article is formulated in a rather vague manner in order to be used in a very effective way.

officials led by Nikolay Bordyuzha, the Secretary General of the CSTO. Following discussions with senior Armenian security officials in Yerevan it was announced that the Russian and Armenian defence industries will soon forge much closer links within the CSTO framework. Bordyuzha told journalists that the two sides have already launched an unspecified 'pilot project' aimed at integrating Armenian defence enterprises into the Russian military-industrial complex (MIC).¹⁶ It remains to be seen whether the proposed plans to create joint ventures specialising in repair and maintenance, forge much closer links within the CSTO framework, and launch an unspecified 'pilot project' will bear the fruits.

***The Role of the US in Georgia**

As Johanna Popjanevski aptly putted it, the US continues to rely on the notion of 'strategic patience' [towards Georgia] as the key to a breakthrough – namely that continued investments into reform processes will eventually create an attractive climate for re-association of Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Georgia. The US also continues to avoid the contentious issue of arms sales to Georgia, in effect upholding a 'soft arms embargo' on Georgia.¹⁷ The undeclared arms

¹⁶ The Armenian military has already received large quantities of Russian weapons at reduced prices or even free of charge since the early 1990's. For a complete article, see Emil Danielyan, "Russia boosts military alliance with Armenia", in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 7, issue 159 (7 September 2010) online: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36792&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=484&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36792&tx_ttnews[backPid]=484&no_cache=1). Hereafter cited as Emil Danielyan, "Russia boosts". As for Danielyan assertion at reduced prices or even free of charge, the first is likely to be correct; as for free of charge, this assertion might not be accurate. Armenia's First Deputy Minister of Defence Davit Tonoyan reinforced the above statement and said that Russian troops stationed there will now not only protect the 'Interests of the Russian Federation,' but also 'Ensure the security of the Republic of Armenia' jointly with the Armenian army. For further information, see http://www.redstar.ru/2011/08/12_08/3_02.html. The agreement on deploying a Russian military base in Gyumri was signed 16 years ago [namely in 1995] and entered into force two years later, in 1997, for a period of 25 years. Marianna Grigoryan, "Armenia: Opposition blasts Russia's proposed 49-year lease on military base" in *Eurasianet* online: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61730> - online on 12 August 2010. In other words, agreement signed in 1995 expires in 2020. For reactions about extension of the agreement until 2044, see *Ibid*. For various opinions about the agreement, see Emil Danielyan, "Russia boosts". See also *Idem*, "Armenia plans more NATO-backed defense reforms", in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 8, issue 153 (9 August 2011) online: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=38299&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=512](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=38299&tx_ttnews[backPid]=512). Hereafter cited as Emil Danielyan, "Armenia plans". For an unspecified but tangible value of assistance from Russia, see note 26. For a bilateral agreement and a rivalry based on division lines (Armenia-Russia versus Azerbaijan-Turkey) in the South Caucasus, see *Povestka*, p. 20.

¹⁷ "International law", p. 18. For earlier reports on the delicate issue of arms embargo, see Richard Lugar, "Striking the balance: US policy and stability in Georgia", a *Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate* online: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/images/091223_Striking_the_Balance.pdf - online on 22 December 2009; p. v; p. 1; pp. 3-4; p. 6. Hereafter cited as Richard Lugar, "Striking the balance". See also Joshua Kucera, "Tbilisi pressing Washington to ok defense purchases" in *Eurasianet* online: <http://www.eurasianet.org/print/61934> - online on 15 September 2010. Despite call of David Iberi that the undeclared Western arms embargo against Tbilisi must, logically, end and the country should be provided with sophisticated defences to further diminish the risk of a new invasion ("NATO demonstrates full support for Georgia" in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 7, issue 217, (6 December 2010) online: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37250&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=37250&no_cache=1

embargo affects deeply operations of the Georgian Armed Forces (GAF). It is very difficult or almost impossible to plan resistance against invading force if the GAF lacks needed arms.

Despite implicit embargo on arms sales, the US responded quickly and comprehensively to assist Georgia and deepen trade and investment ties. In September 2008, Senator Joe Biden introduced legislation committing US\$1.06 billion to Georgia, on top of existing commitments through the FREEDOM Support Act, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and other programmes. About a quarter of US assistance went to direct budgetary support.¹⁸

***The Role of the EU in Georgia**

The EU maintains a balance between its goals of bolstering commercial relations with Russia, strengthening ties with Georgia, and de-isolating the conflict zones. Adopted in December 2009, the EU's Non-Recognition and Engagement Policy mirrors the US approach with both calling on Russia to rescind its recognition of territories in Georgia. There are, however, tactical differences. The US emphasises de-occupation and restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity. The EU emphasises de-isolation and transformation, while holding the line on non-recognition.

Today, the EU engages Georgia through a variety of economic tools and policy instruments such as its ENP, the Instrument for Stability, the Eastern Partnership, and the Black Sea Synergy initiative. The NATO-Georgia Council, which involves leading EU member states, is a forum for discussing strategies and trans-Atlantic co-operation. On 17 June 2010 the EU adopted the EU-Georgia Visa Facilitation Agreement cutting visa fees and enabling multiple-entry visas with a long period of validity. Discussions with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan on Association Agreements within the framework of the Eastern Partnership opened in 2010. Draft negotiations

D=27&cHash=5d2e84f276) the present author is not convinced that Iberi's call going to be answered. See also Richard Lugar, *"Striking the balance"*; p. 8. For the recent US decision not to supply arms to Georgia, see <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1568662> – online on 17 January 2011. Navy Commander Wendy Snyder, spokesperson of the Department of Defense (DoD), told journalists on 17 January 2011 that 'the reports of US arms sales to Georgia via third countries were completely false.' <http://defsec.info/news/dod-denies-russian-speculations-on-resuming-arms-sales-to-georgia>. It is very unlikely that the West will supply heavy weapons such as infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), armoured personnel carriers (APCs), pieces of artillery, helicopters and fighter aircraft. During a press conference held on 14 February 2011 at the Moscow office of the *Interfax News Agency*, James Appathurai, NATO Secretary General Special Envoy for the Caucasus and Central Asia, denied that NATO was involved in the sale of arms to Georgia, stressing however that such transaction may be conducted by individual members of the Alliance as long as they comply with relevant international legal provisions. <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/wiadomosci/2011-02-15>. In his 30 March 2011 interview with *Foreign Policy Blog, The Cable*, President Mikheil Saakashvili talked openly about the issue of arms sales – something he claims has been discussed behind closed doors with his US counterparts many times in the past. The fact that Saakashvili has felt the need to make such a bold public statement would seem to suggest that negotiations on the issue *are not bringing the desired results* (author's italics). Irakli Aladashvili, *"Tbilisi calls on Washington for more firepower"* online: http://www.georgiatoday.ge/article_details.php?id=8939&cat=Politics&version=556 – online on 8-14 April 2011.

¹⁸ David Phillips, *"Implementation review"*; p. 13.

directives have recently concluded, signalling the imminent start of negotiations including talks on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).¹⁹ Although draft negotiation directives have recently been concluded the path ahead remains long and arduous. Furthermore, it is suggested not to use wording such as imminent since it is misleading and raises many expectations in Georgia regarding the EU. The latter *modus operandi* is slow and cumbersome.

The EU agreed to provide a total of €500 million to support Georgia's economic recovery stemming from the August 2008 war and the global financial crisis. The first tranche of €46 million was provided in 2010 within the frame of macro-financial assistance package. In early May 2011, the EU announced a second tranche of €46 million. In 2010, Georgia has finally showed signs of economic recovery after two years of low or negative growth. The real gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 6.3 per cent despite the trade embargo imposed by Russia.²⁰

To conclude, role of the EU, Russia and the US in Armenia and Georgia vary according to the latter wishes and interests and the former list of priorities and their current particular position. Furthermore, historic legacy of the FSU inherited by Russia point clearly to interests of Russia playing an undisputable role in Armenia. How Armenia counters this role is discussed further below. Georgia's path toward the EU and NATO remains full of twists and thorns because of clear and unequivocal Russian 'No', to paraphrase former Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko. In such difficult environment Armenian and Georgian military need to pursue very careful and well-balanced policy. The two countries military agendas are discussed below.

Strength and Weaknesses of Armenian and Georgian Military

***Armenian Military Reforms and Threats**

The current Armenian armed forces are a mixed of professional, contract and conscript-based organisation and consist of two arms of service: the Ground Forces and a joint Air and Air-

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 18. For the EU failure to identify Russia's role as an occupying power, see note 9.

²⁰ For a complete article, see http://georgiandaily.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21453&Itemid=129 – online on 11 May 2011. See also “*Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2010.*” *Country Report: Georgia*. Joint Staff Working Paper SEC (2011) 649. Brussels, 25.05.2011; pp. 8-9. Russia imposed embargo on wine, mineral water and agriculture products from Georgia. The EU agreed to provide and not as David Phillips wrote the EC provided €500 million. See “*Implementation review*”; p. 13. For further information on Georgia's economic growth, see note 40.

Defence Force.²¹ According to *Military Balance 2011*, Armenia's two services have 48,570 servicemen (45,393 with the Army (or Ground Forces) and 1146 with a joint Air/Air-Defence Aviation Forces. There are additional 2031 with the other Air-Defence Forces.²²

Seyran Ohanyan, Minister of Defence of Armenia, stressed that in 2009 the new structures of the MoD and Armed Forces Headquarters (HQ) were successfully started, the process of professional sergeant's training began, works are carried out concerning the development and main planning documents within the framework of Strategic Defence Review (SDR), and special Civil Service system was introduced in Central Staff of the MoD.

Minister also said that strategic planning is set on a new basis, structural reforms are in the process (of implementation), and service contract is introduced and gradually gets more importance in the army.²³ A revived version of Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) publicised in 2010 commits Yerevan to continuing the reforms. In particular, the 15-page document envisages that the Armenian military will 'review' its chain of command and control procedures and revamp its military education and training systems. The 27 July 2011 statement by the minister of defence revealed that Armenia and NATO officials are currently working on a fresh modification of the co-operation framework. However, it did not elaborate any details.²⁴

President Sargsyan and his National Security Council (NSC) approved in late December 2010 a five-year plan to modernise Armenia's armed forces which envisages the acquisition of long-range precision-guided weapons (PGWs). Sargsyan's office referred to it as the State Programme of Developing Weaponry and Military Hardware for the years 2011-15. The modernisation plan is essentially based on two documents approved in August 2010 by another Armenian government commission dealing with defence and national security. The first document dealt with army weaponry, while the other detailed measures to develop Armenian defence industry. Minister of Defence Ohanyan said that 'the two programmes envisage both the acquisition of state-of-the-art weapons and their partial production by the local defence industry.' Speaking to journalists on 10 August 2010, Ohanyan didn't deny that the modernisation plan is linked to the

²¹ <http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Russia-Aid-The-CIS/Defence-Budget-Armenia.html> - online on 30 June 2011.

²² London: Routledge, 2011; p. 85. For whatever reasons the other Air-Defence Forces are not identified. Furthermore, we don't know whether the total of 48,570 is fully or partly operational force. The same question of how many tanks and aircraft are operational remains unanswered.

²³ For a complete article, see http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sub=news_reforms – online on 29 January 2010. See also Emil Danielyan, "Armenia plans". For a contribution of Western experts to the SDR, see http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sub=news_us_british_sdr – online on 1 July 2011.

²⁴ Emil Danielyan, "Armenia plans". Although Emil Danielyan reports are very good they tend from time to time to overstate the importance of military ties between Armenia and the United States. See for instance notes 10, 11 and 44.

persisting risk of another Azerbaijan war in Nagorno-Karabakh.²⁵ The latter issue is, however, not dealt with in the current report.

Ohanyan said that potential development scenarios in case of materialisation of threats and understandings of military planning were elaborated during SDR. He added that 'Two different subgroups on these considerations were elaborated. The first subgroup emphasise that in medium-term, namely by 2018, *status quo* (author's italics) as to the issue of Karabakh conflict settlement will be preserved, while the second subgroup emphasise the possibility of peaceful settlement of the conflict.' Artur Baghdasaryan, Secretary of the NSC, noted that external threats to national security dictate the necessity to have a stable, technically equipped and combat-ready army. He added that 'As a result of reforms we can state with confidence that as a result of the huge work carried out, we have a system, which meets modern requirements and is capable of withstanding all possible threats.'²⁶ Baghdasaryan's dictate the necessity requires steady funding. For that reason the report provides an analysis pertained to the state of Armenia's defence budget.

***Armenian Defence Budget**

Armenia's official defence budget in 2010 was an equivalent of about US\$400 million.²⁷ The Armenian defence budget for 2011 is projected at just US\$405 million.²⁸ According to *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, Armenia's defence spending has risen substantially since 2004 when it stood at about US\$81 million. Despite the rise it has been unable to match that of its main regional rival Azerbaijan. As a result, its regional security position is coming under strain relative to its wealthier neighbour which committed to expand military and security spending to US\$3.1 billion in 2011. With a budget of US\$390 million in 2011, Armenia occupies a mid-level point in the regional defence budget hierarchy, spending more than most Central Asian countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan), but less than each of the Baltic States, Belarus,

²⁵ For a complete article, see <http://asbarez.com/90083/armenia-approves-plan-to-develop-domestic-defence-industry> - online on 13 December 2010. Part of the information published in this article was published online in <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/61730> - online on 12 August 2010. See also Emil Danielyan, "Armenia plans". For plans to forge links between defence enterprises of Armenia and Russia, see note 13.

²⁶ http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sib=news_sdr_scenarios - online on 1 July 2011.

²⁷ Emil Danielyan, "Armenia displays sophisticated air defence systems", in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 8, issue 13 (19 January 2011) online: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=37381&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=512](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37381&tx_ttnews[backPid]=512). For defence budget in 2008 and 2009, respectively US\$396 million and US\$405 million, see Sergey Minasyan, "Problemy regional'noi bezopasnosti na Yuzhnom Kavkaze v 2009 godu: Perekhodnyi god s neopredelennymi rezul'tatami" ("Problems of regional security in South Caucasus in 2009: Transitional year with uncertain results") in Alexander Iskandaryan (ed.), *Kavkaz-2009. Ezhegodnik Instituta Kavkaza*. (Caucasus 2009. Caucasus Institute Yearbook). Yerevan: Caucasus Institute, 2011; p. 122. Hereafter cited as Sergey Minasyan, "Problemy regional'noi".

²⁸ <http://asbarez.com/90083/armenia-approves-plan-to-develop-domestic-defence-industry> - online on 13 December 2011. However according to *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, Armenia's defence budget stands at US\$390 million in 2011. <http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Russia-Aid-The-CIS/Defence-Budget-Armenia.html> - online on 30 June 2011.

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In addition, Armenia's spending is in an order of magnitude smaller than its other neighbours Turkey (projected at more than US\$20 billion in 2011) and Iran (projected for US\$9.45 billion in 2011).

Although transparency has improved in recent years, the official published defence budget in Armenia still does not capture the *full extent* (author's italics) of military related spending by the country. This is primarily due to the *exclusion* (author's italics) of much of military spending in Karabakh, military pensions and the value of assistance obtained from Russia for border protection. According to the official budget figures, three quarters of the budget for 'Ensuring National Security' is allocated towards operational expenditure with capital spending accounting for the remaining 25 per cent.²⁹ As a result, we may assume that unofficial defence budget in Armenia is likely to be between one- and/or twofold higher than the official budget, but still short of Azerbaijan defence budget. However, even with US\$390 million or US\$405 million Armenia is capable to take part in NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operation in Afghanistan. The latter issue is discussed further below.

***Georgian Armed Forces: Structure and Threats**

The GAF is comprised of Land Forces and integrated with Land Forces Air Forces. According to Bacho Akhalaia, Georgian Minister of Defence, following an outdoor session of Defence and Security Committee of Parliament at Vasioni military base, 'There is a need of speed, flexible and operative troops triggering the necessity of integrating Military-Air Force with Land Forces together to ensure the better coordination under a single staff.'³⁰

According to Akhalaia President Saakashvili has been pushing for the creation of an adequately small but highly professional army and the MoD is determined to follow this plan. Akhalaia said that 'Stage by stage we will raise standards in order to have military servicemen who will be all well-trained professionals, both in terms of individual soldiers as well as the commanders' level. This will enable us to have a small but more effective army.'³¹

The new reality that emerged from the August 2008 war has necessitated a revision of the National Military Strategy. Under the new military strategy, which builds on the lessons learnt from the August 2008 war, the armed forces should be drilled and trained to use both

²⁹ For a complete article, see <http://articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Russia-Aid-The-CIS/Defence-Budget-Armenia.html> - online on 30 June 2011. For an unspecified value of assistance from Russia, see note 13.

³⁰ For a complete article, see *Defence Today*, issue 33 (March 2010) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/gopkmerojoeng.pdf>; p. 1.

³¹ For a complete article, see *Idem*, issue 37 (July 2010) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/qbwhlagohmeng>; p. 1.

conventional and non-conventional defence tactics, and to take part in international peacekeeping and stabilisation operations.³²

As far back as August 2009 it was reported that the Georgia Deployment Programme-ISAF launched at the Krtsanisi National Training Centre. At that time the 31 Infantry Battalion began to undergo six-month intensive training before deployment to the NATO-led ISAF operation under the command of the US Marines.³³ In an interview with David Smith, Director of Georgian Security Analysis Centre (GSAC), he noted that 'the Marines training is very important because the US Marines are the finest fighting force in the world – the Georgian armed forces will be learning from the best. And that is important because the armed forces mission in Afghanistan will be tough. The training is to ensure that the armed forces are fully ready. After the first Georgian battalion goes to Afghanistan, the Marines will train the Georgian battalions that will serve in the following rotations there, so this is more than just a one-time effort. In addition, although the Marines are now providing only Afghanistan-specific training, any training and any real-world experience will contribute to the *overall professionalism* (author's italics) of the GAF.'³⁴ In late March 2010 it was reported that the DoD said that it would build military capabilities of Georgia to ready them for operations in Afghanistan. Due to the sensitivities of re-arming the Georgian military, DoD officials have said that they have consulted with Russia about the military programme with Georgia.³⁵ During President Saakashvili meeting with the leadership of the MoD and the Joint Staff of the GAF, Saakashvili emphasised that 'Georgia's participation in ISAF was a huge military school for us.' He added that '2008 has shown the world that there was not 100 per cent effective political deterrent that is why we need total defence. Our presence in Afghanistan gives us a unique experience. So not only should we not suspend our participation in the Afghanistan operation, but we should consider and seek out new opportunities for more active participation. As a result, we are holding consultations on the matter with our partners'.³⁶

As for the threat of another round of military confrontation between Russia and Georgia such a threat cannot be disregarded. For instance, on 13 March 2010 the Georgian television channel *Imedi TV* aired a mock news broadcast pretending to report on a new Russian invasion of Georgia sometime in June 2010. Although the bogus newscast was preceded by a disclaimer that it was fake, it nonetheless created a lifelike feeling among Georgians and made headlines in Georgian, Russian and Western media. On the other hand though, there was a real Russian invasion in 2008 and given its failure to produce regime change in Georgia and thwart the

³² Theona Akubardia, "Security and defence policy development" in Tamara Patariaia (ed.), *Democratic control over the Georgian armed forces since the August 2008 war*. The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), 2010; pp. 13-14.

³³ *Defence Today*, issue 26 (August 2009) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/sjvdhvhkbgeng.pdf>; p. 1.

³⁴ For a complete article, see *Ibid*; p. 2. For the US Marines evaluation of the Georgian soldiers' performance in Afghanistan, see David Smith, "These guys are in the fight: US Marines evaluate Georgian soldiers" in *Tabula*, (19 September 2011); pp. 1-2.

³⁵ <http://uk.reuters.com/assets/print?aid=UKTRE62P3VU20100326> – online on 26 March 2010.

³⁶ For a complete article, see *Defence Today*, issue 37 (July 2010) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/qbwhlagohmeng>; p. 1.

country's pro-Western orientation, any new invasion to 'finish the job' is highly probable *if permissible international and domestic conditions are created by Moscow* (author's italics).³⁷ Sergei Lavrov, Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, has outlined a revised and updated policy of regime change towards Georgia. Interviewed on 8 July 2010 by the *Mir* television channel, Lavrov raised the possibility of fomenting tensions among the Armenian and Azeri ethnic minorities inside Georgia. With this, Lavrov became the first senior Russian official in memory to hint openly that Moscow might stir up ethnic minority tensions in Georgia.³⁸

The current uncertain and unstable situation between Russia and Georgia requires the latter to be prepared for any eventuality. As a result, such situation compels Georgian government to allocate necessary funds for maintaining robust military force.

***Georgian Defence Budget**

There is no doubt that changes within the GAF require steady financial support for the next three to five years at least. At the meeting with the leadership of the MoD and Joint Staff in July 2010 President Saakashvili said that the government had to cut defence budget for 2010 as a result of the economic crisis, however, added that the government would 'reverse the process' of budget cuts 'as much as we can, because we cannot leave the country without defence.' He added that 'In previous years we spent much more on arms than on training; now there will be much more training given and filling the arsenal will be a separate issue.'³⁹ We need to remember that under the current circumstances filling the arsenal with heavy weapons remains mission impossible as a result of the tacit understanding reached between the West and Russia. The issue of external military assistance was dealt in the Section: *The Role of the US in Georgia (see note

³⁷ For a complete article, see Giorgi Kvelashvili, "A new Russian invasion of Georgia: Is it so unrealistic?" in *Jamestown Foundation Blog* online: <http://jamestownfoundation.blogspot.com/2010/03/new-russian-invasion-of-georgia-is-it.html>. Ronald Asmus was very explicit in his writing, namely that *Moscow is determined to break Tbilisi's will to align with the West* (author's italics). "How to prevent another war in the Southern Caucasus" online: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/02/AR2010070204358.html>. President Saakashvili said that Russia 'Has not given up' its plans 'to overthrow the Georgian democracy and to occupy our entire territory', which it tried but failed in August 2008. For a complete article, see <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22556> – online on 28 July 2010.

³⁸ For a complete article, see Vladimir Socor, "Lavrov hints at fomenting ethnic tensions inside Georgia" in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 7, issue 132 (9 July 2010) online: [http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=36605&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=484&no_cache=1](http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36605&tx_ttnews[backPid]=484&no_cache=1). For the recent items on the risk of dangerous escalation between Russia and Georgia, see <http://georgiaupdate.gov.ge/en/doc/10011279/GU%16.06.11gm.pdf>, p. 3; <http://www.kyivpost.com/news/russia/detail/108893> – online on 18 July 2011; <http://www.izvestia.ru/news/499635> – online on 6 September 2011.

³⁹ *Defence Today*, issue 37 (July 2010); p. 3. See also Theona Akubardia; "Security and defence"; p. 13; <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22556> – online on 28 July 2010.

14 in particular). It appears that after the August 2008 war as a result of the undeclared arms embargo on Georgia the decision was made to build some home-made weapon systems.⁴⁰

According to the report published on website of the Georgian MoD, defence budget was severely cut between 2008 and 2011. For instance, in 2008 the defence budget was Georgian Lari (GEL) 1.547 billion. In 2009, it decreased to GEL 897 million and in 2010 it further decreased to GEL 749 million.⁴¹ On 17 December 2010, Georgia's Parliament approved the state budget for 2011. The MoD was allocated GEL 661 million⁴², or about \$US300 million. In other words, the MoD budget was cut by more than 50 per cent between 2008 and 2011. In part as a result of the global economic crisis and for improvements of the domestic economy, and in part, as a result of Georgia's military refocusing its policy from acquiring arms to education and training of military personnel and participation in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Still, it appears that for the time being the GAF has sufficient funds to operate properly. As for the notion of 'reversing the process' of budget cuts, for the time being this process has not materialised. It can be further stated that as a result of the forthcoming parliamentary elections in 2012 and the presidential elections in 2013 the defence budget is either may remain static or may be decreased. These are certainly not very pleasant news for the military command.

Despite some positive signs that Georgia's economy has expanded by 6 per cent in 2010 and the economic forecast for 2011 was steady grow of about 4 per cent, the defence budget was cut again. Although Thomas de Waal noted that grown figures in early 2011 were healthy, he also wrote that the economy runs a substantial trade deficit and is vulnerable to external factors. De Waal cited Eric Livny, an economist with the International School of Economics at Tbilisi State University, who noted that 'the government doesn't have its own resources, and everything has to come from either private investment or foreign technical assistance.'⁴³ This certainly puts the defence budget under further constraint.

⁴⁰ See for instance an article about production of the Didgori infantry armoured mine-protected patrol vehicle in *Defence Today*, issue 5 (May 2011); p. 1; *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 8 June 2011; p. 11. It is also known that the Tbilisi Aircraft Manufacturing (TAM) was turned into major repair and maintenance facility for aircraft and helicopters. Further information on the subject is not known. It is very difficult to pass any judgement on the quality of weapon systems manufactured in Georgia since they are not on display and have not yet been tested in a real combat operation. In addition, military officials tend not to discuss such issues in a public and transparent manner.

⁴¹ <http://www.mod.gov.ge/index.php?page=241&lang=Eng&Id=28&cp=0> – online on 17 August 2010. According to Theona Akubardia, defence budget in 2008 was 5.4 per cent of the GDP, means GEL 1.494 billion [and not as cited on website of the Georgian MoD, author's comment], while defence budget for 2009 and 2010 matches the website financial data. "Security and defence"; p. 18. See also *The Military Balance*. London: Routledge, 2010; p. 184.

⁴² <http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=22972> – online on 17 December 2010. For the incorrect defence budget of Georgia, see http://www.ng.ru/cis/2011-02-22/1_neoglobalizm.html.

⁴³ "Georgia's choices: Charting a future in uncertain times" in *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Washington DC, 2011 online: http://carnegieendowment.org/files/georgias_choices.pdf; p. 2. For additional negative economic trends, see *Ibid*; p. 10. Georgia's economy grew at a brisk of 5.8 per cent in the first quarter of 2011. <http://georgiaupdate.gov.ge/en/doc/10011281/GU%23.06.11%gm.pdf>; p. 2. Georgia's economic growth was 4.7 per cent between April and June 2011. <http://georgiaupdate.gov.ge/en/doc/10011335/GU%06.10.11%gm.pdf>; p. 3. According to preliminary figures from Georgia's state statistics office, in the first quarter of 2011 Foreign Direct

It is hard to say whether the lean budget leads to mean performance. It is nevertheless possible to say that military have to live according to financial means standing at their disposal. In other words, maximum efficiency and taking into account limited financial manoeuvrability. This is a very tall order for the Financial Department of the MoD. Despite severe budget cut and the tacit understanding reached between the West including the United States and Russia, some arms were sold to Georgia since the August 2008 war.⁴⁴ In addition, the United States found a way to train Georgian battalions for the rotating mission in Afghanistan.

***Armenian External Activity and Its Impact on Armenia's Military**

In early March 2011 Seyran Ohanyan took part in the meeting of Ministers of Defence of countries, participating in NATO ISAF operation in Afghanistan. Armenian subdivision, consisting of 40 peacekeepers, provides for the security of Kunduz Airport in the north of Afghanistan under the German Command. In an interview with Lieutenant Manmohan Lal, leader of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) in the ISAF Command "North", Lal was asked to assess the service of the Armenian soldiers. He said that 'It is a high valued duty, which was proved by visits of various high ranking officers, who had high impression of Armenian soldiers discipline and combat readiness.' He also said that 'He would like to single out that Armenian soldiers have a good ability to assess a situation and they have a clear idea of their actions. However, English skills of the soldiers need to be improved.' He added that 'Co-operation between NATO and Armenian military is on high level. Armenian soldiers are aware of NATO military law and rules and they are able to use weapons and equipment which is provided from NATO for their mission.'⁴⁵ The interaction between Armenian military and military from NATO member states and others exposed Armenian military to new weapons, equipment, mode of operations and procedures under foreign command in a combat zone. Although it is accurate to say that the number of Armenian military remains fairly small compare to that from Georgia (about 1000) not the numbers count but the exposure and lessons learned that can be presented back at home. Furthermore, closer security ties with the West are of paramount importance to isolated from the West Armenia. Maintaining delicate balancing act between the West and Russia is prove to the Armenian political and military elites that the path they choose is the right one and despite uncertainties the equilibrium can be maintained.

Investment (FDI) in Georgia reached US\$173 million. For a complete article, see <http://georgiaupdate.gov.ge/en/doc/10011288/GU%07.07.11%0gm.pdf>; p. 2.

⁴⁴ According to Minasyan, arms from Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, namely the EU members, were sold to Georgia in 2009. See *"Problemy regional'noi"*; p. 116. For the first time it was reported that the US DoD transformed 40 Hammer-type armoured vehicles to Georgia. The armoured vehicles will be used during the preparation trainings for peacekeeping missions. The vehicles will be used by the battalion which will be deployed to the NATO-led ISAF operations in Afghanistan. After the end of the training, the Hammers will become the state property of Georgia. *Defence Today*, issue 6 (June 2011) online: <http://www.mod.gov.ge/files/zwxtyxcjdheng.pdf>; p. 3.

⁴⁵ For a complete article, see http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sub=news_manmohan_lal – online on 15 March 2011. For an increase of a number Armenian peacekeepers in Afghanistan, see note 43. In late June 2011, the Armenian company minus, with 81 soldiers, has arrived in Mazar-e Sharif Airport. http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sub=news_mazare_sharif – online on 21 June 2011.

***Maintaining Delicate Balancing Act**

Armenia tripled the number of its troops stationed in Afghanistan as part of the ISAF mission. The decision to triple the number of troops is a further indication that the South Caucasus state is continuing to seek closer security ties with the West, despite extending and enhancing its military alliance with Russia in August 2010. Armenian leaders seem confident that they can *maintain this delicate balancing act, which has been a key element* (author's emphasis) of Armenia's foreign policy. By boosting its military commitments in Afghanistan, Yerevan is signalling that the new defence pact with Moscow will not hold it back from seeking closer military co-operation with Western powers.

Armenia's official national security and military doctrines adopted in 2007 declare stronger links with NATO (falling short of membership in the alliance) as a top priority. Both documents make clear, however, that military ties with Russia – both on a bilateral basis and within the framework of the CSTO – will remain the bedrock of the Armenian defence strategy. This so-called 'complementary' policy and, in particular, the Armenian military presence in Afghanistan hardly sits well with a Russian government jealous about perceived inroads into what it regards as Russia's zone of influence. Still, Moscow has never publicly faulted Yerevan, suggesting that it *does not yet* (author's italics) consider the growing Armenia-NATO ties a cause for serious concern. According to Anatoly Tsyganok, a Russian defence analyst, the Kremlin 'Does not quite like' them but at the same time 'Understands the difficult situation Armenia is in. Russia will not insist that Armenian armed forces stop co-operating with NATO.'⁴⁶ Russia, however, may ask Armenian military to reduce the scope of its co-operation with NATO. This point should be taken seriously by the Armenian military and not dismissed out of hand. Otherwise, Armenian military is likely to be surprised by behaviour of the Russian president and his government. Namely, Russia for instance, may reduce its military assistance to Armenia, a point which is hard to envisage and accept in Armenia. There is a tendency in Armenia to believe and, as a result, take it for granted that Russia would continue to provide economic and military assistance to Armenia for as long as it takes. Russia may also reduce its economic aid to Armenia. In other

⁴⁶ Emil Danielyan, "Armenia to triple military deployment in Afghanistan", in *Jamestown Foundation, Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 8, issue 101 (25 May 2011) online: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=37970&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=512](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37970&tx_ttnews[backPid]=512). Hereafter cited as Emil Danielyan, "Armenia to triple". The wording does not yet needs to be remembered since Moscow can change its mind at any to Moscow convenient time. With regard to Russia remains the bedrock of the Armenian defence strategy, see *Idem*, "Armenia plans". In early May 2011 it was reported that Armenian parliament began to debate expansion of the Armenian contingent participating in ISAF mission. Seyran Ohanyan said that the strength of the Armenian contingent is planned to be increased from 40 to 130 people. http://www.natoinfo.am/eng/?sub=news_afghanistan_armforces – online on 11 May 2011. The amendments to the December 2009 agreement with NATO on Armenian participation in ISAF allow the Armenian military to have up to 130 soldiers on the ground. Their total number could temporarily rise to 260 during regular troops rotation. The troops will stay in Afghanistan at least until December 2012. Emil Danielyan, "Armenia to triple". For an active military-technical co-operation between Armenia and the US and NATO in 2009, see Sergey Minasyan, "Problemy regional'noi"; p. 123.

words, as was stated by Giragosyan: 'Armenia should be always planning and preparing for various scenarios in advance'.

In the latest manifestation of its delicate balancing act between Russia and the West, Armenia has announced plans for a further reform of its armed forces stemming from its growing ties with NATO. Undaunted by a possible negative reaction from Moscow, official Yerevan also seems to be stepping up its military co-operation with Washington, both within the NATO framework and on a bilateral basis. The US and Armenian military have reportedly agreed to hold their first-ever joint *peacekeeping exercises* (author's italics) in the near future. Davit Karapetian, spokesman of the MoD, specified separately that Armenia's First Deputy Minister of Defence Davit Tonoyan and the officials from the DoD reached a 'Tentative agreement to hold joint exercises of peacekeeping forces of the two countries in Armenia in 2012 or 2013.' Karapetian said that the drills will primarily aim to improve their interoperability in Afghanistan.

With their expectations from Yerevan set significantly lower than the staunchly pro-Western government in Georgia, Western officials have been full of praise for every NATO-related gesture by President Sargsyan and other Armenian leaders. One senior US diplomat privately described Ohanyan earlier in 2011 as a 'terrific partner' for Washington. Celeste Wallander, Deputy US Assistant Secretary of Defense, likewise noted that each time she meets with the Armenian minister of defence 'We have more and more to discuss.'⁴⁷ Whether there are more and more to do things together remains unknown to the author.

Conclusion

Armenia's major problem was and remains its military dependence on Russia. The military dependence is further augmented by the economic dependence since Armenian railway system, industrial plants, communications, banking sector and energy sector are almost under full control of Russia.⁴⁸ If the EU wishes to assist Armenia to become less dependent on Russia, the EU needs to implement projects in the aforementioned sectors without any delay. The EU words without deeds are useless and impractical. At the same time, Armenia needs to pursue systematic reforms in different sectors, which on the one hand will bring about more efficient state and on the other, will be able to lead Armenia to more balancing choices. Whether leadership of Armenia is capable to pursue such reforms remains unknown to the author. At least in case of its military agenda, thus far Armenia managed successfully to maintain delicate balancing act.

⁴⁷ Emil Danielyan, "Armenia plans".

⁴⁸ For further information, see *Povestka*, p. 34; pp. 40-41.

However, as was clearly spelled out in the report whether Armenia is capable maintaining such an act for the foreseeable future remains an open question.

As long as the Karabakh problem, the issue that was not dealt with in the report, remains unsolved, there is no solution to Armenia's military dependence on Russia. Whether Armenian political and military elites are capable to break this vicious circle of dependence on Russia remains uncertain at the moment. After all, as was mentioned above, the US military assistance to Armenia remains minimal, perhaps even marginal. The US and Armenian first-ever joint peacekeeping exercise is a positive sign but the road ahead for a more substantial American involvement in Armenia's military affairs is long, hard and cannot be taken for granted. The US also needs to pay careful attention to Azerbaijan. Finally, Russia will do its best to minimise co-operation between military of the US and Armenia.

As for Georgia, Russia was and remains its major problem and living with Russia in peace is mission impossible since the latter is interested in one and single goal, namely bringing Georgia back under its control. The author's assertion is likely to be dismissed out of hand. As long as policy of the EU and the US toward Georgia remains divided and the two entities cannot stand firmly behind Georgia, the threat of a new conflict between Russia and Georgia remains on the horizon. Political rhetoric pursued by the EU and the US is well-known to the leadership of Georgia, however, rhetoric per se remains insufficient factor if worse come to worse. The well-known Presidents Nicolas Sarkozy-Dmitry Medvedev ceasefire agreement signed on 12 August 2008 proved to be a superficial document without any substance behind it. Russia did what it did, namely brought Abkhazia and South Ossetia back under its fold, regardless pleas from the West. Therefore, pleading with Russia over Georgia is not the best and wisest policy for the EU and the US.

Although economy of Georgia has been growing over the last two years it remains vulnerable to external factors. As a result, economic assistance provided by the US and the EU needs to be maintained and extended. Manufacturing of the home-made weapons is a clear sign that Georgian government realised that tacit Western embargo is unlikely to be lifted in the near future.

The two countries participation in NATO ISAF mission in Afghanistan emphasise importance that leadership of Armenia and Georgia pays to multinational operations and combat experience gained by the military. Afghanistan mission is not just combat mission per se, but mission, which requires communication skills, namely daily use of English language under various circumstances. The latter exposure is of paramount importance to Georgia since it strives to join NATO despite Moscow's clear no.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AECCA	Assistance to Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia
APC	armoured personnel carrier
CI	Caucasus Institute
CSS	Centre for Strategic Studies
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organisation
DCAF	The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement
DoD	Department of Defense
EC	European Commission
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GAF	Georgian Armed Forces
GDP	gross domestic product

GEL	Georgian Lari
GSAC	Georgian Security Analysis Centre
HQ	Headquarters
IFV	infantry fighting vehicle
IMET	International Military Education and Training
IPAP	Individual Partnership Action Plan
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISHR	Institute for the Study of Human Rights
MIC	military-industrial complex
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Member of Parliament
NADR	Non-proliferation, Anti-Terrorism, De-mining and Related Programmes
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
OMLT	Operational Mentor and Liaison Team
PGW	precision-guided weapon
RA	Republic of Armenia
SDR	Strategic Defence Review
TAM	Tbilisi Aircraft Manufacturing

US United States

WMD weapons of mass destruction

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