Security Policies in the Western Balkans: Albania

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Strategic Documents' Context

Challenges the Republic of Albania is facing in the process of developing national security and defense strategies are not an exception, taking into consideration the answers that these strategies try to give to the role the Albanian state might have in the international system, to the threats and security risks as well as to responsible actors.After 1990, Albania found itself facing a new security environment, including new geopolitical situation in the Balkan region. The concept of national security, which until the '90s had been based on self-isolation, popular self-defense and the territorial distribution of all kinds of armed forces, was subsequently followed by the concept of "security as an interdependent issue", emanating from the political and military cooperation with the structures of collective defense, such as NATO, as well as international organizations focused on the internal political and institutional stability, such as the OSCE.

During 1992-1997 every Albanian government, the political elite and, more generally, the public opinion, sought to redefine their perception either of domestic security concerns, or of regional and international threats, based on the aforementioned instruments and orientations. Therefore, over this period, the context on which every strategic concept and document of security and defense was based, could be described in terms of finding new directions and recognizing threats and opportunities derived from domestic, regional and/or international security environment. But the troublesome year of 1997, and the following two years of domestic instability and regional conflicts, culminating with the NATO's intervention in Kosovo crisis, changed the public perception about threats, and created the necessary institutional framework to deal with drafting and further approval processes of security and defense strategic documents. In 1998, upon the adoption of the new Albanian Constitution, the institutional structure of national security policy found its foothold in the so–called "three pillars approach", discussed elsewhere in this paper.

The idea of development and approval of strategic documents related to security and defense policies was repeatedly emphasized in the first half of 2000. The period preceding 2000, in which the economic and political transition of Albania, after the fall of communism took place, could be divided into two phases. The first phase (1992-1997) coincided with the ruling period of a right-wing coalition led by the Democratic Party. This period ended with the violent riots that followed the 1997 collapse of pyramid schemes, leading, to a certain extent, to the failure of existing state security policies. Until 2000 the Albanian Parliament didn't pass any strategic document on defense and security issues. This was linked with a '*top-down approach*', whose prevailing idea was that the state still had its primary role in security matters.

Such an approach was applied to the first series of strategic documents regarding security and defense approved during 2000. This period coincides with the second transition (1997-2005), when Albania was governed by a left-wing coalition, led by the Socialist Party. Due to the total collapse of the military and security structures that came as a result of the riots in 1997, the international community began providing a long-term assistance to the Albanian government. After the so-called "security emergency period" (1997-2000) Albanian government, mainly following the international community recommendations, began drafting the first strategic documents that would enable it to further respond to the security and defense challenges. To some extent, the context of these strategic documents met the willingness of Albanian government to display its improved performance in security, as well as the conditionality approach of the international community - to build a more comprehensive framework of security and defense policy in the country. In this sense, the process of drafting and endorsing these documents mostly followed a security agenda, which was mainly determined by the international actors. On the other hand, this process continued to follow the '*top- down approach*', since the state retained it ownership over the defense and security.

Albanian Strategic Framework

Title of the strategy	Adopted – date	Amendment review
1. Security Strategy Document of the Republic of Albania	2000	Yes, 2004.
2. Defence Policy Document of the Republic of Albania	2000	Yes, 2007.
3. Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania	2002	Yes, 2005.
4. Strategy of the Ministry of Defence Sector 2007-2013	2007	No
5. National Strategy on Integrated Border Management Action Plan	2007	No
6. National Strategy on Public Order Sector and State Police and its National Action Plan	2007	No
7. National Action Plan for the Fight against Trafficking in Vehicles Motor	2008	No
8. Strategy to Fight Organized Crime, Trafficking and Terrorism	2008	No

Table 1: Strategic documents of Albania

The first documents regarding national security and defense strategies were designed in 2000 and followed by the revised versions in 2002, 2004, 2005 and 2007.[1] The drafting period coincides with a relative stability in the economic and political spheres, as Albania had exceeded the difficult year of 1997, the political

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[1] As mentioned above the first document belongs to year 2000 through Law No. 8572, dated 27.01.2000 "On approval of the Security Strategy Document of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 3, Year 2000, page 43) and was reviewed after four years by Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 98, Year 2004, page 6696)

unrest of 1998, and the Kosovo crisis of 1999. In this sense, the challenges, risks and threats that the Albanian government established in these documents took into account new local and regional context.[2] Generally, the approval and review phase went through a process closely associated exclusively with government security agencies. Although legislation provides that such strategic documents should be reviewed every 4 years, 2 of them (the ones passed in 2000 and 2004) were adopted only by teams of experts from the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Interior, and Secret Services and particularly by the National Security Council (NSC) – an advisory body for security issues attached to the President.

Due to the fact that local expertise was still rather limited in terms of strategic planning in security and defense issues, the foreign experts affiliated to the Albanian security agencies had a crucial role in drafting these documents. The difference between strategic documents related to the national security policies and those related to defense and military lies particularly in the fact that the latter were more concrete due to the Armed Forces' objective to enter NATO and to implement the Membership Action Plan (MAP) adopted at the NATO Summit in 1999. However, it should be noted that the internal view of security institutions' experts (considered to be "security producers") prevails in the documents approved in the period from 2000 to 2007 while the feedback from security consumers (represented by community or special groups of interest) lacks.

It should be noted that Albania's efforts to build a new institutional relationship with the EU through the Process of Stabilization-Association (PSA) which took place in 1999, and NATO, through the Membership Action Plan (MAP) adopted at the Istanbul Summit in 1999, were also reflected in the above documents of strategic and doctrinaire framework. In this way, the concept of national security, presented in the relevant strategies, tried to maintain a balanced relation between the challenges and threats, as perceived by the Albanian state, and those perceived by international institutions.

Strategic Hierarchy

As already mentioned above, the first security and defense strategies were approved in the same year: National Security Strategy (NSS) adopted in early 2000, National Defense Strategy (NDS) adopted later in 2000. The review process went through different phases linked with the respective legislative provisions (e.g. NSS should be reviewed every four years, while there is no legal provision pertaining to NDS). On the other hand, the gap between the review periods, somewhat greater in case of NDS (2000, 2007), had been filled by the frequent approvals of

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[2] Regarding the adoption of the strategic framework of military doctrines they follow a series of documents approved by the Albanian parliament such as Law No. 8571, dated 27.01.2000 "On approval of the Defence Policy Document of the Republic of Albania(Official Journal No. 3, Year 2000, page 19); Law No. 8930, dated 25.07.2002"On approval of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania"(Official Journal No. 50, Year 2002, page 1459) Law No. 9419, dated 20/05 / 2005 "On approval of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 46, Year2005, page 1653); Council of Minister Decision No. 763 dated 14.11.2007 "On approval of the Strategy of the Ministry of Defence Sector 2007-2013 (Official Journal, No. 174, Year 2007, page 5332); Law No9858, at 27/12/2007 "The adoption of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 184, Year 2007, p 5801)

the National Military Strategy (NMS) (in 2002, 2005, and 2007).

It is worth mentioning that NSS (2000, 2004) set a general framework for the subsequent development of NDS (2007) and National Military Strategy (NMS) (2002, 2005, and 2007). This is because the last two strategies are considered as parts of national security and it is mandatory for them to rely on its basic concepts, as determined by NSS. Given its specific goals and since it focuses on very important instruments of national security (such as the armed forces) NMS (2002, 2005, and 2007) is more detailed.

However, due to considerable similarities between NDS (2007) and NMS (2005, 2007) one can notice overlaps in certain issues and elements. However, second review of NSS (2008) hasn't been finished yet, although the timeframe for its revision was clearly set by the respective legislation.The fulfillment of this process [i.e. the second review of NSS 2008] is very important, and particularly necessary, in order to reflect all changes occurring in the environment of internal security (particularly as the membership in NATO is now a new reality). It also serves as a framework for reviewing and adjusting the strategic documents of NDS and NMS, in consistency with the new commitments and obligations arising from membership in NATO and with its new strategic concept.

Key factors in passing and updating Strategic Documents

Regarding local key factors which have influenced the process of approving and updating the strategic documents a series of them need to be mentioned, such as: a) the change in the Albanian security environment, as well as the regional security environment; 2) the pressure of international community for developing comprehensive strategic security framework; 3) membership in NATO and the EU perspective, or the so-called "Euro-Atlantic integration agenda" (particularly NATO membership through stages imposed by Membership Action Plan (MPA); and 4) the legislation.

The change in security environment played a significant role in developing a strategic doctrinaire framework. After Kosovo's War, Albania witnessed a different security situation. It was reflected not only at a local level but at a regional one as well, where initiatives such as the Stability Pact or the Stabilization and Association Agreement encouraged Albanian government to undertake the reassessment of the security and defense policies.

Meanwhile, due to the fragile political stability and the riots that Albania had passed through immediately before that period [during '97], the international community exerted a lot of pressure influencing Albania's security and defense policies and providing recommendations for development a well-defined strategic framework. After 2001 parliamentary elections and the revival of "integration agenda" for the Balkans, the Albanian government declared as one of its main goals the advancement to NATO and the EU integration processes. Therefore, the perspective of NATO and EU membership acted as an impetus for the government. This is how the period of security and doctrinaire framework of Albania coincides with the beginning of Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) and the Membership Action Plan (MAP) for NATO Membership. Therefore, both strate-

gies consider the prospective membership into NATO and EU as a main factor for accommodating the country into a safe and secure environment.

Such incentives allowed opportunity to Albania not only to represent the intended objectives and targeted performance of security institutions, but also to further testify through the strategic doctrine framework that was a factor of peace and stability in the Balkans. On the other hand, through the goals, human resources and skills put into strategic documents, it could demonstrate its willingness and readiness to cooperate with international security institutions, especially those of collective defense. Its commitment to approve such strategic documents, Albania also wanted to show that it is transformed from a "security consumer "to "security producer" country. However, NATO and the EU defined different approaches regarding Albania's integration. Since EU membership process goes through a "tailor made approach" of SAP, the NATO integration process adopted an approach supported directly by the USA through Adriatic Chart 3, which significantly accelerated the Albania's membership.[3]

On the other hand, the legal framework adopted by the Albanian government, obliges Albanian institutions to periodically review these strategic documents. While the national security document has so far been reviewed only twice, defense policy and military strategy have gone through a more intense phase of review. For instance, so far the Albanian government and parliament have approved: NSS (National Security Strategy) (2000, 2004), NDS (National Defense Strategy) (2000, 2007), and NMS (National Military Strategy) (2002, 2005, and 2007). As mentioned above, the factors which have contributed to a more frequent review of military strategy have particularly been associated with the steps undertaken to speed up the armed forces reforms to join NATO.

Another key factor that has influenced the strategic and doctrinaire framework review is related to the regional cooperation. Considering that regional cooperation was defined by Albania as an element that will boost and strengthen regional security, the country was involved in a series of initiatives with a regional character in this field.[4] Although the Stability Pact (later turned into the Regional Cooperation Council) failed to fully justify the high expectations of countries in the region to transform itself into the "*Marshall Plan for the Balkans*", it tried to provide a model of regional cooperation despite the common perceived threats, such as illegal trafficking, border control or organized crime.[5]

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[3] Declaration of Albanian Parliament, 18/03/2004, "On the resolution of Congress", 04/01/2004, for membership of the 3 Adriatic Charter countries in NATO, before 2007 (Official Journal No. 23, Year 2004, Page 1189); Elira Hroni *Adriatic Charter 3- A development and influencing model in Western Balkans* CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal, No 13, Published by IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation), Tiranë, 2009, pg. 85-102.

[4] Law No. 8541, dated 21.10.1999 "On ratification of the SECI (Southeastern Cooperation Initiative) Agreement on cooperation for the prevention and fight against cross-border crime (Official Journal No. 31, Year 1999, Page 1175); Law No. 8639, dated 13.07.2000 "On ratification of the" Charter for the organization and functioning of Regional Center of SECI (SECI Center) for combating trans-border crime (Official Journal No. 22, Year 2000, Page 1078)

[5] Florina Christiana (Cris) Matei   *Combating against terrorism and organized crime :Common approach of Southeast Europe* CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal ,, Nr 14 , Published by IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) , Tiranë, 2009, pg 84-111

Within this framework, NSS (National Security Strategy) (2000, 2004), NDS (National Defense Strategy) (2000, 2007), and NMS (National Military Strategy) (2002, 2005, 2007) of Albania also reflected the revival of Euro-Atlantic and regional integration process in the Balkans, followed by a series of important initiatives such as the ones mentioned above, which were among the key elements of security and doctrinaire framework objectives.[6] Given the fact that after 1999, EU undertook a series of actions to create a security zone of justice within member-countries, it adopted a "*security driven approach*" in relation to the Western Balkan countries which included Albania.[7] For this reason, the EU financial instrument, known as CARDS (2000-2006), spent approximately 60% on the security sector reform in Albania, including police, integrated border management, prisons, judiciary, and fight against organized crime.[8]

The interdependence characterizing the EU approach prompted Albanian government to implement all legal and institutional obligations. Within this framework, the National Plan for Implementation of SAA (2007-2013) is still considered important key factor containing specific obligations in the field of legislation and structural adjustments to security sector, and proves the interlinks between strategic documents and integration process.[9]

Institutions tasked with preparations of Strategic Documents

Strategic documents on security and defense were supported by a previously approved legal framework. They specified the tasks and responsibilities of state security institutions. Since 2000, when the first strategy on national security was initiated, government efforts in this area were mostly encouraged by the suggestions and recommendations of international community. Given the fact that issues of security and defense still be considered an exclusive area of central government, along with drafting and approving processes, the Albanian government pursued a top-down approach which implies that experts of state institutions and those of international agencies, who provided an intensive technical assistance in security sector in Albania since 1997, held the upper hand. This is the manner in which the strategic documents, adopted and reviewed from 2000 to 2007, failed to follow the path of consultation and involvement of other actors. What contributed to this is the legacy from past times linked to the perception of security as an element rooted only in state institutions.

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[6] Amadeo Watkins *NATO and Balkans:model for a wider integration* CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË /SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal, No 5, IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation), Tiranë, 2007, pg 41-51

[7] Barry J. Ryan *Development of EU security agenda: Security of Albania and Montenegro*, CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal, No 14, IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation), Tiranë, 2009, pg 30-61

[8] Jonida Hoxha *Organized crime in Balkan as a serious threat to EU security* CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal, No 14, IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation), Tiranë, 2009, pg 122- 136.

[9] Decision of Council of Ministers No. 317 dated 13.05.2005 "On approval of the National Plan for the Approximation of the domestic legislation with that of the EU's and the implementation of commitments deriving from the SAA (Official Journal No. 35, Year 2005, Page 1288); Decision of Council of Ministers No. 463: dated 05.07.2006 "On approval of the National Plan for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement" (Official Journal No. 80, Year 2006, Page 23007)

The role of civil society in this process remained vague. Besides two or three think–tanks with a sort of experience and expertise in security matters, the rest were not yet able to provide any added value in this process.[10] At the same time, within the Albanian security institutions dominated a general idea that Albanian NGOs lacked the necessary capacities, especially in terms of strategic aspects of handling issues related to security and defense. However, the civil society's role in consolidating the national security policies has been widely recognized by academics and policy-makers.[11] So, the fact that during communism there were no independent civil society organizations[12] may be considered as one variable that led to poor democratic standards and authoritarianism in the early years of democracy in Albania. Despite such legacy, during the 90's civil society organizations and particularly the media became increasingly important as pressure groups; however not assuming the role of stakeholders of the democratic process.[13]

However, despite the 1998 Constitutional liberal framework which provided for freedom of association for any lawful purpose, the legal framework remained incomplete. In spite of contributing to the expansion of market and increasing the number of donors, the role of civil society in security sector reform in the last 10 years has been vague and insignificant. This is regardless of the fact that vast majority of common civil society structures have already been present in the country (such as non-governmental organizations, trade unions, professional associations, think-tanks, research institutes etc). However, they are too weak and need to develop further in order to efficiently contribute to Albania's security sector development. Non-governmental organizations, regardless steady progress concerning the involvement in security sector reform, lack authority as independent actors[14]. In addition, civic engagement in security issues remains low.

On the other hand Albania has only a limited number of influential NGOs and policy institutes. It is the duty of civil society to take greater responsibility for demanding progress and holding the government accountable as well as putting pressure to become a part in the process of consultations and drafting security

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[10] Since its establishment in 1999, IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) is focused primarily on security-related issues, especially in improving the performance of police, community policing, reform of intelligence services etc. Meanwhile since the adoption of the Adriatic 3 Charter on 4 May 2003 and till to Albania's full membership in NATO on 2 April 2009 it took a series of activities and initiatives to better explain the importance, rights, duties and costs stemming out of this membership for Albania. For more details, see:http://www.idmalbania.org; AIIS (New Institute for International Studies) has been more focused on the issues related to regional security, regional cooperation initiatives as well as international security environment. Recently, a group of its associate researchers have conducted a comprehensive research paper on security sector reform in Albania. For more details see: http://www.aiis.org

[11] Caparini. Marina, 'Civil Society and Democratic Oversight of the Security Sector: A Preliminary Investigation'. Working Paper - No. 132, Geneva, January 2004

[12] Vickers. Miranda & Pettifer. James, "Albania: From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity", Hurst & Company, London 1997, p:12

[13] Henri Cili, "Security and Defence – Civil Society and the Media", in Fluri et al (eds.), 'Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe: Insights and Perspectives', Volume 1; Albania; Bulgaria; Croatia; A Self-Assessment Study

[14] European Commission, 'Albania stabilization report 2003', Brussels 26. 3. 2003 http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/com03_339_en.pdf

policies. There have been little or no expectations in the last years from citizens toward these organizations. This can be due to the fact that the civil society has little influence in legislative or other activity related to the government.[15] As such, with regard to national policy formulation, coordination between government, parliament and civil society remains frail. The inter-ministerial consultations with civil society actors on draft laws work poorly in practice.[16]

The state has often hindered the role of civil society and, conversely, civil society (CS) has turned into an obedient partner, severely undermining its role in a democratic society.[17] Participation of research institutes in the area of security reform policies has been rather limited, except for few cases such as: the involvement of civil society and other independent actors in the implementation of the Community Policing Strategy in Albania. Parliamentary expertise in specific matters related to the security sector has been provided mainly by experts from governmental institutions. The government, a product of political majority which holds power in parliament, drafts defense and security policies, obtains the approval from the majority of the parliament, and implements these policies through its government structures avoiding the independent actors. Such a system establishes a closed institutional framework, where the only opposing voice comes from the opposition in parliament, therefore undermining the role of civil society and, sometimes, even media.[18] As such, the laws and strategic documents are drafted predominantly by the executive branch itself and represented to the parliament for approval without any prior consultations with CS.[19]

As we have noted above, the role of international institutions like the OSCE, the UNDP, PAMECA (Police Assistance Mission of European Community in Albania), NATO (especially through Liaison Office in Tirana) was very important in the preparation stage of these strategic documents. It should be emphasized that since 1997, apart from several occasions, the abovementioned institutions had been

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[15] Arbana. Lora, Understanding Defence and Security In Correlation to Civil Society and Media, Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2003,
http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache:IrHWUcCdeiwJ:https://intra.css.ethz.ch/civsoc/ev_belgrade_031114Arbana.pdf+%22civil+society%22+%22security+sector%22+albania&hl=en, Accessed February 2010

[16] European Commission, 'Albania, progress report 2008', Brussels 05.11.2008,
http://www.delalb.ec.europa.eu/files/albania_progress_report_2008.pdf, Accessed February 2010

[17] Cili. Henri, 'Security and Defence – Civil Society and the Media' in Trapans. J & Fluri. H, *Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe,* Vol.1 & II, DCAF & Center for Civil-Military Relations, 2003,
http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21335&nav1=4, Accessed February 2010.

[18] Cili. Henri, "Security and Defence" – Civil Society and the Media' in Trapans et al , '*Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe',* Vol.1 & II, DCAF & Center for Civil-Military Relations, 2003,
http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21335&nav1=4, Accessed February 2010.

[19] Arbana. Lora, Understanding Defense and Security In Correlation to Civil Society and Media, Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2003,
http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache:IrHWUcCdeiwJ:https://intra.css.ethz.ch/civsoc/ev_belgrade_031114Arbana.pdf+%22civil+society%22+%22security+sector%22+albania&hl=en, Accessed February 2010

present in a variety of security crises occurring in Albania (i.e. the disorders of 1997, the political unrest that accompanied the 1998 assassination of the former opposition deputy Azem Hajdari or the 1999 refugee crisis when refugees were violently deported from the conflict in Kosovo) and thus were seeking a clear strategic framework that would define the roles, resources and tools to ensure security in the country.

Regarding the role of media in this process, it has been marked by marginalization, regardless of its formal weight as the fourth power within a democratic society. Such media apathy was related to the fact that the drafting and approval of these documents not only turned over the walls of state security institutions offices, but also because the media has not yet generated genuine analysts and journalist on security and defense issues. Almost all strategic documents adopted and reviewed from 2000 to 2007 were not subject of any significant analysis in the print or electronic media but were simply considered as routine news at the time of their approval in the Parliament.

On the other hand, the general public failed to perceive its importance and its role as one of the main consumers of security throughout this process. In this regard, many of these strategic documents bear security features which expose mostly the view of security producers rather than public perceptions and expectations of public pertaining to the national security environment. Due to the weakness of media and the lack of NGO's capacity, the general public, not only as a security consumer but also as a taxpayer entity as well, remains still poorly informed, especially about the financial costs entangled in the strategic doctrinaire framework. Even the specialized periodical publications on security and defense strategic issues have been almost completely absent or very rare. The recent initiatives to fill this gap include an attempt to make the process more transparent and bring different views by various groups of interest, especially from civil society.[20]

On the other hand, regardless of the large number of public and private universities in the country, the academic, scientific and research community was not properly represented and remained outside the process of drafting and reviewing the strategic documents. This happened not only because of the limited expertise (excluding specialized higher education institutions on security and defense issues such as Police and Military Academy), but also due to the lack of a more inclusive process on this issue. Meanwhile, the Albanian Parliament also entered a routine procedure for approval strategic documents without any hearing sessions or open debate with particular groups of interest or representatives of civil society.

In general, the process of drafting these documents remained an exercise of state security institutions, without inclusion and participation of non-military stakeholders interested in security and defense strategic issues.

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[20] Only in February 2006, began publishing a quarterly magazine for security issues called Security Issues. It is published by the IDM and is the only periodical publication of a think-tank that addresses in particular issues related to practical aspects of security and defence strategies not only for Albania but beyond it.For more details, see:http://www.idmalbania/security_issues

Responsibilities in the process of preparation and passing strategic documents

It should be noted that in the aftermath of the so-called "first transition" (1992-'97) Albania continued to maintain its previous institutional security structures such as the Defense Council, which was seriously challenged by the uncommon situation of civil unrests that accompanied the collapse of pyramid schemes. Lack of a genuine and crosscutting concept of national security as well as the lack of experience, the weakness and existing politicization of security institutions brought about a security vacuum which was significant during the riots of 1997.[21] After the new Albanian Constitution entered into force in 1998, the institutional structure of national security policy was based on the so-called "*three pillars' approach*", including the Committee on National Security Policy (headed by and under the control of the Albanian Government), the National Security Council (headed by and under the control of the Albanian President), and the Parliamentary Committee of Security (Parliament). These are the key internal actors which initiate and implement the strategic doctrinaire framework of Albania.

In accordance with the legal framework adopted by the Albanian Parliament, the responsibility for passing security and defense strategic documents shall be performed in the following hierarchical order: a) Parliament; b) President of Republic; c) Council of Ministers; d) Prime Minister; e) Minister of Defense; f) General Staff; g) Chief of General Staff; h) Commanders of Armed Forces (land, sea and air).[22]

In this context, Parliament's role is to approve laws on: a) strategic documents of Security and Defense Policy of the Republic of Albania; b) defense budget; and the number of Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania and their mission. Also, it provides the oversight activities over the Armed Forces by defining the powers and authority of command and direction of the Armed Forces for peacetime, emergency and wartime. A lot of these responsibilities are carried out by the Parliamentary Committee of Security, which handles large part of the control and accountability process on security institutions and armed forces.

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[21] This approach is reflected in a set of rules that determine the progress of this structure such as Law No. 7528, dated 11.12.1991 "On the functions of the Council of Defence and the General Commander of Armed Forces (Official Journal No. 10 , 1991, Page 424); Decision of the Assembly No. 300, dated 02.03.1997 "On the appointment of special envoy from the Council of Defence (Official Journal No. 2, Year 1997, Page 47) Decision of the Assembly No. 319, dated 08.05.1997 "On establishment of the Council of Defence of the Republic of Albania (Official Journal No. 11, 1997, Page 291); Assembly Resolution No. 359 dated 27.04.1998" For a change in Decision No. 319, dated 05.08.1997 "On establishment of the Defence Council of the Republic of Albania (Official Journal No. 10, 1998, Page 359); Constitutional Court decision No. 77 dated 31.12.1998" The object of the request by the President of the Republic: Interpretation Article 178, paragraph 1 of the Constitution regarding the implementation of Law No. 7528, dated 11.12.1991 "On the functions of the Council of Defence and the General Commander of Armed Forces (Official Journal No. 3, Year 1999, Page 4)

[22] Law No. 8671 dated 26.10.2000 "On the powers and authorities of commanding and the strategic direction of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania (Official Journal No. 37,Year 2000, Page 1786);Law No. 9194, dated 19/02/2004 For some additions and amendments to Law No. 8671 dated 26.10.2000 "On the powers of authorities of commanding and the strategic direction of Armed Forces (Gazette No. 16, Year 2004, Page 785)

Another important institutional stakeholder, with significant role in monitoring and implementing the strategic doctrinaire framework, is the President. Pursuant to the Albania's Constitution and laws, the President is the Armed Forces Commander General. In peacetime the President exercises the leadership of Armed Forces through Prime Minister and the Minister of Defense, while in wartime s/he leads them directly or through the Armed Forces Commander.[23] The President as Commander General of Armed Forces has full authority and control over the direction of Armed Forces as well as gives approvals for tasks and responsibilities: a) the proposal from the Minister of Defense on the organizational structure of the Armed Forces; b) the action plan of the Armed Forces in peacetime and establishing measures in case of emergency c) the distribution of the Armed Forces in peacetime and for mobilization; d) set benchmarks of readiness on reserve military units.

On the other hand, the National Security Council constitutes an important structure attached to the President of Republic. It provides him with the assistance regarding issues on security and strategic doctrinaire framework. The National Security Council is an advisory body to the President and it assists him in: a) matters of security and defense of the country; b) discusses and gives opinions on security and defense policy.[24] The members of the National Security Council are as follows: The Speaker of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Public Order, Finance, Transport, the Chief of Staff General and Director of National Intelligence Service. Depending of the issues discussed at the meeting of NCS, the President, may invite additional persons as permanent chairmen of parliamentary committees, ministers, heads of central state institutions, etc.

Pursuant to the Constitution and laws in place the executive branch of government has a significant role to play in terms of the drafting and implementation process of the strategic doctrinaire framework. In this case, the role of Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, as part of the government and civilian control of armed forces, provides a series of commitment and accountabilities. This is why Prime Minister exercising authority over the Armed Forces , in peacetime is accountable to the Parliament and the President. He coordinates and oversees the activities of institutions that have obligations in compliance with the law "On approval of the security strategy document of the Republic of Albania."

On the other hand, the Minister of Defense is accountable to the Parliament, President and Prime Minister on defense policy implementation. His responsibility includes the following tasks: a) presenting defense policy documents and projects related to the number, structure and organization of the Armed Forces to the Council of Ministers; b) submitting (to the Council of Ministers) for approval the Defense's annual budget; c) providing long-term plans for development and modernization of the Armed Forces and special programs in defense, seeking financial support; d) approving allocation of defense budget.

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[23] Law No. 8467 dated 31.03.1999 "On the powers of the President as Commander General of the Armed Forces and National Security Council (Official Journal No. 10, 1999, Page 311).

[24] Law No. 8671 dated 26.10.2000 "On the powers and authorities of commanding and the strategic direction of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania (Official Journal No. 37,Year 2000, Page 1786).

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The Defense Policy Council has been established as an advisory body under the umbrella of the Ministry of Defense. Its members are: Deputy Minister of Defense, Chief of General Staff, Deputy Chief of General Staff, commanders of land, navy and air force, commander of Training and Doctrine, commander of Logistics Support, the Director of Legal Department, and other persons invited by the Minister.[25]

The military structures directly engaged in the implementation of the strategic doctrinaire framework became increasingly important given their new duties and responsibilities prescribed by the law. Therefore, the General Staff constitutes the highest military structure with unique command in the Armed Forces. It is responsible for creating a joint and unified military land, sea and air force which should be able to fulfill its constitutional mission.[26] General Staff acts as the headquarters of the unified land, navy and air forces and is responsible for: a) joint preparation and training of all three services ; b) facing threats or risks that might endanger security in the country; c) planning and programming of defense ; d) undertaking strategic assessment of threats or risks and taking measures to tackle them.[27]
An important role is also played by the Chief of General Staff. He is accountable to the President, Prime Minister and Minister of Defense for military training and readiness of the Armed Forces as well as management and organization of military and non–military actions. The Chief of Staff is the senior military adviser of the President of Republic, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. Indeed, he has the following duties and responsibilities: a) approves the military doctrines of the land, sea and air armed forces; b) approves the plans and actions of military units of the three armed forces: land, sea and air for peacetime; d) displays the structure, number and organization of the Armed Forces.

As we already mentioned above, the players to implement the strategic and doctrinaire framework of Albania are determined by the institutional hierarchy of national security in the country. Part IV of the national security strategy (on the leadership of NSS of the Republic of Albania) is referred to the constitutional basis of leadership represented by three main institutions: the Parliamentary Committee of Security, the National Security Council of President, and the National Security Policy Committee headed by the Prime Minister. This structure reflects the constitutional model of the Republic of Albania as a parliamentary Republic, but on the other hand it does not specify in details the roles and responsibilities of other actors, especially the so-called security executive institutions.[28] In this sense, it determines only the constitutional relations between these institutions where the Parliament holds the highest authority, since constitutionally Albania is a Parliamentary Republic; but *there is no clear definition for actors most responsible*

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[25] Ibid.

[26] The Decision of Constitutional Court No. 26, dated 24.04.2001 with subject: Interpretation of clause 1 of Article 12 of the Constitution " the Armed Forces provide the country's independence and territorial integrity and protect its Constitutional order" (Official Journal No. 20 , 2001, Page 629)

[27] Ibid.

[28] While the effort to change the content of the concept of security was also reflected in the renaming of the Council of Defence in the National Security Council and its functions .Also see the Law No. 8467, dated 31.03.1999 "On the powers of the President the Republic, as General Commander of the Armed Forces and National Security Council (Official Journal No. 10, 1999, Page 311)

for its implementation. The fact that the Prime Minister initiates every four year the review process of NSS (National Security Strategy) implies somehow a greater role of the executive branch.

In this context, the most important issue these documents must provide, apart from the means and ways of securing the nation, is a clear and detailed response to the division of roles within the hierarchy of the country's security paradigm.

Internal coherence and soundness of the Strategic Framework

The set of documents which belongs to the strategic policies concerning security, defense and military are, among others, one of the indicators on how security sector aims to coordinate their activities in the future. Given the fact that Albania is by its Constitution a parliamentary republic, the tasks and responsibilities of the Albanian Parliament in the area of security and defense are reflected in the democratic oversight and accountability. On the other hand, taking into account the hierarchical structure of security institutions, the government has duty to implement the strategic doctrinaire framework through relevant ministries and agencies.[29]

It should be stated that the division of tasks and roles between the legislative and executive powers in the fields of security and defense is already consolidated through a series of laws and practices. Under the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, Albanian Parliament is the highest legislative body from which all other institutions derive their legitimacy. Therefore, in the case of Albania, duties and functions assigned to the Parliament allow it to exercise control and supervision on drafting strategic documents and government's implementation process. However, Parliament's role can be strengthened to ensure an effective oversight and professional control over the processes of civilian control of army and security structures as well as to guarantee a better coordination and use of financial resources to the benefit of national security. In this context, the Parliamentary Security Committee could expand its expert advisory network not only with the full-time professionals, but with the independent experts, when dealing with issues related to the security and defense or strategic doctrinaire framework.

Although it seemed that after 2000 and 2004 when the Republic of Albania strategies of security had been adopted, much control and operational lead was given to the parliament through increasing the powers of its security and interior affairs committee, the events after Gërdec in 2008, which will become an important landmark regarding security and strategic issues in Albania, have shown that the government have gained control and more power over fundamental security institutions. Such approach raised concerns from Albania's Western security partners which were indeed clearly reflected in the draft-law regarding some changes with respect to the responsibilities of the intelligence services of Albania. [30]

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[29] Law No. 8417 dated 10.21.1998 For the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania (Office Journal No. 28, 1998, Page 1073)

[30] See, for more, Albanian newspapers during February-April, 2010.

On the other hand, despite the fact that the current law clearly defines the advisory role of the National Security Council attached to the President of Republic, the existence of an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Security Affairs as an advisory body close to the Prime Minister rather creates a "*hidden institutional rivalry*", than helps better coordination of the activities of state security institutions. For this reason, the overall coordination and cooperation of security institutions to ensure a comprehensive strategic doctrinaire framework remains one of the primary tasks of the state. The preparation of these strategic documents need to pass through a professional assessment of CRT process (Challenges, Risks and Threats) which ensures as much as possible a wider participation across the institutions and stakeholders assigned to implement it in practice.

It would be a sign of coherence if, in the process of preparing and implementing these strategies, involvement from a range of experts from various institutional actors becomes greater. It is evident that there is a certain degree of soundness in the structures of democratic security and defense forces oversight (mainly in parliamentary and governmental structures) well as certain involvement of the civil society in the processes of drafting and implementing these strategies. This involvement is yet to be improved and will be discussed below.

The Constitution has clearly defined roles and basic security concepts of the country. They are founded on peace, good neighborhood and active participation in collective defense structure. So, these notions have paved the way to the general principles which support the strategic doctrinaire framework.

However, the existing laws should provide more details regarding the steps in the process of drafting and approving strategic documents. Hence, it would be possible to enable inclusion of many experts and NGO representatives thus not leaving this process to the discretion of state security institutions. In this way, the legitimacy of the process would be strengthened and the necessary support from general public would be in place.

Risk Analysis' Results

The national security and defense strategy documents should ascertain that the core concept of security strategy is mainly centered on "*respect of the rule of law*" and the "*integration approach*".[31] National security and military strategies as well as the defense policy documents have defined the challenges, threats and risks following a top-down approach which implies that the relevant security institutions were not receptive towards a more comprehensive approach (i.e. to measure in advance the public perception on threats and risks). As a result, the challenges, threats and risks in these documents are ranked in three levels: l*ocal, regional* and

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[31] See Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 98,Year 2004, page 6697) and Law No. 9858, at 27/12/2007 "The adoption of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania"(Official Journal No. 184, Year 2007, page 5802)

global, lacking a clear prioritization and differentiation.[32] Therefore, in the case of NSS it was the criteria related to the local level which was pursued rather than a comprehensive approach which would seek to build on a detailed classification of these.

Security strategies and doctrinaire framework at local level identify four categories as threats and risks for Albania: *organized crime, terrorism, disasters* and *problems of transition*. In the case of organized crime, the term refers to various forms of illegal trafficking, primarily drugs, human beings, conventional weapon, etc. In the case of Albania, special emphasis has been put on internal security, illegal migration, such as Albanian immigrants in other countries or uncontrolled settlement of population within the country. But one can also find in the NSS vague and insufficiently elaborated notions perceived as risks – terms such as "*public opinion misinformation*" or "*insufficient development of education, science and culture*".

With respect to the threats and challenges in regional security, it bears mentioning that national security strategy and military strategy have been influenced by the historical heritage and geo-strategic importance of the country as key factors in determining the security environment. In this context, national security document has clearly defined that the "*destabilization of the region through revival of desire for fulfillment of exaggerated nationalistic projects and development of trans-national ethnic conflicts, represents a danger for the security of the Republic of Albania*".[33]

On the other hand, in both documents the policymakers' conviction is officially acknowledged - the neighbors are not the major threat to regional security, it rather has an internal origin, such as political instability, weak economy and organized crime. In the case of Albania, the so-called "*Albanian national issue*" is set among the highest priorities of the strategic security objectives and suggested that the "*Albanian national issue is going to be achieved through European and Euro-Atlantic integration*". So, Albania seems more focused on issues of Europeanization by avoiding any nationalistic approach and seek the solution of "Albanian issue" within the framework of future membership in NATO and EU.

Meanwhile, in the first survey regarding security threats and NATO integration conducted by the Institute for Democracy and Mediation (IDM) in April-May 2007 the respondents were asked to rank threats as per the given risk evaluation scale rating from 1 to 6 (the highest number indicates the highest risk). They ranked threats in the following order: corruption (4.6); poverty and economic stagnation

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[32] For an analytical review of the document of national security strategy and perceived threats see also: Sotiraq Hroni, Gjen.Let (in release) Pellumb Qazimi: View from Albania - Study on assessment of regional security threats and challenges in the Western Balkans, in Study on the Assessment threats of Regional Security and Challenges in the Western Balkans, Darko Istvam Gyarmati & Stancic (eds.), DCAF (Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces), 2007, p. 57.

[33] Kastriot Islami (former Albanian Foreign Minister 2003-2005) National Security at the context of regional risks and threats (Proceedings of the International Conference: "On the development of the national security strategy", Tirana 21 September 2007, organized by IDM & DCAF), Publishing Houese, Toena, Tirana, 2007, page 26

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(4.4); failure of democratic reforms (3.91); and organized crime (3.64).[34] These four elements were considered even more dangerous for national security than external factors, like terrorism, regional conflicts, and so on.

In this way, a clear definition of CRT at national, regional and global level remains an incomplete structure, particularly within the national security strategies documents. Only a "*map of risks and threats*", based on clear criteria, can help determining the most holistic basic concept on national security and defense strategies. Differentiation and prioritization of CRT should necessary be associated with other aspects rather than traditional security concepts such as state sovereignty, territorial integrity, etc. Adhering to these concepts, the national security strategy has lost the opportunity to be designed in the human security framework depending on the importance that human security presents in certain areas (i.e. food safety, environmental, social, and political, road etc.).[35]

From the viewpoint of CRT classification, the both security documents simply follow an order of geographical distribution of risks (global, regional or local), however, each of them lacks a definition of the scale and intensity of these in short, medium and long term.

Instruments providing Security

The prevailing concept of a "*two track approach*" which links a short and mid-term objective, such as EU/NATO membership, with a long term position, such as respect of the rule of law, presents fundamental element of the Albanian national security and military strategy documents. Consequently, this concept tries to create an environment of internal security (rule of law) by relying mainly on external tools (NATO and EU accession). On the other hand, taking into account the regional security challenges, the documents paid a special attention to Albania as a factor which "*produces and exports security*" through the implementation of good neighborhood policy and regional dialogue. Through these concepts, national security and defense strategies tried to adapt to the principle of *equal distance*, especially in relation to the nation and developments in former republics of Yugoslavia where ethnic Albanians live.

On the other hand, regarding security objectives in short, mid and long terms, national security strategy showed certain shortcomings. For example, the short and medium priority is defined as long-term while the opposite should be true. This "*time mistake*" is an evidence of the lack of detailed typology of risks and threats,

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[34] Besnik Baka: Albania : Threats and perceptions of security CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal , No 11 , Published by IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) , Tiranë, 2009, pg 74-90

[35] For the involvement of human security concept in a document of national security strategy see Prof. Rexhep Mejdani (former President of the Republic of Albania 1997-2002) in: Some thoughts on revising the document on national security strategy publication: On the development of strategy national security (Summary of proceedings of the International Conference: "On the development of the national security strategy", Tirana 21 September 2007, organized by IDM & DCAF), Publishing Houese. Toena, Tirana, 2007, page 26); See also: Backgrounder on human security in Albania, IDM, Tirana 2009, p. 60, which is the first paper drafted by a group of experts at the IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) in terms of human security concept

which must correspond to the precise provisions on how to cope with them.[36] The whole concept of security prevailing in the document of national security strategy of Albania seems to be trying to get clearly defined horizontally, but without a concrete action model. In this way, part III and IV of NSS remains at the level of risk assessment but the general framework of actions (accompanied with the necessary tools and resources needed to achieve the objectives) is overlooked. This could be considered a common feature of national security strategies of the Western Balkan states, which after a prolonged political and economic transition, are changing their approach to security sector reform. As Laszlo Polti highlights "*as regards their essential issue, meeting the security perceptions, with the exception of modern terminology and length, the level of these documents being processed is at the initial stage*".[37]

In the case of Albania, the process of design and implementation of national security and defense strategies is generally developed in accordance with specific assessments of the country's "weight" in the structure of regional and global security. This somehow has led to "*predefined instruments*" that can be used to achieve sustainable security in the country and abroad and which are necessarily attached to the security providers, such as NATO. According to the definition made in both documents, a set of elements labeled as "*instruments of national power*" will enable achievement of the country's security. They include: a) diplomacy; b) protection of public order and safety; c) financial and economic policies; d) civil protection and health & environment[38].

Along with respective sub-elements they constitute a sequence *en-bloc* which lacks a clear division between *hard and soft instruments* of security, mainly implying a combination of them. Given the division of CRT at the local, regional and global level, it is clear that the instruments used are not of the same prominence. For example, the instruments of diplomacy and defence are more prominent at the regional and global security level, unlike the local level, where financial instruments of economic policy or protection of public order and human safety take the lead. Diplomacy is top ranking instrument and it coincides with the objective of the Albanian government to act in a security environment without use of force as an instrument achieving security. This obviously implies the regional and global security and relationship with other stakeholders and international actors.

Meanwhile, in paragraph 5 of national security strategy (NSS) it is stated that "*the strategy supports the creation of a security planning system by giving priority to achieving a concrete outcome under the concept: "Who does what, when, and in co-*

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[36] In Chapter II: OBJECTIVES OF SECURITY (page 5) in Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 98, Year 2004, page 6696).

[37] Laszlo , Poti Assessment of the security of the Western Balkans and a comparative analysis of the threat perception in the countries of the region Darko Istvam Gyarmati & Stancic (eds.), DCAF (Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces), 2007, p. 9-50)

[38] Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 98, Year 2004, page 6697) and Law No. 9858, at 27/12/2007 "The adoption of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Journal No. 184, Year 2007, page 5802)

operation with whom.[39] Through this definition, the document of national security strategy is attached to the concept focused more on the producers rather than consumers of security sector.

Strategies vs Strategic Defense Review

For the main political and institutional actors of the country, periodical review of the fundamental security document of the Republic of Albania, known as "National Security Strategy" is necessary and legally obligatory[40] . This review raises a lot of concerns mainly due to the dynamics of the security environment developments either at the local, regional or even global level. Since 2007, Albania's strategic documents have not changed. More frequent review of military strategy (2002, 2005, and 2007) was accelerated due to prospective membership in NATO. The last review of defense strategy document was conducted nearly two years before Albania became a full-fledged member of NATO (3 April 2009). This document remains in effect and has not yet been subject to any reviews since it also refers to the ministry of defense strategy for the period from 2007 to 2013. It became an important guiding document to the armed forces in an effort to meet objectives foreseen in the strategic doctrinaire framework. This later facilitated the invitation extended, at the Bucharest Summit on 3 April 2008, to the Republic of Albania to become a member of NATO.

Having completed "the NATO membership phase" and given the fact that it became a full-fledged member of the Alliance, Albania shall now undergo a new phase of development of its defense strategy. In line with the strategy new concept Albania is required to conduct a reassessment of its financial and human capacity as well as analysis of commitments arising from the participation in NATO international missions.

Relation between Strategic Framework and Security Sector Reform

The approval and review process of strategic and doctrinaire framework of Albania have also spurred reforms in the field of security sector defining it as the main instrument for Euro-Atlantic integration. In this way, Albania began walking much faster towards NATO accession, rather than EU, due to the geopolitical reasons. The so-called "*two speeds*" (two-track) approach encouraged also a review process especially of military and defense strategies. Thus, reforms in AAF (Albanian Armed Forces) were prompted by the commitment of Albania to become a member of NATO, aiming to ensure not only its security in a troubled region but also to further consolidate democracy through non-military conditionality that derived from the so-called Washington's criteria. Given that Albania was among the first countries that joined the Council of the North-Atlantic Cooperation, in June 1992, and the Partnership for Peace Program in February 1994, there was also a need to adapt the goal for becoming a full NATO membership by reviewing military and

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[39] Ibid p.2

[40] Based on Law 9322, Ar. 84, November, 2004.

defense strategies.[41]

Under the National Defense Strategy in April 2002, the Albanian government approved the implementation of Partnership Goal package which was part of a new plan called AAF Structure and Implementation Plan for the period 2002-2010. NATO 'Membership Action Plan (MAP mechanism) established a program that supported assistance in reforming and restructuring the Albanian armed forces, including: a) assistance in establishing conceptual framework of the armed forces; b) beginning of a structural reorganization of the army; c) management of specific problems as ammunition etch.[42] Almost all changes and reforms within the AAF were the result of the goal to obtain NATO membership, which was set as the primary objective in the area of security for the Republic of Albania in NSS (2000, 2004) and NDS (2000, 2002; 2005; 2007).

The whole process of reforms within AAF was finalized with Albania becoming full-fledged member of NATO Alliance during the Bucharest Summit on 3-4 April 2008.[43] The security sector reform within the Armed Forces, stemming from the strategic and doctrinaire framework of Albania, fostered the belief *of Albania being de facto member* of NATO and had thus strengthened Albania's position as " security exporter" through its participation in operations such as "Iraqi Freedom" led by the US coalition forces, NATO/PfP International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan under Turkish and Italian command, Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia-Herzegovina under German command and recently in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) under French command.[44] Within the region, the Albanian army remained a part of the Multinational Peace Force for South-eastern Europe (MPFSEE).[45] The purpose of this multilateral force is to prevent conflicts and support peace, including peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace building, and humanitarian interventions within and outside the Balkans under the mandate

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[41] Law No. 7816, dated 20.04.1994 "On ratification of the Framework Document on Partnership for Peace between the Republic of Albania and North Atlantic Treaty Organization-NATO North (Official Journal No. 6, Year 1994, Page 305)

[42] Council of Minister Decision No. 763 dated 14.11.2007 "On approval of the Strategy of the Ministry of Defence Sector 2007-2013 (Official Journal, No. 174, Year 2007, page 5332);

[43] Resolution of the Parliament of Albania "For Albania membership in NATO" (Official Journal No. 7, Year 2008, Page 197)

[44] Decision of the Albanian Parliament No. 7, dated 15.10.2001 "Albania - Members of the wide Alliance against international terrorism (Official Journal No 4 7 Year 2001 Page1504);Law No. 8932, dated 25.07.2002 "For deployment a security military force in Afghanistan within the framework of the international coalition against terrorism ISAF (Official Journal No. 47, Year 2002, Page 1416; Law No. 9315, dated 11.11.2004 "For deployment of Albanian Peacekeeping company in Bosnia - Herzegovina to take part in EU Operation" ALTHEA (Official Journal No. 95, Year 2004, Page 6565); Law No. 9927, dated 09/06/2008 "The adoption of the normative act with the power of the Law No. 3, at 28/05/2008" The deployment in the Republic of Chad and Central African Republic of armed forces company of Republic of Albania to participate in Operation EUFOR / TCHAD / RCA EU (Official Journal No102Year 2008, Page 4493)

[45] Law No. 8640, dated 13.07.2000 "On ratification of the" Second Additional Protocol of Agreement for the establishment Multinational Peace Force of the Southeast Europe (MPFSEE) (Official Journal No. 22, Year 2000, Page 1080); Law No. 8816, dated 20/09/2001 for the ratification of the Third Additional Protocol of the Agreement of Multinational Peacekeeping Force of Southeast Europe   (MPFSEE) (Official Journal No. 47, Year 2001, Page 1483)

of the UN, the OSCE or other international bodies. Since February 2007 SEEBRIG participated for 6 months in the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan which was an operational test of its credibility.[46]

All these initiatives present an evidence of a stronger commitment of Albania's security forces to become integrated and operational within the structures of collective defence, not only globally but also at the regional level.[47] However, Albania's participation at the Bucharest Summit on 3-4 April 2008, NATO puts it in front of the other conditions of deepening the integration process of the armed forces and security structures to a collective defence organization. The new role of a country, as a member of NATO, requires quantitative and qualitative changes in terms of internal and external security challenges. This shall serve as an incentive to Albania in further stages of adaptation of its strategic and doctrinaire framework.

At the same time, national security strategy determines the protection of public order and human safety as main instrument for achieving the security. As a result, this prompted a reform, particularly the reform within the State Police as it is one of the main actors in the security sector. Since the 1997 riots, the reforms of state police have been implemented under the EU Police assistance missions.[48] In this framework, the 1999 State Police Law laid down the foundation for transformation of state police into a public service, taking into consideration previous steps taken back in 1998 when Albania's Constitution separated the police force from AAF.[49] For the first time, this law also made distinction between political and senior police leadership introducing the posting of Police Director General. This steps serves as another indicator of the reform developments.

Meanwhile, due to rising international pressure on the Albanian government to fight organized crime and corruption, the state initiated drafting of a set of strategies specifically targeted at the improvement of police reform and increasing pub-

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[46] Law No. 9471, dated 06.02.2006 "On approval of the normative act with the power of the Law No. 5, dated 28.12.2004 For sending Albanian military personnel in the composition of Staff SEEBRIGU-t in support of peace mission (ISAF) in Afghanistan led by NATO (Official Journal No. 8, Year 2006, Page 162.

[47] Amb. Pellumb Qazimi *Regional ownership on security issues* CËSHTJE TË SIGURISË/SECURITY ISSUES, Quarterly Journal , Nr 7, Published by IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation), Tiranë, 2008, pg 25-35); Another evidence of such commitment of Albanian government to regional cooperation it was even the Decision of Council of Ministers No. 134 dated 18.02.2005 "On establishment of the Secretariat of the South-Eastern Europe Defence Ministerial Coordination Committee of the (SEDM-CC and Politico-Military Steering Committee of South-Eastern Europe (PMSC / MPFSEE) in Albania (Official Journal No. 14, 2005, Page 542)

[48] Law No. 8896, dated 16.05.2002 "On ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Albania and the European Community on the status of the Police Assistance EC (ECPA) in Albania (Official Journal No. 25, Year 2002, Page 810); Law No. 9152, dated 06.11.2003 "On ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Albania and the European Community on the Status of the Police Assistance Mission of the European Community in Albania (PAMECA) (Official Journal No. 100, Year 2003, Page 4301)

[49] Law No. 8553, dated 11.11.1999 "On State Police (Official Journal No. 33, Year 1999, Page 1280). When right wing collation came in power in July 2005 it initiated a new one as Law No. 9749, dated 04.06.2007 "On State Police (Official Journal No. 73, Year 2007, Page 2171). It raised a lot of concerns among certain experts because there were allegations that it was used to remove certain high rank police officers from their job positions. However both laws were drafted and assisted by EU Police Assistance Mission

lic safety. Regarding security aspects in the field of public order and combating organized crime, the strategic and doctrinaire framework of Albania has been recently equipped with a set of strategies adopted by the Albanian government.[50]

Conclusions

In conclusion we can note that strategic framework on security and defense, relying upon an appropriate assessment of human and financial capacities, constitutes the right step towards ensuring a safe environment in the country and beyond. At this very historical moment, any strategic analysis may go through traditional (or "semi-traditional") aspects, particularly those of the geo-economic field, showing potentially high level of stability and greater opportunities for cross-border cooperation and foreign investments. It is for this reason our diplomacy, based on the fundamental document of our foreign policy (upcoming strategy of national security), should be even more oriented towards the economic and pragmatic realm. It should identify concrete alliances, properly classify priorities (taking into account the reality), identify geo-economic and geo-strategic position in accordance with our national goals determined by the strategic doctrinaire framework.

On the other hand, the strategic documents that include specific strategies for security, defense and military, should be harmonized among themselves and should go through a transparent process of proper evaluation of CRT and subsequent adjustments in accordance with the available resources and security institutions in the country. That is why legal framework exists. It facilitates activities and fills in the gaps in coordination among state security institutions. In the case of Albania, one can notice lack of coherence and an overlapping between the three strategies: National Security Strategy, Defence Strategy, and Military Strategy. They deal with the concept of national security without a clear definition of the respective roles. We can also note a lack of a model for evaluating the risks, threats, and challenges coming either from local sources or from the international environment. In this context, the strategic documents of Albania have to be formulated in accordance with the clear timetable, where risks and challenges need to be faced in short, mid, and long terms.

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[50] Decision No. 674 dated 07/12/2001 for approval of the National Strategy to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings (official bulletin No. 59, Year 2001, Page 1859); Decision No. 292 dated 07.05.2004 "On approval of the Strategy National Anti - drug 2004-2010 "(Official Bulletin No. 31, Year 2004, page 2539); Decision No. 171 dated 11.02.2005" On approval of the National Strategy against Child Trafficking and Protection of Children Victims of Trafficking and an additional CMD No. 8, dated 05.01.2002 "On establishment of the State Committee to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings" (Official Bulletin No. 21, Year 2005, page 808); Decision No. 668 dated 29.09.2007 "On approval of the National Strategy" Integrated Border Management Action Plan (Official Bulletin No. 147, Year 2007, Page 4087); Decision No. 14, at 09/01/2008 "On approval of the Public Order Sector Strategy and Plan Enforcement Action Strategy 2007-2013 State Police (Official Bulletin No. 5, Year 2008, Page 99); Decision No. 522, at 23/04/2008 "On approval of the National Action Plan for the Fight against trafficking in vehicles motor (Official Bulletin No. 72, Year 2008, Page 3156); Decision No. 1083, at 23/07/2008 To approve the National Strategy to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings 2008-2010 and Supplementary Document "National Strategy for Combating Trafficking Children and the Protection of Children Victims of Trafficking (Official Bulletin No. 131, Year 2008, Page 5775); Decision No. 1140, 30/07/2008 For approval at inter-sector Strategy to Fight against organized crime, trafficking and terrorism (Official Bulletin No. 138, Year 2008, Page 6124)

Defining a strategic concept of defence and security (based on power and "weight" Albania has as a regional and global actor), remains a priority task for any strategic doctrinaire framework. Due to Albania's membership in a collective defense organization, such is NATO, it is more than important to assess all security impacts, risks and benefits stemming from such engagement.

Due to the abovementioned reasons, the process of formulation, design and implementation of the concept of national security strategy should be developed in accordance with specific assessments of the country's weight in the global structure of regional security. Albania's membership in NATO, obtained at the Bucharest Summit on 3-4 April 2009, brought new conditions in the process of assessment of security threats. As a NATO member country, Albania is now required to conduct quantitative and qualitative changes as regards security challenges inside and outside the country. This is because NATO membership puts Albania in the new position of structural adjustments in the security sector.

From the risk classification perspective, the national security strategy should not simply follow geographic distribution (global, regional or local), but within each of them it should determine the degree of intensity and the ways to face them in short, medium and long terms. Differentiation and prioritization of these risks should necessary be associated with other aspects, rather than the use of classical concepts such as the sovereignty, territorial integrity, development of the rule of law, democratic institutions, freedoms and human rights etc. In this way, the national security strategy should be designed taking as spotlight an interlinked concept of human security depending on the importance that it presents in certain areas (i.e. *food, environmental, social, political, road security* etc.). [51] The so-called "*institutional triangle*" (Parliament, Government, President) has to play the most important role in achieving a stable security environment. Such assumptions lead to a further legal clarification, by better separating their roles within security field, in order to guarantee and coordinate a sustainable performance of all relevant institutions.

Regarding the process of drafting, approving, and reviewing national security documents, the necessary amendments should be made at the Albanian legislation, providing for a broad participatory approach, including the civil society actors and stakeholders. Also, the final version of these strategic documents has to be approved by the Parliamentary Commission, through a qualified majority vote and by setting a clear timetable to periodically monitor and review the institutions responsible for its implementation. Based on their competencies and procedures the Commission can hold hearings with interest groups and representatives of civil society, thus making this process more inclusive and accountable.

Bearing in mind the recent political and economic developments in Albania, every new strategic document of national security and defense should pay a greater attention to critical infrastructure. This infrastructure is growing rapidly, including, not only traditional infrastructure (road tunnels, bridges, oil pipelines, dams) but also networks of electronic databases, important for human security (fingerprint,

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[51] See also: *Backgrounder on human security in Albania*, IDM, Tirana 2009, p. 60, which is the first paper drafted by a group of experts at the IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) in terms of human security concept

blood groups, fiscal or banking information).

Finally, taking into consideration the size, resources and problems inherited from the past communist regime, as well as the long transition period, it is important that Albania now moves towards creation of a genuine concept and strategic doctrinaire framework of national security focusing more on human security.

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ALBANIA

No	Title	Category			Width					Source	Sector	Protecting	Remark
		Ch	R	Th	G	R	N	PN	P				
1	Local and regional crisis		+			+				Unstable neighbourhood	Political Military	Albania	NSS
2	Globalization	+			+					Geopolitics Global economy	Political Economy Science	Albania Albania	NSS
3	WMD Proliferation		+		+	+				Terrorist groups Organized crime	Political Criminal	Albania Region International community	NSS NMS and NDS
4	Organized crime (all trafficking and money laundry)			+	+	+	+			Organized crime	Criminal	Albania Region	NSS
5	Ethnical clashes		+			+				Unstable neighbourhood	Political Military	Albania	NDS
6	Terrorism		+		+					Terrorist groups	Political Ideological Religious	Albania Region International community	NSS and NDS
7	Regional crisis	+				+				Unstable neighbourhood	Political Military	Albania Albania	NMS and NSS
8	Spread of light arms in population hands			+			+	+	+	Weak state	Public Order	Albania	All
9	Domestic transition		+				+	+		Domestic instability	Political Economy Social	Albania	
10	Judicial reform	+					+	+	+	Domestic reform processes	Political Social	Albania	
11	Transnational threats (mostly organised crime)			+			+	+	+	Unstable state institutions	Public order	Albania	NSS
12	Natural disasters		+			+	+	+	+	Nature	Social	Albania	NSS
13	Technological accidents (ammunitions - explosions)			+			+	+	+	Ammunition dismantling	Human Political Military	Albania	NDS
14	Epidemics and infections		+		+		+	+	+	Health care	Social	Albania Region	NSS
15	Mines		+					+		Health care	Social	Albania	
16	Attacks on information and communication networks Critical Infrastructure (tunnels, damps, etc.)	+					+	+	+	Communications	Social	Albania	NMS

Challenges, risks and threats as defined by strategic documents of Albania