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Civil-Military Relations and Democracy in the New Europe¹

Introduction

The problem of civil-military relations is as old as formally constituted armed forces. The question “Who will guard the guards?” (*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*) is traced back to the Roman poet Juvenal. However, the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Iraq War have re-cast this old question in a new light. Nearly twenty years ago, the end of the Cold War triggered a new era in civil-military relations, particularly in the eastern half of the European continent. The Soviet and Eastern European communist regimes had developed a particular model of civil-military relations in which the armed forces were deeply penetrated by the communist party but also retained significant autonomy in relation to military matters. The collapse of communism raised major questions about civil-military relations in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union: How difficult would it be to dismantle the communist model of civil-military relations and what would emerge in its place? What problems would be faced in establishing democratic civil-military relations and to what extent would militaries be an obstacle to democratic transition? The dangers were illustrated by the involvement of the military in the August 1991 coup against Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and the central place of the military in the nexus of nationalism, authoritarianism, and war that was the Yugoslav conflict.

As the first decade of the 21st century comes to a close, the civil-military relations agenda has, at least in part, moved beyond that of the preceding decade and a half. The first era of post-communist transition that began in 1989 has arguably come to an end: The Central and Eastern European states have put in place the core institutions and practices of democracy and this is reflected in civil-military relations in these countries, and their accession to NATO and the EU between 1999 and 2007 confirmed their full membership of the club of Western democracies.² While some countries – such as Ukraine and Georgia – face similar challenges to those confronted by the Central and Eastern European states in the 1990s, authoritarian regimes have become entrenched in other post-communist states – such as Belarus and Uzbekistan –

1 The author wishes to thank Anthony Forster and Timothy Edmunds for contributing to his thinking in the area of civil-military relations and Timothy Edmunds for comments on this paper.

2 The term Central and Eastern Europe is used here to refer to the Visegrád Group states (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia), the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), Bulgaria, Romania, and Slovenia.

and Russia may be moving in the latter direction. The enlargement of NATO and the EU has also created a new geopolitical environment, with the enlarged NATO and EU now forming the core of the new Europe, and this also has a bearing on civil-military relations. Parallel to these developments, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the US “war on terror” and the US-led interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have posed other challenges for civil-military relations, especially for the major Western powers. The US and its allies are now using military force – and planning for the possible future use of military force – in a complex variety of counter-terrorism, counter-proliferation, and state- or nation-building operations. This trend poses fundamental questions about the use of military force in world politics and the relationship between civilian political leaders and the military in shaping when and how force is used. Against this background, this chapter reviews civil-military relations in the OSCE region.

The Established Democracies

The countries of Western Europe and North America have long-established patterns of civil-military relations, dating back in most cases to the post-1945 era or earlier.³ These countries are well established democracies, where democratic civilian control of the military is deeply entrenched. Although these countries share this basic feature, national models of civil-military relations have varied significantly: In particular, a distinction may be drawn between countries which have placed a strong emphasis on civilian political control of a professional military, such as the United Kingdom and the United States (at least since the introduction of an all-volunteer military in 1973), and those that have emphasized the idea of the citizen-soldier, a model for which the Federal Republic of Germany became the archetype from the 1950s but which was also maintained by many other Western European states. Although not as dramatic as the transitions in the eastern half of Europe, the end of the Cold War generated significant changes in civil-military relations in Western Europe and North America. During the Cold War, the primary mission for most West European militaries was defence of national territory (or the defence of the territory of NATO allies, which became a *de facto* extension of national defence). For most Western European states, this rationale underpinned a model of civil-military relations based on conscription and preparation for possible war with the Soviet bloc and one in which the deployment of military personnel overseas and in actual combat operations was rare. Advocates of the citizen-soldier concept argued that the maintenance of conscription helped to maintain a vital link between soldiery and citizenry and underpin public support for defence preparations. The

3 The only exceptions to this are Greece, Portugal, and Spain, which underwent democratic transitions in the 1970s and 80s.

American experience was to some extent different from that of Western European: the US was the central protagonist in two major fighting wars – in Korea and Vietnam – and it is no coincidence that these conflicts resulted in significant civil-military turbulence in the US and the eventual abandonment of conscription.

The end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the “Soviet threat” removed the primary rationale for the large standing armies and the conscript model that had evolved in much of mainland Western Europe after the Second World War. From the early 1990s onwards, Western European states undertook a series of military reforms: significantly reducing the overall size of armed forces, re-orienting forces away from defence of national territory and towards power projection roles (for both peacekeeping and combat roles, as the old distinction between peacekeeping and warfighting broke down in the new era of peace enforcement), and abandoning or scaling down conscription. By the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain had abandoned conscription or put in place processes to end it.⁴ The abandonment of conscription in much of Western Europe (and also in much of Central and Eastern Europe – see below) raised once again concerns about breaking the link between armed forces and societies embodied in the citizen-soldier concept. The most notable feature of the debate surrounding the abandonment of conscription in much of Western Europe, however, was the broad consensus on the issue in the countries concerned: Political leaders, military elites, and publics all supported the shift, which was implemented with virtually no opposition. There has similarly been very little concern that the creation of fully professional militaries might threaten civilian democratic control of armed forces or create militaries with too much autonomy or institutional power. In Western Europe, the primary exceptions to this trend towards the abandonment of conscription have been Germany, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian states, although even these states have generally reduced the numbers of personnel conscripted and/or the conscription period. For a variety of historic and/or geostrategic reasons, conscription is deeply embedded in these countries, and they may continue to buck the wider European trend (although in Germany’s case, as the Nazi era moves farther into the past, it is conceivable the country may abandon conscription). Ironically, although the US has, since the 1990s, been pressing its European allies to abandon conscription in order to re-direct armed forces towards power projection, the problems of military overstretch the US has faced in Iraq have led to calls for the re-introduction of conscription in America – although popular opposition appears likely to preclude such a step.

4 Cf. The death of conscription, *BBC News Online*, 29 June 2001, at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/europe/1414033.stm>; Cindy Williams, Draft Lessons from Europe, in: *The Washington Post*, 5 October 2004, p. A25.

Some analysts argue that the abandonment of conscription and the shift from defence of national territory towards power projection are part of a wider set of security, technological, and social trends that are creating “post-modern militaries”. Moskos, Williams, and Segal argue that postmodern militaries are defined by five characteristics: increasing interpenetration of civilian and military spheres; diminution of differences within the armed services based on branch of service, rank, and combat versus support roles; a shift in the military purpose from warfighting to missions that would not traditionally have been considered military roles; movement towards international military operations authorized by entities beyond the nation-state (such as the United Nations, NATO, and the European Union); and the internationalization of military forces (through the establishment of multinational force structures).⁵ These trends are observable in most European militaries today, and the postmodern military concept certainly captures important elements of the zeitgeist in contemporary civil-military relations. However, as Anthony Forster has concluded in his recent comprehensive analysis of civil-military relations in Europe, different national histories, socio-cultural factors, and forms of military organization continue to shape European militaries in important ways, and European armed forces are not yet converging on a single postmodern model.⁶

Parallel to the debate on postmodern militaries has been another debate in the US on what some analysts view as a growing, and worrying, gap between the values and worldviews of professional soldiers on the one hand and civilian society on the other.⁷ It is argued that while civilian society has become increasingly liberal in its social views (in particular, in relation to issues of gender and sexuality, but more generally in terms of personal freedom), professional soldiers remain distinctively conservative in their social attitudes. It is also argued that civilian society has become increasingly reluctant to support the use of military force and high levels of defence spending, whereas professional soldiers are more willing to support the use of force and defence expenditure. Some analysts conclude that a dangerous gap between civilian and military views has emerged and that this constitutes a crisis in US civilian-military relations. One lightning rod for these debates was the issue of “gays in the military”: At the beginning of his presidency in 1993, Democratic President Bill Clinton sought to introduce legislation allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the military, but was forced to back down in the face of Republican and military opposition, instead introducing the so-called “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy (under which homosexuals may serve in the US military so long as they don’t openly declare their sexuality

5 Cf. Charles C. Moskos/John Allen Williams/David R. Segal, *Armed Forces After the Cold War*, in: Charles C. Moskos/John Allen Williams/David R. Segal, (eds), *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces After the Cold War*, New York 2000, p. 2.

6 Cf. Anthony Forster, *Armed Forces and Society in Europe*, Houndmills 2006, p. 269.

7 Cf. Richard H. Kohn, *Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations*, in: *The National Interest* 35/1994, pp. 3-17.

and commanders are forbidden from investigating service personnel's sexuality). While the issue of homosexuals in the armed forces may reflect military-civilian divisions within the US, it is also part of the wider "culture wars" – the divisions between liberals and conservatives – which have played an important role in shaping American society and politics in recent decades. More broadly, while there may be significant differences between the social and political attitudes of the military and wider civil society within the US, to suggest that these constitute a crisis or a threat to democratic civilian control of the military probably exaggerates their scale and importance.⁸ Certainly, while specialists have debated the "crisis" in US civil-military relations for more than a decade, there appears to be little concern in wider American society that the military is an institution out of control or subverting democratic civilian leadership.

The "war on terror" and the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq have generated new tensions in civil-military relations in the US, and also – although to a lesser degree – in other Western democracies. Most prominently, divisions emerged over the conduct of the Iraq war: Senior US military commanders believed that the invasion of the Iraq and in particular the post-invasion stabilization of the country would require several hundred thousand troops, whereas the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense (in particular Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz) argued that mission could be achieved with a smaller force – a debate decisively won by the civilians.⁹ Depending on one's perspective, this debate can be interpreted as an example of civilian leaders unwisely ignoring the advice of professional soldiers or of the civilian leadership asserting its authority over military commanders who had overstepped the mark. Given the increasingly widespread view that the US handling of post-Saddam Iraq has been disastrous, and the argument that a significantly larger military presence immediately after Saddam Hussein's fall from power could have helped to avert some of the subsequent chaos, however, history may well side with the US military leadership rather than the civilians in this debate. More generally, in the wake of the Iraq War, senior military leaders in the US and the UK appear to have become more willing to publicly voice criticisms of government policies – both in relation to the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan but also regarding the state of the armed forces (in terms of equipment and of social provision for the military). In October 2006, for example, the new chief of the general staff, General Sir Richard Dannatt, publicly called for British forces to be withdrawn from Iraq and criticized the impact of the Iraq and Afghanistan operations on the armed forces – stepping

8 For a good review of the debate over the "crisis" in US civil-military relations, see John W. Peabody, *The "Crisis" in American Civil-Military Relations: A Search for Balance Between Military Professionals and Civilian Leaders*, Strategy Research Project, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 2001, at: <http://stinet.dtic.mil/cgiibin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA390551&Location=U2&doc=GeTRDoc.pdf>.

9 Cf. Michael C. Besch, Bush and the Generals, in: *Foreign Affairs*, 3/2007.

beyond previous boundaries in terms of criticizing his civilian masters.¹⁰ There may be signs therefore of a new willingness by the military to challenge what has arguably been the increasing and uncontested civilian dominance of civil-military relations in recent years.

The civil-military tensions over the Iraq War reflect a broader trend: post-Cold War and post-9/11, the US and other Western states have entered what some observers describe as an era of “wars of choice” – humanitarian interventions, state-building operations, and counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation operations – very different from past “wars of necessity”. In this context, states face major choices over whether to participate in these operations and how they should be conducted militarily, and these choices are generating new civil-military tensions. The classical model of democratic civil-military relations has been one in which civilian political leaders take decisions over whether to go to war, and operational decisions over the conduct of wars are left largely in the hands of military commanders.¹¹ While this distinction has always been somewhat unrealistic, in the current era of “wars of choice” it has become increasingly problematic: Civilian political leaders are interfering in a range of operational military decisions (over issues such as force size, targeting, and rules of engagement) to a greater degree than was hitherto the case; at the same time, operational issues (such as what forces may be required, what tactics may be used, and the likelihood and scale of casualties) have an increasing bearing on strategic decisions over whether to use military force, giving the military increasing influence over these political decisions. Some analysts argue that a re-balancing of civil-military relations is required, giving “civilian leaders authority over political decisions [...] and the military wide leeway in making the operational and tactical decisions about how to complete a mission.”¹² In this era of “wars of choice”, however, the issue of how one conducts military operations has an increasing bearing on whether one undertakes them at all. There is unlikely therefore to be a return to an idealized civil-military division of labour, and the US and its Western allies will probably face further civil-military tensions over these issues in future.

10 Cf. Richard Norton-Taylor, General gives voice to army’s unspoken fears, in: *The Guardian*, 13 October 2006; Mark Townsend/Ned Temko, How army chief staged No 10 ambush, in: *The Observer*, 15 October 2006.

11 In his classic work on civil-military relations, Samuel Huntington distinguished between “subjective civilian control” of the military, which risks drawing the military into politics, and “objective civilian control” of the military, which provides for high-level civilian political control of the military but recognizes their professional expertise and allows them primacy in the military sphere. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Cambridge, MA, 1957, pp. 80-97.

12 Desch, cited above (Note 9).

New Democracies

In contrast to the established democracies of Western Europe and North America, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union faced much more radical changes in civil-military relations when the Cold War ended in 1989. For the Central and Eastern European states, reforming civil-military relations was only one part of the “double challenge” of building democratic political systems and market economies. For the former republics of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, the additional problem of building new state structures made this a “triple challenge”. For the democratic leaders who had led the 1989 revolutions (and for some, but far from all, leaders in the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia) this challenge was part of a broad project of Westernization – establishing Western-style liberal democracies and integrating their countries into core Western institutions, such as the EU and NATO.

The communist model of civil-military relations inherited by the Central and Eastern European states had a number of features. The military was quite deeply penetrated by the communist party, with party cells present in all military units, and advancement within the military ranks dependent on at least formal loyalty to the party. While the armed forces were under the overall civilian political control of the communist leadership, civilian control of defence policy was weak, with military staffs (rather than civilian ministries of defence) in practice controlling the structure and organization of the military. After the fall of the communist regimes, the Central and Eastern European states thus faced the complex challenge of both de-politicizing the military and establishing new structures for civilian political control of the armed forces and defence policy.¹³ The de-politicization of the military was actually the more straightforward of these challenges: Communist party cells within the military were quickly dismantled, communist political education was abolished and new constitutions formalized the control of democratically elected civilian authorities over the armed forces. The relative ease of undertaking these tasks also reflected the underlying reality that the political loyalty of the military to the communist system had to some extent always been skin-deep, a reflection of political necessity rather than political conviction. By the mid-1990s, in Central and Eastern Europe the communist politicization of the military was largely a thing of the past: Links between the military and the communist parties (and their successors) had been broken and there was little, if any, danger of the armed forces intervening in domestic politics.

The establishment of new structures for civilian political control of defence policy and policy-making, however, proved a more challenging task. The challenges here included: shifting *de facto* control of defence policy-making and implementation from general staffs to ministries of defence; ci-

13 Cf. Andrew Cottey/Anthony Forster/Timothy Edmunds (eds), *Democratic Control of the Military in Postcommunist Europe: Guarding the Guards*, Houndmills 2002.

vilianizing defence ministries, which had been almost entirely military organizations; building up cadres of civilian expertise in defence policy; putting in place mechanisms for meaningfully reviewing defence policy; and securing detailed control over defence budgets and expenditure (which had previously been “black boxes” under the control of the military, if anyone at all). These were complex technical tasks in themselves, which would inevitably take some years. They also, however, threatened the institutional power of the military, which meant that some degree of military resistance was inevitable. Through the 1990s and into the new millennium, Central and Eastern European governments initiated various reforms addressing these issues. Western support and pressure was important in this process. NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) and bilateral advice and aid from Western states provided both technical assistance and models that Central and Eastern European states sought to emulate. NATO made clear that membership would be conditional on implementing such reforms: a powerful form of leverage at a time when the Central and Eastern European states were seeking membership of the Atlantic Alliance. Overall, this process amounted to a large-scale exercise in the socialization of Central and Eastern European militaries, civil servants, political leaders, and political and bureaucratic institutions in Western norms of civil-military relations and defence policy-making.

After some ten to 15 years of progress, the Central and Eastern European states have arguably become what theorists of democratization refer to as “consolidated democracies”: countries in which democracy is “the only game in town”, democratic structures function at least reasonably effectively, no significant actors challenge democracy and the likelihood of a serious breakdown of democratic politics is low.¹⁴ Becoming full members of NATO and the EU between 1999 and 2007 not only integrated the Central and Eastern European states into the core Western institutions but symbolized the completion of their post-communist transition. Certainly, in the area of civil-military relations these states now largely resemble the established Western democracies: Their militaries are apolitical institutions under the control of democratically elected civilian leaders, and institutions for the management of defence policy by the civilian political leadership function reasonably effectively. Indeed, it is notable that in the last ten years or so, the Central and Eastern European states have largely been engaged in processes of defence reform paralleling those in Western Europe: reducing the overall size of their armed forces, reorienting the military towards power projection, and, in many cases, now abandoning conscription.¹⁵ Certain elements of civil-military rela-

14 For an overall assessment of the transition in civil-military relations in post-communist Europe, see Timothy Edmunds/Andrew Cottey/Anthony Forster (eds), *Civil-Military Relations in Postcommunist Europe: Reviewing the Transition*, London 2006. This work was originally published as a special edition of the journal *European Security* (1/2005).

15 See Anthony Forster/Timothy Edmunds/Andrew Cottey (eds), *The Challenge of Military Reform in Postcommunist Europe: Building Professional Armed Forces*, Houndmills 2002; Jeffrey Simon, *NATO Expeditionary Operations: Impacts Upon New Members and Partners*, Occasional Paper, Washington, D.C., March 2005.

tions within Central and Eastern Europe, however, remain contentious within the countries of the region: Military intelligence and counter-intelligence services have been the subject of controversies in a number of countries, with critics arguing that they are still shaped by personnel and ties from the communist period, including links with Russia.¹⁶ While such dark corners of security and intelligence forces may remain only partly reformed, they nevertheless do not indicate some wider crisis in civil-military relations. More broadly, such controversies also reflect the deep division between former communists and the former opposition that continues to shape Central and Eastern European politics and distinguishes it from Western European politics.

If the Central and Eastern European states have made a relatively successful transition in terms of establishing democratic civil-military relations, the other post-communist states of the Balkans and the former Soviet Union experienced various combinations of stalled transition, authoritarianism, and/or violent conflict in the 1990s, and patterns of civil-military relations reflected this. Since the end of the 1990s, however, a number of these states have experienced major political transitions, triggering renewed hopes of reform and integration with the West. Beginning with the death of Croatia's authoritarian president, Franjo Tuđman, in 1999 and the popular revolution that overthrew Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević in 2000, this process was followed by Georgia's Rose Revolution in 2003, Ukraine's Orange Revolution in 2004, and Kyrgyzstan's Tulip Revolution in 2005. The Western Balkan states (Croatia and Serbia, plus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Kosovo – assuming the latter gains independence from Serbia in the not too distant future) and Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Kyrgyzstan in the former Soviet Union are at varying stages in pursuing the type of transition that the Central and Eastern European states undertook in the 1990s.

While the civil-military reform challenges facing the Western Balkan and former Soviet states are broadly similar to those faced by the Central and Eastern European countries, they are complicated by the powerful impact of the authoritarianism and/or violent conflicts experienced during the 1990s, deep internal ethnic and/or political divisions, and the general weakness of state structures in these countries. In the cases of Serbia and Croatia, for example, the armed forces were deeply implicated in the Yugoslav wars and gained political influence and economic power through their role in that conflict. Reforming civil-military relations in Serbia and Croatia involves undermining the political and economic power of the military and has provoked resistance from within the armed forces. It was thus no coincidence that Ser-

16 Poland and Hungary have both recently experienced controversies in relation to intelligence, counter-intelligence, or military intelligence services, cf. *The Economist*, Of questionable intelligence, 24 February 2007, p. 24; The Crisis of the Hungarian Intelligence Services, *Budapest Analyses* No. 160, 10 July 2007, http://www.budapestanalyses.hu/docs/En/Analyses_Archive/analysys_160_en.html.

bia's reformist prime minister, Zoran Đinđić, was assassinated by members of the elite "red berets" paramilitary unit.¹⁷ More specifically, military reform in Croatia and Serbia has involved surrendering military personnel (including some very high ranking soldiers) to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the Hague – a process to which there remains significant opposition in Serbia in particular. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement left the country divided between its Muslim-Croat and Serb constituent elements, both of which retain independent armed forces, and civil-military and defence reform has involved establishing new national-level defence institutions and seeking to integrate the two militaries into a national force. While progress has been made in this direction since 2000, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains to a significant degree a divided state, and this is true also of its armed forces. In some of the Western Balkan states, in particular Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia, significant progress has been made with civil-military relations and defence reforms, and it seems likely that this will be reflected in invitations to become full members of NATO within the next few years. In the other Western Balkan states, civil-military and defence reforms have made less progress; in particular, the long-term direction of Serbia's politics – and consequently of its civil-military relations – remains far from certain.¹⁸

The former Soviet republics have faced similar complicating factors in reforming civil-military relations and defence policy. In Ukraine, national armed forces and national structures for political control of the military and the management of defence policy were put in place when the country gained independence at the beginning of the 1990s. The deep divisions within Ukraine between Western-oriented reformers and (ex-)communists who still look to Russia have, however, generated political and bureaucratic gridlock in most areas of policy-making, including defence policy. James Sherr describes Ukraine as having made "a substantial, if still not conclusive break with the Soviet military legacy" and retaining "a bloated, conservative and chronically underfunded military force".¹⁹ Some hoped that the 2004 Orange Revolution might herald dramatic progress in reform, but subsequent developments have revealed that Ukraine remains deeply divided between Western-oriented reformers and their opponents, and this reality is likely to continue to inhibit reform, including in defence policy. Following the 2003

17 Cf. Timothy Edmunds, *Intelligence Agencies and Democratisation: Continuity and Change in Serbia after Milosevic*, in: *Europe-Asia Studies* (forthcoming). Two members of the "red berets" were given maximum forty-year prison sentences in 2007 for the assassination of Đinđić, cf. Ian Traynor, *Paramilitary leader among 12 jailed for murder of pro-western Serb PM*, in: *The Guardian*, 24 May 2007.

18 For reviews of civil-military and defence reforms in the Western Balkans see Timothy Edmunds, *Security Sector Reform in Transforming Societies: Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro*, Manchester 2007; David Greenwood (ed.) *The Western Balkan Candidates for NATO Membership and Partnership*, Harmonie Paper 18, Groningen 2005.

19 James Sherr, *Professionalisation of Armed Forces: The Case of Ukraine*, in: Forster/Edmunds/Cotter, (eds), cited above (Note 15), p. 226.

Rose Revolution, Georgia has become the most Western-oriented of all the former Soviet republics. In the area of civil-military relations and defence policy, Georgia has implemented reforms designed to strengthen national defence-policy making structures and prepare for NATO membership. Efforts to reform Georgian civil-military relations and defence policy and integrate the country with NATO, however, face the obstacles of the still unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and Russia's continuing influence in the country (where approximately 3,000 Russian troops remain deployed). Civil-military relations and defence reforms in the former Soviet states are likely to remain heavily shaped by their internal political and ethnic divisions and by the reality of their proximity to Russia.

Authoritarian Laggards?

In contrast to the Central and Eastern European states, authoritarian regimes have been consolidated, or may be emerging, in a number of former Soviet states, and civil-military relations in these states reflect this reality. In Belarus, Azerbaijan, and the Central Asia states, (former) communist leaders gained control in the 1990s and established authoritarian regimes in which power is concentrated in the hands of a single leader and the elite surrounding them, countervailing institutions (such as parliaments and the judiciary) are weak, and political opposition is banned or severely curtailed. Most worryingly, Russia has arguably been moving in this direction since the late 1990s: Power has become concentrated in the hands of President Vladimir Putin and the elite surrounding him, the parliament, judiciary, and media have become to a large degree tools of the Putin presidency and opposition groups are increasingly harassed and intimidated by state power. While Russia retains the formal institutions of democracy, critics argue that it is becoming a sham democracy.

In this context, military, security, and intelligence forces and agencies are some of the key tools of state power at the disposal of the ruling regimes. The relationship between authoritarian rulers and these various power ministries and institutions was largely inherited from the communist period: Military, security, and intelligence forces and agencies are under the control of civilian political leaders, but also retain a significant degree of autonomy and power. The relationship is one of symbiosis: Civilian leaders need military, security, and intelligence forces and agencies to sustain their rule; in return, civilian leaders provide resources for these forces and allow them to maintain a degree of independence. The regular armed forces are, however, not the most important of these institutions, with these states maintaining sizable armed internal security forces to deal with domestic opposition. As the International Crisis Group has put it:

The military in Central Asian states plays a more limited role in everyday political life than the interior ministries. Police forces in the region are much more powerful than the militaries and include their own armed units designed for internal control. They have a considerable role in political life that may grow in future. [...] the internal security forces pose the greater threat to stability and the greater opposition to deeper economic and political reform.²⁰

This reality was made clear during the May 2005 Andijan massacre, when the Uzbek government used armed interior ministry and national security service troops to fire on protesters, resulting in the deaths of several hundred people. Internal security forces have also been used to suppress demonstrations in Belarus and Kazakhstan.

The situation in Russia is more complex, but both the regular armed forces and internal security forces play important roles within the country. The Soviet military leadership played an important role in the unsuccessful coup against Mikhail Gorbachev that triggered the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. During the Yeltsin period, there was much discussion over the political loyalties of the Russian military, although the armed forces sided with President Boris Yeltsin during the 1993 conflict with the Duma, shelling the Duma building in support of Yeltsin's assertion of power. The power ministries – the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Federal Security Service (FSB – the successor of the Soviet KGB) – played a central role in the rise to power of President Putin (himself a former KGB officer).²¹ Indeed, the Putin era is often characterized as the rise of the *siloviki* (those associated with the military and security forces) – derived from the Russian for power ministries or structures (*silovie ministerstva/strukturi*). The power ministries have been both a tool of President Putin's regime and a central part of that regime, with the *siloviki* dominating the presidential administration. As a consequence, the Russian military, security, and intelligence services have been able to resist the types of democratic reforms that were instituted in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s. According to Stephen Blank, "democratic reform of Russia's armed forces has been systematically obstructed by the Army since 1985. Today the public and the Duma are shut out of military policy and the government's leaders either do not know enough about it or lack the political will to break through this barrier."²² With Russia due to hold presidential elections in March 2008, and

20 International Crisis Group, *Central Asia: The Politics of Police Reform*, Asia Report No. 42, Osh/Brussels, 10 December 2002), p. i, http://www.crisisweb.org/library/documents/report_archive/A400843_10122002.pdf.

21 Cf. Brian D. Taylor, *Power Surge? Russia's Power Ministries from Yeltsin to Putin and Beyond*, PONARS Policy Memo No. 414, Washington, D.C., December 2006, at: http://www.csis.org/media/csis/pubs/pm_0414.pdf.

22 Stephen Blank, *The Russian Bourbons: Civil-Military Relations and Pressure on Georgia*, in: *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, 9 October 2002, at: http://www.cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=10.

President Putin prohibited under the constitution from standing for a third time (having been elected in 2000 and 2004), it is no coincidence that one of the men considered mostly likely to succeed President Putin is Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, who was defence minister from 2001 to 2007 and previously served in the intelligence services (the other candidate considered likely to succeed Putin is Deputy Prime Minister Dimitry Medvedev). Ian Bremmer and Samuel Charap argue that:

No matter who is chosen to be Russia's next President, the *siloviki* are here to stay. They are so deeply entrenched in the bureaucracy that it would be impossible to eliminate their presence in Russian politics and political economic. Even if they do not succeed in promoting one of their own as Putin's successor, they are virtually certain to play a substantial role in the selection process and to help shape the new President's political and economic agenda for years to come.²³

The relationship between political power and military and security institutions in Russia is thus very far from democratic norms, and meaningful reform of this relationship will have to await more fundamental change in Russian politics.

The colour revolutions show that political change is possible in the post-Soviet space; although the 2005 Andijan massacre also showed the lengths which governments may be willing to go to resist such change. The problems Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan have faced since these revolutions, however, also indicate that even if authoritarian regimes are deposed, the obstacles to reform and democratic consolidation are still very significant. Given the central relationship between political power and security institutions that has emerged in the former Soviet states since the 1990s, the road to democratic reform of civil-military relations and the wider security sector in the region is likely to be a long and troubled one.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed civil-military relations, and in particular democratic control of armed forces, in the OSCE area as of the middle of the first decade of the 21st century. Countries in the OSCE area can broadly be divided into three groups, with distinctive patterns of civil-military relations. In the established democracies of Western Europe and North America, democratic civilian control of the military is deeply entrenched. The end of the Cold War and the 9/11 terrorist attacks have nevertheless impacted on civil-

23 Ian Bremmer/Samuel Charap, *The Siloviki in Putin's Russia: Who They Are and What They Want*, in: *The Washington Quarterly*, 1/2006-07, p. 91.

military relations in these countries in important ways: Many, though not all, of the Western European states that maintained conscript-based forces during the Cold War have moved to fully professional armed forces, altering the nature of military-society relations in these countries. At the same time, the new generation of peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention, counter-terrorism, and counter-proliferation operations have generated new civil-military tensions in relation to decision making on these operations. With the end of the Cold War, the Central and Eastern European states faced the more radical challenge of establishing institutions for democratic civilian control of the armed forces and defence policy-making. De-politicizing the military proved a relatively easier task, but establishing effective institutions for democratic civilian control of defence policy has been more challenging. By the middle of the current decade, however, the Central and Eastern European states can reasonably be said to have consolidated democratic civilian control of the armed forces and defence policy, and patterns of civil-military relations in these states increasingly resemble those of the established democracies of Western Europe and North America. The Western Balkan countries and some of the former Soviet states (such as Ukraine and Georgia) are arguably now at a similar stage in terms of civil-military reforms as the Central and Eastern European countries were in the 1990s, although the weakness of state structures and the legacies of internal conflicts make such reform efforts particularly complicated. A third group of countries are the authoritarian or semi-authoritarian states of the former Soviet Union, which arguably now includes Russia. In these states, the regular armed forces and (more importantly) the armed internal security forces are one of the tools of civilian authoritarian rule, but also retain significant influence in their own right. Democratic reform of the military and security forces in these states must await wider political change.

In this context, what role can the OSCE play? For those countries that are members of, or are seeking to join, the EU and/or NATO, these organizations are the primary international reference points in terms of civil-military relations, providing models, practical advice, and political pressure for the reform of civil-military relations. Nevertheless, the OSCE has a long track-record in setting *pan-European* norms in the areas of democracy and security and in providing practical support to countries undergoing transitions. The OSCE's primary normative instrument in relation to civil-military relations is the 1994 Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, which lays out a set of general standards for democratic civilian control of armed forces.²⁴ The Code of Conduct has been followed-up by a variety of information exchanges and discussions within the OSCE, but the overall impression

24 Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, in: Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe, Budapest Document 1994, Budapest, 6 December 1994, in: Arie Bloed (ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Basic Documents, 1993-1995*, The Hague 1997, pp. 145-189, here: pp. 161-167.

is of a normative document to which many participating States pay at best limited respect.²⁵ The OSCE has also played a role in providing information and practical support on civil-military relations, especially in countries attempting to implement reforms in the wake of violent conflicts or political transitions.²⁶ Furthermore, given the wariness of NATO and the EU on the part of Russia and some of the other former Soviet states, the fact that these states are full members of the OSCE and the Organization's more politically neutral character gives it certain advantages in engaging them in dialogue on issues of civil-military relations and security sector reform. In addressing the security sector more broadly, the OSCE has also established a particular role in the area of policing: The OSCE missions and offices in the Western Balkans and the former Soviet Union have for some years provided support to states in the area of police reform, and the OSCE regularly sends experts to provide advice to these states on policing; the OSCE Secretariat has also established a Strategic Police Matters Unit, a post of Senior Police Adviser, and a Policing OnLine Information System, and has published a Guidebook on Democratic Policing. The OSCE's ability to shape civil-military relations – and the security sector more broadly – in its participating states is inevitably limited. Nevertheless, the Organization has an important role to play in helping to keep the flame of democracy alive in some participating states, including in the area of civil-military relations, and in providing low-profile but valuable practical support to countries seeking to establish democratic control of their military and security services.

25 Cf. Alexandre Lambert, *Implementation of Democratic Control of Armed Forces in the OSCE Region: Lessons Learned from the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security*, Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Occasional Paper No. 11, Geneva, July 2006.

26 For recent examples of OSCE activities in the area of civil-military relations see the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights's programme on human rights in the armed forces ("Citizens in Uniform: Protecting Human Rights in Armed Forces", 21 September 2006, available at the OSCE website) and the OSCE meeting on civil-military relations held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in February 2007 (*OSCE meeting in Baku discusses standards in civil-military relations*, Press Release, OSCE Office in Baku, 14 February 2007, also available at the OSCE website).