

NATO RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROJECT 1997 - 1999

**POSITION AND TASK
OF NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS
IN THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL
OF THE ARMED FORCES
AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR ACHIEVING
A HIGHER *CREDIBILITY OF ARMED FORCES*
IN THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

FINAL REPORT

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Introduction

Effective democratic control of the military is in any democratic country hardly conceivable without active participation of non-governmental organizations in this process. In this respect, there is no exemption for the Czech Republic, where this fact takes foreground in particular in connection with its accession to the North Atlantic Alliance in spring 1999. It is understandable that in a relatively short period of less than ten years after taking the democratic way of development, the non-governmental organizations don't play yet a strong role enough within the democratic control of the military as in a number of NATO member countries, nevertheless, I think there is a legitimate claim about a number of positive outcomes, which have been achieved by some non-governmental organizations in this field.

The major objective of the research was to show a potential of those non-governmental organizations in the Czech Republic, which engage in the process of the democratic control of the military. Due to the fact that the democratic control of the military has just definitely also international nature, the second significant objective of the research has been focused on issues of cooperation of non-governmental organizations with their partner national and international NGOs as well as on non-governmental organizations operation in some countries of Central and Western Europe and in Russia.

The subjects of the research were first of all individual non-governmental organizations in the Czech Republic and abroad, including international NGOs .

For the research, I have chosen a method of contents analysis of problems and a comparison method for setting a level achieved in the Czech Republic compared with other countries that were the subject of the research.

In case of work with bibliographic material, I paid a great attention to a study of documents and internal materials of individual non-governmental organizations, but also of those of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic. The value of these sources is in the fact that in majority of cases these documents were not yet used in professional publications, and they closely relate to issues of the democratic control of the military.

Personal contacts and consultations with high representatives of individual non-governmental organizations in the Czech Republic and abroad were also a significant part of the research, including contacts with chief officials of international NGOs . The personal contacts and consultations were held in the framework of the research also with competent officials of the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic and ministries of defence of target countries of the research. A number of issues was consulted with domestic and foreign experts, who deal with problems of the democratic control of the military.

The outcomes of the research were presented in special publications as well as at a number of expert conferences - among others also within the international project of the "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies", which has been implemented during 1997 - 1999 in the framework of the Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union.

In total, it is possible to state, based on the research results, that optimal base has already been formed in the Czech Republic for active participation of non-governmental organizations in the process of the democratic control of the military. This fact is very significant because it can be supposed that following accession of the Czech Republic to NATO the role of non-governmental organizations will considerably increase.

I. Period of development and formation

During 1948 - 1989, in former Czechoslovakia no room could exist for free organization of society, whose very expressive feature was the existence of thousands of various non-governmental organizations reflecting interests and needs of citizens. All permitted social-political activities were associated in time of socialism in the so-called National Front. Apart from political and trade union organizations there were also the so-called volunteer social organizations included in it. But these organizations did not have a nature of free spontaneous activity; their sense was turned upside down and abused. They served as a sophisticated instrument of the state power control over citizens and their social and private life. All organizations including those of interest, sports and cultural were structured to a principle of the so-called "democratic centralism", and at the top of the hierarchy was "politically dependable" leadership. The centralized system of the state power did not allow for other alternative forms of association that could carry out their activities independently from the National Front. Organizations of the National Front were fully funded from the state budget, what kept them in increased dependence upon the state policy. Apart from this fact, the model of social public spirit was recovered very soon and in full after fundamental social changes in November 1989. The diverse nature of interests and needs of individual members of society, spontaneously heading to association of citizens in a huge number of associations, clubs and foundations turned out not to be completely inhibited during the mentioned period of time. (1) It is also possible to say with a high rate of probability that it has happen due to a long tradition of "union life" in this country that has led even from the last century, and which went on in a time of the first Czechoslovak Republic, and after Nazi occupation in 1945 - 1948. The strength of this tradition was confirmed also by a short period of the "Prague's Spring" of 1968, when a number of social organizations were revived, but which were forcibly ended by occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army.

In time of totalitarian power of one party no normal civil-military relations could exist, and in their framework also no democratic control of the military. The military was fully dependent upon decisions of ruling communist party. Both military doctrine and armed forces were subordinated to the Warsaw Pact within which the last word had the Soviet Union. This state resulted in a special kind of isolation of the military and society. It is understandable that society as a whole registered abnormality of that status, and within society it was possible to learn the presence of critical opinions towards the military. They were first of all related to issues of the military budget, where non-articulated conviction prevailed that military expenditure exceeds economic possibilities of the country. The society was critical also in its view to orientation of the military to communist values. Nevertheless, till the end of the 80s, these and other critical opinions were not expressed through any organized structure of citizens. But a change occurred during the last stage of totalitarian power rule - in 1988, when under the influence of strong changes at international-political scene (a policy of the so-called "perestroika" and new political thinking in former Soviet Union) a stronger activation of civic initiatives have taken place, which criticized absence of civic rights and freedoms in Czechoslovakia. A number of young people has become engaging into newly formed environmental movements, also new educational and scientific associations, societies and cooperative syndicates were formed. Activities of officially authorized organizations have gradually been beside the state control, and their officials were increasingly courageous in ignorance to directives of the state power. The Independent Peace Association - Initiative for Demilitarization of Society that was established in April 1988 was one of those organizations. Its "engineers" were predominantly young people, which, of course, resulted into declared objectives of the Association - cut the conscription

service down, honour civic rights of soldiers, and freedom of their beliefs and denomination, including establishing alternative service for conscientious objectors. At the same time the Association expressed its support for disarmament process and strengthening confidence among nations. Even though activities of this Association were never been officially authorized, during 1988 - 1989 several meetings of its representatives were held with members of official, state-authorized organizations (Czechoslovak Peace Committee, Socialist Union of Youth - SSM). It is really not uninteresting that under this situation it was just SSM, which responded to some problems within the military. It related first of all to issues connected with democratisation of the conscription service, which were also on agenda of meeting between SSM leaders and command of the army in March 1989. The SSM presented proposals, which in fact corresponded with requirements of the Independent Peace Association, but the army command did not accept them. Regardless to this fact these proposals, nevertheless, were included in the Theses of the Political Report of the SSM Nation-wide Conference that was held closely prior to the November events (November 11 - 12, 1989). Word for word it was stated there that "based on real progress in disarmament talks among countries of the Warsaw

Pact and NATO, and in connection with reorganization of our Czechoslovak People's Army it is necessary for us to put forward new initiatives in the field of life of soldiers, for example, the length of conscription service, duration of leave, extension of possibilities of alternative conscription service, and the like". (2)

We cannot in any case, nevertheless, qualify the above mentioned activities, regardless their importance in the given period, as full-fledged fulfilment of objectives and tasks of the democratic control of the military, even though they formed a certain base for activities of some new non-governmental organizations formed after November 1989.

The democratic control of the military could be gradually developed only after the fundamental social change - after democratic forces handed over power through non-violent revolutionary change that in Czechoslovakia took place during November and December 1989. The Army as the power pillar of the communist regime was that time a centre of considerable attention paid by the public, which was afraid of possible military activities. Even if it is not subject of this work to analyse closely a level of position and activities of the military at the end of 1989, it is necessary to point out that the Army did not engage at all into the political development, and became loyal to a new power. Newly incoming democratic forces were seriously aware of importance of a position the military should have in society. Evidence for this is, for example, the fact that within the Civic Forum - a movement formed in November 1989 in a bid to create necessary political platform for democratic forces striving for social change in Czechoslovakia - a military commission of the Coordination Centre of the Civic Forum was established. In this commission predominantly former service members of the Army served, those who were illegally sacked from the military after occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army in August 1968. The primary task of this commission was to help the leadership structures of the Civic Forum be well up in complexity of the military challenges, to orient better in relations of the military towards bodies of the state power, and to help implement a complicated process of breaking-up the power influence of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSĚ) within the military. At the same time, the commission dealt with issues of creating foundations of the democratic control of the military, which resulted in a number of specific recommendations for newly constituted Parliament and bodies of the state administration. With respect to the above mentioned, it

is possible to mention a number of examples of fundamental decisions that have been changing nature of

the military. Minister of Defence Vacek ordered to stop all political activities within the military by December 15, 1989, and as of January 1, 1990 to stop activities of KSÈ local organizations within the Army. The political apparatus in the military was dismissed by December 31, 1989. Also by an order issued by the Defence Minister on March 15, 1990, all political activities of career soldiers and conscripts were prohibited. The role of defence and security committees of the Federal Assembly - the Czechoslovak Parliament - as important control element of the legislative body has been considerably enhanced. (3)

A considerable factor in constituting principles of the democratic control of the military was the fact that within thousands of newly formed non-governmental organizations of manifold orientation (4) also those appeared, which in their programme documents highlighted either directly or not the need of the democratic control of the military. The most important organization was then the Association Military Revival. Its birth was initiated on December 16, 1989 at a meeting of former career soldiers and civilian employees of the Army persecuted for their disapproval with occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army in 1968. Participants of the meeting were strongly aware of importance of the democratic control of the military - in the first paragraph of the declaration adopted there is therefore stated that it is necessary to ensure that "Army to be under the constitutional control. And therefore it is in particular necessary to restore activities of the defence and security committee of the Federal Assembly, which should be a guarantee of legality in armed forces". (5) In the adopted declaration also other requirements were spelt out in order to ensure depolitization of the military and its transformation to be part of newly formed democratic country. The Association became soon an equal partner to the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff, which was a very good move in newly created mechanisms of the democratic control of the military. Also an influence of the Association within defence and security committees of the Federal Assembly and the Civic Forum contributed to that. Involvement of the Association Military Revival in the first weeks after November 1989 had also indispensable importance during a dialogue between the military and the public, which wasn't at the beginning free of problems. The military had to learn at all levels - beginning with the Ministry and the General Staff down to individual military units - how to communicate directly with new representatives of bodies of the state and local administration, with representatives of the Civic Forum, and with individual groups of the public. The topic of communication was as a rule the issue of a position of the Army to ongoing social changes, and impact of these changes to daily course of military life, and all that was on move also in concrete garrisons and military units. It was related rather to lower command echelons that commanders were not accustomed to this way of communication, and therefore some conflicts occurred. The Association members in a number of cases helped resolve those conflicts based on their unique position - they were able to imagine in detail, as they knew it from their former job, how complicated the mechanism of working of the military was, and at the same time they were able to apprehend, thanks to their long-term involvement in civilian life, the motives that subjects of the civil public used in communication with the military. In this context, also the fact is for sure important that at the beginning of 1990 under support of the Association, a civilian Deputy Minister of Defence was inducted into office (for the first time since 1948) - it was Dr. Antonín Rašek who was forced to leave the Army after occupation of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Army in 1968.

The Association Military Revival wasn't, of course, the only one non-governmental organization, which entered the process of the democratic control of the military. (6) Other organizations, established immediately following November 1989, are the Association of Military Youth (since 1995 the Association of Soldiers and Youth - SVM), and the Association of Career Soldiers (SVP). (6)

Formation of the Association of Military Youth reflected the overall emancipation process of newly establishing non-governmental organizations of children and young people, which started to grow after November 1989 under conditions of disintegration of nation-wide youth organization - Socialist Union of Youth (SSM). This process was felt in the military as well.

The aspiration of a number of young service members of the Army (career soldiers and conscripts) was to create a really independent organization that would protect legitimate interests and needs of young people in uniform. This intention met in the military with relatively considerable support - therefore before the end of 1989 a preparatory committee of the organization was formed and on January 4, 1990 the Association of Military Youth was officially established. (7) In connection with establishment of the Association of Military Youth, it is necessary to mention very interesting fact - during the process of developing the Association the conscripts who were university/college graduates were highly active. (8) The reason was that just university students played important role in November events, and we can even say that they were initiators of open resistance towards the communist regime. (9) The mentioned category of soldiers had strong ties to its former classmates, which enabled fresh information on fundamental social changes could get simply behind gates of the barracks. The striking university students had a chance to address a great part of conscripts directly at conferences of SSM, (10) that discussed current situation of this organization in time of disintegration of the so-called integrated movement of children and young people, which was in itself an unprecedented move at that time. Activities of conscripts but also of progressive young career soldiers in establishing their own organization were at that time certainly possible to mark as a token of the democratic control of the military in a spirit of a thesis that soldier is citizen in uniform.

The Association of Military Youth immediately after its formation had focused first of all on issues of democratization of conscription service - that related first to its cut in duration and cancellation of inflexible regulations directing performance of the service. In case of shortening conscription service, it was made by the Parliament decision in January 1990 already (cut from 24 to 18 months). Also other substantial relief of the service performance was among other important changes that were put through (wearing civilian clothes when out of duty/barracks, prolongation of free time for conscripts after duty hours on working days and weekends). Very substantial element of democratization of military life was the permanent communication among Minister of Defence and the rest of high officials of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff with leadership of SVM in solving problems that had been brought by the democratization process of the military service. This model was applied also at lower command levels down to a unit level including, and gradually it would become a norm within the whole Army.

By no means this model was only formal - it was quite obvious that, for example, defence minister or commander of good-sized military formation (military front, army) directly held talks with SVM members within important meetings, and those talks were often very wild. A considerable feature of

those meetings was also the fact that often also representatives of the Association Military Revival were present at them. That had multiplied the influence of non-governmental organizations to events in the Army.

The Association of Military Youth very actively cooperated also with other newly rising organizations of young people in Czechoslovakia - it had become a member of a coordination structure of organizations of young people - the Council of the Youth. Through cooperation with other youth organizations, the information on current reality in the Army was spread among the civilian public.

Another important organization that was formed after November 1989 has been the Association of Career Soldiers, which officially started in January 1990. Its birth was motivated by an effort for career soldiers to have their own professional organization. Its main target has been to formulate and to put through legitimate interests of its members. In programme documents of the Association is also stated that it strives for "every career soldier to be apprehended by society as citizen in uniform with all rights and professional specifics for performance of this job". (11)

In a longer laps of time after 1989, the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the Army of the Czech Republic (SPD AÈR) was formed in May 1993. The Association is a successor organization of lots of organizations of career soldiers working in Czechoslovakia before the WWII (Association of Czechoslovak Officers, Association of Czechoslovak Warrant Officers). Its membership probably encompasses the greatest deal of the public - among its members it is possible to find former service members of the Czechoslovak Army from pre-war time, members of domestic and foreign resistance movement from WWII, active career soldiers together with those retired and military pensioners. Also specialized civic associations are collective members of the Association (Association of Military Service, Interest Group of Civil Defence Employees). At present, within the Association a lot of former members of the military commission of Coordination Centre of the Civic Forum serve. From the beginning of its formation, the Association has devoted a considerable part of its activities to work with military reserves. The Association leadership is well aware of importance of the reserve corps, which is not only a contact body between the military and society, but also an important element of the democratic control of the military.

During 1990, also other non-governmental organizations, which expressed their will to cooperate with the military, were set up. (12) They have declared their positive relation to defence, state security and the military in their programme objectives. Their membership is also predominantly formed by active or former soldiers. From the viewpoint of their classification, we can divide these organizations into the following categories:

- a) non-governmental organizations associating citizens who actively participated in domestic and foreign resistance movement during WWII, and were persecuted after 1948. Within their framework, they are the Association of Fighters for Freedom, Czechoslovak Community of Legionaries, Confederation of Political Prisoners - military section, and Association of Airmen.
- b) non-governmental organizations, whose activities contain elements of education to defence-related issues. Within their framework, they are the Association of Retired Soldiers, Association

of Multipurpose Basic Organizations of Technical Sports and Activities, Association of Technical Sports and Activities, Junák, the Czech Sokol Community, and Clubs of Military History.

Mentioned associations cooperate with the military primarily in patriotic upbringing of their members, together with the Army they organise joint defence-sports activities. Just this activity helps citizens to understand the military as the military of democratic society. It is obvious that such activities of above-mentioned organizations represent an important element or interconnection of the military and society, and they are also part of its democratic control.

Generally, we can say to the fact of formation of non-governmental organizations, which engage into the process of the democratic control of the military - even though with different degree of influence - that all that was done in relatively short period of time. Moreover, it was done regardless the fact of limited historical experience and therefore a lack of necessary know-how for specific activities. It is obvious that formation and activities of organizations engaging in processes of the democratic control of the military helped include these issues into the process of building the civic society.

Legend:

- 1) In 1989, there were 2037 civic associations, chambers and interest groups registered in Czechoslovakia. In 1998, only in the Czech Republic, there were 38,200 civic associations registered according to a database of the civil-administrative section of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic as of November 26, 1998.
- 2) Theses of the political report to the Nation-wide Conference of SSM, Mladá fronta, September 19, 1989.
- 3) The Federal Assembly was divided into two chambers - there were the House of People and the House of Nations, taking into account both houses have their own defence and security committee.
- 4) Office directory of the Assembly of Political Parties, Movements and Associations in the Czechoslovak Federal Republic in June 1990 divided non-governmental organizations into 18 groups - of general focus, trade union nature, of children, young people and students, professional nature, religious nature, those focused on industry, agriculture, services and other economic activities, focused on solving social issues, health protection and forming healthy way of life, focused on protection of nature and environmental issues, focused on issues of nations, nationalities, ethnic groups and regions, focused on development of social and natural sciences and technology, focused on upbringing, education and schooling, focused on physical training, sports and tourism, focused on issues of peace, security, cooperation and human rights, focused on development of foreign contacts, focused on relation to prominent persons, focused on specific interest activity and on others.
- 5) A resolution passed at a meeting of former career soldiers and civilian employees associated in the Civic Forum - internal material of the Association Military Revival
- 6) In case of the Association of Military Youth and Association of Career Soldiers, we speak in the given context about organizations, which had a federal nature in time of their formation. After partition of Czechoslovakia and formation of the separate Czech Republic on January 1, 1993, the mentioned organizations went on their activities under the same name and within the territory of the Czech Republic.
- 7) It is interesting that an organization with the same name did exist in the military during 1968 - 1969. Its formation was possible in a period of reformist policy of the "Prague's Spring". At the beginning of "normalization", the Association was disbanded and its founders were forced to leave the military involuntarily.
- 8) Within the Czechoslovak People's Army, there was a special category of conscripts - the so-called Graduates of Universities Military Chair. The university students carried out regular military training during their studies, and at the end of the studies they joined conscription service for 12 months (the other recruiters' service length was 24 months).

9) Direct accelerator of November 1989 events was a peaceful student demonstration on November 17, 1989 that expressed discontent with the policy of ruling communist party. The demonstration was violently dispersed, and students then in protest declared a student strike at all universities/colleges. That strike met with nation-wide support.

10) According to official sources from the Main Political Administration of the Czechoslovak People's Army, there were 60% of conscripts and career soldiers organized in the Socialist Union of Youth. But a number of really active members and working local organizations was substantially lower - according to data that were officially published after November 1989, it was about 15 - 20% of soldiers.

11) See the Programme Declaration of the Association of Career Soldiers of the Army of the Czech Republic (in a bulletin the Fundamental Documents of the Association of Career Soldiers of the Army of the Czech Republic, Prague 1997).

12) Adoption of Act No. 83/90, On Association of Citizens, was a significant factor for setting up of independent non-governmental organizations.

II. Institutionalization of relations between the military and non-governmental organizations (1990 - 1992)

The new management of the military after November 1989 was well aware of the importance of cooperation with non-governmental organizations also in the field of the democratic control of the military, what resulted also from efforts to use a potential of non-governmental organizations for overcoming disrespect that was felt in society towards the military in some years after November 1989. The public had perceived the military as a subject operating outside society, which moreover needed considerable amounts of funds for ensuring its existence. That invoked a decline of prestige of the military and military profession as well. The management of the military was aware of seriousness of problems in relations of the public towards the military, and it was prepared to realize measures, which ought to have reversed the mentioned negative situation. It is illustrated also by presentation of Dr. Antonín Rašek, the deputy defence minister for social and humanitarian affairs at one of expert seminars of the Ministry of Defence in November 1991, where he stated that: "...we face a serious problem on how to reverse this development. In a set of targets for development of the Czechoslovak Army we consider necessary to implement measures leading to lessening negative attitudes towards the military before 1993, and before 2000 to achieve reinforcement of civic recognition of responsibility for defence of sovereign democratic country, and before 2005 to create a situation, when the military would enjoy authority in society and its close cooperation with all social components in different fields of life would become one of the stabilizing factors of social life in the Czechoslovak Federal Republic (CSFR)". (1)

The Ministry of Defence had made in this direction a number of practical organizational steps. In 1990, a separate administration for public relations was established, then still within the federal Ministry of Defence. Within it a special section worked for communication with non-governmental organizations, and similar structures had been formed also at the lower command levels. At that time also constituting a position of public relations officer at all local military administrations that were authorized to cooperate with non-governmental organizations was a significant move. Due to the fact that civil-military relations needed also necessary scientific background, it was decided in May 1990 to establish the Military Institute for Social Research. The management of the Institute declared the civil-military relations as a profile topic of its research activities. In relations to issues of non-governmental organizations it was also reflected in publishing a great number of studies and publications that dealt with relations of NGOs and the military, adding that a lot of them also mapped situation abroad. (2)

In 1990, by the Order of the defence minister of July 18, an important forum was formed - these were the councils for cooperation with the public (Council of the Minister of Defence, CSFR, for Cooperation with the Public, and Councils for Cooperation with the Public at local military commands and garrisons). In preamble of the Order it was stated that it was necessary to formulate principles of dealing with the civic public, social and state organizations. "The leading idea of this orientation is the active state-forming policy of the military, its non-party position towards interests of political parties and political movements in society, and the policy of open cooperation with the civic public, namely response to social control and support for the military." (3) From non-governmental organizations the members of the Council were the Association Military Revival, Association of Career Soldiers, and the Association of Military Youth.

The basic objective of the Councils was to ensure information to be passed to the public (first of all to representatives of state administration and local government bodies, non-governmental organizations, to churches and the media) on current activities within the military, to create conditions for cooperation of the military with major subjects of social surroundings of the military, and also to find solutions to problems arising between the military and the public. But activities of the ministerial Council were not effective enough. Instead, the dialogue among partners was substituted by one-sided information passed on representatives of the civil public on situation and intentions of the military. Also the following factors posed a serious barrier to effective action:

- The Council members were predominantly institutional representatives of state administration bodies who respected the state policy towards the military. Those representatives of the public, who were holders of critical viewpoints towards the military, were not the Council's members.
- Negotiations of the Council were not being prepared enough - members of the Council were not informed on issues to be on agenda.
- Negotiations of the Council were not appreciated enough by the command of the Army - high-ranking military officials mostly did not attend sessions of the Council, what led to considerable decrease of importance and authority of the Council.
- Attending non-governmental organizations were not yet capable enough to use the Council as a platform for expressing their interests and objectives. Nevertheless, even with limited influence of the Council, representatives of NGOs cooperating with the military had an official platform that enabled them to express their common interests and viewpoints towards the Ministry of Defence, and it formed also the ground for cooperation in areas of common interest.

The above-mentioned reasons led to cancellation of this institution in 1992.

The Councils for Cooperation with the Public at a regional level on the other side go on in their activities in a number of garrisons even though the mentioned Order of the defence minister as of July 1990 was cancelled, and a new one hasn't yet been issued. It comes from the fact that at the local level more specific and concrete issues of civil-military cooperation are being resolved, which has immediate impact to the given region.

Relations between the military and non-governmental organizations were on the other hand positively affected by very frequent talks between management of the defence ministry and leadership of individual NGOs. Those meetings were also a source of many signals that played a very considerable role in a process of finding new mechanisms of the democratic control of the military. By their activities, the most important were the two non-governmental organizations - the Association Military Revival with its role in a process of the so-called reactivations, and the Association of Military Youth, which came up with a project of establishment of a conscripts spokesperson.

In the framework of rehabilitation of illegally persecuted career soldiers after 1948, the Association Military Revival initiated reactivation into military service of those career soldiers who with regard to their health, experience, professional and moral profile were able

to help democratization of the Czechoslovak Army. (4) In total, it was reactivated 1186 career soldiers as of October 1, 1991. (5) Those reactivated soldiers were placed in all services of the Army and in fact to all command levels, many of them having been offered the top positions. As an example, it is possible to mention a position of the Chief of the General Staff, Chief of Inspection of the Minister of Defence, and the Chief Personnel Management Office of the Ministry of Defence. A lot of reactivated officers also served in area of social policy, education, and in the field of social sciences - and just these fields were considerably influenced by them in a positive way. Activities of reactivated service members represented at that time a very strong element of the democratic control of the military. But the public perceived that fact in different ways - at part of the public the military gained in credibility thanks to reactivations. But the right-wing part of the public spectrum did not see much benefit from this motion because according to it only former and current communists joined together. The process of reactivations also opened a definitely fundamental question whether one of non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military could not excessively affect the development in the military through its members - reactivated career soldiers. It was first of all about a very sensitive issue of changes of personnel, style and methods of work, and the like. The management of the Association Military Revival (SVO) had in principle resolved that issue and evaded the situation, when work of the Association and reactivated officers could be perceived as activities of former organizations of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSĚ). In report of the Association chairman presented at a plenary session of its Central Council in February 1991 it was stated that "...reactivated officers entered into subordination and therefore they cannot act on behalf of SVO, they cannot differentiate themselves from others. By that an elitist relation would be formed" ... "reactivated officers cannot shield themselves behind SVO organization. After duty hours they can work in those organizations they are members of". (6) Generally, it is possible to say that the mentioned model of the democratic control of the military, that applied approximately to the end of 1993, was very specific and in former communist countries quite unique.

Among the most important elements of the democratic control of the military we can in democratic society count a category of conscripts. The thing is that they represent a group of population, which during its service gains a direct idea over the military, over spending public funds for defence, and also it becomes an information source for the public about real happenings in the Army. Important self-identification of this social group had been since 1990 connected also with an idea of establishment of an institute of conscripts' spokespersons. In this work, I have already mentioned an important role of conscripts in time of significant changes in the military immediately following November 1989, including organization representing their interests - the Association of Military Youth. Still in the first half of 1990, it was just SVM, which initiated setting up an institute of a spokesperson for conscripts. This initiative was called up by two factors. Within the Association of Military Youth, considerations were taken into account that it was necessary to open the democratization process in the military also for those conscripts who were not SVM's members. At that time, SVM received the first information about work of the institute of soldiers' spokespersons in the Netherlands, Sweden and Germany. Based on this information, a proposal for a status of conscripts' spokesperson was developed. The very reason of the proposal was to ensure achievement of credible cooperation among conscripts and their commanders - career soldiers. The holder of this cooperation from the side of conscripts was supposed to be elected representative of conscripts - a spokesperson. That cooperation was anticipated in the following four areas:

- In solving issues connected with internal performance of duty
- In solving issues of care for soldiers
- In solving issues of out-of-duty life
- In solving disciplinary affairs.

Very vital idea was in measures for protection of a spokesperson that consisted in mechanisms that saved the spokesperson against affliction for performance of their position. (7).

The Ministry of Defence backed the proposal for establishment of an institute of a spokesperson for conscripts. Within the Round Table organized to this issue by SVM at the Headquarters of the Western Military Front in Tábor on May 28, 1990, the proposal was supported by former Deputy Minister of Defence Dr. A. Rašek followed by support expressed by former Minister of Defence, General of the Army M. Vacek. The function of conscripts' spokespersons was then experimentally tested in a number of military units of the Army, and as of January 1, 1991, by the Order of Minister of Defence (at that time it was a new Defence Minister, Luboš Dobrovský), within the whole Army.

Establishment of a conscripts' spokesperson, the former SVM leadership perceived not only as internal military affair. It was aware of significant outreach of this step also to development of mechanisms of the democratic control of the military. That comes also out of the fact that performance of spokespersons can be certainly marked as an element of subjective control of the military, when the Army is saturated with "citizens who are for some period of time in uniform", and by that they represent the important civilian canal for the control of the military. Also a wide general discussion was conducted in relation to achievements of spokespersons' activities. This discussion was not led only within the military but also outside it - for example in the media; the issue of spokespersons was on agenda also during contacts of SVM with defence and security committees of former Federal Assembly, and with other non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military. The SVM managed also to monitor opinion level of conscripts not only on issues of spokespersons, but also on democratization of the military at all. For example, in July 1991, a representative opinion poll was carried out among 71 spokespersons of local elements of SVM. The result was that 91% of respondents supported opinion that the spokesperson represented highly important democratic element within military units, and in addition, 78% of those questioned expressed their personal satisfaction with work of spokespersons in their own unit. In this context, also other statements from the opinion poll in relation to perception of democratization of the military service are interesting. For 37% of respondents the democratization meant a chance to share at decision making over life and working conditions of conscripts, for 24% it was equality of all people in the military, for 21% a chance to speak openly with their superior commanders about their problems, and for 14% a chance to say openly their opinions. (8)

The work of spokespersons also faced a number of problems. The institute of spokesperson wasn't accepted on the same level inside the command corps of the Army. Part of them perceived it as unacceptable element of interference into integral command authority; another part considered it as a formal resumption of formerly working of the so-called "agitators of platoons". (9) This double

approach in the end led to the same outcome in a number of military units - formal election and formal work of spokespersons. More conservative part of command corps at all levels wasn't also willing to accept the fact that within the military a system is allowed to work, which in fact, separately from the military hierarchy, can deal with information on a real state of life in the Army - first of all in the field of democratization of the military service, and also that the system could create conditions for participation system of management, and which would enable the non-governmental organization represented by SVM to use this information in the process of the democratic control of the military. Such approach had narrowed a field for solution of problems that arose in activities of spokespersons (e.g. providing adequate preparation of spokespersons, selection of candidates for this position, spokespersons input into solution of social pathologic phenomena, and the like). But the SVM also did not manage to gain wider social support for work of conscripts' spokespersons - first of all from very important level of deputies of Parliament. In the given case, it was also caused by the disintegration process of Czechoslovakia, because it were first of all military political and military technical issues related to division of the Army, which were predominantly discussed in the Czechoslovak Parliament, and not issues of deepening democratic elements for control and activities of the military.

During amendment of basic regulations in the military in May 1992, the institute of conscripts' spokesperson was abolished without any consultation with SVM. After formation of the Army of the Czech Republic (ACR) in January 1993, the mentioned institute failed to be restored, in spite of several proposals put forth by SVM. The reasons for refusal of those proposals in fact did not change - it was always about unwillingness to create a system enabling other subjects than commanders to enter decision-making processes that have relation to a human potential. But SVM did not abandon this issue - e.g. during 1995 - 1996, it implemented the project focused on prevention of hazing "Stop Hazing!", which was accompanied with experimental establishment of the institute of conscripts' spokesperson in two ACR units. Subsequently, the outcomes proved success of that experiment. But discussion over this issue failed to be restored even in spite of talks of the former SVM chairman with former Minister of Defence, Vilém Holáð. But thanks to efforts of SVM, a frequency of information on the given issue had increased subsequently in the media - the public had a chance to have better idea on happenings within the Army.

Under conditions of accession of new social - democratic government, when more noticeable support has been given to formation of civic society including a chance for establishment of ombudsman, also better condition are being created for reinstatement of issue of the spokesperson to be introduced into the military. The SVM in this field started implementation of a new project in 1999 entitled: "System of Elected Spokespersons = Trust 2000", what gained support within Phare fellowships micro-projects at the Foundation of Development of Civic Society. In application for granting the Project. it is among others stated that "it can make a breakthrough in a certain taboo that it is not possible to ensure functioning of democratic elements of participation and control within the military. Moreover, it can contribute for the civilian and military publics to apprehend that it is possible to affect in much a pathetic state in the field of observing human rights in small military teams, and to do that not only by lawsuits. At the same time the institute of spokesperson can demonstrate to a number of conscripts for the first time in their life a specific content of a thesis that "Soldier = Citizen in Uniform". (10) It can be highly regarded that SVM managed to get support for its project also from non-governmental organization, which has enjoyed not indispensable authority and influence in the field of human rights observance - the Czech Helsinki Committee.

In general, efforts of SVM for installation of spokesperson into life of the military can be identified as the activity, which in fact takes mechanisms of the democratic control of the military close to very broad constituency of citizens in uniform - not only conscripts, but also career soldiers, and also to the civilian public. Working of the institute of spokesperson can definitely take the area of the democratic control of the military close to common life.

Legend:

- 1) See Rašek A.: To the Civic Control of the Military, Selection of articles for upbringing, education and new-job training, Prague 1992.
- 2) It is e.g. about theoretic empirical study "Society and Military Interrelations" (J. Cvrček), Administration of Social Management of the Federal Ministry of Defence 1992, expert study "Army and Society" (J. Hrabí et al.). Military Institute of Social Research, Prague 1991, bulletin from XIIth World Sociology Congress in Madrid "Army and Social Changes", Military Institute of Social Research, Prague 1991, bulletin of Inter-university Seminar: "Armed Forces and Society, Military Institute of Social Research, Prague 1992.
- 3) The Order of Minister of Defence of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Number 34, dated June 18, 1990.
- 4) But in all cases, it was about career soldiers unfairly dismissed from the Army after 1968.
- 5) "Informer" of the Association Military Revival, number 19/1991, page 11.
- 6) "Informer" of the Association Military Revival, number 12/1991, page 6.
- 7) See "Z" 3/90 (The SVM Informer of 1st Army, Western Military Front).
- 8) See INFO - SVM No. 3/1991.
- 9) Agitators of platoons were within the Czechoslovak People's Army an element of the so-called mass political work among conscripts. They were subordinated to deputy company commanders for political affairs.
- 10) Project "System of Elected Spokespersons = Trust 2000" (Project No. D 97/15026).

III. Possibilities, problems and limits of non-governmental organizations in the process of implementation of the democratic control of the military

Partition of Czechoslovakia and formation of separate Czech State in January 1993 meant decline in influence of non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military. During 1993 - 1996, the ruling political representation in the Czech Republic posed a considerable distrust to the process of formation of civic society, whose important part are also non-governmental organizations. Apart from other things it meant that with the exception of President of the Republic, in fact all other formal holders of the democratic control of the military (Minister of Defence, House of Deputies of Parliament and within its framework the defence and security committee, and political parties), applied only limited, many times not coordinated support for activation of broader influence of civic society subjects to issues of development of the military and defence of the country. From the view of the state administration and local government bodies a conviction occurred after formation of the Czech Republic that establishment of institutions and mechanisms of the democratic control of the military itself after November 1989, first of all at a level of formal checking on, to a some extent completed this problem. That, obviously, did not correspond to reality - the society went through another development, and this development had, of course, to affect also the military. In this context it is good to remind a crucial idea of Chris Donnelly, special adviser to NATO Secretary General for affairs of Central and Eastern Europe, who pointed out that the Army of post-communist country must get used to radical change of its position in society. And the whole society must apprehend the necessity of building new kind of the Army, and be prepared to feed this Army. But the fact is that society is being transformed while the military stays aside. (1) In case of the Czech Republic this trend had deepened - for sure the military was not in the centre of interest of political representation. That resulted in a random nature of introducing changes into the military; there wasn't a clear political objective set forth for its conversion and transformation. That, of course, caused a lot of problems in the military that definitely led to considerable criticism towards the military from the public and decline of its prestige. Under those conditions it was hard in the Czech Republic to advance activities of such subjects of non-formal control of the military as non-governmental organizations are.

In connection with changes in internal policy during 1996 - 1998, when a positive shift to perception of importance to build civic society occurred, also importance of non-governmental organizations is growing in a number of areas of social life, which relates to the field of the democratic control of the military as well. But it is not an automatic process - on the one hand it is up to non-governmental organizations themselves whether they are capable to come up with real initiatives and proposals, but on the other hand it is also up to the state administration and local government bodies and their representatives whether they are capable of reflecting these activities, of holding dialogue with non-governmental organizations and accept their suggestions. At the same time it is obvious that non-governmental organizations can within the process of the democratic control of the military affect solution of the following questions:

- How to ensure that the military did not set objectives and direction of policy in society, but rather it subordinate to social objectives.
- How to ensure that organization, build-up and all activities of the military (training and combat operations) be subordinated to national or state interests of the society in question.

- How to inter-connect society and the military by such relations that the military be integral part of the given society and optimally provided for its security, and at the same time it behave functionally and effectively.
- How to protect the military against non-competent civilian interference and provide against its abuse in favour of non-state, non-constitutional and partial interests.

In case that non-governmental organizations will manage to gain non-formal authority within society, they can then play a significant role in processes of the democratic control of the military and in the final stage they can play a positive role in integration of the military into society. Apart from others, it is also important because non-governmental organizations have no legal authorization to carry out the democratic control of the military, and that is just their non-formal authority and influence that can substitute this legal authorization.

Due to a huge range of problems related to transformation of the military, it is possible that to a some extent the order of priorities can change in the field of the democratic control of the military from the part of non-governmental organizations. In this "problem" phase for the military it is rather about a process of gaining broader support for the military in society, about help in solution of its problems wherever it is possible, and by that it is about preparation of area for subsequent application of standard mechanisms of the democratic control. In case of the Czech Republic, the success in implementation of this process was affected by the following factors:

1. Relation of the Ministry of Defence to non-governmental organizations and vice versa
2. Level of non-governmental organizations' management
3. Mutual cooperation of individual non-governmental organizations
4. Cooperation of non-governmental organizations with bodies of legislative and executive power
5. International activities of non-governmental organizations .

III.1. Relations of the Ministry of Defence and non-governmental organizations

Based on compiled knowledge it is possible to state that these relations have had still inconsistent nature - and this inconsistency is being made both by approach of the Ministry of Defence and approach and situation of non-governmental organizations themselves.

After 1993, communication of the Ministry of Defence with non-governmental organizations was conducted with different range of intensity, which was affected with a number of factors - first of all with nature of tasks the ministry and the Army was being solving, ability of the ministry to use cooperation with non-governmental organizations for better communication with the public, and last but not least, also due to frequent turns in a position of minister of defence. (2)

But in general, it is possible to state that the basic restraint for a success of cooperation was a lack of comprehensive conception for communication of the defence department with the public

resulting in non-conceptual management in this field. That culminated in 1996 by disbanding the Department for Public Relations of the Ministry of Defence. The communication of the defence ministry with non-governmental organization was then conducted within several sections of the ministry, and often also with officials who had no necessary knowledge of issues of both non-governmental organizations and the military as well. Even into this field unfortunately some "laymanism" has infiltrated into the Ministry of Defence.

If we speak about a dialogue of the defence ministry management with non-governmental organizations as about a certain mechanism of the democratic control of the military, that dialogue existed, but its outcomes had only limited impact. For example, defence minister Antonín Baudyš convened in January 1994 a meeting with representatives of 17 non-governmental organizations, where he informed them about policy of the defence department and listened to standpoints of individual organizations to activities of the Army and cooperation with it. But roundly at that meeting he was under criticism that this mass meeting cannot meet its purpose. Therefore, the similar meeting was not ever held in future. Minister Holáček in time of his work did orientate rather on bilateral talks with some non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military (Association of Military Youth, Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers, Association of Career Soldiers) - but those talks did not bring any other more detailed cooperation. But both the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers and Association of Career Soldiers came up with a number of suggestions and proposals directed to improvement of economic processes inside the Army, they drew the attention to cases of uneconomical use of budgeted funds, and failures in solving social problems first of all of the career soldiers, and the like. The Association of Career Soldiers tried in this direction to make use of relatively frequent common talks with commanders of individual operational levels of the Army - but their rate of results was limited by still not finished transformation and re-structuring of the Army. Those suggestions, which can be assessed quite explicitly, as some "internal democratic control of the military" did not meet with adequate response at competent high-ranking officials of the Army.

A certain positive shift occurred in the second half of 1997, when management of the defence ministry became aware of necessity for newly defined relation between the ministry and non-governmental organizations. In October 1997, the defence minister approved the Conception of Relations and Communication of the Defence Department with the Public. Apart from other things there is a statement in the Conception that "communication of the defence department with the public indicates willingness of the military to contribute actively to its democratic control". (3) In the framework of the Conception, also non-governmental organizations are included in this process, namely those which were listed among major target groups of the public, and to which the military will focus its attention. In the Conception, it is supposed that the part of cooperation with non-governmental organizations will be included into newly established body of the defence ministry for communication with the public. This move of the defence ministry fully corresponds to the fact that influence of non-governmental organizations keeps growing in solving problems in the field of military and security policy, and in this framework also in the democratic control of the military. But very negative mark is that the Ministry of Defence has not yet implemented the Conception in spite of the fact the Minister of Defence Miloslav Východník initialled it on October 24, 1997 already.

III.2. Management of non-governmental organizations

The fact that standpoints of non-governmental organizations that critically assess some effects in the military are not taken enough into consideration, has naturally its reason in their so far low social impact. It results first of all from relatively small membership of individual organizations - for example the Association of Career Soldiers has 2,000 members, the Association of Soldiers and Youth about 2,500 members. This state has its historical reason - too many service members after their negative experience with membership in the Communist Party and other official social organizations refuse any out-duty engagement in newly established organizations after 1989. But it is obvious that they are not even addressed by objectives and activities of new organizations - they do not think that these organizations are really capable of helping them in solution of their quite concrete problems that result first of all from a process of transformation of the military (for example, these are the housing issues, social conditions for performance of military service, etc.).

This situation is also given by a level of management of individual non-governmental organizations, which doesn't reach yet the necessary standards in comparison with, for instance, some non-governmental organizations of NATO member countries. Most organizations have, for example, very limited financial sources, which means that in management of these organizations can serve only voluntary officials, and also that public relations methods are not mastered and applied in a required way. In general, it can be said that even expert training for officials for work in non-governmental sector is not developed yet at necessary level. This issue is vital on middle and lower level of management. But recently it was possible to record some qualitative shift - a considerable influence in this direction is played by international cooperation of these organizations. Several officials of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officer, Association of Career Soldiers and Association of Military Youth had a chance to take part in study stays at their partner foreign organizations (Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Denmark), where they had possibility to acquire experience in know-how of control and management of non-governmental organizations. Work of some officials of the mentioned organizations in top bodies of international organizations their organizations are members of, is also very significant in this field.

It is obvious that just enhancement of level of non-governmental organizations management is one of key elements for their more effective impact to mechanisms of the democratic control of the military. It is not only about acquiring practical skills for management of non-governmental organizations, but also about theoretical knowledge on what the democratic control of the military is, and how to apply these theoretical knowledge in practical activities of NGOs just in the field of the democratic control. It is possible to consider as significant that the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR has implemented during 1997 - 1999 in cooperation with the Association of Reserve Officers of Bundeswehr an international project entitled the "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies" within the Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union, which has been focused just on the above mentioned acquisition of practical knowledge and skills. In an application for granting the project it is in this context written: "The Project will focus on seminars, educational and upbringing programmes for active and reserve officers in target countries in order to understand what's going about in the process of the democratic control of the military, and to make them familiar with major instrument of this control (first of all through public relations activities)". (4) This international project will be a subject of further attention, in particular in III.4. Chapter that relates to NGOs international activities.

III.3. Mutual cooperation of non-governmental organizations

Unsatisfactory situation in area of cooperation and dialogue between non-governmental organizations and the Ministry of Defence led some NGOs in 1996 for setting up a coordination platform named "Association Soldiers Together". (5) Objectives of the Association were defined in its programme statement of March 26, 1996: We consider being important - in accordance with jointly defined and shared interests - to tie and unite our efforts and our external activities. We want to be a credible, jointly acting partner to parliament, government, defence department, as well as to non-governmental organizations - our partners - abroad, and towards NATO military bodies". (6) But formation of the Association did not mean that a new structure superior to individual NGOs was created - in the Association's organizational manual it is stated that legal subjectivity of individual organizations is intact, and that its organizational build-up is only horizontal. This confirms that the Association has first of all a coordination role.

The Ministry of Defence and the General Staff of ACR welcomed and supported creation of the Association. They did it also from the very practical reason - a more advantageous possibility was created for them to hold talks with one subject of NGOs, what they consider to be more effective than to hold talks with all NGOs under the bilateral lever.

The Association is currently the official partner for negotiations with the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff on issues that relate to cooperation with the military in a number of areas, which results also from adopted "Conception of Relations of the Ministry of Defence of CR and the Association Soldiers Together". In its performance, nevertheless, problems occur. They come first of all from relatively different orientation of individual member organizations and by that from different interests applied towards the Ministry of Defence and the defence department as itself. In this context, it is demonstrated that really basic problem is also unbalance of individual organizations (membership, economic outcomes, level of management, ability to communicate with major subjects of social environment of the military, and the like). Under this "dispersion" it is very difficult for management of the Association to formulate joint policy towards the Ministry of Defence, and at the same time to respect a separate position of individual member NGOs . That is because it is quite legitimate if some organizations with broader membership and those achieving considerable results in individual areas of activities (social programme for soldiers, foreign activities, and the like) want to negotiate with the defence department directly without a mediation role of the Association's management. A complicated internal structure of top bodies of Association (Executive Council, which include five elected chairmen of organizations being within the Association, and the Presidium, which is composed of chairmen of all Association's member organizations. Also Executive Secretariat has been formed to ensure daily work and activities of the Association), does not allow to respond flexibly to needs and interests of individual member organizations. There is also a danger that the Association (or its Executive Council) starts to be considered by high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff as the only one non-governmental organization, which is a partner to the defence department and that even though it has predominantly a coordination nature. This approach could lead to limitation of communication with those NGOs , which could have more critical view to activities of the defence department. This approach could also limit the entry of other NGOs, which are not so closely

connected with the military, to the process of the democratic control of the military, and which are interested in their engagement in solving particular problems of the military.

It is also a question up to which extent the Association's partner position towards the defence department, and a possibility of critical view to its activities is limited by the fact that the Ministry of Defence covers cost for the Association's activities including other charges (the Secretariat of the Association is located in a building of the Ministry of Defence free of charge, and ministry pays its operating expenses including monthly pay for the Secretary of the Association).

Solution of these very sensitive questions seems to be the must - firstly from the viewpoint of credibility of the Associations entry into specific mechanisms of the democratic control of the military and also in connection with enlargement of NGOs activities in a period of integration of the Czech Republic into NATO. Therefore it is important that a discussion started among top bodies of the Association on possible changes in its internal work. These changes should in 1999 lead to removal of disputed moments in the Association activities.

The important factor that can affect cooperation of NGOs is opinion the defence minister expressed during a meeting with representatives of the Association Soldiers Together on August 28, 1998 that it is necessary that strong organization of career soldiers exists both with its quantity and its professional quality that could become an important partner to the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff. In the first half of 1999, following the above-mentioned, in that way formulated conclusion, the talks were started on possible integration of the Association of Career Soldiers and the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers. But the Central Council of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officer pointed out that it must be quite voluntary process without any intervention from the Ministry of Defence - the contrary could have negative impact on principles of independence of NGOs to state administration bodies.

The specific form of cooperation of non-governmental organizations with the Ministry of Defence, that reaches the process of the democratic control of the military, are their activities in a period of integration of the Czech Republic into NATO. Within it a widening of activities spectrum of individual non-governmental organizations took place. Also those non-governmental organizations, which are not so closely connected with the military, actively engaged into this process. The Ministry of Defence in this case co-operates first of all with the Centre for Democracy and Free Enterprise, the Czech Atlantic Commission and Educational Centre for Support of Democracy. These organizations also closely cooperate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Centre for Democracy and Free Enterprise, for example, in Prague initiated establishment of the NATO Information and Documentary Centre. Its objective is to provide top, dynamic and closely tailored selected information service for deputies, senators, ministers, journalists, teachers, students and also for international public through expert publications of electronically processed information with use of Internet. Within this Centre also information database was compiled. The Centre also convenes discussions on NATO issues with prominent politicians and scientists first of all for university students, and it has also produced in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence two popular educational films on accession of CR to NATO. The other non-governmental organizations, which most considerably engaged by their activities in favour of admission to NATO are the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR - in particular by its project

implemented in the framework of Phare programme of the European Union, entitled the "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies", and the Association of Soldiers and Youth through project "Programme 99" that has been focused on providing basic information on NATO for young people between 17 - 22. All mentioned projects were realized with direct support from the Ministry of Defence. That proves also their enlisting into the Plan of Communication with the Public for preparedness of the Army of the Czech Republic to contribute to integration of the Czech Republic into NATO (it has been implemented since September 1997 up to April 1999). (7) Into the same Plan also activities of the Czech Atlantic Commission were included as it has been preparing since 1996 in cooperation with the Military Academy Brno special courses of military and security policy for teachers of grammar schools. The Educational Centre for Support of Democracy is very effective in organizing expert seminars to current issues of security and military policy that are held under support of Phare and TACIS programmes of the European Union, the NATO Press and Information Office, Parliament of CR and ministries of foreign affairs and defence. So far, the following expert seminars took place: "NATO and European Security" (December 1996), "Is CR prepared to enter NATO?" (December 1997), and "NATO Enlargement: Financial Aspects and Cooperation of Candidate Countries" (June 1998).

The non-governmental organizations relatively well affected in a positive way a level of public information on admission of CR to NATO. Their activities could be in this case considered as a new dimension of the democratic control of the military, which consists in the fact that information on very fundamental step in the field of military and security policy were being mediated for the public. It can be also expected that activities of non-governmental organizations will go on in this field also under conditions of CR's membership in NATO.

It is also possible to consider important that the process occurs of broadening spectrum and cooperation of NGOs involving the democratic control of the military. In November 1997, the Round Table called the "Civilian control of the Military in CR and NGOs" was held in the framework of already mentioned Phare project. (8) The Round Table was attended by a number of NGOs representatives (e.g. the Czech Helsinki Committee, Information Centre of Foundations, the Circle of Children and the Youth), who mentioned the need for increased entry of NGOs, which are not so closely connected with the military, to the process of its democratic control. Representatives of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers, as the chief organizer of the Round Table in response to this need expressed its readiness to provide its know-how in given issues to a broad spectrum of NGOs. A concrete output in this direction was development of a project called "NGO TO ARMY 99" (9), in the framework of which the Information, Documentary, Study and Consultation Centre of NGOs for democratic control of the military was formed. The primary objectives of the Centre are:

- create a base for analyses of problems in the field of security and defence, which are important for development of independent materials and analyses for parliamentary and governmental bodies;
- initiate a competent discussion in the media on issues related to security and defence policy, as well as situation in the Army; and
- education and training of representatives of NGOs management in the field of issues of the democratic control of the military with emphasis to apprehension of instruments for the work itself.

According to first information from the Centre, it seems that there is a need among NGOs and a potential of active entry into processes of the democratic control of the military, which can contribute to formation of a platform for more qualified orientation in a complex of problems within the democratic control of the military. At the same time it is important that this can help overcome some kind of distrust towards the Army.

III.4. Cooperation of non - governmental organizations with bodies of legislative and executive power

The level of cooperation of NGOs with bodies of legislative and executive power strongly reflects ability of NGOs to enter into processes of the democratic control of the military. This first of all relates to a way on how NGOs communicate with bodies of legislative and executive power, and whether this communication leads to achieving real results that can affect a level of the democratic control of the military. It is understandable that this issue closely relates to the level of management of individual organizations and to their influence within the military. Based on knowledge learnt, we can formulate the main forms of cooperation:

1. Entry of NGOs into legislative process that relates to issues of the military, defence and security policy;
2. Talks and cooperation with representatives of legislative power and affecting them in favour of NGOs and their objectives in the field of the democratic control of the military;
3. Acquisition of support for NGOs activities in relevant bodies of executive power.

III.4.I. Non - governmental organizations and their participation in legislative process

The entry of NGOs into the legislative process that relates to issues of defence and security policy is affected first of all by the fact that cooperation in this field with the Ministry of Defence and other bodies of the state administration isn't limited by any law. That means that all is quite up to consideration of the mentioned subjects whether they will cooperate or not in the given area with NGOs. The practice so far performed is that viewpoints of NGOs during development and coordination process of relevant laws, directives and regulations are mostly not taken into account. On the other hand, the management of major NGOs cooperating with the military is not professionally up enough in order to be able to enter at an expert level a legislature process, which is apart from other things caused by absence of experts serving in favour of NGOs. That obviously limits a chance for NGOs to become an equal partner to the Ministry of Defence in this field and to be able to create conditions for more or less equal cooperation with use of some sort of social pressure (and all that in spite of the fact that expert legislative commissions work within all major NGOs as well as inside the Association Soldiers Together). Such a state limits also prospective cooperation with the parliament.

That was also the reason for limited access of NGOs into development of new defence legislature, which has been developing in the Czech Republic, and which is to be adopted in the second half of 1999. This new defence legislature among others includes the Constitutional Act on

Security of the Czech Republic, Act on Ensuring the Defence of the Czech Republic, Defence Act, Act on the Army of the Czech Republic, Act on Performance of Conscription (Alternate) Service and Military Exercises, and on some legal relations of reserve soldiers, as well as the Act on Career Soldiers. The same situation is in the case of development of fundamental conceptual documents related to defence and security policy - in the given case it was about the development and discussion over the National Defence Strategy.

Some exception within NGOs is the Association of Career Soldiers, which managed to establish direct contacts with the Section of Legislature and Legal Service of the Ministry of Defence, which enabled the Association to enter regularly into coordination process over laws that relate first of all to issues of career soldiers. Even for this positive fact the cooperation was made problematic as it can be learnt from the Association's documents, by late distribution of bills for comments (e.g. one day before the end of coordination process), and by almost not used suggestions and ideas provided by the Association. Also due to the mentioned reason, the Association submitted a proposal to be included into developed Act on Career Soldiers that NGOs cooperating with the military should be equal participants of coordination process within the Ministry of Defence.

In this context it is necessary to state that following appointment of a new minister some qualitative shift is felt in perception of NGOs role in the given field. The Minister of Defence, Vetchý, for example, declared that the Association Soldiers Together represented a platform that could not be missed in a process of coordination of important bills. But it is obvious that the most important element in entry of NGOs into legislative process will be legitimacy of organizations, which is, for example, given by their membership. This conclusion was confirmed, for instance, also at the third session of the Association of Career Soldiers Board on October 23, 1998. During the talks, apart from others, also commander of the Ground Forces of ACR, General Bohumil Hrabal, took his floor, pointing out that the Association should more aggressively apply their influence on politicians' behaviour, and to open the problems towards the parliament. But for that it is necessary to have "not a couple of clubs but at least 15,000 members". (10) This conclusion certainly applies generally also to other NGOs .

III.4.2. Talks and cooperation with representatives of legislative power

The NGOs try to solve a deficit in entry into a legislative process, apart from other things, by the direct talks with deputies and senators. A number of talks have already been held in this field but due to the above-mentioned weak expert background these attempts were without a substantial impact on the given situation. In spite of that it is possible to record that in several cases a discussion has been started on specific problems, and also cooperation was established in the framework of particular activities and projects.

In April 1993, the Association of Military Youth (SVM) initiated cooperation with former deputy of the Defence and Security Committee of the House of Deputies of Parliament, Tomáš Svoboda, in joint seminar of that committee held to issues of conscription service, where high-ranking officials of the defence department and SVM representatives were present. (11) The Association of Military Youth approached the organization of that seminar with an idea that conscripts are important players of the Democratic control of the military. They have represented a group of population, which during its service is gaining the immediate image on the Army, on spending public funds. Perception of this group about the Army is at the same time considerably affected by conditions the conscripts live in.

And just these conditions of the service were in the centre of attention of the talks. The SVM representatives expressed their opinion at the seminar that performance of the conscription service represents from the part of young men a voluntary service in favour of the country and based on that it is a commitment of the state to create corresponding - first of all social - conditions for its performance. According to SVM's opinion, which was worded at the seminar, this aspect is still being omitted, which apart from other things create a room for outlasting of social - pathological phenomena, first of all of hazing. At the seminar also the problem of not dealing with an SVM's proposal was put forth, and that was the establishment of institute of conscripts' spokesperson. SVM also put forth detailed proposals for making the conscription service more attractive - those related first of all to a chance for soldiers to get the second job qualification during their conscription service if they are interested in. The discussion to those suggestions was rather voluminous - and that from both parties. And due to the fact the seminar was held only three months after establishment of the defence and security committee of the Czech Parliament (12), for deputies it was really the first opportunity to acquaint themselves with problems of conscription service. But just this "first appearance" limited possibilities of deputies to more deeply involve into discussion and respond to attitudes of ministerial representatives who did not wish much to open problems connected with conscription service. Even a question was raised about legitimacy of SVM entry into solutions of those problems. The seminar in the end finished without any particular outcomes - and the ministry even did not accept the only one more concrete conclusion - recommendation for the defence ministry to get involve into possibility to establish spokespersons of conscripts. Yet for SVM this seminar created another room for its activities - the initiator of the seminar, Svoboda, backed SVM, in a form of personal recommendation, in its efforts to gain support from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Physical Training for its activities and for getting a grant for SVM that could enable further development of its activities. It is also necessary to say that former Chief of the General Staff of ACR, General of the Army Karel Pezl, in a similar way supported SVM towards the Ministry of Education, Youth and PT.

Also the Association of Career Soldiers tried to develop contacts with the House of Deputies of the Czech Parliament. The one of the most significant was participation of a deputy and former chairman of Constitutional Legal Committee of the House of Deputies, Miloslav Výborný, at a session of the SVP Central Council on April 27, 1995. M. Výborný had a chance to get acquainted at that session with critical view of the Association management towards insufficient level of cooperation of defence ministry management and the Association of Career Soldiers - the criticism related first of all to the fact that the defence department was not capable of using a potential of NGOs cooperating with the military and poor communication of the department with NGOs . Also insufficient level of social and personnel management policy was criticized. The session also pointed out that due to the above a decline in prestige and social status of career soldiers occurred.

Also bad situation in the field of development of new military legislature was a subject of criticism. Miloslav Výborný in response to a critical tone of the session emphasized that he was aware not only of legal aspects of mentioned problems but also of their all-political implications. At the same time he pointed out that it was in fact the task of deputies - they should view affairs and problems, and to judge, solve and decide over them accordingly. Speaking about SVP activities, he appreciated its active approach to solution of existing problems of the Army, and first of all he supported the Association's entry into development of bills related to the military. In addition, he recommended being in more often contacts with deputies, to present them recommendations and

suggestions from areas that are SVP's subjects of interest, for deputies to be able to defend them or advance solutions that corresponds to interests and needs of the military and soldiers themselves.

Participation of M. Výborný in a session of the Central Council of the Association was also significant by the fact that he could get acquainted on the instance with working experience of associations of career soldiers in Western Europe - EUROMIL president, J. Rotboll, who also took floor at the session, pointed out that it was necessary to take very seriously the idea that career soldier is citizen in uniform.

A number of talks was held also from the level of the Association Soldiers Together. The Association's management held, for example, talks with chairman of the Defence and Security Committee of the House of Deputies of Parliament, chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security of the Senate of Parliament, and the like. But the mentioned talks had rather informative character on activities of Association, and had no immediate impact within the legislative bodies in a way of more decisive enforcement of interests and objectives of NGOs united in the Association.

One of forms of building-up influence of NGOs is no doubt a possibility to create strong non-formal ties with representatives of legislative bodies what can bring a chance for an NGO to increase its social influence. That applies fully to those NGOs, which are interested in cooperation with the military, as well as those, which enter into the processes of its Democratic control. That can be done also by support of an NGO to a specific candidate to parliamentary election. Within those NGOs, which were mentioned in this work, only the Association of Career Soldiers used this opportunity. Before the last federal election in June 1992, it addressed all major political parties with a proposal to put on their slates the candidates - the Association's members - who would have been able to protect interests of career soldiers and the military in case they would have won. To the given proposal only formation of the Left Block (Levý blok) responded positively, and put the Association's members Jan Novák and Libor Kostya to its slate, and finally, these candidates were elected deputies. (13) A possibility of their positive work in favour of the Association was later limited by very short period of work of the Federal Assembly that was disbanded in December 1992 as a consequence of partition of Czechoslovakia.

Entry of deputies and senators into particular activities of NGOs that have relationship with the democratic control of the military represents another form of cooperation. For example Senator Jan Kráček, the first deputy chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security has involved actively into implementation of already mentioned international project of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR, named the "Civilian Control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies". Senator Kráček is also a member of the Czech Atlantic Commission.

Besides deputy Svoboda, the Association of Military Youth cooperated in 1992 also with former deputy to the Federal Assembly of CSFR and a member of the Defence and Security Committee of one of its chambers, Josef Žanda, in dealing with problems of conscripts and the service itself. Deputy Žanda also attended XIVth Congress of European Council of Conscripts Organizations held in 1992 in Czechoslovakia.

Generally, it is possible to state that cooperation of NGOs with legislative bodies, related to the democratic control of the military aspects is at the level that altogether corresponds to its importance, position and activities. Enhancement of activity in the given area is definitely connected with broadening last mentioned factors. Also insufficient level of mutual cooperation in this field and its coordination is a limited element of the above.

III.4.3. Cooperation with bodies of executive power and winning their support

NGOs, which enter into processes of the democratic control of the military obviously first of all cooperate with the Ministry of Defence, nevertheless, it is possible to record also cooperation with other top bodies of the state administration - first of all with the Ministry of Education, Youth and PT, and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The great importance for activation of cooperation in this field had definitely talks of the Executive Committee of the Association Soldiers Together with the prime minister of the Czech Republic Miloš Zeman on November 12, 1998 that followed already mentioned reception by the defence minister on August 28, 1998. Those were the ever first official talks of NGOs representatives that in their activities predominantly focus on military issues, on issues of military and security policy, with the top official of the executive after November 1989. The main result of the talks was the explicit confirmation for existence of such type of organizations, and their role in the field of cooperation of the military with the public. The prime minister at the same time emphasized importance of these organizations as equal partner to state administration bodies in development and reviewing pieces of legislature that relate to the military with a stress to problems of service members and also issues for support

of the military veterans. This approach has got a great importance because it has practically opened greater room for NGOs for exerting their opinions and suggestions in the field that has immediate impact for enhancement of their authority and influence. The crucial question for up-coming period therefore is, to what extent the NGOs, and the Association as their coordination platform, will make use of proactive approach of the government, which was expressed by this mentioned reception attended also by the defence minister.

Cooperation of individual NGOs with the above mentioned ministries in the framework of specific projects that cover problems where it seems needy for NGOs engagement, represents significant form of cooperation with bodies of executive power.

Highly active in this field is first of all the Association of Soldiers and Youth. It is possible to emphasize that its long-lasting cooperation with the Ministry of Education in realization of concrete fellowship grants that the ministry invites applications for, represents highly significant form of practical implementation of the democratic control of the military. The cooperation has two important aspects. SVM can, with help of those grants, engage in a long term in solution of relatively serious problems in the Army, of those, which are first of all connected with social pathological phenomena. Support of the Ministry of Education at the same time enables SVM to enter in this framework towards the defence department as an independent subject. It enables the SVM also to address increasingly the public, to initiate public discussion on problem aspects of military service. During 1994 - 1997, SVM, thanks to the projects supported by the Ministry of Education, dealt with issues of hazing (projects "Stop Hazing!" - 1995, and "Hazing, Alcohol, Drugs - Stop, Help" - 1996), and

also with issues of leisure time of conscripts (projects "At Ease, Free" - 1996, and "Away with Boredom" - 1997). The media largely covered especially the projects that dealt with hazing issues - in the annual report of the Association of Military Youth presented at VIIIth General Meeting of the Association is, for example, stated that "many nation-wide newspapers and magazines, for example Respekt, Kvìty, Blesk, but also many regional papers - Moravský den, Hanácké noviny, Dobrý veèer and Rovnost - published articles and stories on the "Stop Hazing" project. Information on the project was also aired by the Czech Television and the Czech Radio". (14) Based on experience learnt from implementation of the mentioned projects, SVM held in March 1997 an open "Round Table" devoted to relationship of SVM and other NGOs with the military that was organized in cooperation with the chair of the public policy of the Institute of Sociological Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, the Charles University. Also the fundamental thesis was formulated there that SVM wants by its activities help the military solve its problems and gain for solving these problems social support and assistance. It is necessary to state that this approach met already with appreciation in the Ministry of Defence, and at present a detailed cooperation is underway first of all with expert services of the Ministry that are in charge of the social policy. (15)

The Czech Atlantic Commission maintains a close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with financial and material support of which it held a number of seminars, conferences and meetings with the public devoted to issues of the North Atlantic Alliance, to a place of the Czech Republic within efforts of all-Europe and world-wide security and cooperation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also directly supports activities of the Czech Atlantic Commission, primarily its activities in the framework of the Atlantic Treaty Association (ATA), which associates national Atlantic commissions and councils of NATO member countries.

In case of cooperation of NGOs, which engage in issues of the democratic control of the military with bodies of executive power, the future extension to other ministries should be also considered as they also have important role in its detailed execution. That relates, for example, to ministries of finance, industry and commerce, and the interior. From the other hand it seems to be also a question of readiness of the mentioned ministries to be able to reflect their overall role in the process of the democratic control of the military, and in this framework also a position of NGOs in its implementation.

III. 5. International activities of non-governmental organizations

NGOs international activities represent very important part of the democratic control of the military in the Czech Republic. It is first of all due to the following reasons:

- The Democratic control of the military in the Czech Republic gets international dimension by membership of NGOs in international organizations;
- International activities and membership in international organizations increase legitimacy of these organizations and their influence in the Czech Republic;
- NGOs gain support for their activities in the field of the democratic control of the military from abroad.

- International activities of NGOs and their work have indispensable impact on prestige of the Czech Republic and its Army abroad, first of all in NATO member countries.

Currently, the Association of Soldiers and Youth, Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR, and the Association of Career Soldiers are maintaining the most important international contacts. The Association of Soldiers and Youth has been a member of the European Council of Conscripts Organizations since 1991, which unites national organizations of conscripts from 11 European countries. (16) The Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR has been a member of the Association of Unions of Military Reservists of Central European countries - the Gaming Initiative (17) since 1993, and an observer in the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers of NATO member countries - CIOR. The Association of Career Soldiers has been a member of the European Organization of Military Unions EUROMIL (18) since 1991. These unions have established also bilateral contacts with individual national unions/associations that are members of the mentioned international organizations.

Activities of national and international organizations of soldiers are to some extent the indicator of changes that have been underway with the armies. Those changes demonstrate gradual transformation of a soldier as an isolated element in society in the soldier as the citizen in uniform who is its integral part, and who have, the same as others, their job - even though by its nature specific - focused on defence and protection of society. But it is obvious that realization of a thesis on citizens in uniform can be only applied where soldiers "live in democracy and will be able to defend this democracy." (19) Such perception creates also a framework for involvement of national and international organizations into processes of the democratic control of the military.

It is very important that work of soldiers' organizations is codified also in a number of documents of influential inter-governmental organizations. For example the Council of Europe adopted on March 30, 1988 a resolution No. 903, in which it "encourages all members of Council of Europe "...members of armed forces of all ranks to make use of the right to establish specific associations created for protection of their professional interests in the framework of democratic institutions, which the Council joins and wants to play an active role". (20) Also in a resolution of the European Parliament, called the "Observance of the Human Rights in the European Union" from 1984, it is stated that "the European Parliament strongly draw the attention of both member countries and candidates for the European Union to set rules and principles for recognition of the right of assembly inside armed forces - for conscripts, soldiers for time contract, and career soldiers." (21)

The importance of the Czech NGOs being members of international organizations of soldiers is given also by their direct contacts with prominent European and Euro-Atlantic structures. ECCO enjoys, for instance, a status of observer in the Council of Europe. EUROMIL also enjoys an advisory status in the Council of Europe and is a discussion partner to the European Parliament, NATO and to the International Labour Organization. CIOR has very close relations to NATO authorities.

In general, all mentioned facts demonstrate significant international background for NGOs, which plays indispensable role in specific outputs of NGOs in the field of the democratic control of the military.

III. 5.1. Association of Soldiers and Youth

International activities of the Association of Soldiers and Youth - first of all within ECCO, relate predominantly to those areas of the democratic control of the military that are linked to problems of conscripts and conscription service.

ECCO pays an extra attention to mentioned areas, which is confirmed also by the fact that it has developed the "European Charter on the Rights of Conscripts" that was adopted in September 1996. (22) The Charter is based on the General Declaration of the Human Rights (UN), Convention on Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties, and of the European Social Charter. The Charter contains requirements related to human rights, social economic conditions, conditions for performance of service and preservation of human dignity of conscripts. Apart from other things, reference is also made to the right for setting up organizations protecting interests of conscripts. By adopting the Charter, ECCO created a platform for deepening cooperation with such European institutions as the European Union and the Council of Europe are. In this respect it is necessary to point out that it was just the Council of Europe, which adopted at its session in Strasbourg on September 22, 1998 a resolution No. 1166 on human rights of conscripts. Apart from other things, this resolution speaks about necessity for conscripts not to perform during their service any work, which doesn't relate to performance of their civic duty. It contains also a call to member countries of the Council of Europe to establish the democratic control over the performance of the military service and a recommendation to create a structure specialized on solving questions and problems that could appear during its course. It is natural that ECCO responded to that resolution - it has recommended to governments and parliaments of individual member countries to establish commissions whose members could be, besides representatives of state institutions, also representatives of NGOs including conscripts' organizations, and which could contribute to concrete implementation of recommended measures.

Efforts to meet the Charter provisions are being reflected also in topics of yearly ECCO seminars, which in a number of cases have direct tie to issues of the democratic control of the military. For example, 15th ECCO Seminar, held in 1993 in Lisbon dealt also with issues of conscripts' service in "out of area" missions, and in multinational forces, which is topical from the viewpoint of NGOs work in implementation of the democratic control of the military in peacekeeping missions. In case of the "out of area" missions, it was, for example, stated in the Seminar's conclusions that these operations require not only well trained soldiers, but also soldiers particularly prepared for meeting the UN tasks. It was also pointed out that there is a danger of pressure applied towards conscripts from their superiors in time of making their decisions on volunteering for UN operations. It was also stated that a conscript must get objective information on mission expectations. Conclusions of the Seminar to the given issues also included requirements for a profile of training that is to be provided for soldiers before their assignment to any mission. In case of conscripts' service in multinational forces there is also the need of specific harmonization in financial, social, life, service and legal conditions for performance of the service. (23)

Membership of the Association in ECCO helped the public in the Czech Republic to get involve seriously into issues related to the conscripts' rights, position of conscripts within the Army, and participation in solution of problems connected with all this. Very strong stimulus

in this direction was done during 1995 - 1996, when in the Czech Republic an international project of "Conscript = Citizen in Uniform" was being implemented in the framework of the Phare - TACIS programme of the European Union. (24) That project was developed by ECCO in cooperation with the Association of Military Youth as the main partner organization, and also organizations and representatives of conscripts of Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Slovakia took part in this project. The project was first of all focused on procurement of information on the course of conscription service in the target countries of the project, on publishing materials related to observance of human rights of conscripts, including the so-called Black Book on violation of these human rights, convening expert seminars and study stays to provide transfer of experience of West European organizations of conscripts (predominantly from Sweden and the Netherlands) to countries of the Central and Eastern Europe. Work of the Information Centre for conscripts in Central and Eastern European countries with a seat in Prague was also part of the project. In the Czech Republic not only members of the Association engaged into implementation of the project, but also experts in the field of military and security policy, sociologists, university teachers and officials of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff of ACR. The Association used the project first of all for emphasizing importance of its participation in fighting social - pathological phenomena - that is first of all the hazing, and also in enforcing the institute of conscripts' spokesperson. A wide reception had the second issue of the project bulletin in the Czech Republic, which contained the Guide Book on how to establish the institute of conscripts' spokesperson. (25) The Guide Book included a detailed description of a mechanism for establishing and work of this institute in the Netherlands and Sweden. The account of this publication was also in the fact that its prefaces were written by that-time ministries of defence of the Netherlands and Finland - Reius ter Beek, and Elisabeth Rehn.

But the Association has maintained also bilateral contacts with some ECCO member organizations, predominantly with the Dutch VVDM, Swedish SCVR, and Slovak ZVM. (26) In particular the representatives of the Dutch VVDM within their visits to the Czech Republic were being emphasizing importance of work of NGOs associating conscripts as a significant part of the democratic control of the military. For example, in 1993, former VVDM President, Gielt Algra, attended the seminar on problems of conscripts' role in the military, which was jointly organized by the Association and the Defence and Security Committee of the House of Deputies of the Czech Parliament. He informed participants of the seminar about work, possibilities, and competencies of VVDM within the Dutch Army. The same opportunity had also members of the Dutch delegation during their visit to the Czech Republic in December 1994 - part of the visit was also their participation in the 1st Nation-wide Exhibition of Non-profit Organizations in the Czech Republic, and within it also their active participation at the "Round Table" devoted to issues of hazing in the Army of the Czech Republic.

Also another fact significantly contributes to the overall authority of the Association, which is that its representatives have been working for a long time already in a steering body of ECCO, its Executive Committee, since 1992. Currently the chairman of the Association is at the same time the president of ECCO.

III. 5.2. Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR

At present, the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR develops its international activities first of all in the field of international cooperation of military unions' organizations. Since 1995, the Association has been a member of the Gaming Initiative. The major objective of the Gaming Initiative is to contribute to cooperation of military unions that can play an important role in integration of the Army to society in countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The main role in this process within the Initiative is played by unions of reserve officers from Germany, Switzerland and Austria. In the framework of the Gaming Initiative activities, there are also yearly seminars held to issues of defence and security policy, and the democratic control of the military. These seminars are also attended by ministers of defence, chiefs of general staffs, chairmen of defence and security committees of parliaments, as well as high-ranking NATO officials.

Orientation to work with reserve officers and long-lasting cooperation with the Association of Reserve Officers of Bundeswehr led in 1996 the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers to development of a project called the "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies", which has been implemented during 1997 - 1999 together with the Democracy Programme of Phare of the European Union. Besides the major holder of the project - the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers, and the main partner from EU countries - the Association of Reserve Officers of Bundeswehr also unions of military reserves from Hungary and Slovakia have taken part in it. The primary objective of the project was to contribute the most to information for the military and civilian public on targets, tasks and means of the democratic control of the military. In execution of this objective the project was based on the fact that during a process of integration of the military into society the great importance is being attached to reservists. They do not represent only mediators between the military and society, but they are also important element in the democratic control of the military. The project has focused in this framework to realization of workshops, educational programmes and study stays for active and reserve officers in the project countries. Within the workshops, discussion has been focused on issues related to the role of reserve officers in the process of communication among NGOs, which engage in the democratic control of the military, and also issues of passing information towards the public on problems of the military as important part of the democratic control. Educational programmes were focused on providing knowledge and practical skills in the field of cooperation with the media, and communication with the major target groups in social surroundings of the Army (state administration and local government bodies, trade-unions organizations, schools, churches). In the context with the educational programmes, it is possible to point out that they were held in cooperation with prominent educational institutions in Germany and the Czech Republic - the Innere Führung Institute in Koblenz and the Military College of the Ground Forces in Vyškov, CR. The study stays that took place in Germany were focused on making the acquaintance of a position of the Association of Reserve Officers of Bundeswehr in the process of the democratic control of the military with a stress to its role in the system of internal leadership. The attention was also paid to cooperation of the Association with the German Parliament. The study stay in the Czech Republic paid a considerable attention to cooperation of the Association with the media in the field of the democratic control of the military. For example, during meeting with a number of journalists it was stated that the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers could provide journalists with more information on issues of the democratic control of the military. Another conclusion of the study stay, within framework of which also talks with deputies and

senators, with an adviser to the president of the republic and high-ranking officers were held, was the statement that one of platforms for cooperation and also communication with the public could be formation of a community of people - civilian experts, journalists, politicians, NGOs representatives - who could concentrate for a long time on defence and security problems and the democratic control of defence and security policy, called the "Defence Community".

The important part of the project was also organization of round tables to issues of a position of NGOs in the process of the democratic control of the military. Those round tables were held in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. The round tables demonstrated apart from some national specifics that broader involvement of NGOs into processes of the democratic control of the military is highly important element in developing the civic society. They underlined also the significance of active entry of reserve officers into this process.

A great attention was within the project paid to compiling information database on problems of the democratic control of the military. The result in this direction was, among other things, also already mentioned establishment of the Information, Documentary, Study and Consultation Centre of NGOs for democratic control of the military under direction and coordination of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers.

Another outcome of the project was also publication of the Guide Book for active and reserve officers with practical manual with forms and methods to be used in communication with the public and especially with the media. In cooperation with the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Charles University, also bulletin "Security and Army in Modern Society" was published that deals with international political and internal political dimensions of civil-military relations and economic, political, social, legal and historical aspects, which are influenced by both dimensions. (27)

Generally, it is possible to state that the mentioned project contributed to enhancement of level for understanding the process of the democratic control of the military among officers actively serving in the military and reserve officers in the project countries, and it also contributed to limitation of some prejudices that can objectively exist in this area. The participants of the project have understood the importance of more open communication with the public as one of substantial elements of the democratic control of the military. Organizations of reserve officers and predominantly their management had an opportunity to get acquainted in detail with mechanisms of the democratic control of the military. The great moment of the project lies also in the fact that implementation of the project in countries of Central Europe showed to top management of defence departments of individual countries the ability of NGOs to enter actively into processes of the democratic control of the military, and to do it also in the framework of international cooperation. That was also reflected in active participation of high-ranking officials of the defence departments in a number of events held within the project. The project was also supported by some members of legislature bodies in target countries of the project. (28)

III. 5.3. Association of Career Soldiers

Membership of the Association of Career Soldiers in EUROMIL represents for the Association an opportunity to contribute to solution of a broad range of problems of soldiers in Europe-wide scale. (29)

EUROMIL is an international organization that is strongly focused first of all on solution of problems related to social position of soldiers within society and observance of their human rights. Currently, its member organizations include 500 thousand members. Due to its orientation, EUROMIL has very close contacts with European Trade Unions Confederation. But it has maintained contacts also with other distinguished European and transatlantic organizations - the Council of Europe, European Parliament, NATO, the North Atlantic Parliamentary Assembly, West European Union, and with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Association of Career Soldiers enjoys a high prestige within EUROMIL because it ranks to the most active organizations from the Central and Eastern European region. That is also the reason for the chairman of the Association of Career Soldiers to be a member of EUROMIL's Executive Committee. The importance of membership in EUROMIL increases also in connection with membership of the Czech Republic in NATO. It is important to say that EUROMIL is well aware of the fact that for providing relevant social conditions of the military service and professional perspectives of soldiers closely relates to successful integration of new NATO member countries and their armed forces into the Alliance. (30) This fact brings, of course, also relation to problems of the democratic control of the military because first of all its formal holders (especially government and parliament) should not lose from their consideration the question of necessity to solve the mentioned problems and their relation to ensuring defence capability, and to effectiveness of membership in NATO. The Association of Career Soldiers can, in relation to mentioned line of EUROMIL, in enforcing its programme focused on improvement of social position of career soldiers serving in ACR, lean on the fact that attention paid to social issues of the service is one of the most important elements contributing to stability of the Army, which directly relates to effective implementation of its democratic control.

III. 5.4. International activities of non - governmental organizations as part of efforts for accession to NATO within a region of Central and Eastern Europe

Cooperation among NGOs , which enter into the process of the democratic control of the military in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and some countries of Western Europe, this work deals with, is being held first of all within international organizations they are members of. This platform represents a significant chance for participation in integration process for organizations from Central and Eastern Europe. Within this process, a majority of countries from this region strive for admission into the North Atlantic Alliance (which came true in case of the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in 1999), and into the European Union as well. A considerable feature of cooperation among all the mentioned organizations - ECCO, EUROMIL, and Gaming Initiative - is also the fact that exchange of experience works in both directions. It is, apart from other things, feasible because NGOs from countries of Central and Eastern Europe are also capable of bringing interesting and substantial activities - the evidence for that is the implementation of Phare and TACIS projects of the European Union focused on issues of the democratic control of the military. Important contribution

for cooperation are also experiences of NGOs members serving in steering bodies of international organizations, which can be utilized in near future not only for needs of NGOs , but also nation-wide.

From the viewpoint of international cooperation, which is directly linked up with the enlargement process of the North Atlantic Alliance and enhancement of its role in a system of European and world security, a very important role is played by a prominent NGO closely cooperating with NATO - the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR). This non-governmental, non-political and non-profit organization was established in 1948 from initiative of reserve officers of Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Currently, this organization encompasses reserve officers' organizations of all NATO countries, and it associates more than 800 thousand members. Activities of CIOR are focused on maintenance and reinforcement of Atlantic spirit of member countries and on providing information on NATO activities to its members. Moreover, it contributes to organization, administration and training of reserve forces in countries of the Alliance. It upgrades their motivation, abilities, coordination and mutual trust through joint and exchangeable training programmes. CIOR maintains close ties with relevant national defence organizations and with NATO military bodies, and it develops international contacts among reserve officers. Its members are active in professional, business, industrial, academic and political circles in their countries, and they individually contribute to improvement of public understanding within NATO and for reinforcement of public support for the Alliance.

CIOR in the framework of its activities pays a great attention to the democratic control of the military. Just reserve officers are considered to be its very important part because they can share in the most effective way in "keeping good relations among government, the public, and armed forces, and enhancement of awareness on defence issues among the public". (31) Due to the fact that CIOR has in this field a considerable amount of practical skills, it has involved itself into the process of their transfer in favour of countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The importance of these activities was also emphasized by NATO command. In February 1995, during reception of the CIOR management delegation, former chairman of the NATO Military Committee, Field Marshal Sir Richard Vincent said that reservists had a chance "to play an important role in integration of the military into democratic society in new independent countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It is a virgin country because organizations of reserve officers do not exist in those countries". (32) In this context it is necessary to say that CIOR has established and developed cooperation with the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The reserve officers from these countries have attended specialized expert seminars focused on issues of defence and security policy of NATO, democratic control of the military and formation of reserve officers' organizations. Those seminars are being held in the framework of the Partnership for Peace Committee of CIOR. During one of similar seminars, which was held in December 1997 in Oberammergau (FRG), individual committee members also discussed in detail a possibility of CIOR assistance in establishing independent organizations of reserve officers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland that will gradually become CIOR member organizations in relation to accession of these countries to NATO. But this is not only a one-way process - for example, the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR contributed to planning and organization of large international conference held by the US Army War College and CIOR, called "Euroasian Security in Era of NATO Enlargement", which took place in Prague, August 1997. (33) But the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers has been cooperating with CIOR since 1993 already. That has created a platform also for further cooperation with the North Atlantic Alliance in the field of solving

problems connected with the democratic control of the military. The role of the Association was in this direction highlighted also by the fact that at a winter CIOR session in February 1999, the Association was granted a status of an observer to CIOR, which represents the last step before full membership.

Legend:

1) See Donnelly Ch.: Defence transformation in the new democracies: A framework for tackling problems. In: NATO Review, No. 1/97.

2) During 1993 - 1998, there were five politicians at a position of the defence minister (Antonín Baudyš, January 1993 - September 1994; Vilém Holáček, September 1994 - July 1996; Milošlav Výborný, July 1996 - January 1998; Michal Lobkowitz, January 1998 - July 1998; Vladimír Vetchý, July 1998 - till present).

3) See Conception of relations and communication of defence department with the public - ref. No. 10144/137, initialled by the defence minister, Milošlav Výborný, on October 24, 1997.

4) See Project No. 96/5294 "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies", Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union.

The Phare (in French "lighthouse") is focused on projects in a number of areas (e.g. economy, social policy, science, development of human rights and freedoms, and the like), which can help enable to countries of Central and Eastern Europe preparation for admission to the European Union. In a recent period, the same name of the programme was used but with capital letters - PHARE - originally it was designed for assistance of the European Union in restructuring Polish and Hungarian economies (Poland and Hungary Assistance to the Reconstruction of the Economy). The similar programme to Phare is TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Common Independent States), which has been designed for states of former Soviet Union and Mongolia.

5) Currently, the member organizations of the Association are the following: Association of Christians for ACR, Czechoslovak Community of Legionaries, Association of Soldiers and Youth of CR, Association of Foreign Airmen, Association of Civil Defence of CR, Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR, Association of Airmen of CR, Association of Reserve Officers of CR, Association of Career Soldiers of CR, Union of Army's Sports Clubs of CR, Association of Military Rehabilitated, Military Section of Confederation of Political Prisoners, Association of Support Technical Battalions.

6) See Programme Documents of the Association Soldiers Together (Internal materials of the Association Soldiers Together).

7) See Plan for Communication with the Public to Readiness of the Army of the Czech Republic to Contribute to Integration of CR into NATO, ref. No. 10144/101, initialled by the defence minister, Milošlav Výborný, on September 12, 1997.

8) See Bulletin of Project "Civilian control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies" No. 2 - 3/1998.

9) Project "NGO TO ARMY 99" (Information, Documentary, Study and Consultation Centre of NGOs for democratic control of the military) (Internal project of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of ACR).

10) See "A Report" No. 22/1998, a fortnightly of ACR.

11) Participation at the seminar was very representative - besides part of committee members for Defence and Security of the House of Deputies of the Czech Parliament, also the First Deputy Minister of Defence, Chief of the General Staff of ACR, commanders of former operational commands of ACR West and Centre were present. Also journalists attended the seminar.

12) Till December 1992, the Committee for Legal Protection and Security worked within the Czech National Council, the top legislative body of the Czech Republic. This committee was first of all involved with issues of departments of the interior and justice. The issues of defence of the state and the army were under jurisdiction of defence and security committees of the Houses of People and Nations of the Federal Assembly (i.e. federal parliament). After disintegration of Czechoslovakia and formation of a separate Czech Republic, the Czech National Council transformed into House of Deputies of the Czech Parliament. In its framework, also this mentioned Committee for Legal Protection and Security had transformed into the Defence and Security Committee with responsibility for issues of defence and the military.

13) According to the Defence Act that is in force (§ 24), in case the career soldier is elected the deputy of a legislative body, his active duty service is suspended for the period, his deputy mandate is valid.

14) SVM for Pocket, issued by SVM, Prague 1996.

15) More on activities of SVM see e.g. Balabán M.: Current Face and Perspectives of the Association of Military Youth, Selection of Essays, Ministry of Defence of CR, August 1995; Balabán M.: Non-governmental Organizations and the Army, Bulletin: Security and the Army in Modern Society, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague 1997.

16) European Council of Conscripts Organizations (ECCO) was founded in 1979. At present, its active members are the national organizations of Austria, the Czech Republic (1991 is being stated as the accession year, because the Association of Military Youth of the Czech Republic became, following decision of the ECCO Executive Committee, immediate successor organization to the federal Association of Military Youth of Czechoslovakia), Finland, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden. The permanent partner of ECCO is the Foundation of VVDM - former organization of conscripts of the Army of the Netherlands.

17) The Gaming Initiative was founded in 1995. At present, it associates organizations of military reserves of Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

18) The European organization of military unions was founded in 1972. EUROMIL members are associations/unions from Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, (1991 is being stated the accession year of the Association of Career Soldiers to EUROMIL, even if at that time the Association worked within former Czechoslovakia. After its partition, the successor organizations to the former Association - the Association of Career Soldiers of the Czech

Republic and the Association of Career Soldiers of the Slovak Republic - were in fact immediately enrolled as full EUROMIL members in 1993, while continuity of their activities is being recognized since 1991), Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

The EUROMIL specific is its possibility to include more than only one association from each member countries. At present, this is the case of Belgium (2 associations), Denmark (2), Germany (2), Hungary (2), Portugal (3), and Spain (3). Organizations from Albania, Poland, Spain and the Ukraine enjoy a consultative status.

19) See The European Charter of the Rights of Conscripts, European Council of Conscripts Organizations, Utrecht 1996.

20) See Bulletin: Army and Social Changes, Military Institute of Social Research, Prague 1991, page 68.

21) See the Document of the European Parliament A4-0112/97.

22) ECCO has adopted the "European Social Charter for Conscripts" in 1991 already. Based on five-year experience learnt during its fulfilment, this Charter was in 1996 amended and renamed to the "European Charter of the Rights of Conscripts".

23) See ECCO Echo No. 3, November 1993.

24) See Project "Conscripts = Citizen in Uniform" (from archive of European Council of Conscripts Organizations).

25) See "Second Bulletin of ECCO's Project Conscript = Citizen in Uniform", and "The Guide Book for creating a representation system for conscripts", ECCO, Utrecht, February 1996.

26) The Dutch organization of conscripts VVDM (Vereniging Van Dienstplichtige Militairen) was founded in 1966, and in 1996 it terminated its activities following full professionalization of the Army of the Netherlands. At present, the Foundation of VVDM (Stichting Erfgoed VVDM) works in the Netherlands. The Swedish organization of conscripts SCVR (Sveriges Centrala Varnpliktsrad) was founded in 1970. The Slovak organization of conscripts ZVM (Zväz vojenskej mládeže) was created in 1993 after partition of Czechoslovakia and the federal Association of Military Youth.

27) See Sarvaš Š.: "Security and the Army in Modern Society", Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague 1997 (No. 6/1997 in the Public and Social Policy volume).

28) According to the Interim Report to the project of the "Democratic control of the Military and Officers in Democratic Societies" developed up to September 30, 1998, the round tables to issues of relation of NGOs and the Democratic control of the military in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, were attended by the following officials: in November 1998 in CR - the deputy chairman of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security of the Senate, Parliament of CR, Jan

Krámek (he assumed the auspices over the meeting), former commander of ground forces of ACR, General Jiří Šedivý, and commander of territorial forces, General Petr Voznica; in June 1998 in Hungary - the state secretary of the Ministry of Defence, Tamás Wachslar, and deputy chief of the General Staff, General Lajos Fodor; in March 1998 in Slovakia - the supreme director of the Strategic Planning Section, Colonel Slavo Manga. Senator Krámek also received in April 1998 participants of the study stay in CR organized within the project focused on the area of cooperation of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers with Parliament of CR, and with the media in the field of the Democratic control of the military. The meeting was also attended by deputy Jiří Payne, a member of the Foreign Committee of the House of Deputies of Parliament of the Czech Republic.

29) Career soldiers form membership base of most organizations associated in EUROMIL. The most numerous member organization - the Association of German Bundeswehr - associates also conscripts. Due to this reason it is necessary to speak about all soldiers to be a target group for EUROMIL activities, and not only about career soldiers.

30) See the EUROMIL Brussels Declaration, May 5, 1998.

31) See Guide Lines - Fundamental Principles which should govern a Reserve Officers Association.

32) See Gerry C. A. Alexander: "Role of Reserve Associations in a Democracy", Brussels 1997

33) For detailed information on the conference agenda, see the "European Security and NATO Enlargement: A View from Central Europe", Strategic Studies of U.S. Army War College, April 1998

IV. Position and tasks of non-governmental organizations that engage in issues of democratic control of the military in some countries of Central Europe (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia), and in Russia

The work of non-governmental organizations in process of the democratic control of the military is a significant social factor in the above named countries of Central and Eastern Europe. They grew up and started to engage themselves in a historically short period after communist regimes were over, and they entered a sphere, which was a forbidden area for any social control within those regimes. There are many identical but also specific features in activities of these organizations, which are done by historical development aspects of countries, and distinctions in their transition to democracy. It is obvious that Russia contra-distinguishes well in this framework, which was the reason to earmark a special part of this chapter for Russia.

IV.1. Situation in Hungary, Poland and in Slovakia

The democratization of civil-military relations that is based on effective control of the military plays an important aspect of the democratic development in Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. It includes a wide complex of measures and steps - first of all the clear constitutional and legislative limits for competence of the top state institutions and their representatives, parliamentary control of the budget, control of the General Staff and military commanders, but also transparency of the defence policy. In general, these major requirements were managed to meet in the mentioned countries. In case of Hungary and Poland, meeting these requirements had a direct relationship with a process of entering NATO, as it set forth as the only major condition for accepting the new members the working system of democratic control of the military. (1)

Also work of non-governmental organizations occupies an important place in a process of the democratic control of the military. The foundations of non-governmental organizations that engage in the given affairs is in all these three countries, similarly to as in the Czech Republic, connected with involvement of organizations relatively closely tied with the military. It is about the Association of Career Soldiers, Association of Reservists, and the Representative Union of Border Guard Conscripts in Hungary, the League for Defence of the Country, the clubs of reservist officers, and the Club of Former Career Soldiers in Poland, and the Association of Career Soldiers, Association of Military Youth, and the Association of Reservists in Slovakia.

The mentioned organizations have also broad international ties corroborating their authority in the mentioned democratic control of the military. In fact, all the mentioned organizations cooperate with, or are members of, according to their orientation with already mentioned international organizations of ECCO, EUROMIL, of the Gaming Initiative, and the CIOR. Organizations of reserve officers of Hungary and Slovakia contribute to implementation of the above-mentioned project of the "Democratic control of the Military, and Officers in Democratic Societies" realized within the Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union.

Relation of the defence department with non-governmental organizations is addressed in the mentioned countries with great attention - unlike of the Czech Republic - expert bodies of their ministries of defence being in charge of issues of public affairs never ceased to work. That also

enables, among other things, to approach issues of non-governmental organizations and their participation in the process of democratic control of the military in a more complex way. (2)

The Ministry of Defence of Hungary, for example, set three basic spheres of cooperation with non-governmental organizations that relates to gathering their opinions and views on military strategic issues, implementation of main goals of cooperation (partnership), and a dialogue with society (share of duties). (3) This approach enabled also development of cooperation in area of the democratic control of the military with non-governmental organizations expressing various opinions towards the army and about the army. (4) The three basic spheres of cooperation represented as well a platform for intensive engagement of non-governmental organizations backing entry of Hungary to NATO into Hungarian communication strategy to its accession to the Alliance. These non-governmental organizations were holders of a number of activities, which were focused on the public, and which main objective was to help increase objective way of information on tasks and goals of NATO, and also what for Hungary results from NATO membership. Very important form of activity in this field was cooperation of non-governmental organizations with top political opinion-makers in setting methods and ways of communication with the public and its support. Hungarian communication strategy to accession to NATO created conditions for implementation of nation-wide open democratic discussion on important foreign, military, and security policy issues, which accession to NATO no doubt represents. Its outcome is certainly also the fact that the public "learned" on how to discuss, and it can be supposed that it will be open also in the future to discussions that are connected with its interests, including issues of the democratic control of the military. By that the non-governmental organizations, which actively shared the mentioned communication stated, created for themselves necessary conditions for making them accountable also for future to be a serious partner in the process of the democratic control of the military.

In respect to Hungary, additionally it is necessary to mention another important thing. The non-governmental organizations that engage in the process of the democratic control of the military can use also for their business the well working scientific base that specializes in issues of civil-military relations, and in this framework also in democratic control of the military. For example, within the University of National Security of Miklós Zrínyi, there is the Centre for Civil-Military Relations that in particular deals with the mentioned issues. Great attention is there paid also to the role of non-governmental organizations in implementation of the democratic control of the military. The result is that Hungary has at present a great number of experts, who are capable of providing necessary research and expert background for non-governmental organizations in their activities in the field of the democratic control of the military.

In Poland, there is a very wide network of non-governmental organizations that closely cooperate with the military. (5) This relates first of all to organizations of defence nature, which are considered to be an important partner of the military in execution of social consensus for ensuring defence capability, and for formation of wide social support for the military. For non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military this cooperation represents a very prestige affair, what is, among others, given by the fact that the military in Poland represents in a long run the social institution with the greatest credibility at the public (the military even outruns in strongly catholic Poland the Roman Catholic Church). The

permanent and long-lasting cooperation of the military with non-governmental organizations at all levels - from nation-wide to regional and local levels literally provides that happenings in the military is under constant social democratic control. The Polish Army as a whole and the Ministry of Defence is well aware of importance of non-governmental organizations in the given case. On that is based also a strategy of cooperation with non-governmental organizations that is currently being implemented within the Polish Army, and which is focused on deepening integration of the military with society, and to making interested public familiar with national-defence problems. Also implementation of a goal to promote issues related to national defence in society is connected with it, and for constituting a lobby in favour of the military in the society.

Slovakia was up to recent parliamentary election in September 1998 perceived as a country with limited democracy, first of all due to policy of the ruling nationalist Movement for Democratic Slovakia. Obviously, it has also a certain reflex in the military first of all from the viewpoint of aspirations for direct political influence towards the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff. But the military with its 75% level of support in the public represented in Slovakia the most credible institution, which created place for not being affected in too large scale from the part of non-democratic government. Under this situation, and in a whole without problems, non-governmental organizations could work and contribute to the process of the democratic control of the military by their activities. The Ministry of Defence also concluded with a number of non-governmental organizations the so-called Memorandums of Understanding, and cooperation agreements. It is possible to consider as some milestone in participation of non-governmental organizations in the process of the democratic control of the military the talks within a Round Table to a topic of the "Civilian control of the Military in Slovakia and Non-governmental Sector", which was held within the "Civilian control of the Military, and Officers in Democratic Societies" Project in Bratislava on 31st March 1998. (6) In conclusions from the talks there were recommendations spelled out for further development of mechanisms of the democratic control of the military both in formal and non-formal level. Among others, it was stated there that it is necessary to support formation of non-state and non-profit organizations for research and education in the democratic control of the military area, and help expand already existing organizations, societies and foundations that actively contribute to the democratic control of the military. One of the important requirements that arose from the talks is the one for setting up an institute that could help resolve problems of relatively large social group in the military - the conscripts, which could be, for example, a commissioner for the military in the National Council of the Slovak Republic (Slovak parliament) and a spokesperson of conscripts. Due to the fact that the Round Table was prepared by the Association of Reserve Officers and the Association of Military Youth in cooperation with military experts of the Party of Democratic Left, which was in time of the seminar in opposition but after election in September 1998 it became a governmental party that has in its charge also the department of defence, it is possible to suppose that issues of participation of non-governmental organizations in the process of the democratic control of the military will be one of the important priorities of the department. It is conformable also with efforts of the new Slovak government for expeditious integration of Slovakia into NATO.

IV.2.Situation in Russia

The Russian military currently does not represent so closed structure as the Soviet Army was, which is given first of all by the fact that tough party-ideological control of the military by the communist party does not exist more. On the other hand, there are formal institutes of the democratic control of the military, issues of the military are publicly discussed in the State Duma (Russian parliament), the military issues are covered also by the media that altogether openly (and to a some extent also objectively) reflect situation in the military. But there is still a fact that weakness of Russian political institutions, authoritarian style of president and government ruling, lack of democratic traditions, and also a permanent state of political, economic and social crises still limit chances for development of democracy in Russia, and by that also actual implementation of the democratic control of the military. Even though Russia has already some experience with presentation of political procedures, as first of all relatively free elections are, the civic society and political power are weak. The modern civic society is for now deformed and divided, and its influence on political decision making is light.

Under these conditions, involvement of non-governmental organizations, which focus on issues of the democratic control of the military is very difficult. Chances for their active work are limited, first, by persisting reluctance of state authorities and the military to cooperate with such organizations, and second, by the limited possibilities of their work both in the military and in the public. Nevertheless, step by step, there is advance in creating a platform for their activities. It is first of all due to as great as possible use that provides parliamentary democracy, even though relatively weak, by pointing out the need to observe human rights. Besides a number of problems, it is an affair at present Russia, which the state authorities, also due to international commitments, cannot put in doubt and take easy, and finally also by intensive cooperation with a number of international and national governmental and non-governmental organizations.

At present, the best-known non-governmental organizations, which engage in issues of the democratic control of the military, are organizations of the "Soldiers' Mothers" and "Independent Trade Union Association of Soldiers".

The organization of the "Soldiers' Mothers", set up in St. Petersburg in 1991, focuses on issue of observance of human rights for conscripts in the Russian Army. The organization informs the public and accountable bodies on cases of violence of these rights - it first of all relates to hazing, issues of inadequate social security for conscripts, including insufficient health care. The organization provides conscripts and their families with legal aid in case of need. It pays attention also to issues of conscientious objectors and alternative service.

The work of the organization is backed by the European Union within Phare/TACIS programme, by the Söros Foundation and the Russia - Germany Exchange programmes. In 1995, members of this organization presented cases of violation of human rights by Russian troops in Chechnya before UN court of law for human rights in Geneva. The organization also issues publications, which inform the public with its activities what serves as practical instruction for observance of human rights for conscripts. (7)

The second mentioned non-governmental organization - Independent Trade Union Association of Soldiers of the Russian Federation was set up on 17th January 1992 immediately after All-Russian Officers Assembly convened to Moscow by president Jeltsin. The president convened this officer's assembly in a bid to gain support from the officers' corps, which in its vast majority did not agree with disintegration of the USSR. Through army general Saposnikov, under whose chairmanship the assembly was held, pledged to officers to have privileged position and appropriate support in new democratic Russia. This pledge helped in that time to calm the officers' corps but was, due to a crisis economic situation of Russia, never fulfilled in reality. Proponents of formation of the trade union association were aware of unreality of that Jeltsin's pledge even in that time - first of all in confrontation with a strong decline in living standard of officers (suspension of pays, lack of flats, etc.). This assumption was fully confirmed in the years to come.

Due to non-existence of legal base in the field of social security of career soldiers of the Russian army, the Association has focused its attention first of all on activities in the field of generation of laws (also through immediate participation in discussion over laws in relevant committees of the State Duma - the Committee for Defence, and the Committee for Veterans Affairs) related to these issues - it is first about a bill on position of soldiers and a bill on civic control of the military organization of the Russian Federation. This bill that was prepared for the first reading in the State Duma in October 1998 sets principles of civil-military relations. It refers to a large scale of questions - from use of armed forces according to the Constitution, followed by regulations of service in the army, up to control of military budget drawing. The bill also discusses a system of civic control of the military, which is to be realized in three levels of control - state-administrative, parliamentary and social. (8) The overall conception of the bill confirms that relationship between protection of social rights of soldiers and the Democratic control is well perceived. It is also obvious that its passing would positively affect possibility for activities of the Independent Trade Union Association of Soldiers, but also other non-governmental organizations.

Significant issue in the Association work is a question of its independence on political parties and movements with regard to polarization on the Russian political scene. Top representatives of the Association declare that priority in their activities is first of all the defence of soldiers' rights, and that on this platform they are prepared to cooperate with all political powers and movements across political spectrum. But realities of the Russian policy drive the Association to a concrete cooperation first of all with the Communist Party of the Russian Federation. The Association has an agreement with faction of communists in the State Duma. According to words of the Association chairman, O. Svedkov, this cooperation is necessary because this communist faction is the largest in the State Duma, and therefore it can provide lobby for the Association interests. (14) Radicalization of the Association membership, which can start in connection with ongoing and deepening social and economic crisis, can mean also larger inclination to the communists. In this respect, it is necessary to point out that the Association will have to respond also to activities of the Movement for Support of the Military, defence industry and military science that represent radical opposition coalition, whose goal is to change political power in Russia and the preference of military interests and military-industrial complex. The Movement itself is closely connected with the Communist Party, and has relatively strong public support. The leadership of the Association, nevertheless, is trying also to cooperate with opposite pole of the political spectrum - in particular to enter into cooperation with the Democratic Option for Russia liberal party that was, apart from other things, a co-organizer of

international seminar titled the "Formation of Democratic Institutes in the Military" held in St. Petersburg in May 1998. (15)

International activities of the Association are important element, which increases authority of the Association. Since 1994, it has been a member of the European Organization of Military Associations EUROMIL, and it has very close bilateral relations with the Association of Bundeswehr, Germany. The Association is also engaged in TACIS programme of the European Union. Currently, establishment of international coordination council for issues of new-job training for soldiers is the major project within this programme. In April 1998, the Association initiated foundation of the International Military Trade Union Association, which associates trade union organizations of soldiers from the states of former USSR. EUROMIL highly welcomed this activity, and it has been even presumed that the Association would become a collective member of EUROMIL, which would extremely broaden chances for its work.

Generally, it is possible to say that existence and activities of the Association contribute in Russian conditions, regardless a number of problems and limits that it has in its work, to building platforms for effective Democratic control of the military in Russia. It is obvious that in Russian conditions the issue of the Democratic control of the military is more then elsewhere connected with promotion of social rights of soldiers because without their real implementation there is impossible to provide the Democratic control in full range. Due to this reason it is also obvious that the Association has a nature of trade union organization. The important fact is that gradual building of platforms for the Democratic control of the military has connection with realization of military reform in Russia. (16) This was also confirmed by the defence minister of the Russian Federation, Marshal Sergejev, who declared that "Civic control is a way of mutual action of society and its military organization. In this sense, the civic control must become the major direction of the social forces within the military reform, guarantor of its openness for every citizen of Russia". (17) Conception of the military reform perceived this way gives also to the Independent Trade Union Association of Soldiers necessary room for its further activities. Therefore its cooperation with other non-governmental organizations is also important, in this respect, for example with nation-wide organization of legal protection "Civic Control", and with regional social movement St. Petersburg entitled "For Military Reform".

Legend:

1) In a study on NATO enlargement, issued in 1995, it was, among other things, mentioned that perspective members would have to:

- prove devotion and respect to standards and principles of OSCE including solution of ethnic disputes, external territorial differences including territorial claims or domestic jurisdiction disputes by peace means
- prove devotion to support of stability and well-being, economic freedom, social justice, and responsibility for environmental security
- establish adequate democratic and Democratic control of their military.

2) In Hungary, the Department for Social Relations and Culture, in Poland, the Department of Social Relations, and in Slovakia, the Office for Public Affairs, are the bodies within individual ministries of defence responsible for cooperation with non-governmental organizations.

3) Material of International Communication Seminar "How to gain long-term trust and understanding?", Budapest, November 1 - 5, 1998, lecture by Mr. Erno Szelekovsky, Director of Department for Social Relations and Culture: "Role and importance of the maintenance of relationship with social organizations within Hungary's NATO Communication Programme".

4) Major Hungarian non-governmental organizations that produce activities in the field of the Democratic control of the military are: National Association of Clubs of Comrades, "Honvéd" Trade Union, Civil Employees Trade Union in Armed Forces, National Association of Reserve Officers, Representative Union of Border Guard Conscripts, League Against Compulsory Military Service, Hungarian Association of Antifascist, "Honvéd" Cultural Association, Association for Friendship of Hungarian Defence Forces and Society, and, the Hungarian Association for Peace.

5) The Ministry of Defence of Poland divides non-governmental organizations cooperating with the military into five categories - associations of the youth (the most prominent is the Association of Polish "Harcers", whose membership is of some 420 thousand), associations of para-military nature (this category includes, for example, the League for National Defence, associating some 500 thousand members), associations of former career soldiers and reservists (this category includes, for example, Clubs of Reserve Officers having several thousand members, and, the Association of Former Career Soldiers, with approximately 34 thousand members, and the last example, the Association of Reserve Officers, whose membership is about 3.5 thousand), associations of fellow combatants (it is about organizations associating war veterans and former political prisoners. The Association of Comrades-in-Arms of the Republic of Poland and Former Political Prisoners belong to this category together with the World Association of the Land Army Soldiers), and regional associations.

6) See Bulletin II - III of the Phare Project, the "Civilian control of the Military, and Officers in Democratic Societies", pp. 12 - 14.

7) For example, it is about the following publications: The Defence of the Legal Rights of Conscripts: From our Working Experience (St. Petersburg, 1995), and The Rights of Conscripts and Servicemen in the Russian Army (St. Petersburg, 1995).

8) For more information see Vorobjov E.: Society must be aware of its responsibility for the military, Krasnaja Zvizda, October 22, 1998, p. 1.

9) For more information see Piskurev V.: Interests of Soldiers Defend Together, Krasnaja Zvizda, November 27, 1996, p. 3.

10) It is, for example, about Ministry of the Interior, Ministry for Extraordinary Situations, Federal Security Service, Federal Border-guard Service, Federal Agency of Governmental Communications and Information, etc.

11) See Bulletin from international seminar called the "Formation of Democratic Institutes in the Military. The Project about a Bill on Trade Unions in the Military", St. Petersburg, May 30 - 31, 1998. This bulletin also included a size of the largest local organizations of the Association - St. Petersburg (4,000 members), Kaliningrad (3,500 members), and the Murmansk Region (1,500 members).

12) In 1998, active troop strength of the Russian Army was 1.2 million servicemen.

13) In this respect, there are certainly interesting data coming from sociological researches that are carried out in the Russian Army - the number of soldiers engaging in work of organizations for protection of rights have increased in 1998 compared with 1992 from 21% to 56%. (See Nizavisimoje vojennoje obozrenije No. 1/1999).

14) See Bulletin from a Round Table titled: "Formation of Democratic Institutes in the Military. The Bill on the Army Project", St. Petersburg, April 4, 1998, p. 8.

15) For more information on position of the Russian Army in Russian society at present see Balabán M.: Military Opposition in Russia - Threat or Reality?, International Policy, Prague, No. 11/1998, pp. 20 - 23, Balabán M.: Potential of the Russian Armed Forces as Power Factor in the Russian Policy, International Policy, Prague, No 4/1999, pp. 27 -30.

16) The objective of the military reform in Russia is to put the armed forces into harmony with current military political realities and possibilities of Russia, enhance combat capacity by making their structure more optimal, which relates also to a structure of and troop strength itself, improve their technical equipment and training, and to ensure adequate social conditions for service of career soldiers. The reform is to be implemented in two periods to 2005.

17) See Korotëenko P.: Marshal Sergejev prefers civic control of the military to military reform, Nizavisimaja gazeta, August 13, 1998, p. 2.

V. Experience and knowledge of non-governmental organizations that engage in issues of the Democratic control of the military in the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Netherlands

V.1. German experience: Citizen in uniform as important element of the Democratic control of the military

The Federal Republic of Germany has learned for the period of more than 40 years after foundation of its army - the Bundeswehr (1955) considerable experience from implementation of the democratic control of the military. Non-governmental organizations play an important role in its framework. Very significant is the fact that their work is put into the framework of general integration of the military into society. Unlike many other countries, Bundeswehr soldiers take part in social, public, and political life of the Federal Republic of Germany without limitation. The soldiers enjoy both passive and active right to vote. Many soldiers work as deputies at the local level, in parliaments of federal lands, but also in the German Federal Assembly (Parliament). They are members of political parties, trade unions, and non-governmental organizations, which is a significant move of integration of Bundeswehr into society. The Bundeswehr service members develop contacts even with bodies of the state administration, in business, trade unions, and in non-profit sector. The conceptions of "Internal Leadership" and "Citizen in Uniform" are connecting elements of these activities.

The conception of "Internal Leadership" is designed to carry out the three basic goals:

- Justification of legal, political and ethical reason for existence of the army and civic duty to perform the military service.
- Integration of the army and its service members into society.
- Willingness of soldiers to serve according to their consciousness, and carry out duties to their best in accordance with their abilities, and be prepared to accept limitations of their basic rights by means of special military legislature.

As to the conception of "Citizen in Uniform", the German Bundeswehr assumed this idea from Swedish and Swiss practice and elaborated it into a complete theory that is also thoroughly advanced into practice. Its part is not only participation in decision-making, partner relationship, and democratic profile of commander, but also the respect to subordinates who are full-right citizens of the country. The civic dimension of society - army relation therefore includes both responsibility of each citizen of the country for defence of society, and consistent observance of civic and human rights in internal relations within the military. This civic dimension of society - army relation has its special importance also from other point of view. Although social ranks, groups, state and other institutions including the public are very important in this relation, the real holder of society - army relation is always a concrete person. That means the citizen of FRG who is for some time always attached to any of these social formations or to the army itself. Just in a very individual citizen the perceptions are formed on society and on army, as well as on legitimacy of the military and about life within it. In some phase in history of any citizen, these perceptions may be enriched by experience

and knowledge in order to be his/her relation created and come to maturity towards the society, to its defence, and also to the military.

The mentioned conceptions were developed also based on negative experience in relations of German army with society in the past. Forcible placement of Bundeswehr into social isolation could bring fatal consequences into domestic policy because by that could develop a politico - militant - authoritarian potential vulnerable to radical propaganda, easily activated in crisis situations. On this is based also another conclusion - it is necessary for army service members to be economically, materially, and socially independent. They must not become a peripheral group of the society. The support for social integration of the military into society in sense of participation of soldiers in social and political life is at the same time an element of making the military legitimate in its social surroundings.

The existence and work of the Association of German Bundeswehr represent important place in this field. The Association was founded in July 1956, and currently its membership is some 250 thousand of career soldiers, conscripts, service members on time, reservists, veterans and surviving dependants of soldiers. The Association is independent non-governmental organization whose major objective is promotion of interests and needs of all soldiers and their families. The Association is considered to be an equal partner to the German parliament and to government. In this respect, agreements on cooperation were concluded in 1973 with the defence ministry and the ministry of the interior. Based on these agreements, the Association participates in development and discussions over all legal standards that directly relate to personal, social, and economic aspects of soldiers' life. Also sophisticated system of democratic institutions that exists both inside and outside the military helps that in a considerable way. And the Association closely cooperates with all of them. This is first of all about a system of spokespersons that are regularly elected by officers, non-commissioned officers and rank and file. These spokespersons cannot intervene into command authority but they can discuss with commanders ad hoc all issues related to performance of duty, directions, orders, and the like. The major institute that works out of the military, but in which competence is directly the management of army's problems, is the commissioner of the German parliament for issues of the military. All deputies elect the commissioner for five years. The commissioner's chief task is checking on observance of rights and freedoms of soldiers and implementing of the "Internal Leadership" principles. The Bundeswehr servicemen enjoy right to address directly the commissioner with complaints with regard to violence of their rights. (1)

The Association of German Bundeswehr contributes also to negotiations in relation to issues of defence and security policy of Germany, which is done also through deputies of the German parliament - members of the Association. It actively participated in discussions over deployment of Bundeswehr units into IFOR/SFOR serving on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which represented very serious change in German foreign policy. In recent years, the Association focuses its attention also on issue, which influence would have the deepening integration of armies in Euro-Atlantic framework to a position of soldiers serving in them. It, in particular, relates, for example, to EUROCORPS and German-Dutch Corps, but also to exercises of NATO armed forces and armies of the Central and Eastern European countries. In the Brussels Declaration of the Association of German Bundeswehr of May 12, 1995, there is, in this respect, stated that it is clear that in this process various philosophies could encounter, together with various legal and social orders. In this case, the highest common denominator could be considered to be the conception of "Citizen in

Uniform". (2) Implementation of this conception across international environment ought to be the subject of

attention of European institutions, the European Parliament in particular, which would enable its further development, first of all in relation to protection of human rights and social justice. The Association contributes to meeting this goal first of all by active work within the European Organization of Military Associations EUROMIL, of which it is a founding member. In this connection, the Association also initiated idea of the so-called European citizen in uniform, whose profile would be based on the following elements:

- Personal freedom as allowed by a free constitution
- Soldiers ready to defend their homeland and the fulfilment of human rights
- Citizens with a sense of responsibility for a unified Europe
- Responsible citizens who participate in creating the fundamental conditions for their service in the armed forces (3)

The above mentioned elements show that in case of actions of the Association of German Bundeswehr, the issue of the democratic control of the military is being connected strongly with a size of positive engagement of the Association's members, and also civil public for defence of the country, and all that not only in national but also in international scale, which represents very key element in overall context of civil-military relations.

Another very important non-governmental organization that enters into the process of the Democratic control of the military is the Association of Reservists of German Bundeswehr, which associates both active and reserve officers. It represents very influential organization - within it over 130 thousand members work (13 thousand of reserve officers, 30 thousand of NCO's, 67 thousand of privates in reserve, 4,500 active duty soldiers, and 15,500 of others). The Association's activities in the process of the democratic control of the military are one of the main areas of its business. The Association organizes annually seminars and workshops to issues of the defence policy, closely cooperates with the German parliament. This cooperation is amplified also by the fact that three members of the Association are deputies to the parliament including chairman of the Association, Helmuth Rauber. (4) Members of the Association also contribute to explaining goals and tasks of the Democratic control of the military among the public - first of all in schools and in the media outlets. The very important fact is that they can use their personal experience with working of the "Internal Leadership" and "Soldier as Citizen in Uniform" systems. The Association pays a considerable attention also to making the public informed on the role of the army, interpreting problems of integration of army into NATO. All mentioned activities of the Association contribute to deepening public information on the military and its Democratic control.

The Association pursues very considerable activities also in the international fields, which is given also by its membership in the Interallied Confederation of NATO Reserve Officers and the Gaming Initiative. Within these organizations, the Association supports a process of founding and development of associations of reservists in Central and Eastern European countries. The

Association has very close ties with similar organizations first of all in Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, and in Slovenia. Since 1997, it has been also the major partner of the Association of Commissioned and Warrant Officers of the Army of the Czech Republic in implementation of the "Civilian Control of the Military, and Officers in Democratic Societies" project, realized within the Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union. The participation of the German association in this project had a great importance, which was supposed already in a draft of the project. It was stated there that implementation of the project would not be an easy walk because no educational programmes

that would focus on members of armed forces, and which would deal with the democratic control of the military were not developed in former socialist countries. It was therefore supposed that the project could eliminate this shortcoming to a certain extent. In addition, the draft of the project included a statement that it could be expected that goals of the project would not be fully and positively met in all armies of the countries, where the project would be implemented because non-governmental organizations are its holders. "The participation of a partner from the European Union - the Federal Republic of Germany - nevertheless, can act positively" because German army - Bundeswehr and the Association of Reservists are holders of positive experience related to concrete implementation of the democratic control of the military. (5)

A considerable contribution for fulfilling objectives of the project was a study stay organized by the Association in cooperation with the Institute of Internal Leadership in Koblenz in August 1998, and which, among other things, focused on issues of acquainting with contents and mechanism of the internal leadership practice in Bundeswehr. One of results of this study stay was that the project implementation team proposed to include into

final recommendations that this German experience with existence of the so-called subcommittee for issues of the internal leadership being an expert body of the German defence minister would be thoroughly studied by high-ranking officials of defence ministries of countries participating in the project (the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia). (6) This subcommittee includes some 25 members - those are specialists in areas of economy, science and education, representatives of churches, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, and the media. Its composition thus represents all-important social powers in Germany. The work of the subcommittee has of course a great importance in a dialogue with those groups of the public that form the public opinion - which relates also to the public opinion on the military. It affects highly positively a nature of relations between Bundeswehr, its servicemen and society. It is evident that in the given case it is about one of very significant mechanisms of the democratic control of the military within which also non-governmental organizations act. According to the project implementation team, the existence and work of this subcommittee represents also a possible model for active engagement of non-governmental organizations into the process of the democratic control of the military in the three mentioned countries.

V.2. Experience of the Netherlands: Stress on human rights in the military and a constant dialogue between the state authorities and non-governmental organizations associating service members of the army - the base for effective democratic control of the military

The Netherlands has a great tradition in producing organizations that deal with promotion of rights and interests of their members. According to French scientist Lucien Mandeville, the Netherlands is the example of the country with old tradition of associative military movement, whose considerable

feature is a phenomenon of collective representation. (7) In this context, it is necessary to add that it is just the Netherlands where existence of military associations, which in fact are the trade unions in the military, has been well rooted. For now, it is relatively very specific feature, for example, within the NATO member countries themselves.

The first independent military associations of a trade union nature were founded even at the end of the 19th century. For example in 1897, a military trade union association of the navy was founded followed by the association of non-commissioned officers (NCO's) in 1898. The differences in interests, of ranks, political and religious orientation were the reason for a raise of a number of other organizations in the whole period of the 20th century. Uniting goal of all of those associations was some protection of interests of their members, promotion of human and democratic rights for soldiers and promotion of democratization of the military and the whole society. Their mutual cooperation and cooperation with other prominent and influential non-governmental organizations, political parties, trade unions, and the media, represent important part of their activities. This way orientated and in practice implemented work is just really one of the basic elements of high-level democratic control of the military performed in the Netherlands. It is completely obvious that the general public, thanks to activities of the military associations, was permanently informed about situation in army and problems that have been resolved there. No doubt that it has its importance first of all under situation, when there has been a fully professional army in the Netherlands since 1997.

Currently, there are nine major military associations in the Netherlands, which directly focus on implementation of the above mentioned goals. (8) These organizations include about 75% of army service members. The Ministry of Defence fully recognizes all the associations and they are its real partners in resolving a broad circle of issues relating to problems of the military service. This approach was being formed for a very long time. In early stages of existence of these associations, there were no formal dialogue between them and the government. Only in 1921, it was decided that no decision on legal status of soldiers could be adopted before prior consultation with military associations. In 1931, this decision was included into the Military Servants Act. At present, these consultations have a form of talks held monthly between representatives of military associations and defence ministry within the "Official Consultative Committee". (9) Besides sessions of the Committee, also special working groups can meet on a case by case basis to discuss some problems. In accordance with principles of the Committee work, the defence minister is obliged to consult his decision related to servicemen with individual non-governmental organizations. Even though they do not agree with a specific decision, they can express their opinion, and submit alternatives for resolving disputable questions. The mentioned system of bargaining also considerably strengthens a position of servicemen within the Dutch society - servicemen are increasingly considered to be more state servants than soldiers, who enjoy some special status in the society.

In the context with activities of military associations in the Netherlands, it is possible to remind that during 1966 - 1996, the Association of Conscripts (Vereniging Van Dienstplichtige Militairen - VVDM) existed there, which enjoyed extra important role in promoting principles of democratization of the military service, which it considered to be one of the basic elements of the Democratic control of the military. The Association managed, for the time of its existence, to push through a number of basic measures that considerably improved a status of conscripts. A considerable mark of VVDM was also its internal democracy, which was presented in its membership that represented the whole

Dutch political and religious spectrum, which was even for the Netherlands rather unusual. In 1990, the VVDM became member of the Federation of the Dutch Trade Unions (FNV), one of the biggest and the most influential Dutch trade union head office. The main reason of this VVDM's step was a reflection of a fact that conscripts in the Netherlands were regarded as workers, temporarily working in the state sphere, and moreover, this move enabled better position for negotiations with the Ministry of Defence. This presumption proved to be correct according to experience in the years to come for VVDM.

Also VVDM activities within organizational platform "31", being coalition of the youth non-governmental organizations, were highly important. By active work within this platform, the VVDM ensured passing information into other non-governmental organizations on situation within the military, by which it at the same time created conditions for gaining support for its own work within the army.

The VVDM has also indisputable credit in development of international movement of conscripts and support in formation of conscripts' organizations in Central and Eastern European countries after 1989 - first in former Czechoslovakia, and then in the Czech and Slovak Republics, and in Hungary. VVDM was one of initiators of founding the European Council of Conscripts Organizations, already mentioned in previous chapters, where it played very significant role for the time of its membership. For the whole time of its membership, the representatives of VVDM strove to help individual partner organizations to be able "not only to teach conscripts to be individual citizens with duties to their societies, but also to give an instrument to the society how to stay in contact with the army". (10)

The overall spectrum of VVDM actions and their outcomes brought for this organization a considerable social-political authority both in the Netherlands itself and abroad.

But in the Netherlands, there are also structures inside the army, which are to provide scope for democratic discussion over problems of the military service within military units. These structures work independently to activities of military associations - the right to express their own opinion is thus guaranteed also for those, who are not members of associations. For example, within each unit there is the elected Consultative Unit Body (Onderdeels Overleg Organen), where all categories of soldiers must be represented. (11) The unit commander regularly meets members of this consultative body to discuss problems related to performance of duty and personnel management policy. Since 1989, the so-called Local Consultative Body (Lokatie Overleg Organen) has worked in the Netherlands Army, whose task being to resolve problems related to service conditions within individual barracks.

Generally, it can be stated, based on the Dutch experience that a broad democratic dialogue inside the Dutch army, which also non-governmental organizations (military associations) share to the maximum, that the Dutch society is well aware that the military is indispensable part of democratic society to which defence it is designed. Therefore the same principles and values that are the roots of democracy must be observed also in the military. This approach also creates conditions for maximum capacity of results of the democratic control of the military.

Legend:

- 1) Institute of a commissioner was set up in 1956, and his rights and duties were determined according to a specific law adopted in 1957. The first commissioner was elected in 1959. According to information of the Federal Assembly, he was addressed by 3.5 thousand servicemen of Bundeswehr with their complaints during the first year of his work; in recent years, the number of complaints varies about 10 thousand a year.
- 2) See Brussels Declaration of the Deutscher Bundeswehr - Verband Dedicated to the Future of Europe and its Soldiers, Brussels, May 12, 1995, pp. 20,21.
- 3) Ibidem, p. 21.
- 4) Members of the Association serve also as deputies in land parliaments and in other representation authorities on district and town levels.
- 5) See Project No. 96/5294, "Civilian Control of the Military, and Officers in Democratic Societies", Phare Democracy Programme of the European Union.
- 6) Subcommittee for issues of the internal leadership was set up in 1959.
- 7) See Mandeville L.: Syndicate Temptation and International Surroundings (the French view on a chance for formation of all-European association of career soldiers) (In a bulletin: The Army and Social Changes /bulletin of selected speeches of foreign authors given at the military section of the XIIth World Sociological Congress in Madrid - July 1990/, Military Institute of Social Researches, Prague, 1991, p. 66.
- 8) Those are the following organizations: General Christian Association of Soldiers (ACOM), National (nation-wide) Association of Junior NCOs, Association of Military Police, Association of Dutch Officers, Royal Association of NCOs (ONS BELANG), Association for Defence of Interests of Crew Members of the Royal NAVY in Reserve, Association of Naval Officers, General Association of Soldiers of the Netherlands (AVNM).
- 9) For discussions of this committee an expression of "Formalized Consultations" is being used in the Netherlands.
- 10) Speech of the President of ECCO Gielt Algra at the Conference "Obligatory Military Service in Central and Eastern Europe: present situation, developments and perspectives", June 7 - 11, 1995, Chudobín, Czech Republic (In Bulletin of the Phare Project: "Conscript = Citizen in Uniform", Utrecht/Prague, 1995, p. 33)
- 11) Soldiers, who were elected into this body, have a right to take part in a special course that would train them for tasks carried out in the framework of it. It is interesting that the course is funded by the Ministry of Defence but its organization is delegated to independent social institution.

Conclusion

It is evident that regardless a relatively short period of time since November 1989, non-governmental organizations including those, which engage in the field of the Democratic control of the military, have well established in the Czech society as its firm part. In this my work I tried to show to the maximum their approaches to implementation of the democratic control, specific activities and results. They confirm that optimal base has been created for their future development and substantially greater engagement. A number of problems, connected with their work in the field of the democratic control of the military, is still open. This relates first of all to their capability of using their influence to play more important role in activation of the civic sector in favour of the military, defence and security policy. They should become one of active upholders of new ideas that can positively affect the work of mechanisms of the democratic control of the military, and in the end, also one of possible personnel sources necessary for competent control and management of the military. In the interest of NGOs there is also enlargement of circles of the publics that are interested in engagement in the field of defence and security policy, and its democratic control. Focus on setting-up the so-called "Security and Defence Community" can also contribute to the above. Such a community is formed by representatives of non-governmental organizations, politicians, soldiers, university teachers, students, and journalists. This community should play a significant role in development of civil and social awareness of responsibility for security, defence and protection of the citizen and the state, as well as for disseminating knowledge on how to improve the security system of the Czech Republic. It is understandable that in case this community will be successfully constituted, it'll mean that NGOs chances to enter into the process of the democratic control of the military will be increased and capable to affect its overall level. In a feedback, it can contribute in a considerable way to expansion of operation and influence of the "Security and Defence Community". The achievement of this state will require from NGOs , which engage in the democratic control of the military, and whose activities I have analyzed in this work, a constant orientation to implementation of the following steps:

1. Increase information dissemination within NGOs on what is, and how the Democratic control of the military is to be implemented.
2. Pay attention to training of their own experts who'll be capable of active engagement in the field of solving issues of the Democratic control of the military.
3. Create their own analytic and research background for activities connected with issues of the Democratic control of the military in a bid to use it for compiling independent supporting documents and analyses for bodies of legislative and executive power. Through this way achieve also necessary non-formal influence at these bodies.

The potential of NGOs for implementation of the above mentioned steps exists and is real, which is to a certain extent documented also in this work. But it is important that activities of NGOs are supported also from the part of the government and parliament because first of all these institutions must be aware of the fact that the democratic control of the military is a two-way process between the military and society, and that it is the integral part of the civic society that is just being formed.

At the end of this work, I would like to express my thanks to the NATO authorities concerned for a chance to carry out this research. I would like also to thank to all of those who helped me to

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