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**Security Policy of the Slovak Republic: Deficiencies in
Meeting the NATO Criteria**

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I. Introduction

At the Madrid Summit in July 8, 1997, the General Secretary of NATO J. Solana announced that representatives of the NATO countries and governments agree that the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland should be invited into NATO. Slovakia, one of the applicant countries, was not invited to become NATO member at the Washington Summit in April 1999. The refusal to invite Slovakia was not very surprising. The behavior of the Slovak decision-making institutions in the years before, their reflection of Slovakia's security position and of the security constellation in Europe did not allow any other result. After the decision of the Madrid Summit, the Slovak government reacted with the announcement that the NATO membership should remain the final security goal of the country.¹ Underlying materials for the final assessment of the Slovak position, which led to the exclusion from the first round of NATO enlargement, allow the thesis that after 1995, Slovakia's chances of NATO membership remained very low. Since then, definitely, a lot of predominantly political deficiencies have come to the surface.

This forms the principal thesis of the report:

The political changes in Central Eastern Europe in the late eighties and early nineties created for all Central European countries (the later Visegrad Group)² approximately the same outcome positions in their endeavor to be integrated into NATO. The chances Slovakia could display at the time of Czechoslovakia's split were supposed to be compared with those of the other successor state of Czechoslovakia - the Czech Republic. After the official application for full NATO-membership (November 1993) there followed a period of a gradual lagging behind the other Central Europeans:

The growing distance between Slovakia and the other Central European countries in terms of domestic policy and the growing uncertainty of Slovak security orientation weakened the

¹ The statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic in July 13, 1997.

² By referring to Central European countries, i. e. *Central Europe* (CE), the author means the loosely formed Visegrad Group, which was founded in 1991 (Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, after the division of Czechoslovakia Czech Republic and Slovak Republic replaced Czechoslovakia) gradually ceased to cooperate and with the enlargement of NATO lost its substantiation definitely. The broader context of the post-communist Europe is covered by using the name *Central Eastern Europe* (CEE).

Slovak - NATO link. The analysis should point out the transition of a fully democratic state to a category of countries with certain democratic deficiencies. The security policy orientation is closely linked to factors of domestic policy, of democratic traditions and traditional links to Eastern Europe.

There are several reasons, why Slovakia experienced problems to meet fully all basic criteria for NATO-membership. Whereas some criteria can be met satisfactorily (compatibility of the armed forces, gradual transition to market economy), some others (transformation of the originally authoritarian society to a democratic one, good relations to the neighbors) could not be fulfilled for a number of reasons that are analyzed. Slovakia is in the process of transforming basic values that concern the self-reflection of the society and the decision about the future orientation. This problem might have been only partly resolved by the parliamentary elections at the end of 1998. The projection of the controversial development within the society, the looking for basic "civilisatory" orientation and the attitude of the population helped to create a special *type* of postcommunist democracy that could be found especially in Southern-Eastern Europe (Croatia, Serbia, partly Bulgaria, in previous years Romania).

The analysis of the development in the mid-nineties in Slovakia (a deep difference between political declarations, declamations and the real political output) should give more specific and precise answers to our question of the security oscillation between East and West.

This forms the principal hypothesis of the report:

Already after 1993 Slovakia followed a not clearly-cut security policy towards both parts of the former bipolar world.

In spite of declarations, Slovakia would have obviously welcomed a further postponement of the NATO enlargement in order to stabilize its international position in the region.

However, due to the fact that the neighboring Visegrad countries were admitted to NATO, Slovakia needed to be integrated, too. Meeting the criteria that concern domestic policy

(democratic deficits) were, however, a dilemma for the former (up to the end of 1998) government coalition, because it equaled to the loss of power in the country.

The enlargement of NATO without Slovakia involved a change of strategic position of the Central European region in which Slovakia wanted to play the role of a "bridge" between East and West.

A non-admission to NATO might have complicated the security relations to the neighbors, especially to Hungary.

One of the leading (and popular) Slovak options was to look for neutrality. In this case, Slovakia could rely on the support of the neighboring Austrian partisans of neutrality, whose status in Austria has been a big help for the Slovak neutrality seekers.

The change of government in Slovakia after the parliamentary elections in 1998 do allow the conclusion that in relation to the security orientation of the country there does not exist any contradiction between political declamations and the real policy any more.

From this point of view, especially the development *preceding* the Madrid enlargement decision have been examined. The hypothesis of proved deficiencies has been tested both against official statements in the course of 1993 - 1997 and against the real political output of the state foreign and security policy. The author has also tried to take into account the security policy discussion in Slovakia in the period July 1997 – May 1999 and to cover two aspects of the development: first, how the country evaluated the unsuccessful attempt to enter NATO by having disregarded the warning signals and, second, how was the reaction of the “second half of Slovakia” to the highly unfavourable security challenges after the Madrid summit. As the “second half”, as a rule, the opposition parliamentary political parties before the parliamentary elections in September 1998 were mentioned. Following the parliamentary elections in September 1998 and the forming of a new government a month later, the political forces of the hitherto government turned to be the "second half" of Slovakia.

It is a generally known fact what happened with Slovakia after 1993: from one of the forerunners of eastern enlargement of NATO the country turned to be the less promising of what was once called the Visegrad Group. In 1997 it found itself behind such countries as

Romania and Slovenia concerning the NATO-admission. The Washington Summit in April, 1999, did not meet the expectations the new Slovak government had expressed at the end of 1998. The question why Slovakia experienced such an unprecedented integration collapse can be scrutinized from several aspects. Again, it is not very difficult to localize several important reasons that contributed to the Slovakia's growing isolation. It is, however, much more difficult to select the most important factor standing behind the historical Slovak failure, or, as the case may be, to select the more and the less important ones.

II. Perception of the NATO Criteria

In the first round of the NATO Eastern enlargement process the membership in NATO depended mainly on five basic criteria Slovakia had to meet, being:

- completing the democratic transformation of the society
- free market economy
- civil control of the army
- compatibility of the Slovak Army with NATO armed forces
- friendly relations with neighbors

These criteria coincided partly with the conditions for being admitted into the EU (democratic transformation of the society, free market economy, friendly relations with the neighbors) and produced the impression that both integration processes were deeply interconnected.³ From the point of view of the deficits Slovakia displayed, one could, however, discover a lot of secondary deficits. These secondary deficits mostly concerned the perception of the democratic transformation and the outmoded evaluation of the political and strategic priorities in Europe after World War II. The factors accompanying the nature of a newly independent state and its strong nationalist orientation also produced specific deficits. Sometimes it is difficult to discern between deficits and serious problems. Generally, one can describe the political side of the development in Slovakia as deficient, whereas in the sphere of the economic development and of the integration of the armed forces one can speak about problems. Maybe the most serious deficit of Slovakia's NATO integration should be seen in the overestimation of the own importance for NATO.

II. 1. The Deficit of Own Geopolitical Overvaluation

Contrary to the former Czechoslovak military conception of defense and contrary to the Czech defense strategy Slovakia found itself in a much more sensitive security position it occupied being a part of Czechoslovakia. The still existing Czechoslovakia started in a very

³ This impression was strengthened by the decision of the European Council of the EU in Luxembourg in December 13, 1997. At the summit Slovakia was not admitted in the first group of EU candidates

anti-Soviet style in 1990, whereas the Slovak government⁴ did not share such a strong anti-Russian orientation. For the former Czechoslovakia this orientation was easily explainable through the trauma of 1968 and the first step was to negotiate the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Czechoslovak territory (from Slovak territory first), which they have entered unlawfully and by force during the WTO invasion in August 1968. The Soviets wanted to establish a new basis for their presence in Czechoslovakia, which was to coincide with the intending remodeling of the WTO as announced by the Soviet president Gorbachev in Malta already in December 1989. The WTO was to have been reformed along the lines of NATO, to become an instrument for political dialogue with the West. The Czechoslovak side succeeded in restricting this question to a bilateral negotiation and the „Agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovak territory“ was signed.⁵ The last Soviet soldier left the country in Summer 1991. During that time Czechoslovakia was the country that pursued a very rigid anti-WTO policy. At the consultative meeting in Budapest in February 1990, Czechoslovakia was the only country which rejected the Soviet proposal to create a permanent secretariat of the WTO. The country's representatives declared a clear objective: to remove the Czechoslovak army from the authority of the Joint Command, which was in the hands of the Soviets, and instead to strengthen the political dimension of the pact as a temporary consultative body. This efforts rejected the key principle of the new Czechoslovak foreign policy, which meant the rejection of the old bloc concept of European security. All this contributed to the final dissolution of the WTO, but the orientation of the Czechoslovak foreign policy in security matters experienced a reorientation in Slovakia after the dissolution of Czechoslovakia itself.

Owing to the break-up of Czechoslovakia⁶ two successor states came to existence in Europe facing brand-new security problems. A number of problems arose especially for Slovakia that „shifted“ much more to the East and lost common borders with NATO as an

⁴ Czechoslovakia had after January 1, 1969, when it became a federation, three governments: federal, Czech and Slovak.

⁵ Signed in Moscow in February 22, 1990.

⁶ Accomplished by a legal and peaceful way through the decision of the federal Parliament and valid since December 31, 1992 - January 1, 1993.

acknowledged guarantor of peace after 1989.⁷ Slovakia was left alone with its frontier to the unstable CIS region and to Hungary with which it has had serious historical controversies. Alone the fact of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia seemed to run contrary to the general trend of the European political and military integration. This brought the new security position of Slovakia to the foreground and put new questions as to the Slovak security orientation in the future. The division of Czechoslovakia has changed not only the geopolitical position of its successor states, but also that of all Central Europe. We can summarize the changed outcome position of both successor states as follows:

- a) The geopolitical center of gravity of the new Slovak Republic shifted eastward, whereas the geopolitical center of gravity of the Czech Republic shifted westward.
- b) The geostrategic asymmetry of Slovakia vis-à-vis the former Soviet space deepened, whereas the geostrategic asymmetry of Czechia deepened, too, vis-à-vis Germany that has been, however, considered a calculable neighbor.
- c) Whereas the Czech Republic was cut off the „Carpathian arc of instability“ and gained (in Slovakia) a „buffer“ between itself and the territory of the CIS, Slovakia became tied to this territory without the used (between 1989-1992) Czech security background. The Slovak attempts to persuade the Czechs to form a military union with Slovakia after the division failed.
- d) The subregional asymmetry in Central Europe increased with Poland becoming a subregional geostrategic power.

The break-down of the old order in 1989/1990 offered new, independent prospects to the CEEs. The possibility to decide about the course of development of the own country and about its position in the international order became very attractive for all CEEs. In Slovakia, however, this possibility became almost an obsession, due to the general conviction that

⁷ The considerably shortened frontier with neutral Austria does not represent an equivalent to a NATO frontier despite the fact that since January 1, 1995 Austria has been member of the EU.

there does not exist any Czechoslovak foreign policy but only a Czech foreign policy that pretends to be Czechoslovak. If the “ownership” of foreign policy was not transparent, Slovakia as a geographic and a geopolitical unit in the possession of Slovaks was undeniable. Slovak political, military and even academic circles got just fascinated by the fact, that the geographical position of Slovakia can be geopolitically interpreted as unique and crucial not only for CE, but for Europe as a whole.⁸

Since the beginning of the 1990s, geopolitics has become probably the most popular (sub)discipline of political science to be thoroughly studied in Slovakia. Slovakia’s foreign political position immediately after 1990, and particularly after 1993 can be described as *geographical determinism*. The most important methodological principles of the Slovak foreign political behavior that concerned the future integration in the EC and NATO - still in the framework of Czechoslovakia - betrayed a firm belief in the importance of the own geopolitical position that would be taken into consideration in Brussels by passing the integration verdict.

Theoretically, Slovakia departed from quite false premises misjudging the development that should follow the end of bipolar world. “The new world order” being introduced to the post-bipolar world by the Bush administration, enclosed many geopolitical components. Although at the beginning of the nineties there was a marked diversion from macro-geopolitical (it is from global) thought in direction of micro-economical factors, the Slovak theoreticians interpreted this trend too unilaterally as favoring the neutral status of small international subjects. In the first place, of course, of small national states like Slovakia.

At the beginning of the nineties the geopolitical research was concentrated in two scientific institutions that worked for the government. Both of them supplied the government with a lot of fresh geopolitical reflections and both of them had based their research on obsolete classical geopolitical theories. They tried, in fact, to apply the traditional geopolitics of the beginning of the 20th century to complex geopolitical relations after the end of the bipolar

⁸ Samson, I.: *Geopolitics - an Attractive Discipline of Political Science?* In: *SFPA Newsletters*, October 1998, p. 8.

conflict. The modern geopolitical research in Slovakia tries - by means of classical geopolitical terms - to harmonize the power relations that prevail in CE, in Europe and in the world at the end of the millenium with the modern Slovak geopolitical research.

Due to the alleged (and still widely believed) exclusive geographical position of Slovakia in Europe and especially in CE, the phenomenon of space has played a key role in the geopolitical research. Unfortunately, the geopolitical expertise made by the *Center for Strategic Studies* was assumed by the Slovak government as foreign political principles.⁹

II. 2. Deficits of Nationalism in Slovak Security Policy

According to official statements of the government representatives the integration into NATO remains the basic priority of the Slovak foreign and security policy.¹⁰ In the statements, however, many contradictions could be discovered. There existed many statements made by the top government and government parties representatives that ran contrary to this declared goal. As a rule, the views opposed to NATO membership were interpreted as only private statements. The crucial foreign policy deficiency became obvious in the practical steps that were undertaken by the three government parties in relation to such sensitive issues as collective defense and consensus of the contracting (NATO) parties. They were repeatedly doubted and a parallel to a “dictate” of the West has been drawn. In the whole election time since 1994/5 until 1998 the state policy towards the integration was handicapped by the composition of the Slovak government: moderate leftists nationalists; intransparent left-wing neo-communists; extreme right-wing nationalists. Whereas the attitude to a common NATO oriented security policy has been very confused and contradictory in the case of the strongest political force (HZDS), the other two government parties have openly opposed the NATO membership of Slovakia in NATO. The fact that they have been obliged by the still valid Program Declaration of the

⁹ The expertise elaborated by the Center for Strategic Studies of the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic under the title *The Geopolitical and Geoeconomical Development in the World and the Position of the Slovak Republic* was submitted to the Slovak Government in February 1, 1994. See in: Ziak, M.: *Slovensko od komunizmu kam?* ("Slovakia on the Way from Communism Where?"), Bratislava 1996, p. 178 - 190.

¹⁰ Leška, M.: *Príbeh sebadiskvalifikácie favorita* ("The Story of a Selfdisqualification"), in: Bútorá, M., Šebej, F.: *Slovensko v šedej zóne?* ("Slovakia in a Grey Zone?"), Bratislava 1998, p. 74.

Government (pledging allegiance to both NATO, and EU) were interpreted in an unsatisfactory way.

Undoubtedly, also in 1997 and 1998 Slovakia's stumbling block in approaching NATO was in domestic politics, more specifically in the *national* pointedness of domestic politics. Both in the *Constitution of the Slovak Republic*, and in the *Declaration of Independence* a different approach to citizens of non-Slovak ethnicity is obvious: Slovakia is a *nation state* and the Slovaks are declared a *state-forming nation*. In the course of time following the partition of Czechoslovakia the Slovak Parliament declared the Slovak language as the language of the state and the Slovak nation and the Slovak identity were placed under state and even under police protection. As the national minorities form about 14% of the population officially (1991) and as far as 20% by assessment (1999), a large proportion of the population seems to be excluded from enjoying the full civic rights. The languages and the culture of national minorities are not only unprotected by the state and police, but the use of languages and cultural symbols can be prosecuted. Thus, "non-Slovak Slovak citizens" have become members of non-state-forming minorities and their limited civic rights often seem to contradict to binding international norms. Since several years the Slovak Government has promised to reflect some of the West's concerns and due to this promise managed to silence international opposition to Slovakia's adoption to the Council of Europe in June 1993. Although the remedy of the criticized development was promised to be reached within several months, over 4 years later the Slovak Government was not able to meet the Council of Europe obligations. The reliability of Slovakia in war-like crisis situations cannot be fully guaranteed under conditions the society is not fully able to display uncontested loyalty of all citizens.¹¹

An important factor on the Slovak political scene, of utmost significance concerning the prerequisites of the SR for NATO integration, is the way the government power is being applied. It is connected to some extent with the imbalance of political forces, most evident

¹¹ The debate of the National Minorities' Language Law in the first half of 1999 showed the heavy impact on nationalism on the Slovak population. The government was able to agree about the bill and to pass it to the parliament in June 1999. The Hungarian parties, however, have not supported the bill as being unsatisfactory.

in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections in 1994 and evident later in 1997 (the case of NATO referendum) and in 1998 (the case of using the presidential powers). As a result, the government coalition had taken steps to obtain by illegal means an overall majority in order to consolidate its political power, because it was aware of its inability to achieve constitutional changes without this majority. The representatives of the government resorted to the methods whose assessment in democratic countries ranges from being unethical and uncultured to being incompatible with principles of democracy. The number of bills that had been adopted by the Parliament and were afterwards found running contrary to the constitution, is probably unparalleled in CEE. During his presidential term (up to March 1998) the Slovak president referred more than 30 bills back to the Parliament. In 15 cases the Constitutional Court classified the bills as unconstitutional. In one of the last cases the governmental majority in the Parliament repeatedly refused to observe the Constitution and the findings of the Constitutional Court.

A united approach to a common security policy has been severely disturbed by the lack of a clearly-defined security goals by the three decisive security policy institutions: the State Defense Council (*Rada obrany štátu*), the Parliamentary Committee for Defense and Security (*Branno-bezpečnostný výbor NR SR*) and the Ministry of Defense. Since March 1998 another complication has entered into the decision-making institutions. After the expire of his election term, the president of the country being the formal head of the Slovak armed forces was temporarily replaced by the Slovak PM, who was, however, the head of the State Defense Council at the same time. After prolonged political discussions, in direct elections the new president of the Slovak Republic was elected in May, 1999, and ended the 14 months lasting presidential "interregnum" in Slovakia.¹²

III. Problems of Security Policy Development

III.1. From the Independent State to the Madrid Summit

¹² In direct elections, Mr. Rudolf Schuster (originally from the Party of Civic Understanding), an explicit supporter of Slovakia's NATO integration, was elected president in the second round of presidential elections in May, 1999, having defeated the former prime minister V. Mečiar.

The Slovak security policy-making has had to confront a much more complicated situation than at the times of a common security planning within the framework of the former Czechoslovakia. Although Slovakia's security position does not mean any condition in which the state is endangered by armed attack, economic coercion and/or political pressure is conceivable and Slovakia has to balance national security interests and a secure political and economic coexistence among its direct or indirect neighbors in order the society can pursue its development. According to the *Defense Doctrine of the Slovak Republic*¹³ national security is guaranteed when, in opinion of the national leadership there does not exist any threat of a military attack or threat of force or coercion in any form whatsoever. The hidden security threats are not taken into consideration explicitly, although the key structural components of national security mention also political, economic, social, geographic, environmental and demographic aspects besides the purely military security.

In Slovakia, there arose the necessity to redefine the foreign policy of the new state, which was conceptualized in realist terms of „national interest“. There was a marked effort of the new Slovak elites to define themselves negatively vis-à-vis the previous federal or domestic foreign policy-makers, who were at the same time their rivals in the elections. The problems of conceptions concerning the military strategy and defense won a quite new dimension, because Slovakia's identity in Czechoslovakia had been felt suppressed and unlike Czequia, Slovakia began to develop without any tradition of a state of its own. The philosophy of defense of the Slovak Republic consists in looking for answers to the crucial question: what is necessary and what is possible to do for guaranteeing the country's security in the critical period after the bipolar world ceased to exist and the involuntarily received guarantees given by the WTO¹⁴ (having fulfilled exclusively the internal function anyway) disappeared. Security risks for Central Europe have not been as fundamental as they have been for south-eastern Europe but they do exist as a lasting possibility until a security integration in any vital alliance has been reached.

III. 2. Security Policy, Army Reform and Future Options

¹³ Intentionally, one avoided the denotation „military doctrine“. The „Defense Doctrine of the Slovak Republic“ was approved by the Slovak Parliament in June 30, 1994.

¹⁴ Warsaw Treaty Organization.

One can localize the principal dilemma of the Slovak security policy. This dilemma involves two irreconcilable contradictions: economic crises and rationality of the traditional military thought.¹⁵ From this presumption we can develop rationalizations of the possibilities for choices in security policy-making and planning. The second presumption is the answer to the question what specific security problems a small state like Slovakia could face and what are the choices Slovakia can opt for. *First*, becoming member of a security alliance or coalition. In the near future, full NATO membership seems to be a purely illusionary idea and Slovakia, although not exposed to a direct military threat, lives, nonetheless, in a security vacuum. The Washington Summit has left the door open to a future NATO enlargement, has introduced the MAP (Membership Plan Action), but without any firm obligations.¹⁶ The country can take the *second* choice, it is to give up an own defense policy. It means either a variant of armed neutrality (this variant is, however, for Slovakia as expensive as other models), or a variant of neutrality meaning a position between two blocs¹⁷ that is completely unrealistic at present. *Third*, a renewed non-conventional thinking. It means the evaluation of defense expenses and stressing saving (economy) and the so called synergic effects (multiplication of military consequences, military-strategic effects). According to this philosophy the only efficient conception is the so called defensive model of defense¹⁸ that follows the national interests of Slovakia excluding the priority role of the army in security policy.

In considering the new military strategic conception of defense for Slovakia one has to take into account the fact that the contemporary security system in Europe does not foresee an immediate follow-up of the first round of Eastern NATO enlargement. The second factor that exerts a big influence on the new conception of military strategy ensues from the unique

¹⁵ Robejsek, P.: „Defense without Army...“ (in Czech), Prague 1992, p. 29.

¹⁶ Jakabcin, V.: *Informácie o Washingtonskom summite NATO* ("Information about the Washington NATO Summit"), in: *Bezpečnostná situácia v Strednej a východnej Európe po Washingtonskom summite NATO* (The Security Situation in Central and Eastern Europe after the Washington NATO Summit), Bratislava 1999, pp. 7 - 11.

¹⁷ At the very beginning of the Slovak independence and even before, this choice found expression in the theory of „bridge between East and West“, see e.g. in: Fabian, J.: *V silokrývkach geopolitiky* („In the Crossroads of Geopolitics“, in: *Slovenské pohľady* 4/1991, Bratislava 1991, pp. 28 - 33.

¹⁸ Kulasík K., Kulasík P.: „Security and Defense Policy of Slovakia“ (in Slovak), in: „Medzinárodné otázky,“ (International Issues) 1-2/1993, Bratislava 1993, p. 51.

position of Slovakia in the Carpathian basin and in the Danube curve. Although the geopolitical priorities have changed substantially since the World War II, the Slovak military analysts still underlined the historical significance of the Carpathian basin and the Danube stream for economic, social and military-political development of those countries that have been situated in this European region, where during the last centuries and decades huge state-forming movements of all-European importance were taking place (the formation of Czequia and Slovakia being the last example). The significance of this territory, including the territory of Slovakia as an important geopolitical factor at the intersection of important communication directions North-South and East-West increased after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in all aspects: politically, economically, militarily.

The military strategic conception of the Slovak security policy-making and planning can be accomplished only by a radical re-orientation of both military and political thinking, and of strategic-operational considerations that take into account security risks and imaginable military conflicts. During the first eight-years-lasting existence of independent Slovakia three types of military conflicts have been theoretically possible:

- 1) A strategic defense against an armed aggression on a large scale. The goal of this aggression can be the Slovak Republic directly or Slovakia can serve as an operational space of contending powers. Because Slovak territory is, vis-à-vis the supposed superiority of a big power practically undefendable, Slovak policy-planning can reckon only with a preventive deterrent effect of its army. The goal is only to demonstrate the decision to defend the territory until a possible foreign help is available.
- 2) A large-scale conflict (e.g. the Balkan war or, theoretically, a conflict North-South), where the armed forces should be able to lead a defense operation in order to localize and neutralize the conflict and to preserve the territorial integrity of the country.
- 3) A neutralization of internal unrests caused by ethnical tensions and bearing the danger of intervention by other states.

From the supposed types of conflicts it is clear that it is unrealistic to follow the traditional models of defense-planning in such a small country as Slovakia. A real alternative can be seen in the above mentioned economic and effective defense conception („defensive model of defense“) based on the presumption that the new strategic conception foresees such an army that is able to deter the aggressor by threatening to inflict heavy damages on him. This defensive model of defense is preferred, because due to economic transformation and to the difficulties of the transition period the Slovak Republic is visibly not capable of bearing the expenses for building traditional armed forces of the coalition type. With the NATO membership out of sight (in this case, in cooperation with NATO members and regional newcomers the expenses would be sustainable) the defensive model of defense is very attractive for Slovakia.

III.3. The scope of change

The reorientation of the military-strategic thinking made it necessary to realize a principal rebuilding of the armed forces, the reduction of their numbers according to earlier obligations of Czechoslovakia¹⁹ (the reduction of both army personnel and armaments was reached in 1995), a new dislocation and technical modernization. The reality given by the division of federal property of the former Czechoslovakia and by special agreements in the sphere of armed forces left Slovakia face three possible variants of solving the problem of change whose necessity became evident.

- 1) The „classical reduction“ of the army. This method would mean the reduction of manpower by preserving the traditional strategic principles of defense based on already existing military and arming-technical structure of the armed forces. The realization of this variant would have entailed extraordinary costs (90% of expenses would swallow the plain existential consumption). No means would have been left for the modernization of the armed forces. This variant, that was taken into consideration as a choice at the beginning of independence mirrors the thinking of the classical Soviet school (specific geostrategic features are neglected). Although this model has had

¹⁹ CFE (Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) from 1990.

several defenders in Slovakia, the impossibility to reach compatibility with NATO in this way has been quite obvious.

- 2) The „considerably reduced“ armed forces. It means only a more drastic realization of the first variant (as to the reduction of manpower). The arming, organizational and logistic structure of the armed forces would be preserved, too. No principle reform of the armed forces has been foreseen and the traditional conventional military thinking has been preserved. Neither this model would be persuasive enough to bring Slovakia among the member states of NATO.

- 3) The most chances have been given to the third variant - the “unconventional, extremely reduced army“. It means a slightly stronger reduction of manpower than the second variant foresees and an adoption of a quite new strategic conception of the „defensive model of defense“. The advantages of this model lies with saving finances, does not hinder the economic activity of the state and although the hypothetical aggressor may find it easier to be successful in an attack, it also transmits the non-aggression character of the country. At the same time, the defensive striking power remains high. This model represents a trend in postcommunist countries and could be discovered also elsewhere at the beginning of the 1990s.²⁰ The army consists of mobile forces having at disposal modern arms. Quality replaces here quantity. The main difficulty in introducing this model is represented by the necessity to adopt a new philosophy of military thinking what entails a replacement of old officers and traditional army personnel. It means also that civilian experts are accepted to the army and bring new, not purely military aspects to security theories.

Defining the search of new models for security policy-making and policy-planning in Slovakia leads to a comparatively simple conclusion that in the sphere of security policy the only thing to do is to look for new answers to old questions. It is clear that a defense self-sufficiency of Slovakia in military matters is an illusion and is not realizable economically. The adoption of non-conventional defensive model can display several substantial military,

²⁰ Zachariás, K.: „Variants of an Reduced Army“, Prague 1992.

political and economic advantages. *First*, it signals to the western defense Alliance that the Slovak armed forces are able to get rid of thinking in old categories and to create an effective defense model anticipating the future security structure of Europe. *Second*, through its economy it leaves untouched the means needed for overcoming the economic instability of the country. *Third*, it forms a starting point for building a modern, long-term and complex security policy.

III. 4. Deficiency in the Compatibility of Armed Forces

The compatibility of the Slovak armed forces with NATO/West European disposition has several aspects. One of them, obviously the most difficult, is the compatibility of *military thinking*, the change of philosophy. This change can be brought about only by active personal contacts with NATO/WEU reality and by a consequent personal re-building of the armed forces, by adding people that have not been linked to the previous WTO period. The contacts with western armed forces, especially due to the PfP contacts, are very useful.²¹ Slovak peacekeeping activities have been relatively modest up to 1998²², but considerably more active than e.g. the Czech peacekeeping activities. The preparation for Slovak peacekeeping are in full progress. Besides this, Slovakia keeps a military mission in the NATO HQ in Brussels and cooperates closely especially with the USA that finance the reform program for the Slovak Army and have launched education programs for Slovak army officers in the USA. Since 1995, Slovak soldiers have increasingly taken part at several peacekeeping trainings in the Central European region and in the West.

Another problem Slovakia has experienced until 1999 can be found in the matter of a common speech, i. e. in the *terminological compatibility*. The traditional terminological instruments that are still used in the Slovak armed forces have very often their origin in the terminology of the WTO. The problem becomes even enhanced, because alone by the NATO members there does not exist unanimity about many principal terms concerning security: strategic interests, security, security policy (grand strategy, national security

²¹ See in: Exchange of Experience in Partnership for Peace Program Implementation, Bratislava 1998, pp. 8 - 13, 14 - 16, 61 - 68,.

²² See the chapter about the Peacekeeping activities of the Slovak Army in this report.

strategy in the USA), military strategy, military doctrine, etc. Among the American, French and German terms we find several differences in meaning and Slovakia has to look for fitted equivalents that correspond to Slovak specific conditions. After several considerations, e.g., the term „military doctrine was rejected“ and given the denotation „defense doctrine“. There still exists a slight confusion about the proper meaning of „security“. In the Anglo-Saxon countries and especially in the USA, e.g., „security“ is a synonym for a defense of long-term used values and is seen as means for reaching the needed goals in relation to other countries and international organizations. In this way one creates a condition, under which the vital interests of the people and of the state can be defended against exterior and interior danger. It does not matter, if this danger bears a real, a potential or a hypothetical character.²³ In case of Slovakia, however, an efficient security cant be guaranteed in the moment the country is attacked and Slovakia can reckon only with potential enemies relying so on prevention and deterrence only (could be elaborated on several examples).

Another important item in the causa „compatibility is, of course“, the *compatibility of arms, armaments*. In this case Slovakia can display quite good results that have their root in the fact that the heavy armament industry was concentrated in Slovakia at communist times, although in the second half of the eighties and especially in the euphoria following the change in 1989 the production was drastically reduced. So the former Czechoslovakia, historically among the WTO´s chief armourers, reduced the arms output to about one tenth of pre-1989 levels in 1990. After the split of Czechoslovakia Slovak arms executives and government officials made it clear that the industry will be given a second chance. Slovakia succeeded in modernizing the arms industry and to gain new markets in the course 1993 - 1995.²⁴ With the collapse of the WTO, as well as due to the failure of Soviet-typed arms in the Gulf war the traditional market for Slovak weapons like the Soviet-designed T-72 was almost lost. Now it is the Slovak objective to raise production of arms to at least 25 per

²³ „National Security Strategy of USA“, Washington 1993, 13 pp.

²⁴ According to the former Deputy Defense Minister A. Sobol (in office until the beginning of 1995) „we do not want to be known as the gun suppliers of Europe, we just want to supply our citizens with jobs... It is a strategic fight for the arms market out there, and every tactics and means is fair game. We will do what the rest of the world does“. See the Interview for „Reuter“, Bratislava, 24 November, 1994.

cent of 1989 capacity within few years²⁵ - still far from levels in the 1980s when Czechoslovakia (in fact Slovakia) ranked seventh among the world's arms exporters. The former quantity should be replaced by quality that corresponds to western arms. Topping Slovakia's list of military goods is the newly designed howitzer called „Zuzana“ firing NATO-standard ammunition, which military experts believe to be possibly the first of its kind intended for western markets. Slovakia has also modernized²⁶ sit classic T-72 tank in the form of the T-72 M2, which is also on the market. According to experts there are an estimated 8 000 piece of the T-72 tanks in use around the world. So the modernization of the Slovak arms industry contributes to the compatibility of the Slovak Army with NATO armed forces and has been a frequent theme for discussions with the western army officials during 1995.²⁷ The Slovak arms industry, according to official statements, can produce all modern weapon systems necessary for the world.

According to the previous assessment of the American Minister of Defense in September 1995 Slovakia reached the best results in the third and fourth points of the basic NATO admission criteria listed above, i. e. in the civil control of the army and in the compatibility of the Slovak armed forces with NATO armed forces.²⁸

Anyway, a rapid progress in the compatibility issue represents a very good result with regard to the fact that in the past Slovakia didn't import arms, on the contrary it produced them and exported. During the visit to Slovakia in September 1995, J. Shalikhvili, however, indicated, that it were the Czech Army that had been the most advanced in transformation and arms compatibility and keeps the most mature contacts with the US armed forces. Nevertheless, both armies (i.e. Czech and Slovak) were in the „foreground“.²⁹ Here one could discover the first signs of a differentiation that had been absent in statements made by NATO officials in the previous two years. It is not clear, if

²⁵ The former Defense Minister Pavol Kanis to „Reuter“, Bratislava, 24 November 1994.

²⁶ In the arms industrial complex ZTS Martin in Central Slovakia.

²⁷ The former (1994 - 1998) Defense Minister Ján Sitek with the British Defense Minister M. Rifkind on 15 February 1995, see in: „Národná obroda“, 16 February 1995 and with the US Defense Minister W. Perry on 18 September 1995, see in: „Sme“, 19 September 1995.

²⁸ William Perry on 18 September 1995, see in: „Pravda“, 19. September 1995.

²⁹ See in: „Sme“, 28 September 1995.

the decision of Madrid in July 1997, took into account also the different level of the purely military preparedness.

In spite of all these positive facts, Slovakia is still, even in 1999, considered to experience severe deficits in other points that are seen as crucial conditions for a full NATO membership. Due to previous domestic political development that differed from the classical left-right model of political scene in most of the West European countries and in the other Visegrad countries, Slovakia has been often regarded as the weakest spot in the regional Central European mosaic. Since the beginning of the Slovak independence Slovak diplomacy has tried, with changeable success, to disperse doubts about Slovak integration backwardness. The division of Czechoslovakia and the Slovak independence made it necessary to re-evaluate the principal pro-NATO federal policy and the first months of independence witnessed a slight confusion as to the security orientation. NATO alone began to discuss seriously the Visegrad proposals not sooner than in the half of 1993 and had to find out that it is not prepared to swallow such a huge enlargement (taking Visegrad as a bloc) of four countries that has numbered around 65 million inhabitants (such an enlargement would have been hardly comparable in NATO history). There was first the need to adapt NATO to post-bipolar reality and one had to take into account the opinion and possible objections raised by Russia. The discussions about the eventual NATO membership became heated in Slovakia in January 1993, because the idea of neutrality found a strong support in the country at the very beginning of independence. Slovakia's decision to establish an independent state was, besides of other reasons, caused also by rejection of radical westernization plans of the Czechs not confined only to economic reform, but to a strongly pro-western foreign policy as well. In the first half of 1993 the public discussion turned on the question of either NATO-integration or neutrality, although any analysis based on real politics left only the first alternative as rational. The membership in the first broad post-cold alliance - NACC - that even did not pretend to radiate any semblance of security prospects was felt as quite insufficient. The setting up of NACC was understood as a platform for NATO to launch a dialogue with the former adversaries, not as a waiting room for NATO membership. Yet, to be put on one level with Central Asian countries where civil war raged at that time induced the Visegrad countries to look for a

different security status. The Visegrad bloc wanted, of course, to be seen differently even from the countries like Bulgaria and Romania that had been raised on the same level at the Copenhagen summit of the EU in summer 1993.

It was in the half of 1993 that the Slovak foreign policy decided to take definitely a pro-western course. On the domestic political scene in the first months of 1993 the pro-eastern contra pro-western tug of war ended in the purge of the then Foreign Minister,³⁰ whose diplomatic activities betrayed strong pro-NATO inclinations. His successor,³¹ however, continued the orientation of the Slovak security policy toward NATO, what resulted in the visit of the Slovak president in the NATO HQ and in the official application for NATO membership at the end of 1994.³² This security and foreign policy orientation led to another crisis and resulted also in the purge of Foreign Minister, in a government crisis and in premature parliamentary elections in October/November 1994. In between, the new Foreign Minister in the temporary government³³ steered to a NATO integration course as well. Despite the permanent domestic policy crisis with regard to changing foreign ministers, the Slovak NATO policy was assuming more positive features during 1993 and 1994. Already in March 1993 a NATO delegation paid a four-day visit to Slovakia and in June J. Shalikashvili arrived in Bratislava to be informed about the Slovak will to cooperate closely with NATO. He recommended a closer military cooperation including peacekeeping tasks. As Slovakia's top priority he mentioned improving military education and offered an educational center for language training to members of the Slovak Army. At that time he refused to admit that Slovakia was behind other Visegrad countries.³⁴ The official presentation of the Slovak application to join NATO by the president of Slovakia can be seen as the culmination of the pro-NATO development of Slovakia. At that time the PFP program was not yet decided upon and the president expressed the hope that the January summit would offer the Visegrad countries „formal assistance membership“ with the right to consult NATO if they thought their security was endangered, as well as an assurance of

³⁰ Milan Knazko, removed from office in March, 1993.

³¹ Jozef Moravčík.

³² On 4 November, 1994.

³³ Eduard Kukan in the government led by the former Foreign Minister J. Moravčík.

³⁴ TASR, 22 June 1993.

eventual full membership. The PFP program failed to offer even „soft guarantees“ like these.

The Slovak government³⁵ signed the PFP program in February 1994 as the seventh country and without disappointing reservations the other Visegrad countries expressed.³⁶ A more direct approach of NATO toward membership would have brought a certain dilemma for the Slovak foreign policy that has upheld very friendly relations to Russia. It is because good relations both to Russia and to NATO that hot discussions has been led in the Slovak public during 1995 doubting the sincerity of official Slovak declarations toward NATO-integration.

To reassure the efforts of Slovakia to join NATO, all Slovak governments, including the present one, have repeatedly pledged allegiance to this intention since 1993 and officially, there has been no doubts about this issue.³⁷ After 1998, the new Slovak government confirmed this allegiance in the subsequent Declaration of the Government once more. Despite this fact, since 1993 several statements made by western politicians and views expressed in articles published in the western press have ceased to mention Slovakia as a first-round candidate for an admission to both NATO, and EU. Slovakia has been many times omitted from the preferential list, because the country has not been regarded as fully stable, especially in terms of domestic policy. The reservations of western countries turn on methods used in domestic policy and on the alleged deficits in minorities' policy.³⁸ The Slovak political representation undertook a series of diplomatic steps to clarify the situation, especially in connection with the latest criticism from the side of the EU.

IV. The place of Slovakia in the Typology of post-communist states

IV. 1. General Theoretical Typology

³⁵ On 9 February 1994 by prime minister Vladimír Mečiar.

³⁶ See e.g. the joint Czech-Polish declaration already after the PFP-approval by NATO foreign ministers, CTK, 9 December 1993.

³⁷ See in: „Documents on Foreign Policy of the Slovak Republic“, MFA of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava 1993 and 1994.

Officially, the statements of all Slovak governments since 1993 have confirmed the will to integrate into western economic and defense structures as final objectives of their diplomatic activities.³⁹ Like the other countries of Central Europe, of course, the Slovak government also thought that Slovakia was preferably entitled to be in the first round of the widely announced enlargement, be it for proclaimed cultural, historical, geographic, geopolitical and geostrategic, or for economic and political reasons.

From Central Eastern European and particularly Central European point of view, three post-Communist perspectives remained open. They were not so much actual political realities as theoretical derivations of an ongoing political and ideological struggle among different power groups within Central Eastern European societies. Yet, the characteristic feature of Central Eastern European politics was exactly this struggle underlying all political events. The perspectives seem to have been the following:

a) *Assimilation to the ruling western paradigm.* In this case the focus is on liberal values and human rights, as well as democratic principles. Any deviation from them or retardation in their implementation represents nothing more than unwanted compromises due to the backward character and the lost opportunities of these societies.⁴⁰ Within the Central European countries Slovakia is less able than the others to follow this paradigm.

b) *Creating an independent national paradigm.* In this case the focus was on the reemergence of the nation-state, the primacy of national (ethnic) values and historical heritage. It emphasized the uniqueness of a nation and considers the acceptance of certain liberal values only as an unwanted compromise. In this case, Slovakia has been (even in 1999) a splendid example following such a value orientation, mixed partly with the third perspective (c).

³⁸ After 1994, the Slovak government received two demarches on behalf of EU (November 1994 and October 1995) and one on behalf of the USA.

³⁹ In Slovak case this goals were repeatedly confirmed during the negotiations between representatives of the Russian and of the Slovak Committees for Defense and Security of both parliaments in Bratislava on 6 - 8 May 1996, see in: *Sme*: , May 15, 1996.

⁴⁰ Weidenfeld, W., Janning, J.: *Europe in Global Change*, Guetersloh 1993, p. 186.

c) *Mixed paradigm*. The focus was on how to pair the two previous paradigms. Democratic values and human rights approach is supported but liberal and market principles are considered as threats to national heritage. Thus, the standardizing effects of the Western paradigm is opposed. This paradigm has been to be found in all Central Eastern European societies and is projected in security thinking.

IV. 1. Central European Typology

One has to admit that the security position of the Visegrad countries (and Slovenia)⁴¹ was not quite comparable. In security matters, their outcome positions are different in such a divergent measure that the way to cooperate effectively had to be seen as blocked *a priori* in all spheres except economy. Bringing the Central European countries to one bloc following one identical global orientation resembling to that of the original EFTA-countries in the last decade before entering the EU has been unrealistic. It was namely the security connotations of foreign policy that betrayed conflicting interests. By substituting several variables we can scheme nothing more than several two-bloc conceptions within the Visegrad/CEFTA group furnishing proof of internal affinities or mutual inconsistencies that influence the possibility of a „bloc admission“ to NATO (and/or EU/WEU):⁴²

a) *Poland - Hungary* (affinities): these two countries form a cohesive two-member bloc that is tightly bound by economic, foreign policy and historical orientation (traditionally strong agriculture, recently formed post-Communist, i. e. socialist governments preserving, however, a permanent NATO-orientation, „special relations“ to Germany, jointly shared bad experience with Russian/Soviet influence harking back deeply into the 19-th century and a deeply-rooted distrust of the Russians that is widespread among the population).

⁴¹ Slovenia, although not a participant to the Visegrad agreement of 1991, has developed to a partner of Central European countries during the mid-nineties.

⁴² The „bloc approach“ vis à vis EU and NATO was at the basis of the original Visegrad Three. Soon Poland and Hungary (in 1991) and finally the Czech Republic (following the Copenhagen Summit in July 1993) ceased to cooperate with the other member-countries. Poland and Hungary returned to the group immediately, the Czech Republic has remained „stubborn“ until the Madrid Summit in 1997, following a „solo“ trip to Western economic and security structures.

Hungary's foreign policy was under the post-Communist government even more anti-Russian than that of Poland.⁴³

b) *Czech Republic - Hungary* (affinities): These two countries can display some recently forged political ties. Although both of them burdened with disputes about ethnical issues between Prague and Budapest from Czechoslovak times, liberal political cultures of Czechs and Hungarians got nearer each other during the seventies and eighties due to liberal-minded dissent in both countries. After the division of Czechoslovakia the political relations could be further developed without the former Czechoslovak-Hungarian reminiscences. These went over to contemporary Slovak-Hungarian relations. What is important, there don't exist any recent historically-based conflicts between Czechs and Hungarians.

c) *Poland - Czech Republic* (affinities): relations between these two countries document a great measure of understanding in the past. In spite of possible Polish (nationalist) claims on tiny parts of the Czech territory⁴⁴, Poland is for the Czech Republic the only indispensable partner in Central Europe due to Poland's importance for the West, especially for Germany. That's why the Czech-Polish relations have begun to be more friendly in the mid-nineties. The Czech Republic needed the geopolitical significance of Poland and Poland needed the then economic high repute of the Czech Republic. Therefore, it was natural, that these two countries could be among the first three to reach a full NATO-membership.⁴⁵

d) *Slovakia - Czech Republic* (affinities): Both countries realized a peaceful division of a common state and, in a long perspective, have remained connected in many ways, in particular economically. The Czech politics has preserved a somewhat paternalistic, although careful, attitude to Slovakia due also to a big number of ethnical Slovaks living in

⁴³ Zellner, W., Dunay, P.: *The Foreign Policy of Hungary in the First Year of Horn's Government* (in German), in: *Suedosteuropa*, No.44/95, pp. 654 - 655.

⁴⁴ The problem arose about the Tesín region in the north of Silesia. Generally, however, the revision of the Versailles (St. Germain) Treaty (fixing the frontiers after World War I) would be endangered.

⁴⁵ About the goals of the Polish foreign policy in the sphere of security and the affinities to the Czech Republic see: Bartoszewski, W.: *Polish Security Policy*, in: *Perspectives*, Prague 1995 (Summer issue), pp. 5 - 7.

the Czech Republic.⁴⁶ Owing to contemporary deficiencies in the Slovak domestic policy and to difficulties Slovakia can expect in its strivings for entering the EU and/or NATO, the Czech Republic can appear as the only „Western“ ally unselfishly supporting Slovakia's admission to Western integration structures. Both countries still solve similar transformation problems but each of them in another way.⁴⁷ Today some problems still exist of an economic character (division of the former common property), resulting from the differing levels of the two economies. Certain problems also remain in settling mutual claims and debts. The remaining questions are being worked on intensively, and there is a strong desire in both countries to reach agreements.⁴⁸

e) *Slovenia - Czech Republic* (affinities): the relations between these two geographically distant countries⁴⁹ are of economic and cultural nature. Economically, both are the most dynamic CEFTA-members and culturally, Czechs and Slovenes are obviously the most ethnically related West Slavonic nations in cultural and ethnolinguistic terms.⁵⁰ As candidates for EU-membership (EU meaning in this context predominantly the CSFP - the common security and foreign policy) the Czech Republic and Slovenia are leading countries.

f) *Slovakia - Hungary* (inconsistencies): the relations between these two countries have disturbed the acceptance image of the former Visegrad group. Still in 1999, both countries remain ethnically estranged due to historical reminiscences and current political disputes about international issues.⁵¹ Slovak-Hungarian relations represent a symbolized variety of Central Eastern European conflicts as a whole. Central Europe represents only a part of the

⁴⁶ With approximately 300 000 members the Slovaks form by far the most numerous ethnical minority in the Czech Republic.

⁴⁷ *Both Countries to Europe, each on its Own* (in Slovak), in: *Mosty*, No. 30/95.

⁴⁸ Bombík, S., Samson, I.: *Security for Europe* (forthcoming, N. Y. 1996), Chapter 11 (Slovakia).

⁴⁹ Separated in the most direct and natural way by Austria.

⁵⁰ Décsy, G.: *The Linguistic Structure of Europe* (in German), Hamburg 1973.

⁵¹ The Gabčíkovo-Nagyamaros controversy that has been delivered to the International Court in the Hague is only one of them. Much more dangerous have been the accusations made by the Slovaks of Hungarians' hurting the air space of Slovakia, lasting and potential feuds about Slovak cultural goods allegedly withheld by Hungary, and the overall general distrust. See also in: Renner, H., Samson, I.: *The Hungarian Minority in Slovakia* (in Dutch), in: *Internationale Spectator* (the Netherlands), October 1992.

post-Communist world and in the sense of a possible full-membership in NATO the chances were assorted, unfortunately, to others.

IV. 3. General Practical Typology

The intransparency of the unambiguous orientation of Slovakia lied with *specific features* of the development. The orientation strategies were unstable - they proceeded very quickly and Slovakia could be regarded as hardly liable to concrete typologizing among the post-Marxist states.⁵² According to the level of accomplished transformation, of domestic political development and of transformation processes of Central Eastern European economies we can differentiate among:

- 1) *The former communist countries* that have already passed the crucial point in both domestic, and foreign policy, as well as economy. The countries that represent this group already have the political system stable and strong enough to accommodate even significant shifts of political orientation within governments. They can allow the classical right-left shifts on the domestic political scene without casting doubts at the sincerity of their security orientations. We speak about the *Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland* and *Slovenia*. Slovakia, that has logically belonged to this group, too, has got somewhat isolated in the last two years due to developments in domestic policy. Both European Union and NATO responded with severe criticism. Even the OSCE expressed doubts about the development in Slovakia throughout the mid-nineties.⁵³

- 2) *The former post-Communist countries* that have not reached political stability and are still fighting for economic macro-stabilization. These countries experience security handicaps owing to large ethnical minorities of their own living abroad or to foreign ethnical minorities living on their territory. We speak about *Albania, Bulgaria* and *Romania*. The domestic policy of these countries is developing in a somewhat turbulent and incalculable way despite of formally correct democratically performed election

⁵² Gabal, I.: *Five Years after. The Post-Communist World. Crisis or Evolution?* In: *Perspectives*, No. 5/1995, Prague, pp. 47 - 48.

⁵³ The criticism of the high commissioner of the OSCE Max van der Stoel see in: *Domino Efekt* No. 21/96.

procedures. In the second half of the nineties, Albania took a special position among the CEE countries and kept it during the Kosovo crisis in 1999.

1. The remaining post-Communist countries (post-Soviet and post-Yugoslav) form a complicated and heterogeneous group that can be divided into several sub-groups:
 - a) Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania
 - b) Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine
 - c) The three post-Soviet Republics of the Caucasus
 - d) Moldova
 - e) The four post-Soviet Islamic Central Asian countries
 - f) Kazakhstan (originally a promising „nuclear power“ with an ethnically mixed perspective)
 - g) Serbia, Croatia, Macedonia
 - h) Bosnia (differing from other post-Yugoslav countries by culturally divergent foreign policy (Islamic) links

Slovakia's position differed heavily from these (a - h) listed groups. At the basis of excellent macro-economic results in the years 1995 - 1997, Slovakia belonged to the first group (1), the domestic political development brought it in connection with the second group (2), in particular with Albania and Romania and with the group listed as „a - h“, namely with Serbia and Croatia (g), whereas the foreign policy resembled to that of Bulgaria (2).⁵⁴

V. Problems of the post-Madrid Development

V. 1. Conclusions and Issues after the Madrid Summit

- Slovakia, a former front runner for NATO membership, was excluded from the first wave of enlargement, due to its instability on the home political scene (insufficiencies in the domain of the democratic life of society);

⁵⁴ Pantev, P.: *Security for South Eastern Europe: Bulgaria*. Conference paper (free to quote), Munich, September 1995.

- Three of the five neighbors of Slovakia will be accepted as NATO members in 1999;
- In spite of existing national-political problems, there are many positive elements which emerge from the moderate political center (local, regional political leaders, entrepreneurs, soldiers, and university students) - a key for the Slovak future;

It is necessary to direct the endeavor of NATO policy after the summit to the group of "failed runners" and to form an environment of trustworthiness and "openness" of the enlargement process, to support Slovakia and other interested countries.

Owing to the present position of Slovakia in the Central European region and owing to the evolution of the security orientation, the following alternatives to treat this question can be considered.

V. 2. Alternatives of the Slovak Security Orientation after Madrid

Alternative No.1: to continue the endeavor of the Slovak Republic (SR) to enter the Atlantic Alliance:

Even after the SR was not included among the States with which process of discussions on entry into NATO has already begun, the standpoint of the SR remains unchanged in the sense of accomplishment of the Government program of the SR⁵⁵ - the endeavor to enter the Atlantic Alliance in the process of NATO enlargement. The Slovak Republic supports the standpoints which are based on the prospect of its membership, as the basic foreign-policy priority and orientation. From the political viewpoint, this alternative is unique and unchangeable; it is closely related to the principle of transition from individual defense to collective defense. All the other opinions related to the problem regarding the membership or non-membership of NATO/WEU can move only on the level of opinionative hypothetical considerations. One encounters many opinions on the level of oral expressions of politicians, or on the level of theoretical contributions in the expert press on the fact, that the process of enlargement also has its paradoxical background. The paradoxes may have

⁵⁵ Renewed by the Government by M. Dzurinda at the end of 1998.

an evident existing nature; on the other hand, hypothetical to speculative paradoxes can be found. In relation to them it is important that further development should confirm their speculative and hypothetical character, and it is necessary to prevent them becoming really existing paradoxes or hypotheses.

In becoming member of the European security structures, Slovakia should emphasize the fact, that the principle of collective defense is, for the SR, especially important not only from the military point of view, but also from the economic viewpoint. The Slovak Republic must be ready to take part in the tasks, risks, responsibilities, advantages, and costs resulting from common security in the Alliance and from collective defense. It is expected that Slovakia will accept a strategy anchored in the NATO Strategic Concept. Then the aim will be to tune the Slovak concept with the NATO New Strategic Concept. The ability to make military contribution to the collective defense and to the new tasks of the Alliance will be a criterion for decision-making about beginning discussions aiming at entry into the Alliance. An important element of the military contribution will be the engagement to take part in the targets of standardization, which is a basis for strategy and operational efficiency. Above all, it will be necessary to concentrate on interoperability and to accept such procedures related to standardization, which will enable the Slovak Army to reach a sufficient level of training and equipment for an effective operational common activity. The activities of the SR are oriented to the facts within the framework of the PfP, including the Process of Planning and Evaluation. To reach at least a minimal level of interoperability within as short periods possible is an important military requirement owing to securing military efficiency. According to NATO representatives, the Slovak Republic is progressing very responsibly and purposefully in this sense.⁵⁶ There is also a political demand for the internal solidarity of the Alliance, in the sense that its new members, and those expected to join in the near future should feel that they are equal participants having equal rights in collective defense.

At present 92 % of the foreign investments, which are crucially important to master

⁵⁶ The attitude of the Slovak government during the Kosovo crisis has been clearly pro-Western. Without any hesitation, Slovakia opened both the air space (and, subsequently, the land space) for NATO military technology).

successfully the restructuring of industry and to complete the economic transformation, are concentrated⁵⁷ in the three countries (the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary) which were accepted as members of the Alliance in 1999.

This is another reason why it is necessary for the Slovak Republic to become a member of NATO. According to the last statements or opinions of experts, at home and abroad, and, of course, to the conclusions of the Washington Summit, the Slovak Republic is not included among the most important candidates for the second wave of enlargement. But it is too early to reflect in such a way. In the nearest future, the situation may be different; Slovakia may be included among the prominent candidates for the second wave; even in a sense it can be "enriched" by ideas and experience from reception of its neighbors and so it can avoid entry defects and mistakes which can occur during the actual process of integration.

From the economic and armaments point of view (conversion - reconversion), Slovakia's entry to NATO would mean a direct export opportunity for Slovakia's mechanical engineering. The need to renew the production of arms would create a market potential for at least 10 years, also resulting in more jobs. It is more than probable that contribution in taxes and savings of allowances in unemployment and the effect on the overall growth of the economy would cover the increased defense expenses linked with NATO entry.

The cooperation with top armaments firms would provide Slovakia, as a NATO member, with the highest technologies and know-how. The Slovak arms would attain the world competitive level and they would also find sales also outside NATO (solvent customers without political risks).

The entry of Slovakia in NATO would, undoubtedly, mean increased expenses for defense. At present, each member country has higher defense expenses than Slovakia. The annual contribution of each member country to running the Alliance must also be considered.

⁵⁷ See in: TREND - weekly in economics and business - July 16, 1997.

One has also to consider the process of balancing the differences in the armaments and readiness of the Slovak Army and those of the Alliance countries, which could last 10 to 15 years, and in this period, defense expenditure would be higher. This results from the system operated by NATO in common planning, with the whole system based on budgeting; further expenditure is related to normalization and standardization of the armaments and material by the national armaments industries.

However, this does not prevent the development of such activities as for example in South East Asia, where the market with Indonesia is explored (concluded contract) by the enterprise *PPS Detva*.⁵⁸ Promising relationships have also begun in Malaysia and the Philippines. This region appears to be very important to Slovak mechanical engineering.

If Slovakia remains outside NATO, the following scenario of evolution is possible:

- probably, sales of Slovak armaments to NATO members would not be considered;
- even if the Slovak Republic revives armament production and improves it to the necessary technological level, NATO member States will have no reason to purchase armaments from an external source;
- if a defensive alliance is formed with Russia, Slovakia's armament production would be concerned with production according to Russian license (in such a case, especially the armament production of the Russian Federation will compete with Slovakia, and the Slovak armament industry would achieve little).

Alternative *No. 2*: A neutral Slovakia according to the slogan "We'll seek neutrality"

This alternative has no prevailing support in intellectual political and academic circles. The present globalization, and the associated integration processes, now include all domains of

⁵⁸ Situated in the traditional Central Slovak region, where the production of the heavy armament industry was concentrated in the past years. See in: Brzica, D.; Poláèková, Z.; Samson, I.: The Slovak Republic: Bridge between East and West, in: Katzenstein, Peter (ed.): Mitteleuropa: Between Europe and Germany, Providence 1997, pp. 192 - 211.

economic and social life (new high technologies, information age). In direct connection with the laws of social development, and the repeated tendencies of rise and fall, anybody who does not accept this global trend, will very soon (2000 – 2005) be unable to take advantage, on the European economic and socio-economic scene (EU, OSCE, WEU), of the economic growth and positive economic indicators recorded in Slovakia in recent years.

In the last 2 – 3 years before 1998/99 the Slovak economy has recorded the highest rate of the economical growth and the lowest inflation rate among all the applicants for EU membership. According to the data of the European Commission, the Slovak Republic was in third place among the associated countries in volume of the gross domestic product per inhabitant. It may be stated that in spite of these results, the Slovak Republic, in the document of the European Commission "Agenda 2000", is not cited in the first group of countries recommended for beginning discussions on membership. Insufficient appraisal of our economic results is evidently related to evaluation of the accomplishment of political criteria of membership by the Slovak Republic, which have been marked as unsatisfactory by the Commission.

The EU and the WEU as its security structure have formulated the basic characteristics for the future steps to enlargement. It follows that the process of NATO adaptation and EU/WEU enlargement are two related processes, but different in their essence. The new EU member countries will have to be capable of incorporation into the common EU defense policy. It means that in practice a country will not be able to be accepted as an EU member, if it does not express clearly its will to become a NATO and WEU member. In the case of three countries (the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary) one may assume that their EU entry will be simpler. Slovakia must clearly and especially with political unity declare this fact (if it wishes to be part of Europe). Thereafter, neutrality has no justification and does not solve the alternative of Slovakia's security from the military point of view. Theoretically, neutrality is impossible without self-sufficiency in armaments.

Neutrality loses its theoretical and military-political substantiation in the international-

political context. Not only in relation to the statements cited above, but also as military-security attributes of classic neutrality or "positive" neutrality, or "dynamic" neutrality⁵⁹, have lost their sense in the present Europe of the future European peace, without conflicts and threats of a military character. In global politics, one does not assume a revival of antagonisms of any character. The new model of collaboration of the world and European economical and military political groupings assumes (and this is the aim of general globalization of economic and political life) a steadily deeper knowledge and scientifically substantiated prognostic outcome of strategic partnership between the subjects.⁶⁰

Then, what is the justification of neutrality for Slovakia?

Slovakia as a very small state in Central Europe has a national-strategic interest to take part and really evaluate its globalization tendency and possibilities towards the globalizing world. And so the question occurs between whom Slovakia is endeavoring to be neutral?

Neutrality or "non-participation" would lead Slovakia into isolation within the framework of Europe and it is questionable if this neutrality, in case of military threats, would be accepted by the potential military-political groupings. The history of the former neutral European countries says the opposite.

And finally, there is another, also essential argumentation. Even based on a gross pragmatic viewpoint, a lively discussion is being led in all the neutral States on the simplest way, and above all in a constitutional legislative form, to get rid of neutrality, which is very costly, and morally and politically obsolete.

Last but not least, the economic security of the Slovak Republic is being affected and will be affected in the future by the decisive European political, economical and security integration processes - NATO enlargement and increasing its effect on the European and world security and stability, EU enlargement and its effect on the management of political

⁵⁹ These notions occurred as parts of East-West relations during the mid-nineties.

⁶⁰ Russia, NATO, see "The Founding Act" – Paris 1997.

and economic processes.

Alternative *No. 3*: Security of Slovakia according to the slogan "We'll go East if the West rejects us!"

The future security arrangement of Europe on the continental and regional levels will have to find alternatives which will not cause undesirable reactions by Moscow. Russia is considered to be an uncertain and inconstant colossus, but its raw-material and also marked human potential is understood as a possible contribution to Europe and the world. Therefore, Russia itself, in spite of its internal economic and social problems, is strong enough to choose its own security orientation.

The present Russia, "new" Russia is above all a completely different country to the former USSR. The Russian army is not led politically; its numbers have been decreased; its equipment is economically limited.⁶¹ It is a country giving birth to democracy, where market economics opens its path and which has a weakened conventional military force. Even if alarming political changes occur in Moscow, Russia would need several years to renew its former military machinery. The causes of Russian return to a military confrontation would be, in spite of the facts cited above, as follows:

- economical problems in the economically weakest regions;
- political instability which could continue in military-political instability;
- instability in the domain of ethnic policy, or the effect of religion;
- other, possible conflicts and threats of a non-military nature.

This potential possibility of return of Russia to a policy based on force and military confrontation is real, and therefore one cannot absolutely exclude it. Slovakia, in its security orientation must also consider such possible alternatives of evolution in Russia, but also in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

⁶¹ The International Herald Tribune, in its article *Fantasies about NATO* from October 17th, 1997, deals with the fact that Russia represents neither a military nor a political threat to Europe.

The general economic and political processes of instability, however, are so great, that the Slovak Republic has no reason to search for its security guarantees in the Russian Federation. But this does not mean that within the framework of well developing neighborly relations with the Russian Federation, in almost all important domains of economic, social, and political life, the Slovak Republic will not develop collaboration in the domain of security policy. On the contrary, in this domain it is necessary to respect the strong partner in the East; there is a steady sense to consider the fact that elimination of unclear conditions in Central Europe could also be an advantage for Russia. The process of NATO adaptation (including enlargement) could also be a new historical impulse in forming relations between Russia and the rest of the world.

However, after our transformation to a market economy and an economic orientation towards the West, the EU and CEFTA countries consume 83 % of Slovak exports, while the states of the former USSR take only 6.6 % of them (data from 1997).

V. 3. Objective Declarations to the Suitors, Especially to the Slovak Republic, From the Madrid Summit⁶²

- To continue dialogues of the existing (16+1) countries with Slovakia and other "failed suitors", which are endeavoring to become members;
- NATO and its members allot detached means to continue activities in the PfP, especially to Slovakia and the "failed suitors", still endeavoring to become members;
- The Slovak peacekeeping training spaces can be used as places for partner peacekeeping activities.
- The assurance of Slovakia and other failed suitors that they will continue in the policy of integration with the Alliance is also recommended to increase their endeavor to work more in the Atlantic Partnership Community (APC).
- It is necessary for the APC structures and functions to be clearly defined so that the

⁶² See in: Link, P.; Samson, I.: *Geopolitické postavenie strednej Európy. Tendencie vývoja v 21. storočí* ("The Geopolitical Position of Slovakia. Tendencies of Development in the 21st Century"), Bratislava 1998, pp. 23-24.

engagement of NATO to Slovakia will be evident. The fact should bind the APC to meetings - periodical consultations (e.g. once a month) with the NAC;

- It is necessary that after inauguration by heads of state at the highest level, programs be established and developed for periodical APC meetings at the level of defense ministers and ministers of foreign affairs. Concrete programs need to be visibly demonstrated (NATO engagements) in order to deepen political relationships with the failed countries.

In the following period, it will be necessary to elaborate the following items as a contribution of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic:

methodological starting points:

- To prevent the occurrence of new dividing lines in Europe.
- Protection of democracy and human rights.
- Elimination of economic and social differences.
- Contribution of the SR to the European security architecture.
- Transition from national-security interests to all-European security interests related to possible new risks in the 21st century.
- Tuning the Slovak concept with the NATO Strategic Concept.

VI. Correcting the Deficiencies after Madrid

The deficiencies concerning the Slovak armed forces have been regarded as minimal in comparison with the political deficits in the course of the Slovak NATO integration process. The engagement of the Army of the Slovak Republic in the peace keeping operations has been over the average and the Slovak military has often given these activities as an example of a positive security policy development of the country.⁶³

⁶³ Marguš, J.: *Aktivity Armády SR v operáciách na podporu mieru OSN a ďalších medzinárodných organizácií* ("The Activities of the Army of the Slovak Republic in Peace Keeping Operations of the UN and Other International Organizations"), in: Samson, I. (ed.): *Riziká a ohrozenia v strednej Európe*

Since its origin in 1993, the Slovak Republic has supported peace initiatives of the United Nations and other international organizations. The participation of the Slovak Republic and members of the Slovak Army in international activities, which aim to prevent conflicts, contribute to moderating their escalation or to solving them, is an important part of the foreign and security policy of the Slovak Republic.

In 1998, 54 members of the Army of the Slovak Republic were working in six peace or observation missions of international organizations.

VI. 1. In missions

(UNDOF - United Nations Disengagement Observer Forces)

On the basis of resolution of the government of the Slovak Republic No. 606 from 19th August 1997, and resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no.862 from 10th December 1997, 35 members of the Army of the Slovak Republic were assigned to the United Nations UNDOF peace keeping mission on the Golan Heights. The assignment of soldiers to the UNDOF mission was done in the framework of the project "Cooperation of the Central European countries in peace keeping operations" (CENCOOP), in which Slovakia actively cooperates with Austria, Slovenia, Hungary and Rumania. The UNDOF mission on the Golan Heights is based on the resolution of the Security Council of the UN Security Council no.350 from 31st May 1974, after the conclusion of a force disengagement agreement between Syria and Israel. In harmony with the "Agreement between Syria and Israel on disengagement of forces", the peace keeping mission supervises the implementation and fulfillment of the agreement by observation, supervision and control regime in the zone of separation (the zone consists of territory extending from the junction of the frontiers of Syria, Israel and Lebanon in the north to the junction of the frontiers of Israel, Syria and Jordan in the south, its length is 70 km and its width 8 km),

v 21. storočí. Vplyv na úlohu ozbrojených síl. ("Risks and Threats in Central Europe in the 21st Century. Impact on the the Role of Defense Forces"), Bratislava 1999, p. 89.

which was created by separating the armed forces of the two sides. Thirty five members of the Army of the Slovak Republic began to fulfill roles in the third company of the Austrian Contingent on 26th May 1998.

The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (*UNTSO*) in the Near East

Resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no.1030 of 1st July 1998, authorized the sending of 2 military observers to the UNTSO peace mission in the Near East. The sending of observers from the Army of the Slovak Republic was done on the basis of the project "Cooperation of the Central European Countries in peace keeping operations (CENCOOP). At present, 80 military observers from 19 countries of the world work in the mission. The military observers are placed in 11 observation posts, located in the zone of separation between the two front lines. They monitor observance of the cease fire, inspection of the number of soldiers, equipment, weapons and other important aspects in the area of the Suez Canal and Golan Heights. To fulfill its roles in the area of the Egyptian - Israeli sector on the Sinai Peninsula, in Beirut and in Damascus, UNTSO cooperates with the UNDOF mission, which is concerned with the Israeli - Syrian sector on the Golan Heights, and with UNIFIL in the Israeli - Lebanese sector. Two members of the Army of the Slovak Republic have fulfilled roles in the mission since 22nd August 1998.

MONUA - United Nations Observer Mission in Angola

The observer mission MONUA in Angola continued after the completion of the mandate of the UNAVEM III mission in July 1997, with a new mandate from the UN Security Council, and activity expected to continue until February 1998. The Mission MONUA took over all the units and activities in Angola from the concluding mission UNAVEM III. Its main role remains monitoring the fulfillment of the military aspects of the peace process, including demobilization, in accordance with Lusaka Protocol from 1994. From 1st March 1998, the number of representatives of the Slovak Republic in the mission was reduced from 5 to 3 military observers from the Army of the Slovak Republic.

An Observer Mission for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

The center for conflict prevention of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) asked the Slovak Republic to send a military observer to the international staff of the OSCE observer mission in the Moldavian Republic. The National Council authorized the sending of a military observer from the Army of the Slovak Republic, by resolution no.1030 on 1st July 1998. The mission was established by a decision of the Council of High Plenipotentiaries of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) on 4th February 1993. The aim of the mission is to settle the armed conflict, which arose as a result of the declaration of Transdnistria on part of the territory of the Moldavian Republic. The main tasks of the observers of the mission include monitoring the process of reduction and withdrawal of the armed forces of the Russian Federation from Moldavia. The military observer from the Army of the Slovak Republic began to fulfill his task in the mission on 13th March 1998.

The European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM)

The European Community Monitoring Mission in former Yugoslavia began its activity in July 1991 with the participation of 15 countries, including a delegation from former Czechoslovakia. The government of the Slovak Republic, by resolution no.45 from 19th January 1993 and the National Council of the Slovak Republic by resolution no.74 from 18th March 1993, expressed agreement with the participation of the Slovak Republic in the ECMM mission on the territory of former Yugoslavia. Since 1st January 1993, a delegation from Slovakia has consisted of a civilian part, formed by employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic and a military part composed of 5 members of the Army of the Slovak Republic. The basic aim of the ECMM mission is to support the peaceful solution of the conflict on the territory of former Yugoslavia, monitoring the observance of human rights and international legal norms.

Stabilization Forces - North Atlantic Treaty Organization

In harmony with the Peace Agreement on Bosnia-Herzegovina, signed at Dayton on 21st November 1995, and on the basis of a UN mandate, the resulting monitoring and implementation tasks were entrusted to the NATO-IFOR peace keeping force. On 20th December 1996, operation "Joint Guard", performed by the NATO SFOR stabilization, began on the basis of resolution of the UN Security Council no.1088 from 12.12.1996. Its aim was to stabilize the results achieved in implementation of the peace agreement in the military area, and to gradually implement tasks in the civilian area, with the help of other international organizations. Apart from the 16 member countries of NATO, the 20 countries associated in the program Partnership for Peace, participated in the SFOR operation. In June 1998, the third stage of the SFOR NATO operation ("Joint Forge") was started, with the aim of fully developing the civilian dimension of the peace process, to create conditions for the civil administration to take responsibility for stabilizing the situation, to restructure and reduce the number of soldiers in SFOR. On the basis of resolution of the National Council of the Slovak Republic no.863 from 10th December 1997, and with the agreement of the NATO command, from 26th August eight officers of the Army of the Slovak Republic began to perform tasks in command organs of the mission in Tuzla, Gradaèac and Sarajevo, in the sections of civilian - military relations, engineering services, health care provision and logistic support for the SFOR operations.

VI. 2. Prepared activities

In connection with the prepared more extensive transfer of part of SFOR and the planned end of the UNTAES mission at the end of 1997, the military organs of NATO announced the possibility of the participation of the Slovak Republic by sending engineering units of the Army of the Slovak republic and specialists for civilian-military relations to the SFOR operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the basis of this offer, 8 officers, who were mentioned above, were assigned to the command structures of SFOR. The engineering unit, with a strength of up to 150 persons, is intended to perform engineering and mine clearance work. It can perform tasks in the construction of housing, and the construction, maintenance and repair of roads and air ports. The proposal to send engineering units to

the NATO stabilization forces was already processed by the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic, and in next few days will be available for discussion by the government, National Council of the Slovak Republic and command structures of the North Atlantic Alliance.

Another prepared activity of the Ministry of Defense of the Slovak Republic is a proposal to increase our participation in the UNDOF peace mission on the Golan Heights. In the framework of discussions between representatives of Austria and Slovakia, an increase in the participation of the Army of the Slovak Republic in the UNDOF peace mission from a platoon to a company was proposed. The planned date for beginning the fulfillment of the tasks of the Slovak unit with the new number of 93 persons is May 1999.

In October 1998, as a result of the worsening of the conflict in Kosovo, the secretariat of the OSCE asked the member states to send verifiers to the Kosovo verification mission. After the approval of legislative documents, five members of the Slovak Army should begin to fulfill tasks in the mission on 21st December 1998.

On the initiative of Austria, Slovakia joined Austria, Slovenia, Hungary and Rumania in the project Central European Nations Cooperation (CENCOOP), aimed at closer cooperation between these states in the area of the preparation and participation of members and units of armed forces in peace keeping operations.

The conception of Central European cooperation assumes regional cooperation, following the example of the initiative of the Nordic states, in creating a flexible cooperation mechanism, and on the basis of it creating a joint brigade of peace keeping forces on the principle of so-called modules to support the activities of the UN and other international organizations.

The aim of the Central European Nations Cooperation is an effort to improve the abilities of these countries, so that they can more effectively react to the demands of operations in support of peace and achieve better results with the help of regional cooperation. This will

involve not only the creation of a brigade, but also of a cooperation mechanism, involving meetings of ministers of defense, a directing committee and working groups for multi-national operations and civilian - military cooperation, training, logistics, communication and information systems, humanitarian questions and air security.

Safe and rapid mastering of conflict situations is usually conditioned especially by military, political, economic and time factors. In the form of the CENCOOP brigade, international organizations, such as the United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, will receive an effective instrument, means or unit, which will be professionally prepared to react flexibly to requirements, within short deadlines, after the appropriate legislative requirement (UN mandate) has been issued.

The cooperation of the Slovak republic in building the CENCOOP project is in its initial phase. When constructed, this system will certainly contribute to the creation of such relations and mechanisms, which will lead to adequate and required measures for the prevention, or reduction of the possible political, economic or other results of a crisis or conflict, as a result of the ability to react in a short time.

To achieve this, the Slovak Republic has also joined the CENCOOP project.

VII. Findings

1. The research has been aimed at the general criteria that had been set up by the NATO and both technical, and political aspects of these criteria have been subject to an independent analysis (compatibility of the army system with the NATO, civilian control over the army, correct relations with the neighboring countries, guaranteed rights of the ethnic minorities, working democratic institutions).
2. As there ensues from the checking, the meeting of technical, i. e. purely military criteria can be evaluated as roughly satisfactory. In this respect, many deficits are still to be found.

3. A special attention is paid to the reform of the Slovak Army. The reform process was launched in 1993 and in 1997 Slovakia should be theoretically behind the second reform stage. From the first accessible analysis at the beginning of 1998 it seems to be clear that the Slovak Army was not able to reach the goals.
4. By which arguments is it possible to explain this failure? They obviously consist in the lack of financial means and in the political sphere of the armed forces. The political division line seems to lead between the General Staff and the Ministry of Defense itself, where diverging political party orientations are palpable. It is, however, a difficult task to get insight into the materials being mostly classified as “secret”. In spite of this, the development 1997 – 1998 can be relatively well documented.
5. Many problems Slovakia experienced with NATO in 1995 - 1998 seem to have been caused by applying the geopolitically founded foreign political theories about the future development in Europe and in the world. The reflections of the geopolitical factors, to which the Slovak governments (with a short interruption in 1994) have adhered, can be structured as follows: a) eurocentrism, b) centroeurocentrism, and c) slovakocentrism. In 1998, after the refusal of Slovak integration claims by both NATO, and EU, no principal re-evaluation of the obvious false geopolitical outcome position became visible.
6. The political conditions in Slovakia were the official (and credible) reason for the refusal of Slovak NATO integration ambitions. The deficiencies of the past seem to have been removed by the Slovak government that had been created following the parliamentary elections at the end of 1998.
7. Since the parliamentary change of government in 1998, still there has not been an official re-evaluation of the geopolitical priorities. At least publicly, the geopolitical factor disappeared as an argument for Slovakia's NATO admission. To assess the development after the Madrid Summit one has to wait until the probable enlargement of NATO at the beginning of 1999.

8. Although Slovakia has not entered the cooperation within the NATO led forces (IFOR, SFOR) in the former Yugoslavia, the peacekeeping activities of the Slovak Army are impressive one can see them as a substantial contribution to the future NATO membership.

Abstract

After the division of Czechoslovakia, the crucial turning point in its history, the Slovak republic got the chance to be integrated to NATO. Slovakia failed to reach this officially proclaimed goal.

Slovakia does not show any heavy shortcomings in the question of constitutional transformation process (some deviations, as e. g. the preamble to the Constitution or the absence of Minorities's Language Act) can be theoretically repaired very quickly. What is important is the fact that the existence of legal structures has been guaranteed by the Constitution. In practice, however, the so called "constitution reality" betrays many peculiarities of the "Slovak Way".

Attempts at making themselves nationally visible took on the form of looking for a specifically Slovak road of transformation, and at denying any positive aspects of the federal past. A particular stress was laid on the geopolitical factor, although the geopolitics does not play any decisive role in the security development any more.

An important factor on the Slovak political scene, of utmost significance concerning the prerequisites of the SR for NATO/EU integration, was the way the government power was applied before 1999. It had been connected to some extent with the imbalance of political forces, most evident in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections in 1994. As a result, the government coalition took steps to obtain by illegal means an overall majority in the society in order to consolidate its political power, because it was aware of its inability to achieve constitutional changes without this majority. The representatives of the government resorted to the methods whose assessment in democratic countries ranges from being unethical and uncultured to being incompatible with principles of democracy. The number of bills that had been adopted by the Parliament and were afterwards found running contrary to the constitution, is probably unparalleled in CEE. This feature of the post-1994 government of

the SR, together with other “specificities” of the Slovak political scene contributed in 1994 - 1998 to the polarization of the society aggravated the confrontational tones. Government policy has continued to be influenced by an isolationist line, imposed by radical nationalists. The development in the armed forces scored a better result than the political development. However, even the relatively more positive results of the politico-military development and a good record of the Slovak Army in peacekeeping operations were not enough to secure a NATO membership for Slovakia.