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The Normative Model of the Ideal-Type Soldier in a Democracy: Case of Poland

Polish Case

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Between the Organisation of Armed Forces and the Principles of
Democracy in European Comparison“

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1. Particular Features of the Political Culture

1.1 National Traditions

Poland is member to the North-Atlantic Alliance (since 1999) and the European Union (since 2004). It profits from the attainments of these organizations and international cooperation in general. At the same time, Poland offers its own contribution to it. Still, both internal and external Polish policies are centered around national interests. Numerous references to the notions of nation and national identity, as well as to the state, statehood, independence and sovereignty, are a characteristic feature of these policies. National traditions, with special emphasis on these originating from the period of the Second Republic¹, are strongly cultivated, with military circles at the forefront of such activities.

As many leading authors indicate, nation and state are closely interconnected. State is generally regarded as an emanation of a nation; a nation should not exist without its state. As stated by one of frequently cited authors, Roman Dmowski²: “A nation is an indispensable moral content of a state, while a state is an indispensable political form of a nation”. Poland is currently witnessing a period of a renewal of historical politics – notions of nation and state are vividly present also in the discourse concerning foreign and security policy, conducted by the authorities formed chiefly by the “Law and Justice” party (in Polish – *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*). To some extent this phenomenon may be a reaction to the earlier process of acquiring membership in the two aforementioned key security organizations. Above all, however, it is a form of reconciliation with a sophisticated past and with sometimes strikingly different perceptions of Polish history between the people associated with the political left and those active in other political circles.

As periodically conducted research clearly indicates, individuals with binds to the military (both active and retired) regard nation and state as core values. Education of non-commissioned officers and soldiers with lower ranks³ includes, giving it a high priority, elements of patriotism, together with national traditions. “A nation is a lasting community of people, formed on the basis of a reciprocal plight, existence of a common territory, common culture, language and economic life, characterized by an awareness of distinctiveness and efforts directed towards possessing and retaining its own state”⁴. As

1 A period in history of Poland, lasting from 1918 to 1939, i.e. to the outbreak of the World War II.

2 Roman Dmowski (1864-1939) was a Polish politician, statesman, and chief ideologue and co-founder of the National Democratic Party; citation taken from: “Thoughts of a modern Pole”, Lviv, 1907 [Myśli nowoczesnego Polaka].

3 Please find all details pertaining to the rank system of the Polish Armed Forces at <http://www.uniforminsignia.net/index.php>.

4 „Dictionary of terms in the domain of national security”, Studies and Materials No. 40, Warsaw, 1996 [Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego].

professors of the Academy of National Defense stated, “feeling of a national community links contemporary Poles with the past generations, whose spiritual and material attainments constitutes a part of their personalities and milieus, as well as with future generations, which may be endowed by a part of their ancestors’ set of accomplishments”⁵.

As a consequence of treating both nation and state as values of paramount importance, which itself is a result of tragic historical experiences, the defense of “homeland” is of particular significance to Poles. Defense of “homeland” is usually identified with defending the territory and the assets located on that territory, including monuments belonging to the national and cultural heritage, but also common interests in the field of economy and energy policy. “The national identity which binds Poles, sometimes referred to as “Polishhood”, is an extremely emotional phenomenon”⁶.

A rich tradition of defensive struggles constitutes a crucial factor in terms of forming national awareness of numerous generations of Poles, including those with links to the military. It is also a source of national pride and dignity. Tadeusz Kościuszko, one of Polish national heroes⁷, used to say that only an army imbued with patriotic spirit and citizenly aware will know what it is fighting for.

It is with Kościuszko, who is often referred to as a „hero of two nations” – Polish and American – and with numerous other eminent Polish generals and high-ranking officers from different periods of Polish history, including the World War II, that the phrase “for yours and our freedom” is associated. It became the simplest and smoothest justification for Poland’s participation in various missions which included the use of force.

It symbolizes, in a way similar to the victory of Marshall Józef Piłsudski’s⁸ forces over the Red Army in a battle of Radzymin (a town on the outskirts of Warsaw) in the year 1920 (this event is referred to as „The Miracle upon Vistula”), the extent of Polish resistance against Soviet or Russian, but above all communist domination in Europe.

The rich history of uprisings against the partition powers, events of both World Wars – major battles, but also foray and local partisan fighting, in addition to Polish literature

5 Józef Marczak, Jacek Pawłowski, „On military defense of Poland at the Break of 20th and 21st century”, Warsaw, 1995 [O obronie militarnej Polski przełomu XX i XXI wieku].

6 Dilemmas of Polish national identity”, Wiedza Obronna, No. 2, Warsaw, 2000 [Dylematy polskiej tożsamości narodowej].

7 Andrzej Tadeusz Bonawentura Kościuszko (1746-1817) was a Polish, Lithuanian and Belarusian national hero, general and a leader of the 1794 uprising (which bears his name) against the Russian Empire. He fought in the American Revolutionary War as a colonel in the Continental Army on the side of Washington. In recognition of his dedicated and faithful service he was brevetted by the Continental Congress to the rank of Brigadier General in 1783, and became a naturalized citizen of the United States that same year.

8 Józef Piłsudski (1867-1935) was a Polish revolutionary and statesman, Field Marshal, first Chief of State (1918–1922) and dictator (1926–1935) of the Second Polish Republic, as well as head of its armed forces. From the middle of World War I until his death, Piłsudski was the major influence on Poland’s government and foreign policy, and an important figure in European politics. He is considered largely responsible for Poland having regained her independence in 1918.

dealing with the dramatic plight of the nation, amounts to a general message to the young people, including soldiers:

- whole, united nation ought to be engaged in a fight, it should be conducted with dedication worth of a highest cause;
- a nation must have confidence in its own strength, have faith in final victory even when the enemy is incomparably more powerful, and be ready to make highest sacrifices for the sake of the Homeland;
- martyrdom, which marked the plight of numerous Poles who experienced suffering on the hands of Russians and Germans, became an inseparable part of Polish history.

The approach to the national traditions in Polish Armed Forces had been set on an early stage of Poland's political transformation. Political transformation's impact on the military has been gradual, but quite intensive in the first half of the last decade of the 20th century. The order of the Minister of National Defense, issued on the January 2nd, 1991, regulating matters of inheritance and cultivation of the traditions of the Polish army. Polish Armed Forces are to cultivate the traditions of the armies of the Piast and Jagiellon rule⁹, armies of the First Republic¹⁰, traditions of the Napoleonic period, national uprisings from the years 1830-1831 and 1863-1865¹¹ and the period of the Second Republic and combat during both World Wars. In 1918, after the 123-year-long period of partitions, Poland regained its independence. It lasted until the outbreak of the World War II.

The aforementioned order regulated all corresponding procedures (names of the units from specific armed forces' services, procedure of granting patron's names to military units, documentation, scope of competences of commanders, etc.). All military holidays, including the Polish Armed Forces' Holiday (it takes place every year on the 15th of August, thus going back to the tradition of the pre-war Polish Soldier's Holiday, and making reference to the anniversary of the "Miracle upon Vistula" battle; at the same time, the Holiday coincides with the Assumption Day, underlying the link between the

9 Names of two first dynasties to have ruled in Poland. This period in Polish history starts in the second half of the 10th century and ends in 1572 with death of the last king from the Jagiellonian dynasty, Sigismund August.

10 The period in Polish history starting with the first so-called free election (1573) and ending in 1795, after the third, decisive partition of Polish state.

11 The November Uprising (1830–1831)—also known as the Cadet Revolution—was an armed rebellion against Russia's rule in Poland and Lithuania. It was started on November 29, 1830 in Warsaw by a group of young conspirators from the army's officer school in Warsaw and was soon joined by large part of the Polish society. Despite several local successes, the uprising was eventually defeated by a numerically superior Russian army. The January Uprising was the longest Lithuanian and Polish uprising against the Russian Empire: it began January 22, 1863, and the last insurgents were not captured until 1865. It started as a spontaneous protest by young Poles against conscription into the Russian Army. The uprising was soon joined by various politicians and high ranking Polish officers from the tsarist army. The insurrectionists, severely outnumbered and lacking any serious outside support, were forced to resort to guerrilla warfare tactics. The insurrectionists failed to win any major military victory, and throughout the campaign, not one major city or fortress in Russian-occupied Poland was recaptured.

Polish Armed Forces and the Church), are celebrated on the state (or central) level, on the level of specific services and single units. Banners, flags, military oath, badges, emblems, eagles of all three services (differing from the sign of the eagle on the Polish national emblem), military caps, and all other symbols and insignia with links to national traditions are subject to specific regulations in separate acts and regulations of a lower rank. One of important contributions to the new identity of armed forces was the restoration of the title of the flagship magazine dealing with military issues, “Polska Zbrojna” (in English – “Poland at Arms”; earlier title of the magazine: “Żołnierz Wolności” - “Soldier of Freedom”)¹².



¹² Janusz Odziemkowski, „Army and society of the Second Republic” [Armia i społeczeństwo II Rzeczypospolitej]

Polish Church has a role of its own among Polish national traditions. Its activity offered support to Poland's defendants both in the country and in exile, during historical battles and today, during peacekeeping missions. According to the Act of February 19th, 1993, military banners include a phrase "God, Honor, Homeland", which corresponds to a battle cry used in the past.

Institutional structure of the Polish Armed Forces includes the functioning of ordinaries, field bishops and chaplains of Poland's three most numerous denominations: Roman-Catholic, Orthodox and Augsburg-Evangelical. Their activity is deemed as quite useful to the soldiers, contributing to their morale and strengthening their family ties¹³.

The Armed Forces are decreasing references to the combat traditions reaching to the origins of the Polish People's Army (combat trail beginning from the Battle of Lenino and ending in Berlin, i.e. events which took place even before the creation of People's Republic of Poland), but also traditions which originated during the existence of People's Republic of Poland. The army's participation in the inception of the martial law is subject to heated public debate, mainly in the context of the liability of the head of the armed forces at that time, Wojciech Jaruzelski. At the same time, participation in the "Dunaj" operation (Warsaw Pact's forces' intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968), is barely present in the collective memory of Polish society. Assessment of the armed forces during the period of People's Republic of Poland, i.e. until 1989, is not unambiguous. It is largely influenced by more general considerations as to what the People's Republic actually was: a country completely subordinate to the Soviet Union, or a country enjoying a certain degree of sovereignty. A final judgment tends to vary largely between different generations, but it is predominantly a political one.

1.2 Collective Self-Understandings and Historical Peculiarities

In the collective memory of the older, and sometimes even middle generation, the armed forces were in fact a part of the authority apparatus under the People's Republic of Poland, carried out martial law and served as an ally of the Soviet army and the remaining Warsaw Pact countries. At the same time it carried out many tasks which were useful to society. It provided local communities with public utility facilities, such as new roads or causeways. Barracks often constituted a central part of many towns. This phenomenon was attributable to the understanding of the roles of Armed Forces in the period discussed: they had important external (resulting from subordination to the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact) and internal tasks. Attributing internal tasks to the Armed Forces meant that they could be engaged in safeguarding general internal order and specific tasks such as public works. Such arrangements offered the Polish authorities a smooth explanation for introducing the martial law and defining the role and scope of Armed Forces' duties while it was in effect. Today, employing the military to conduct internal tasks remains highly problematic. It would require new legislative regulations. Armed

13 It is for this reason that the question of religiosity and relationship with the Church may be regarded as an element of education and ought to be researched during next stages of the Project.

Forces may, however, be tasked with conducting missions of humanitarian and rescue nature. An elite, anti-terrorist unit GROM may not operate on the territory of Poland.

Currently, the army and the Church are the bearers of the topmost values for many Poles. The image of the Polish Army is thus varied, but the Polish armed forces have occupied the highest places among institutions of public trust for many years (distancing universities, the Church, media, Police, the President, banks). An officer of the Polish Armed Forces is ranked as the fourth most esteemed profession (only medics, academic professors and lawyers enjoy higher esteem). Such an approach makes the development of civil-military relations easier.

The national identity of Poles¹⁴ clearly adopts a new shape as a result of processes of globalization, mainly in the course of Atlantic and European integration, and numerous other factors. As far as Polish Armed Forces and their personnel are concerned, national traditions seem to have, at least in the area of mentality and culture, a very important role¹⁵. “In contributing to the creation of the system of European security, which grants independence and security also to our country, we must take into consideration the attainments and experience of the past generations”, so Stanisław Topolewski, one of the few Polish researchers of the problem¹⁶. “While participating in international cooperation, Poland should strive to ensure its security in a framework that would be compatible with the ones existing with regard to Poland’s partners, but without detriment to the other states, not bound by an alliance”, the author notes.

The Fourth Republic of Poland, i.e. the new political and social order that the current authorities intend to introduce¹⁷, puts an even greater emphasis on the national traditions than beforehand.

14 See Józef Kukułka „Understanding and key elements of national identity in lat 20th century”, Warsaw, 1999 [Pojmowanie i istota tożsamości narodowej pod koniec XX wieku].

15 Compare also with subsequent chapters, especially chapter entitled: External factors.

16 „Select problems of Polish military-philosophical thought (from 19th century to the beginnings of 21st century)”, Ministry of National Defense, Education and Defence Promotion Department, together with Elipsa Publishing House, Warsaw, 2003 [Wybrane zagadnienia polskiej myśli filozoficzno-wojskowej (XIX w. – początki XXI wieku)].

17 The so-called Fourth Republic is a symbolic concept, bearing no references to the Constitution of the Republic of Poland or any other legal regulations. The name intends to create a link to the specific periods of the Polish history, namely the First and the Second Republic – both have been referred to in the preceding paragraphs and footnotes – as well as to the Third Republic, a fully independent and sovereign state created as a result of the politico-social changes inaugurated in 1989, which eventually resulted in the rejection of communism and adoption of a democratic political system and free-market economy. The Fourth Republic encompasses the intention of the Kaczyński brothers, currently holding the crucial posts of president (Lech Kaczyński) and prime minister (Jarosław Kaczyński), to eliminate from the public life not only the remnants of the communist system and mentality, inherited from the period between 1945 and 1989, but also the so-called corruption coterie. This coterie (sometimes referred to with a capital letter: the Coterie) allegedly gathers civil servants and politicians, businessmen and media within a network of contacts developed in the years 1989-2005, i.e. from the conclusion of the round table-talks between the Solidarity and the communist authorities to the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2005 which ended in the victory of the Kaczyński brothers. The Coterie is fought with all means at the disposal of the executive. The dispute between those supporting the Third Republic and those in favor of the concept of the Fourth Republic created the pivotal dividing line of the Polish elites and the whole

Poland made its way into NATO and the European Union from the membership in the Warsaw Pact and COMECON, being aware, since the Pact's break-up in 1991, of the importance of its territory and potential and the simultaneous second-level role in the military alliance of the time.

During the Cold War, Poland lay on the edge of two opposing military and political blocs. It could have become the arena of a direct armed confrontation between the two sides. It possessed a 410,000-strong, so-called "second wave" army with the task of taking control of Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany. It possessed an expanded military infrastructure. In the beginning of the 1990s, after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, it found itself in the so-called grey (or buffer) zone, which is considered by some key military strategists as a risky situation, and even as a relative, transitional worsening of the situation – due to the instable surrounding.

NATO accession radically and positively changed the Polish and Central European strategic situation, endowing our country with a truly subject status, also in the eyes of the majority of officers and people linked with the military. Nonetheless, geopolitical thinking is still present in Poland. This perception has its roots in the period before formal NATO membership, when the Alliance acted as a deterrent against possible attempts to threaten Polish self-reliance, sovereignty or independence. Thus there remains a strong interest in a strong NATO. The Alliance and the European Union are important for Poland as organizations which may counter the re-nationalization of security policies and "above-our-head" politics, for example between the Germany and Russia.

There is a persistent, undefined, enigmatic feeling of threat arising from Poland's geographic position in Europe; a certain suspicion which is often uncomprehended by our western partners. Witold Waszczykowski, the current Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs responsible for security policy, wrote: "Many newly accepted allies may... still see in the east of the continent old threats which appear under new forms, and which show that not everyone has accepted the process of covering the European divide."¹⁸

It is acknowledged that Polish territory is not under threat of an army-based attack. Polish generals often mention the lack of a serious, large-scale threat during the next fifteen years. The scenario of an armed conflict in the CIS area which could endanger Poland and Central Europe is also unlikely. But it is made clear that "hypothetical dangers shall remain until the character of changes taking place to the east of Poland is fully explained."¹⁹

Potential sources of threat mentioned in available Polish sources include: military factors not legitimized by the state, mass migration, the possibility of Russia making use

society before the preliminary elections, scheduled for October 21, 2007. The dispute carries with itself an enormous polarizing potential.

18 "The state of the debate on enlarging the NATO zone of activities", „Sprawy Międzynarodowe” quarterly, no. 1, January-March 2004. [Stan debaty nad rozszerzeniem obszaru działania NATO].

19 Jerzy M. Nowak: „International security in periods of transition” Threats – Concepts – Institutions. Polish International Affairs Institute, Warsaw, 2003 [Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe czasu przemian”. Zagrożenia – Koncepcje – Instytucje].

of Poland's dependence on its energy policy, illegal arms trafficking, etc. It is also difficult to assess what will be the consequences of installing 10 ground-based interceptors belonging to the US Missile Defense system for relations with Russia and security situation in the region of Central-Eastern Europe. The problem of hypothetical threats unspoken of in public and solely during seminars is highly complicated. It stems partly from the previously mentioned so-called historical politics. This means that in Polish domestic and foreign policy, in the media, cultural life and arts, there is a tendency to revert to the topic of Poland's dramatic past, World War II, martyrdom. The armed forces especially revere the memory of the fallen and the made sacrifices. In the older generation's memory, there persists the image of not one but two enemies: Russia and Germany. The problem is of a historical and psychological nature, but nonetheless influences the political atmosphere. Poles exhibit over-sensitiveness towards every manifestation of unfavorable policies.

The Polish perception creates an atmosphere supporting the need to uphold the defense of the territory as an indispensable element of Polish national defense, NATO security guarantees (including the United States as "the last guarantor"); to develop NATO Response Forces capable of defending Polish and other allied territories; to seek the possibility of effectively functioning as a host nation-state in terms of NATO military infrastructure development (117 various initiatives) and the future eastward expansion of NATO. The foreign, security and defense policy of the European Union is of secondary importance in the general debate on Poland's security, which does not rule out Poland's support for the development of CFSP and ESDP.

2. Role of the Armed Forces

2.1 The Form of Government

The president of Poland is the head of the armed forces and has an advisory body – the National Security Council (created by the President in a decision of December 28th, 2000) – at his disposal. The Council gathers key state officials, including chief of the so-called strategic ministries.

During peacetime, the Minister of National Defense administers the entire armed forces, including soldiers and units deployed to allied armies. During a crisis that constitutes a serious threat to security, the defense command principles remain unchanged. Additional means and procedures are implemented. In the case of war, if the Sejm (the lower house of Parliament) is unable to convene, the president becomes the legislative body, whereas a supreme commander, nominated by the president and appointed by the Prime Minister, takes charge of the armed forces. Command takes place at a national and allied levels.

In case of various kinds of peace-keeping missions it is the president who decides about the use of the armed forces, and not the Sejm. According to the Use or Presence of Armed

Forces of the Republic of Poland outside the state's border Act of December 18th, 1998, the President may decide about the use of the armed forces on request of the Council of Ministers or the Prime Minister alone. Speakers of both chambers of Polish parliament (the Sejm and the Senat) are merely being informed in „due time”. The aforementioned Act sets out all rules concerning the Armed Forces' presence abroad, making a distinction between their „presence” and „use”. A professional soldier may be appointed, upon his written consent, to conduct service abroad, but in some cases, mainly participation in an armed conflict strengthening Polish Armed Forces or forces of Poland's allies, such a consent is not obligatory.

According to the Constitution, a decision concerning the presence of foreign armed forces in Poland must be supplemented by a consent of the Polish parliament, issued in form of an Act or a ratified international agreement.

The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, adopted on the April 2nd, 1997, is – as a supreme act – a starting point for all key regulations in the domain of armed forces²⁰. The Constitution sets out the role of the military according to the rules of civic democracy. General regulations, civic rights and duties bound with defense, have been included in specific sections of the Constitution as important elements of the political system, the mode of functioning of public authorities, as well as general legal and financial order of the Polish state. National Security Strategy (NSS) is a document second in rank, together with – partly confidential – supplementary documents. A so-called sector strategy is, in comparison to the NSS, a more detailed document. It is being constantly updated in various acts, regulations, decisions and orders.

Article 26 of the Constitution states that:

- The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of the State, and shall ensure the security and inviolability of its borders.
- The Armed Forces shall observe neutrality regarding political matters and shall be subject to civil and democratic control.

This provision describes the fundamental tasks of the Polish Armed Forces and grants constitutional rank to the political neutrality of the armed forces and the principle of civil and democratic control over them, thus inserting them into the framework of a democratic state's mechanisms²¹.

According to Article 85 of the Constitution, military service has a rank of a constitutional citizen's duty. This provision is crucial in the light of maintaining a conscription-based, basic military service, applicable to all capable male citizens bearing Polish citizenship.

20 For an English version of this document, please see:
<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>.

21 This issue will be further explored in the part of the paper addressing control over armed forces.

Constitution grants every citizen a right to follow his own ethical convictions and outlook on life while conducting military service. Citizens who are, according to their conscience, unable to conduct armed military service, are obliged to enter a so-called substitute service, which is in line with the democratic standards of western democracies.

2.2 Tasks of the Armed Forces

The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland²², which is supplemented with the Military Strategy for the Republic of Poland²³, states that “The size, organization and assets of the armed forces will be continually adapted to defense requirements, allied and international commitments and the social-economic potential of the State. As the nature of security threats evolves, static armed forces designed for territorial defense will be gradually phased out in favor of advanced, mobile, highly specialized units. The nature of new risks necessitates cooperation between the armed forces and civilian structures within the scope of response to non-military threats, as well as in rescue and antiterrorist operations in the homeland and outside its borders”.

Further on, the Strategy states more explicitly: „The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland serve to assure Poland's security and to offer allied assistance under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. Their purpose, too, is to protect the Polish interests and to build Poland's position in NATO and the European Union. The national defence role of the Armed Forces consists in the adequate preparation and use of the assets and means available to them to counter any threats to the national security and to safeguard Poland's interests”²³.

22 Please find the English version of the Polish NSS under <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Poland-2003.pdf>. The NSS had been adopted on the July 22nd, 2003.

23 The NSS specifies, moreover, what follows: At the same time, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland share in the implementation of the allied commitments and assuring the collective security in Europe pursuant to the international agreements and within the organisations that Poland is a member of. The Armed Forces act together to enforce security in situations of threats of terrorist attacks on Poland's territory and take part in NATO's area and out-of-area operations as part of the antiterrorist coalition. The fundamental mission of the Polish Armed Forces in peacetime is to maintain the assets and capabilities needed to safeguard and assure Poland's security and to extend to the civilian authorities indispensable military assistance, mainly in case of non-military threats (natural disasters and catastrophes). Poland's membership in NATO entails the necessity to develop allied interoperability, to deliver on capabilities as appropriate within the agreed national specialisation and to be ready to build defense preparedness through the international collaborative effort. Poland's Armed Forces are part of the security assurance process in Poland's immediate neighborhood and the entire European territory through an expanded military cooperation with other states. They participate in consolidating the international order by sharing in military stabilization operations, mainly as part of the United Nations, OCSE, NATO and UE, as well as ad hoc coalitions. In order to guarantee the practical effectiveness of their mission, Poland's Armed Forces need to improve their operational capabilities within the scope of:

- protecting forces against the weapons of mass destruction,
- enhancing military command systems, including the security of command and control systems as well as information superiority,
- ensuring the effectiveness of combat operations and the attainment of the required standards by the deployable armed forces,

The new security strategy now in creation will, according to its principles, take into account in a greater degree than currently the national approach to security. The Minister of National Defence said that the hitherto strategy “does not define national interests and strategic aims in the domain of Polish security, and thus sees this security almost entirely from the allied angle, while only slightly touching upon individual efforts, solutions and defense options.”²⁴

The armed forces are assigned to tasks, outlined in the Politico-Strategic Defense Directive and national and allied operational plans²⁵. “While acting in the framework of national and allied defense systems, the armed forces are prepared to fulfill three types of strategic tasks: defense tasks in event of war (counteracting a direct attack against the territory of Poland or participation in thwarting an aggression against an allied state), tasks pertaining to reacting to a crisis (including missions undertaken under an aegis of an international organization) and peacetime preventive and stabilizing tasks. They are also ready to respond to threats of non-military nature” – it is in this way that, according to Gen. Mieczysław Bieniek and Prof. Sławomir Mazur, the tasks of the Polish army may be characterized²⁶.

The ongoing reconstruction and restructuring of the Polish military is based on a premise according to which their potential should be maintained at a level allowing for an “effective” and “flexible” reaction to changes in the military situation in Poland’s neighborhood. Such a level ought to allow for “covering” the Polish territory and an “immediate” initiation of defensive activities in case of endangerment of security of Poland or security of its allies, as well as “constant” participation in international operations. Peacetime potential should ensure possibility of a mobilization unfolding suitable for periods witnessing threats to security and wartime.

All services of the armed forces²⁷ should include units with high readiness to react (operational readiness forces), capable of reacting quickly to every type of threat, above all to counteract an aggression against Polish territory, and units with a mixed readiness

- assuring the possibility of rapid deployment and sustained support of combat units.

The Forces on High Stand-by status and selected units of Forces on the Stand-by status must be assured of state-of-the-art armament and military equipment corresponding to NATO standards. The armed forces have the obligation to come up with and maintain an expeditionary force capability for crisis-response and peacekeeping operations in and out of Poland, conducted under the aegis of NATO, EU and the United Nations. The Strategic Defence Reviews responding to specific needs will serve to define Poland's defence requirements and to adapt its armed forces to changing scenarios and new challenges.

24 Statement by former Minister Radosław Sikorski at a Sejm National Defence Committee session.

25 Both documents are related to the NSS of 2003, they will, after undergoing certain modifications, be also included in the NSS that is currently being drafted. They are classified, therefore there are no references to them in this report.

26 „Security and defense of the Republic of Poland”, Academy of Physical Education, Katowice, 2006 [Bezpieczeństwo i obronność Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej]

27 There are four types of forces in Poland: Land Troops, tasked with defense against a land and air attack in every region of the country, able to act at a level of tactical teams, units and detachments organized in the framework of national and multinational corps; Air Forces, tasked with air defense, they are highly integrated into the NATO system; Navy, tasked with defending the maritime border and the allied area of responsibility, as well as with coastal defenses; Special Forces, tasked with activities of strategic and operational importance in an environment of heightened level of risk.

to react (including mobilization readiness forces), tasked with supporting and continuing operations already underway (which includes readiness to mobilization unfolding of additional forces).

All three services feature operational forces, which are prepared to be assigned to NATO command, and territorial defense forces, which remain under national command and are tasked primarily with activity on Poland's territory.



Administrative map of Poland, source:

www.geocities.com/.../Haven/1538/Polandlgmap.jpg

It is worth noting that according to some circles, including the military ones, too much emphasis is currently being put on introducing an expeditionary-defensive model of armed forces²⁸. Such an approach is even viewed as running against the constitutional duty of the Polish Armed Forces to defend state's independence and indivisibility of it

²⁸ This aspect is also important from the point of view of the scope of the Project dealing with civil-military relations.

territory. It is for this reason that further reduction of the size of Polish military is regarded as being too risky. According to some opinions, planning should be centered around a scenario including an eventuality to defend state's territory with a largely conscription-based army. There are voices, however, which note that classical threats to security are largely non-existent, while the asymmetrical threats are steadily mounting. As a result, Polish Armed Forces ought to be developed in a direction of an expeditionary-defensive model, rather than a defensive-expeditionary one.

An issue being constantly raised in debates is that Polish army must know exactly what it should be like. A Strategic Security Review ought to be a starting point, taking into consideration the geopolitical position of Poland. It should provide answers to key questions: what are the threats to security, what shape should the armed forces adopt, how numerous should they be and how to equip them.

A need to prepare a White Paper dealing with security and defense has been voiced for quite a long time. It should, just as it does in other member-states of NATO and EU, set general directions for solutions that could define the future of armed forces. "Advancing" transformation and modernization plans, as well as other planning documents, drafted according to the NATO criteria, do not seem to be satisfactory.

The so-called Strategic Defense Review²⁹ concerned only the armed forces, and not state security in general, which was a reason for criticism of the document from the very beginning. Authors of the Review, lead by the plenipotentiary of the Minister of National Defense, assumed to be working merely as an expert's team and was aware that the effects of their efforts – a document submitted in August 2006, after 18 months of work – would not be met with acceptance of the new political authorities. The whole document was intentionally classified. Overt version of the document was published in January 2007. It was preceded with a commentary of the late Minister of National Defense, Radosław Sikorski, which stated that "the document constitutes the first attempt at defining a far-reaching policy towards the armed forces and towards the functioning of the Ministry of National Defense. It is the first analysis to be so reliable and first instance of making an effort of balancing the aims of defense policy with financial capabilities of the state". However, as foreseen by the majority of commentators, the Strategic Defense Review had not been approved by the Polish government. The fact that, according to Andrzej Karkoszka, Plenipotentiary of the Minister of National Defense for conducting the Strategic Defense Review, "as stipulated in the mandate of the Review, and regardless of some efforts to use of the work over the Review for political purposes, the document itself is based solely and entirely on analyses pertaining to the content and calculations of state's financial capabilities", did not seem to influence this decision.

Based on the overt version of the Review it is nevertheless useful to cite some recommendations included in this document, as they mirror a certain approach in a debate on the vision of the Polish Armed Forces. The Review recommended:

29 Decision of the Minister of National Defense No. 227, issued on the August 10th, 2004, and a modifying decision No. 3, issued on the January 4th, 2005.

- An increase of potential within the existing financial capabilities of the Polish state, i.e. retaining the size of armed forces, which would include: operational forces (app. 95.000), crisis reaction forces (app. 10.000-15.000) and national reserve forces (app. 40.000-45.000); at the same time, the Review suggested a transformation of the existing structure of the armed forces (18 brigades, out of which only some are developed) into a structure with a smaller number of fully complete units;
- Abandonment of two separate command and control systems (a peace-time and war-time system) and adoption of a unitary system, to be employed in peace-time, in the event of crisis and during war-time;
- Full professionalization;
- Converting the territorial defense forces and reserves (principle of universal mobilization) into modern, effective reserve forces;
- Achieving operational capabilities which would allow for participation in international operations of mixed intensity;
- Long-term planning of technical developments in the armed forces.

Current Minister of National Defense, Aleksander Szczygło, has made only general remarks about his view on these matters. When asked by journalists Artur Bartkiewicz and Artur Goławski³⁰ whether he did not fear a scenario in which a revolution that he introduced in the Polish army would last only as long as he remained in his post, and whether it could be worthwhile to reach a political consensus that would guarantee that the next ministers would continue the reconstruction, instead of introducing elements fundamentally at odds with decisions of their predecessors, Minister Szczygło responded:

“Of course that should be the case, but only under the condition that some Polish politicians will begin to think about the military in a responsible way. I can not find a common denominator with persons who believe that once Poland joined NATO and EU our country is in need of only the Representative Battalion of the Polish Armed Forces. Of course, I am exaggerating – but there exist such patterns of thought. Contrary to appearances, regardless of membership in the Alliance, threats to Poland’s security still exist. The military is an important element of the state’s functioning. There will be no area of understanding until all of us acknowledge this. Controversies around the army that we are witnessing in Poland are non-existent in the US, UK or even France. In Poland saying things that are not true with respect to the army is still an element of political rivalry. Poles must understand that the Ministry of Defense is a distinct place from the point of view of state’s security. For if we assume that indeed nothing poses threat to us, we may as well disband the army”.

30 „Poland at Arms” No. 18/2007 [Polska Zbrojna].

Currently, Poland witnesses a period of debate over an optimal model for the armed forces. The debate does not seem to bear fruit yet, contrary to the efforts made by the Office of National Security (an institution aiding the works of the National Security Council) and its Head, Władysław Stasiak, which are to result in creation of an integrated system of state's security.

The issues central to the whole debate are as follows:

- a national security act (currently drafted), which would offer a so-called integrated approach to security in its different dimensions (internal and external, political, military, economic) and set relations between certain state institutions and economic entities, as well as non-governmental organizations;
- an aforementioned new National Security Strategy;
- defining the size of armed forces and directions for their future transformation;
- defining the ratio between the professional armed forces and the conscription armed forces in each of the coming years.

2.3 The Military Concept

The Polish army is currently 40% conscription-based and 60% professional. During our common project – i.e. from the outset of November 2006 until the year 2012 at the latest – the Polish armed forces will become fully professional, but still have 150,000 servicepersons, as currently. According to various announcements, conscription is to be eliminated by the end of 2009. All soldiers are to be volunteers. The president will have the right to reinstate conscription in extraordinary circumstances. Around 90,000 of these soldiers are to be professionals. The plan is for the intensive training and contracts to enable the transition to professional service. 30,000 servicepersons – having undergone intensive training – will be transferred to the reserve, creating a national reserve force, or a type of National Guard to be used if the need arises.

These latter 30,000 will also be, I suppose, the “subject” of our research, as they will constitute “a new quality” in the Polish defense system and be a connection between the civil society and the military. However, there are already opinions that the largest problem among this group may turn out to be the lack of motivation and low morale. According to the Polish Army General Staff, which has analyzed solutions implemented in many allied countries, the above model is best adapted to meet Polish reality.

The new regulations do were not introduced to date. They must be adopted by the Sejm, but the chances of this happening are very large. The atmosphere surrounding the Polish Army, which results from the participation in foreign missions (involved formations include highly specialized and effective Special Forces units such as GROM), is very favorable in the society and military circles.

One must take into account the fact that the parliament may not be able to re-amend the Defense of the People's Republic of Poland Act dating back to 1967, but that a new Defense of the Republic Act should be drafted.

In 2006, conscription encompassed men born in the years 1982-1986 and women born 1978-1988 who are currently finishing education in medical and veterinary academies³¹. During times of peace, conscription lies under the competence of the Ministry of Interior and Administration, and conducting conscription under the joint competence of the Ministry of Interior and Administration and the Ministry of National Defense. To perform their service, young men are directed to the army, to armed units i.e. police prevention teams and the border guard, as well as to substitute military service: environmental agencies, fire squads, health-care institutions, etc. Conscription has encountered and still encounters a list of problems:

- reluctance of many young people, due to which avoiding conscription was common;
- lack of conscripts capable of operating modern equipment in the battlefield;
- presence of pathologies in military service;
- lack of justification for conscription due to the lack of need to defend the homeland;
- substitute service.

In practice conscription must be sustained in order to maintain the number of armed forces at a level mentioned by the President of Poland. The fact that number of people willing to undertake military service is decreasing³² creates objective obstacles for the professionalization of the army. Only citizens of the Republic of Poland can become professional soldiers. Professional soldiers will be divided into two categories: those on permanent duty, i.e. the duty's duration is not time-restricted, and those on contract, whereas a contract may last from 6 months to 3 years. It is generally expected that an average contract will last from 18 months to 3 years.

31 The conscription duty encompasses women – graduates of secondary schools and academies/universities, specialized in the following professions: medics, veterinarians, psychologists, radiologists, veterinarian diagnostics, IT specialists, navigators, interpreters, as well as in professions related to sea and aerial issues. During the first years after women had been allowed to serve in the armed forces, i.e. after 1986, they were mostly graduates of civil academies, employed in the civil corps. Enrollment of women to military academies, introduced in 1999, causes a gradual increase of their presence in all types of armed forces and the General Staff. More than a half of women serves in the medical and veterinarian corps, but their representation raises steadily in signal and IT corps, legal services, radio-technical services, missile and artillery forces, as well as logistic and engineering corps.

32 It is not to be ruled out that thousands of men, who will graduate from universities after a five-year long course of studies this year (i.e. 2007), will face conscription. Such conclusions can be drawn from a draft of a regulation of the Minister of National Defense. Such a situation would be unprecedented, since persons, who inaugurated their studies before the academic year 2002/2003, were being moved to reserve automatically; see „Rzeczpospolita” daily, issue from the May 24th, 2007.

Soldiers serving under the shortest possible contract will be recruited from conscripts or – more often – reserve soldiers, drafted for service in peace-keeping operations. As a result, even soldiers who completed a 6 months contract will possess training and will have specific skills as operators of equipment used during various missions.

An original solution is that of the “professional private” – young conscripts who undergo trainings as potential future professionals³³.

Table 1. Soldiers in professional service in Poland, in all kinds of armed forces (figures from March 31st, 2007)

Number of professional soldiers, out of which:	77 523
generals	134
officers	24 944
non-commissioned professional officers	42 767
professional privates	9678
Number of non-professional soldiers	62 363
TOTAL	139 886
CFE limit	234 000

Source: Polish Ministry of National Defense, www.mon.gov.pl/strona.php?idstrona=47@idn1

Reservists compose, on one hand, an important hinterland of the Polish armed forces, on the other hand they are critical of military institutions, raising numerous complaints, mainly of a social nature (low retirement pensions, lack of contacts with persons in active service). Both the Association of Former Professional Soldiers and Reserve Officers of the Polish Armed Forces and the Polish Association of the Veterans of the UN Peacekeeping Operations are rather inactive. Despite the above-mentioned increase of cuts in the personnel’s numbers, the membership in these associations falls. According to opinions cited by the military press the mode in which these organizations acted – created

33 Legal basis regulating the issues of conscription: Article 32, section 1 and Article 34 of the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland Act of November 21st, 1967, amended on July 29th, 2005.

more than 25 years ago – has lost its effectiveness. One may assume that, contrary to the figures offered by the Military Office of Social Research – that 60 per cent of reservists declare their positive attitude towards the military – the situation is just the opposite.

3. The Mode of Control

3.1 Neutrality of the Military

The current Constitution of the Republic of Poland³⁴ underscores the principle of maintaining neutrality of the military in the political matters, whereas, as noted by a renowned expert in the field of constitutionalism and military affairs W.J. Wołpiuk³⁵, there is a distinct lack of interpretation and detailed legislation in this regard. According to Jerzy Zalewski, “the most valuable aspect of the constitutional principle of civil and democratic control is a clear definition of this principles object, namely the armed forces. A notion of being “subject to” (Article 26, point 2) means not only a state of dependence, understood as subordination, as it also underlines that the military does not enjoy a privileged position vis-à-vis other state institutions and, as a result, is subject to the same control procedures that apply to these “other” state structures”³⁶.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the president, elected in a universal ballot, is the superior of armed forces. President names the Chief of General Staff and commanders of specific services of armed forces. Acting upon formal request of the prime minister, the president names and dismisses Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, appoints to the rank of general, issues decision on introducing the state of war (provided that the Sejm is unable to convene). Other acts undertaken upon a formal request of the prime minister include ordering mobilization and use of armed forces, introducing martial law and state of emergency. During martial law president, as the only executive body, is entitled to issue regulations with a status of parliamentary acts. The president has an informal/customary influence upon designating the minister of national defense.

The act of transferring the supreme authority over the armed forces to the newly elected president is always a solemn occasion, taking place in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Warsaw, and featuring the Representative Company of Polish Armed Forces. The current president, Lech Kaczyński, assumed the supreme authority on December 23th, 2005, stating: “It is my wish that the army, although more modern than a couple of years ago, becomes even more modern and stronger. I will do everything to make it happen”³⁷. The moment of assuming supreme authority over armed forces is

34 See chapter of the Report: The form of government.

35 See Waldemar Wołpiuk, „Armed forces as regulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland”, Scholar Publishing House, Warsaw, 1998 [Siły zbrojne w regulacjach Konstytucji RP].

36 Ibid.

37 Compare the website of the President of Poland at www.prezydent.pl.

extremely important – from the point of view of pace and scope of the reform of military, the direction of changes, as well as the general political mood, which may act to its favor to a smaller or higher degree. Specific attitude of the president has a considerable impact on the body of the civil-military relations in the context of the aforementioned so-called historical politics, namely reconciliation with the past, including the communist period in the Polish history.

3.2 Exercising Civil and Democratic Control

The constitutional regulation according to which basic executive competences in the domain of managing the defensive structures belong to the Council of Ministers and the Minister of National Defense is important from the point of view of exercising civil and democratic control over armed forces. The Minister of National Defense is a civilian politician and, together with the cabinet, he bears constitutional responsibility to the parliament. According to the constitutional order the parliament has full control over the expenses of the military covered by the state budget. To fulfill scheduled defense tasks and missions Poland has allocated to defense expenditures 20,202.0 millions zloty (MPLN)³⁸. Within that amount MPLN 20,156.0 was allocated to Ministry of National Defense and MPLN 46.0 to the other ministries for non-military defense preparations.

The 2007 defense expenditure ceiling has been established according to formula defined in the act dated May 25th, 2001, on restructuring, modernization and financing of Polish Armed Forces. It means that the defense appropriations are not less than 1.95% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the year 2006.

It is worth noting that the defense budget is being increased faster than the increase of the GDP, which should have some impact on modernization of the armed forces. Financing of all long-term programs has been ensured.

Control over the military, although not yet flawless (as discussed below), belongs to one of the most important achievements resulting from the Polish transformation in the direction of a democratic state, obeying the principles of the rule-of-law, and towards integration with Western security institutions, first in the framework of the “Partnership for Peace” program, and then as a member of NATO.

During the period of political breakthrough in Poland (year 1989), the main postulate of the “Solidarity” (opposition) concerned creation of an overt system of public control over the youth’s education, including education in military academies, establishing legal guarantees that would allow soldiers to exercise their fundamental rights and ensure observance of their dignity (freedom of thought, faith and religious practices). Expose of prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, delivered on the August 24th, 1989, contained a following remark: “Mechanisms of normal political life must be restored...the hitherto philosophy of state must be changed...we will not create a new army. We only mean to

38 1 PLN=0,26 EUR.

create such guarantees which would allow everyone, including those inside this institution, to feel that they are serving the society”.

As noted by Jerzy Zalewski in one of the few but extremely valuable publications³⁹ dealing with the issue character and tasks of the armed forces at the point when power was assumed by the first non-communist Prime Minister were defined by the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Poland (adopted on July 22nd, 1952, with subsequent changes) and by over 100 acts and other legislative regulations of key importance to the functioning of the armed forces.

The abovementioned constitutional and legal regulations, “ideologization” and high degree of “politicalization”, customary norms, subordination to the structures of the Warsaw Pact, dependencies in the domain of military doctrine, high manpower, highly developed infrastructure, lack of a rooted tradition of civil control over armed forces, as well presence of Soviet forces on the territory of Poland and neighboring countries, coupled with a unstable political situation in Central-Eastern Europe – all these factors set a strenuous outset for reforms in the domain of the military and state’s defense and security policy. “In 1990 the Polish Armed Forces were not destabilized. While sustaining full availability to the orders of their superior, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, after the breakthrough of June 1989, it remained in the barracks, maintaining organizational and operational density/cohesion/impenetrability and separation from politics/political situation”, Jerzy Zalewski underlines⁴⁰.

3.3 Extraordinary Position of the General Staff

Liquidation of party control over the military, included in the regulations introduced by the Political Parties Act of July 28th, 1990⁴¹, was the first step towards establishing civil and democratic control over the armed forces. The whole process begun with institutional re-arrangements (liquidation of party structures in the General Staff and party organizations in the armed forces, disbanding the political officers’ corps, change in the educational doctrines and first major reduction of the number of officers, chiefly those responsible for education). This process is still underway, but it is not advancing at an invariable pace, changing its intensity according to guidelines preferred by the subsequent circles taking charge of the military.

Generally speaking, the model of democratic control over the armed forces preferred in Poland recognizes civil authority exercised by parliamentary and governmental bodies, but the armed forces, especially the General Staff, stress their autonomy in military matters (not without consent of civilians). Each minister and his deputies must take into account the views of the generals and codes of conduct, established in the course of year-long practices. Every service of the armed forces seeks to guard its own identity and any

39 Jerzy Zalewski „Polish Armed Forces and the changes in the political system 1989-2001”, Elipsa Publishing House, Warsaw, 2000 [Wojsko Polskie w przemianach ustrojowych 1989 – 2001].

40 Ibid.

41 For the full text of this Act please see <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/partiepol/partiepol.htm>.

attempt at overcoming divisions existing between them, meant to lead to creation of joint structures or logistic support, is confronted with obstacles.

Structure of the Ministry of National Defense, introduced on January 1st, 2007, is characterized by certain features of importance from the point of view of the „Democratic Soldier” Project:

According to structural arrangements the General Staff remains a part of the Ministry of National Defense⁴². Initial ideas foresaw a unification of all structures of the Ministry, which would involve introducing departments in the structure of the General Staff. All in all, the General Staff remained divided into “directorates” (an adjective “general”, used since 2000, has been omitted). Since 1990 the General Staff has had its structures change six times. The issue of the institutional status of the General Staff has been controversial within the Ministry.

In the past those Ministers of National Defense who stemmed from the “Solidarity” circles and understood well the necessity of abandoning Soviet patterns and introducing civil, democratic control over the armed forces as one of the most important attainments of the process of democratization of Poland’s public and political life, attempted to radically limit the role and competences of the General Staff. The Staff was meant to be, according to their concept, an institution advisory to the Minister of National Defense, i.e. to fulfill planning, organizational, mobilization and logistic tasks. One of the points raised in the context of the debate on the draft of the Minister of National Defense Act, supported by Janusz Onyszkiewicz and Bronisław Komorowski⁴³, foresaw resignation from a provision stating that the Minister of National Defense commands the armed forces via the Chief of General Staff. Both Onyszkiewicz and Komorowski preferred to introduce a model in which command would be exercised by the agency of chiefs of three services: Land Forces, Navy and Air Forces (then named in a different manner), whereas the most prominent role would belong to the Land Forces. This service is (was) the most numerous in the Polish Armed Forces, amounting to approximately 70 per cent of the manpower, it is linked with the armored forces, which are traditionally enjoying high esteem in Poland, and it was responsible, during the period discussed here, for the foreign missions, of which Polish forces were part since early 1950’s under the aegis of the United Nations. Ultimately, the novelized provision had not been introduced and, from the legal point of view, the Chief of General Staff remains the First Soldier of the Republic of Poland (titled in this manner until present day)⁴⁴. An extraordinary position of the General Staff had been confirmed by Jerzy Szmajdziński, who from the outset of his time in office as Minister of National Defense⁴⁵ declared that command over the armed forces will be conducted in line with binding legislation.

42 Regulation no. 5 of the Minister of National Defense from February 20th, 2002.

43 Janusz Onyszkiewicz held the post of the Minister of National Defense in the years 1992-1993 and 1997-2000, Bronisław Komorowski was the Minister of National Defense in the period between 2000 and 2001.

44 The post of the Chief of General Staff is currently being held by Gen. Franciszek Gągor, who is a Polish candidate to becoming the Chief of the Military Committee of NATO.

45 Minister of National Defense in the years 2001-2005.

It seemed that the dispute over the role of the General Staff would be resolved by the new administration, who announced profound changes to the hitherto mode of management and command over the army. However, such changes are nowhere to be seen. According to Radosław Sikorski⁴⁶ a situation, in which a Minister has one soldier to command rather than three – which would mean that he would have to act as their arbiter – is more desirable⁴⁷. The current Minister of National Defense, Aleksander Szczygło (who assumed his post on the February 7th, 2007) seems to opt in favor of changes in personnel.

At the same time, during internal debates, there have been voices that proposed preserving highest importance of the General Staff in the hierarchy of military institutions, just as during the 1920's⁴⁸.

Still, reform of the General Staff is advancing, in line with principles of the control over the armed forces. The key aim of this reform is to introduce a separation of three different functions of central management of the armed forces, namely: strategic planning, normal course of command over the armed forces and operational command⁴⁹. According to General Gągor, “these changes will allow the General Staff to focus on the most important function it is to fulfill in the framework of the armed forces: strategic planning and development and use of the armed forces”⁵⁰.

Nevertheless, and regardless of the decisions that entered into force at the beginning of 2007, there is still a distinct lack of clarification as to who is to command the Polish army during peace time, in the event of crisis and during war time. The competences of the Chief of General Staff had not been changed. Chief of Staff is responsible directly to the

46 Minister of National Defense from October 2005 to February 2007.

47 „Poland at Arms” No. 4/07 [Polska Zbrojna].

48 During the period of Second Republic, the most notable trace was left by the decree of Józef Piłsudski, issued in January 1921. The decree foresaw that the General Staff would become the leading military body, equipped with broad competences in the domain of organization, training, logistics, mobilization and personnel policy. According to historians (including the best known expert in military history, Andrzej Ajnenkiel) and numerous publicists, regardless of the lack of political stability which characterized this period of Polish history, the General Staff worked intensely on various scenarios of conflicts with Germany and the Soviet Union. The influence of the General Staff begun to steadily decrease once, after the military coup conducted by Piłsudski in May, 1926, he himself created and manned the post of Marshall. In another decree, issued on August 6th, 1926, Piłsudski became the “permanent deputy of the minister of the military affairs in all matters dealing with preparation of the armed forces and the state in general for the event of a conflict”. General Inspector constantly narrowed the tasks of the General Staff. As a result, a marginalized and depreciated “brain of the army” did not play any significant role during the September Campaign of 1939, when Poland had to face simultaneous strikes from the West (Nazi Germany, beginning on the 1st September) and from the East (Soviet Union, from 17th of September onwards). Perhaps that was one of the reasons for such a rash defeat of Polish defenses. While in exile and during post-war period the General Staff had been remade according to completely different patterns, as noted by Tadeusz Mitek, a military publicist, in „Poland at Arms” No. 06/2006 [Polska Zbrojna].

49 The General Staff consists of eight Directorates: Organization and Recruitment, Intelligence and Reconnaissance, Operational Planning, Logistic Planning, Strategic Planning, Commanding Systems and Liaison Planning, Training, Material Planning. In addition, it is aided by a Coordination Bureau and 60 branches and sections.

50 „Poland at Arms” No. 6/2007 [Polska Zbrojna].

Minister of National Defense and commands the armed forces during peace time in the name of the Minister⁵¹. General Gağor made it clear that “the General Staff does not command. It serves the Chief of General Staff while he conducts his tasks”.

The issue described above is of importance not only to the military circles, but also to the public opinion and civil-military relations, especially given the fact that it had been made public. One of the Vice-Ministers of National Defense resigned from his post after acting against the binding rules and proposing to transform the General Staff into a planning and coordination body and depriving it of its hitherto role. Next, he published a text in one of the esteemed opinion-making Polish daily newspapers under a meaningful title “An Irredeemable General Staff”⁵².

3.4 More Civilians

The second element that may be of importance to the pattern of relations between the society and the military, especially from the point of view of perception of the armed forces, is the activity of two internal bodies of the Ministry, namely the Public Information Department and the Department of Education and Promotion of Defense, which are the main channel for dissemination of information about the military to the media and society, as discussed below.

Two further factors influencing the civil-military relations are, on one hand, an increase of the degree of “civility” (“civilizing”) of the army through the reduction of military posts and appointment of civilians to them, thus strengthening the so-called corps of civil employees of the military, and the so-called reconversion, i.e. help on the side of the army to its members in finding their way into a civilian labor market, on the other.

In the course of advancing the process of „civilizing” of the armed forces⁵³ a civilian had been appointed as Head of the Personnel Department. The maximum level of posts in the Ministry of Defense during peace-time had been set at 1795 (prior to reorganization – 1952), which includes the General Staff (currently 640 posts, prior to that 730). Number of posts occupied by members of the civil service and other employees of the military in a given organizational unit may not be lower than 50 per cent. General Staff is an exception – number of civilians had been set at 16 per cent. The overall number of the civil employees corps of the Polish Armed Forces amounts to over 52.000.

Reconversion has been a major problem for quite a few years. It should be a scheduled activity, meant to prepare the personnel for the realities of working in the civil sector, and provide a link between the military and labor market. In effect, however, it is generally associated with a one-time payment of benefits to the person leaving the armed forces. According to the report of the Supreme Chamber of Control⁵⁴, the Ministry of National

51 Office of the Minister of National Defense Act of December 14th, 1995.

52 „Rzeczpospolita” daily, August 18th, 2006.

53 Decision of the Minister of National Defense No. 63, from February 17th, 2006.

54 „Poland at Arms” No. 10/2007 [Polska Zbrojna].

Defense did not undertake effective measures to regulate, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, conditions and mode of transferring former professional soldiers to posts in the domain of state's defense. It is impossible to assess how many soldiers will leave the service as a result of termination of contract, professional relationship, or for other reasons. It is being said that mass redundancies are not taken into consideration. Nevertheless, according to various assessments, 3 to 5 per cent of the general number of personnel left the army upon their own request in the years 2005 and 2006. Reasons given as justifications for this step were as follows: unclear perspectives for continuation of service, growing disproportions in possibilities between civil and military market, uncertainty resulting from frequent changes of garrisons, the need of "living in two homes". The most frequent cases of leaving the service pertain to soldiers holding specialist positions (medics, IT experts, lawyers), who are able to receive a much higher salary at a civilian labor market.

The key document regulating the status of professional soldiers is the Military Service of Regular Soldiers Act, adopted on the September 11th, 2003⁵⁵. One must note that this broad and multifaceted document is treated rather as a starting point for adopting possible legislation and not as a document that regulates, over the long-term, issues such as: rules of appointment to professional military service and its course, basic rights and professional duties, including those pertaining to public activity, rules of receiving salaries and other financial amounts due, rules of dismissing professional soldiers from service, course of military service with regard to candidates for professional soldiers, and, last but not least, course of military service of professional soldiers and candidates in case of mobilization (Article 1 of the above-mentioned Act), introduction of martial law and in the event of war⁵⁶.

It is worth underlining that the Act, generally referred to as „the pragmatic act”, holds key provisions, which are of utmost importance to all parties involved. These provisions are a starting point for attempts aimed at comprehending the essence of discourse among the military and non-military circles on the all-important issue of relation between duties of a professional soldier on one hand, and responsibilities of politicians, parliamentarians, staff of the Ministry of National Defense and numerous others, including the representatives of military personnel, for creating appropriate conditions for service, including regulations of remuneration and proper living standards, mainly those associated with dwellings.

The first general remark of Article 3 of the Act states that “professional soldiers are soldiers conducting active military service”. Next, it is said that “professional soldiers conduct military service for the sake of the Republic of Poland. This service requires discipline, loyalty and sacrifice”. The next provision of the cited fragment of the Act reads: “The state ensures to the professional soldiers decent living standards, allowing for

55 Please confront with: www.mon.gov.pl; Personnel Department.

56 “Encyclopedic dictionary of civic learning for soldiers”, published by the Ministry of National Defense, Education and Defense Promotion Department, Warsaw, 2005, [Leksykon pojęć z zakresu wiedzy obywatelskiej dla żołnierzy].

dedication to service to the Nation and Homeland, compensating appropriately hardships, limitations and sacrifices resulting from the professional military service”.

In the light of these provisions and given the fact of the ongoing restructuring of the Polish military (liquidation and relocation of garrisons, personnel reductions and transfers in particular services, heightening of standards and requirements resulting from the need to adjust to standards present in Western countries, new areas of activity and new tasks/missions, discrepancies in the salaries offered by the military and those offered in civil sectors of Polish economy) both professional soldiers⁵⁷ and so-called employees of the military, i.e. civilians employed by the military, are increasingly active in pursuance of changes to the Act.

As a result, specific provisions of „the pragmatic Act” have been subject to constant debate from the day of Act’s entry into force (July 1st, 2004). The Act has been subject to several amendments. The necessity of introducing an amendment, as voiced by representative bodies within the military, results from anxiety about the increase of number of soldiers to which no new posts could be allocated, due to their high ranks. The so-called coincidence of ranks and posts has been one of the fundamental problems of the military personnel for years⁵⁸.

3.5 Command (and the Limits of) the Duty to Obey

„The pragmatic Act” sets out rights and obligations of commanders of military units vis-à-vis professional soldiers (Article 7 of the Act) who are conducting professional military service in units subordinate to the Ministry of National Defense or other units supervised by the Ministry. According to Article 25, which grants the commander a possibility of entrusting a professional soldier with numerous additional duties, and judging from widespread opinions, commander’s authority over subordinates is not only very extensive, but also difficult to control, at least in the past. One of means of this control is the so-called soldier opinion-making procedure (Article 26). A soldier may apply for a modification of an opinion about himself within 14 days.

On matters pertaining to the Ministry of National Defense a professional soldier (or his or her relative) may contact military authority of a higher rank⁵⁹ or the Minister of National Defense (via the Bureau of Proposals and Complaints, established by the Statute of the Ministry of National Defense, adopted in the 24th of October, 2004. Prior to that, these matters were dealt with by a separate section within the Secretariat of the Minister).

57 A contract for service with a soldier may foresee a permanent or periodical service, whereas the second may be extended (Article 12 of the Act).

58 Transcription of a debate featuring Deputy Minister of National Defense, Bogusław Winid, and Michał Jach, Member of Parliament heading the sub-commission responsible for drafting an amendment, may be found at the website www.sejm.gov.pl. The debate took place on January 27th, 2007, on the forum of the Defence Committee of the lower house of Polish parliament (Sejm).

59 Rules governing these contacts are regulated with an Act of June 14th, 1960.

Approximately 3000 complaints and proposals are being filed yearly (in 2006, exactly 3757 such cases were registered), with the maximum timeframe for issuing an answer being set at 30 days. Proposals pertaining to improvements in the functioning of the army are forwarded to the General Staff. The gravest issues mentioned by persons filing complaints are: policy towards personnel (including the policy of promotions), activity of the Military Lodging Agency, financial assistance.

A soldier has a right to file a complaint, issue petitions and proposals pertaining to the functioning of public authorities. As an inalienable right of every citizen, these matters are settled in the Article 63 of the Constitution of Poland, and supplemented by specific provisions of the Code of Administrative Conduct (adopted on the 14th of June, 1960).

Complaints may not be filed, however, with regard to decisions regulating: allocation, transfer and dismissal from a post, transfer to reserve personnel or to a state of availability, appointment to a military rank, transfer to a higher ranking corps⁶⁰ or delegation to fulfill external professional tasks, i.e. tasks not confined to the area where a particular unit is stationed.

In extraordinary instances, unit's commander may grant to soldier a permission to undertake an external job. As a rule a professional soldier may not, however, engage in such activities (Article 56 of the Act). Additionally, professional soldiers are not allowed to become members of internal organs of companies, enterprises and foundations (Article 57).

A professional soldier has a right to medical care, a right to lodging (one must note, however, that the scope of this right, regulated by Lodging of Armed Forces Act of 22nd of June, 1995, has been gradually narrowed by specific provisions referred to in Article 116 of the "pragmatic Act"), a right to salary, and others.

One has to note that – according to individual conversations and information available to military press– internal control in the military (i.e. in the Ministry itself, including particular services and on the level of military units) is well developed and rather effective. Its findings, especially with regard to matters pertaining to personnel's living standards, are made available to the wider public. This observation applies also to pathological phenomenon.

Procedures of internal control is regulated by a ministerial decision on oversight activity and a decision establishing a program for units' evaluation, both adopted on 12th of May, 2005. Their content takes into consideration prior experiences of the Department of Control of the Ministry of National Defense and experience gained during functioning of the OPEVAL system, designed to conduct oversight of a general-purpose battalion. Control is to apply to all units subordinate to the Ministry of National Defense, including the Military Intelligence Service. The Military Intelligence Service has been dissolved for political reasons, which were accompanied with grave charges of engagement in unlawful

60 Until today, there existed the following corps: officers' corps, non-commissioned officers' corps and professional privates' corps. Currently, there are some changes underway, described closely in the chapter: Military concept.

practices, such as corruption, informal ties with politicians, contacts with special services of foreign powers, chiefly Russian, and many more. Approximately 1.200 officers and soldiers have been transferred to the so-called Reserve Personnel of the Minister of National Defense. The MIS were replaced by intelligence and counterintelligence services, which are to be subordinated, during the peace-time, to civilian authorities, including the Special Services Coordinator.

Refusal to follow an order is dealt with in a specific manner. The “pragmatic Act” does not refer to this situation in a direct way. Article 93, point 1, states: “A salary and other payments due to a professional soldier, who willfully leaves the post where professional military service is conducted or refuses to perform service or duties resulting from this service, is suspended until the next payment date”. If an absence is deemed justified, the suspended salaries are being paid up. According to point 2, every day of an unjustified absence is converted to a loss of salary in the height of 1/30 of its total monthly amount. Furthermore, point 3 asserts that “point 2 is applied also when a soldier is found to be culpable of an inability to fulfill professional tasks”.

A Polish soldier may, at any time, terminate the professional relationship (Article 114 of the Act).

Regulations concerning a command and refusal to follow it are to be found in the Rules of the Polish Armed Forces from July 1st, 2004⁶¹. Point 25 of the Rules states that, in especially justified instances, a subordinate may issue a request to be given an order in a written form, above all when an order pertains to undertaking a task fulfilled in extraordinary circumstances or in a way which makes in different from generally accepted rules”. Responsibility for the content and the “foreseeable effects of its implementation” belongs to the commander, whereas “ways of performing” an order are a responsibility of the performing person (point 28 of the Rules). A soldier, who, during performing the order, knew that it meant committing a crime, or who agreed with such situation, is subject to criminal prosecution together with the person who issued an order.

Polish Criminal Code, in its part dealing with the military⁶², foresees certain sanctions for disobeying to perform an order (Article 343). Not performing an order, denying to perform an order or performing it in a manner discordant with the content of an order, involves a penalty of military arrest or a maximum period of a three-year’s imprisonment.

Polish Criminal Code holds detailed provisions concerning crimes against military discipline and rules of conduct vis-à-vis the subordinates.

61 Decision of the Minister of National Defense No. 303 from November 12th, 2003, amended by the Decision No. 365 from October 26th, 2005, points 15 to 29.

62 Chapters XXXVIII-XLIV of the Criminal Code Act of June 6th, 1997.

3.6 Civil Rights

Question of political rights of a Polish soldier are not subject to debate; only civil rights are discussed, but not without certain limitations introduced by the legislation. No efforts to change this situation are discernible. However, there are some voices to create a structure similar to a trade union.

The „pragmatic Act” discusses civil rights in six brief sections (the whole Act holds a total of 190 sections), which form a closely observed basis for regulating the public activity of the personnel. Section 6 of the Act is entitled “Public activity of professional soldiers” (Articles 105-110). Article 105 states that “a soldier benefits from civil rights to participate in public life, on the stipulations contained in separate legislation”.

3.7 Rights to Participate

Membership in a political party, association and other civic organizations and movements which pursue political goals is forbidden during military service⁶³. This restriction applies to participation in political assemblies and pursuance of political activity. Professional soldiers have a right to participate in central and local elections, provided that they will not be wearing a uniform, military distinctions and badges. A professional soldier may be a candidate in parliamentary elections, in elections to high elective posts and institutions of local government. During an election campaign professional soldiers are required to take an unpaid leave. Membership in an association must be terminated on the day the service commences.

In instances of membership in organizations and associations with non-political aims the regulations are not as restrictive, but a soldier has a duty to notify the unit’s commander in writing of this fact. In case of membership in a foreign or international organization a soldier must file an official request to the Minister of National Defense, stating name of the organization, its seat on the territory of Poland, and the post held in the organization. Additionally, in certain circumstances, a request to submit a statute of the organization or an excerpt from a register may be raised. Minister of National Defense has a right to turn to the organization in question for further information.

It is important to stress that bulk of the proposals and interventions filed by the professional staff of the Polish military to the representative bodies at virtually all levels concern matters of social and living conditions, and not issues of restructuring or modernization of armed forces. Issues that dominate the proposals are as follows: improvement of staff’s financial situation, especially with regard to personnel with lowest

63 Judging from conversations and interview the personnel would like to create a labor union which is, thus far, not possible from a legal point of view. The verdict of the Constitutional Court from March, 2000, has been used as a legal basis for this standpoint. The Court has not decided that creating labor unions in the armed forces is illegal, stating only that provisions of legislative acts are in force and do not violate the Constitution. However, according to a general opinion, there is no suitable climate for the heads of the Ministry to decide about a consent for a change in legislation that, in practice, forbids creation of a labor union.

salaries⁶⁴. Majority of so-called green garrisons (named after the color of uniforms of ground forces, which until recently formed approximately 70% of the overall number of soldiers) is located in regions characterized by a high rate of unemployment, which further complicates finding an occupation for family members. Numerous soldiers, mainly non-commissioned officers, are forced to make use of housing allowances/bonuses, offered by districts. Indebtedness of professional soldiers to banks is high, according to soldiers' estimates.

Soldiers are free to be members to denominations and other religious assemblies with legal entity.

The Ministry of National Defense and the Polish military declare their readiness to cooperate with and support Polish non-governmental organizations (currently approximately 350 organizations, of which 90 are cooperating on the basis of formal understandings), including the Fire Service (which has broad obligations vis-à-vis the Polish society) and the Scouting Association of the Republic of Poland, as a youth organization with the widest outreach. The Ministry regards this cooperation to be one of the most effective forms of promotion of defense and state security, predominantly in line with patterns taken from the period of the Second Republic. According to the representatives of the Ministry, cooperation with non-governmental, pro-defense organizations becomes especially important given the fact of steady diminution of the number of conscripts. Non-governmental organizations are regarded, at least formally, as a desired partner to the Polish Armed Forces in the process of preparing to the fulfillment of duties to the defense of the country. This approach is mirrored in the current National Security Strategy (adopted in 2003), as well as in the National Security Strategy that is currently being drafted and in the draft of the National Security Act.

It is hard to assess the actual significance of cooperation between the Ministry of National Defense and the non-governmental sector. It is believed that it is especially important for local societies, often bringing together former members of armed forces and their families. In aiming to contribute to the positive image of the Polish Armed Forces among the society and to strengthen the civil society, the Ministry grants financial support to projects implemented by non-governmental organizations, such as the "Aliante" competition, intended to raise the level of knowledge about NATO in countries of Central Europe and Ukraine⁶⁵.

3.8 Personnel Representation

After the year 1989, i.e. with the inauguration of the political transformation, spearheaded by the "Solidarity" movement, the organizational structures of the Communist Party within the Polish armed forces were dissolved. The same applied to various public organizations and institutions – councils and commissions responsible for

64 Salary in the Polish Armed Forces is set at a level higher than the national average, including the most demanding occupations.

65 See details of the Aliante Project at <http://www.project-aliante.org/enter.php>.

both ethical and socio-economic issues regarding the activity of the cadre – whose functioning within the particular military units was mandatory. At the same time the military began the process of restructuring and reductions, which involved also relocations of the officers, soldiers and their families. This, in turn, led to the need for new forms of self-representation. Since 1990 new ideas for creating representative bodies, as well as their legalization, began to be propagated. These ideas invoked the tradition of the so-called officers' meetings, dating back to the Second Republic. These informal meetings dealt with honorary and recreational matters. Other ideas included proposals of introducing the institution of intermediaries (as a common one in Poland in general), and with the rise of the awareness of the Western achievements in this domain also various forms of activity typical of allied armies.

However, the process of creating the representative body was a complex one. None of the ministers of the national defense was willing to allow for a creation of an organization that would resemble a labor union. Additionally, the nature of the relations between the superiors and the subordinates, as well as certain deep-rooted customs among the military staff, both prevent reaching independent and uncompromising decisions. As a result, the representative bodies in the contemporary Polish armed forces, including the meetings and intermediaries, were initiated by the subsequent highest authorities of the ministry of national defense, although not without discussions with the officers.

Competences of representative bodies of particular corps were broadened in the beginning of 2007. As a rule, new competences are intended to create better ways for articulation of problems. However, according to the military press, the general atmosphere, resulting from the uncertainty about the future development of armed forces, instability of the personnel and common instances of lack of trust between soldiers and commanders, does not contribute to an open discussion.

So-called "meetings" are key elements of the representative bodies' system within the Polish Armed Forces and compose forums for debating problems. So far meetings were held at levels of commanders of military districts, particular services and at the level of ministerial institutions. After the adoption of last regulations, they can be held at a level of brigade, division, corps, in the Headquarters of the Warsaw Garrison⁶⁶ and the Headquarters of the Military Police.

Prior to these changes, only officers were allowed to participate in the meetings. Currently, non-commissioned officers and professional privates can also take part. The proposals to hold meetings at the level of particular units were accepted due to the fact that, in the course of restructuring of the Polish Armed Forces, the officers' cadre is decreasing in number, whereas the non-commissioned officers' cadre is growing.

A meeting was regarded valid once "at least 75% of the professional soldiers composing it" were present, which effectively meant 75% of the whole personnel of the unit. The required turnout was often impossible to achieve due to the fact that the

66 Its role is traditionally exceptional, as it is located closely to the seats of key governmental institutions.

personnel was occupied with other activities. Currently a meeting is valid when at least 50% of the personnel declaring interest in participation in representative bodies is present (note: this figure is not identical with the overall number of personnel of the unit). In effect, a right to form representative bodies was granted, while no longer assuming the need for full participation.

The topics of meetings include: expression of opinions on the issues of direct interest to the soldiers, i.e. conditions of service, social conditions; presenting the issues affecting the morale of the squad or unit; presenting remarks on the legal initiatives regulating the professional service; comradesly relations and morality; granting aid to colleagues and their families in need; recommendations for distinctions.

A meeting is summoned by an intermediary or intermediary's deputy. Unit's commander is obliged to summon a meeting in two instances: when an intermediary is to be elected and when a request for his dismissal is filed. Commanders are obliged to formally meet an intermediary at least three times per year's quarter to hear their opinions and proposals and inform about the means by which prior proposals are dealt with. The intermediaries may fulfill their duties within service hours.

Deans' competences vis-à-vis the superiors were enhanced. Deans are currently allowed to directly (i.e. disregarding the usual channels of communication) contact the commander of a military district, a commander of a particular service or the Secretary of State in the Ministry of National Defense responsible for social matters. The Minister of National Defense may discuss matters pertaining to personnel only with the Convent of Deans of Officer's Corps. While commenting on these changes, Chairman of the Convent, Col. Anatol Tichoniuk expressed his belief that from now on the intermediaries of all corps on one hand, and commanders on the other, will be able to "really cooperate" while dealing with fundamental problems of service in the military units.

To date, no research addressing the question of functioning of representative bodies in the armed forces after introducing the above-mentioned changes had been conducted. On the other hand, according to prior research done by the Military Office of Social Research, soldiers believe that the representative bodies serve mainly as a façade, whereas the personnel expects to have representatives who would stand for their rights.

It is for this reason that main proposals formulated by the personnel concern issues pertaining to living conditions. Other proposals concern rules that would ensure observance of at least fundamental rights of soldiers – as citizens in uniforms – and carrying out of rights of assembly and rights to professional representation. There are plans to create a White Book of conditions of service – a Polish soldier's compendium holding information about conditions of service in countries whose militaries are members to the European Organization of Military Associations (EUROMIL).

A soldier is obliged to inform the Minister of the fact of resignation from an organization. The Minister decides on termination of the decision with regard to a

given soldier. The Minister may withdraw or suspend for a fixed time a decision concerning membership of a soldier in an international or foreign organization in case when such a step would be necessary for protection of state secret or confidential information⁶⁷.

It is for these reasons that civil press/mass media point to the fact that adoption of the “Code of Honor of Polish Armed Forces’ Professional Soldier”, endorsed by the Convent of Deans of Officer’s Corps of Polish Armed Forces, is an initiative of a propaganda nature, aiming at influencing private life. One of the chapters of the Code⁶⁸, entitled “Professional soldier off-duty”, contains a fragment stating that a soldier “seeks to aptly balance the demands of service with concern about the well-being of his/her family”.

3.9 Equal Rights

Women soldiers amount to 1% of the overall number of professional soldiers. There are no figures prescribing the percentage of women’s participation in the Polish Armed Forces, and no attempts to set any limits in this field are made. According to Col. Beata Laszczak, Minister’s of National Defense Plenipotentiary for Military Service of Women⁶⁹, “there should be a lot more women in the military. Only then will their presence be regarded as a norm, and not as an exception”⁷⁰. The regulations that need to be amended concern facilitations in the period of motherhood and parenthood, as well as special preparation of women for entry exams to military academies. A problem of unequal earnings is non-existent in the Polish Armed Forces.

The principle of equal treatment is generally observed also with regard to persons belonging to ethnic minorities and religions different than Roman-Catholic. Commanders of detachments/sub-units are responsible for practical implementation of these principles. They have oversight over all interpersonal matters, as well as activities of chaplains of three afore-mentioned denominations. In the future these matters will, according to information obtained in the Ministry of National Defense, belong to the domain of the newly created corps of officers for educational matters⁷¹.

67 Article 107 of the „pragmatic Act”; Paragraphs 2-7 of the regulation of the Minister of National Defense from February 20th, 2004, on providing professional soldiers with a permission to adhere to an association and other foreign or international organization.

68 The Code had been adopted on the October 17th, 2006. The ultimate version of the Code has not been published yet, see the website of the Convent www.kdkowp.wp.mil.pl.

69 The body representing women in the Polish Armed Forces is the Council on Women’s Matters. The Plenipotentiary for Military Service of Women is regarded as an institution providing a link between the Council and the Minister of National Defense.

70 „Poland at Arms” No. 06/2006 [Polska Zbrojna].

71 Educational matters will be subject to further research in the course of the future stages of the „Democratic Soldier” Project.

4. External Factors

Poland's security environment which is taking shape after the turn of 1980's and 1990's, redefinition of Polish foreign and security policy from Eastern to Western orientation, Poland's and Polish Armed Forces' deepening political, military and economic integration with NATO's and EU's structures were factors decisive for the emergence of a new shape of Polish Armed Forces, as well as a wholly new culture of functioning of Polish military in general, as well as specific formations.

Decomposition of the Yalta system which determined the ideological and political division of Europe into two blocks in the post-war decades, together with a shift within the armed forces of Poland and other countries that once belonged to the Warsaw Pact, and now are members of NATO, from an offensive to a defensive posture were of crucial importance. Participation in creating a post-Cold War system caused Poland to be involved in international – allied and regional – cooperation to an extent that was incomparable with any period in the past. Polish army, which had been assigned an important role in the event of an outbreak of an inter-block conflict, had to find its new identity as a national army, but functioning within an alliance. According to a widely accepted opinion, raised in Poland, Polish Armed forces would not be able to act unaided over a longer period of time.

Participation in the Euro-Atlantic system did not cause the Polish army to abandon its national traditions, but, thanks to adopted patterns of action, it has numerous positive outcomes for humanization of the military service and democratization within the military. Structural changes, defense planning, technical modernization, separation of classified and unclassified information, changes in mentality within the military circles are factors whose effect had been increased by external factors.

Polish armed forces profited greatly from the experience of other democratic states, chiefly those of the US (rapid reaction forces, non-commissioned officers corps, soldier's individual gear, fighting ethos), British (army's reconstruction, structure of the Ministry of National Defense, outsourcing) and German (armored forces, foreign missions, *Innere Führung*).

External factors doubtlessly brought about an increase of effectiveness of budgetary procedures, observance of rules of free-market economy and ecological norms.

Military activity had been made subject to civil and democratic control mainly because of patterns adopted from experiences/practices of Western countries e.g. by the Polish Ombudsman. Transparency of the activities of the military vis-à-vis the media – and thanks to their agency, also to the public opinion – had been increased. Transparency grew as a result of adoption of arms control agreements (e.g. the agreement regulating limitations of conventional forces in Europe, CFE).

Activities of the Ministry of National Defense and Polish Armed Forces are subject to evaluation and scrutiny from the side of parliament and media that is analogical to the one exercised with regard to other Ministries.

One of the authors cited before, Jerzy Zalewski⁷², notes that systems of dependencies between Poland's military have gained, between 1990 and 2001, an ability to liken to the Western-European model in the sphere of:

1. adjustments of armed forces' tasks to the character of changes in the state's political system;
2. division of competences between major institutions holding public authority in the domain of defense and armed forces;
3. institutionalization of democratic, civil control over the army;
4. fulfillment of political, military and infrastructural upgrading tasks pertaining to membership in NATO.

72 Jerzy Zalewski, *op.cit.*

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