

MED TRANZICIJO IN TRANSFORMACIJO

BETWEEN TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION

Review article

Povzetek Po šestih letih sodelovanja Republike Slovenije in Slovenske vojske v Natu in strukturah Evropske unije številni pokazatelji navajajo na sklep, da sta politična in obrambno-varnostna tranzicija uspešno končani, prav tako vojaška tranzicija, pri čemer je izpolnjen tudi petletni načrt vključevanja v zavezništvo. Kljub prepričanju, da zavezništvo predvsem stane, pa je dejstvo, da so obrambni izdatki, obrambna struktura in obrambne sile bistveno manjši, kot če bi še vedno gradili samozadosten sistem. Republika Slovenija verodostojno sodeluje v obrambno-vojaških strukturah in skupnih aktivnostih tako v Natu kot v EU. Pri tem mislim zlasti na aktivnosti skupnega obrambnega načrtovanja, sodelovanje v skupnih poveljstvih in njihovih aktivnostih, povezovanje v zavezniško strukturo sil ter zagotavljanje prispevka v njenih odzivnih silah, sodelovanje v mednarodnih operacijah in na misijah ter graditev nacionalnih zmogljivosti, ki so prek doktrin in standardov povezljive z drugimi v zavezništvu. Obenem je Slovenija deležna skupne zaščite in kontrole zračnega prostora ter Natovega investiranja v letališke zmogljivosti v Sloveniji. Integracija v zavezništvo je ustvarila pogoje za spreminjanje strategije nacionalne varnosti in posledično vojaške doktrine. V zavezništvu in posameznih državah ter njihovih oboroženih silah pa se srečujemo s pojavi transformacijske narave, pri čemer se postavljajo vprašanja o izginjanju nacionalnih vojaških identitet in nacionalnih vojaških sposobnosti. V članku predstavljamo značilnosti slovenskega tranzicijskega obdobja in izzive transformacije na obrambno-vojaškem področju ter navajamo slovenske vojaške izkušnje iz procesa integracije.

Ključne besede *Tranzicija, integracija, izkušnje iz delovanja v zavezništvu, transformacija.*

Abstract After six years of cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovenian Armed Forces in NATO and the European Union structures, numerous indicators point to the conclusion that the political as well as the defence and security transition have been

successfully completed. Also completed are the military transition and the five-year action plan for the integration into the Alliance. Despite the conviction that the Alliance is above all costly, it is a fact that defence expenditures, defence structure and defence forces are significantly smaller than in the case of building a self-sustaining system. The Republic of Slovenia participates, as a credible partner, in defence and military structures as well as in joint activities within NATO and the EU. This refers to the activities of joint defence planning, participation in NATO commands and their activities, integration in the NATO Force Structure and contribution to its Response Forces, participation in multinational operations and missions, as well as the building of national capabilities, implementation of the doctrines and standards through which forces and commands are interoperable with others in the Alliance. At the same time, Slovenia is enjoying air policing and NATO's security investment in military airport facilities in the country. Integration in the Alliance has created conditions for changing the national security strategy and, consequently, the military doctrine. In addition, the Alliance and individual countries, along with their armed forces, are facing a transformation phenomenon, which brings questions regarding the loss of national military identity and national military capabilities. The article discusses the characteristics of the Slovenian transition period, transformation challenges in the area of defence and military, as well as Slovenian military experiences from the process of integration.

Key words *Transition, integration, integration process lessons learned, transformation.*

Introduction In 2009, at the 60th anniversary of NATO, activities began for the preparation of the new NATO Strategic Concept (NSC), which is to respond to the current and, above all, future challenges of the Alliance. The work on designing the new NSC was completed in May 2009 by a special expert group. At the beginning of 2010, the Slovenian Armed Forces fulfilled its tasks arising from the integration plan and thus became comparable and interoperable with other armed forces in the Alliance.

It took Slovenia ten years of preparation in the context of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme to join the Alliance, while the political and military conditions for membership were fulfilled in the second accession cycle of the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Legitimacy was assured by the 2003 referendum, when 66 percent of citizens voted for the membership of the Republic of Slovenia in NATO. One of the main conditions for Slovenia's membership was reforms carried out in numerous areas, including the restructuring of the Slovenian Armed Forces, as well as its structural and functional professionalisation. Slovenia's achievement of NATO membership was followed by a very intense five-year period of integration activities. One may claim that after five years of membership, the Slovenian path to transition and its integration in the Alliance have been successfully completed.

1 SLOVENIAN PATH TO TRANSITION

In Europe, the end of the Cold War and bipolar division have led to major social transition processes. These processes were most intense in the European countries of the former socialist regime, while they also took place in the West European countries. Consideration of conceptual, structural and functional changes made during the transition in the defence and military field in Slovenia indicates a number of characteristics also found in other European countries after the end of the Cold War. At the same time, there are several particularities which, on the one hand, apply only to Slovenia as a newly established state and, on the other hand, exceed the period of transition and represent the characteristics of transformation changes.

The central common feature of transition processes was the **adaptation** of the defence and military organisation to the new circumstances in the period of social as well as defence and security transition. In the area of defence, efforts regarding the functionality were directed towards the provision of national defence during the intense structural changes, and towards the accession to military and political alliances, which led to cooperation in conflict solving in crisis areas abroad. Efforts in the social area were focused on the establishment of institutions for democratic control of armed forces, which Cottey, Edmunds and Forster (2002, pp. 31–56) consider the first and the second generation of problems in the civil-military relations¹.

Since 1992, Slovenia, as an independent state with international recognition, has participated in the processes of political, economic, national, as well as defence and security transition. It has established a multiparty political system of parliamentary democracy, introduced market economy, built its own state, along with the defence and security components, as well as prepared for and entered such liaisons as the UNO, OSCE, NATO and the EU. Slovenia spent part of the process of the defence and security transition developing and reforming the national security system.

The transformation of Slovenian military organisation ran in parallel with the process of independence and with military activities for securing the establishment of a democratic and sovereign state in 1991². These activities were conducted on the basis of total defence and mass army concepts, founded on a large mobilised reserve structure of the Territorial Defence. The period after July 1991, after the end of the War for Independence, saw the demobilisation of enlisted reservists and final establishment of the Territorial Defence Learning Centres³ which trained Slovenian military recruits on the basis of general compulsory military service. At the same time, a regular army and a large military reserve were also established. The process in Slovenia was conducted simultaneously with the processes of reducing mass

¹ See also Donnelly (1997), Ikenberry (2002) and Moskos (2000).

² In reality, however, it began immediately after the first democratic elections and the assumption of power in May 1990.

³ The first two Slovenian Territorial Defence learning centres were established in May 1991, while altogether eight learning centres were established by June 1992.

armies and abolishing military service in some industrialised countries of the former Europe, for example in Belgium and the Netherlands. Considering the fact that Slovenia emerged from the war in 1991 and was, until 1995, under a military threat from war activities in its immediate vicinity in the former Yugoslavia, Slovenian deviation from the then processes in developed European countries can be better understood.

In the process of establishing a regular Slovenian army, several specific features emerged, which could not be eliminated in subsequent periods, as all transition changes were aimed at adaptation rather than radical changing of the defence and military structures (Šteiner 2009, pp. 126-129). Thus, from the initial establishment of the military organisation, through the period of transition, to entering the transformation period, there have been characteristics present, which have impeded further changes in the Slovenian Armed Forces and thus its transformation. Establishment of compulsory service with the system of manning the regular and reserve structures has left an officer structure that is too vast and inappropriate, having a conscript army mentality; infrastructure that, on the one hand, is adapted to military service of the male population and, on the other hand, is spread throughout the country; as well as a wide branched civil and administrative recruitment network. All of the above-mentioned has been reorganized several times during the military transition. However, it has not been abolished or overcome in accordance with the new tasks and missions of the Slovenian Armed Forces. The numerous reorganization processes of the command structure and scope of the army, as well as gradual changes are thus essential companions in the period of transition, as can also be observed in other countries.

Through extensive support of countries with which the Republic of Slovenia has entered in cooperation in the military area (the USA, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Israel, and others), it gradually became clear that it is necessary to abandon the outlived military organisation models and the past operational patterns. Accession of the Republic of Slovenia to the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme in January 1994 signified, on the one hand, moving away from old models, while, on the other hand, it has led to the pluralism of following foreign examples. Following examples may sometimes signify the adoption of everything that has been offered and evaluated as good, regardless of the efficiency of the examples when they are placed in concrete situations and the defence and military system. Uncritical and unselective following of foreign examples is characteristic of all countries in transition, as described by Haltiner and Klein (2002, pp. 7-22).

Realisation of the necessity of abandoning the old model of military organisation and consequently of military structure and scope of the army has become one of the most important transition challenges. It was not easy to comprehend, let alone implement, as ideas of restoring old models are still present. A particular challenge was the necessity to open up and cooperate in the area of defence and military,

which arose with the accession to the PfP. The tools and activities in the PfP thus not only appear as mechanisms of defence and military transition, but also of political transition. For this reason, there are many changes and new processes conducted in the field of defence planning and, consequently, political decision-making with regard to defence issues⁴. Slovenia has been learning about and adapting to collective defence planning since 1994, through the Planning and Review Process (PARP) and the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP), also followed by the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in 1999. Until the time of the accession to NATO and during very intensive preparations of Slovenia, which followed the five-year membership action plan, these tools provided effective interagency cooperation.

When, in 1997 in Madrid, the Republic of Slovenia did not receive a membership invitation, the initial disappointment resulted in the knowledge that the transition process will have to be brought to the point where it is evident that Slovenia takes reforms seriously and will successfully implement them. The Madrid “no” thus helped, rather than inhibited, Slovenia on its path to transition and enhanced the political aspects of the defence reform⁵. Without the Madrid experience, Slovenia would have certainly delayed the professionalisation of its army, and the establishment of modern and deployable armed forces.

The transition period until 2002 was characterised by gradual and relatively slow changes. When the Slovenian government and the parliament decided to abolish military service as a component of general compulsory military service, and the NATO Summit in Prague in November 2002 resulted in Slovenia’s invitation to become a full member of NATO, this signified the continuation of even more intense changes in the military organisation. After the accession in 2004, the Slovenian Armed Forces prepared the Accession and Integration Plan (AAI)⁶ which was to be fulfilled by the end of 2010, but was already implemented by the end of 2009. One may claim that the essence of activities in the period of PfP, MAP and AAI lies in their orientation towards transition in the broadest sense of the word.

Based on conclusions made during the period of Slovenia’s transition, two general characteristics can be defined. First, preparations for membership take several years and include the implementation of membership plans, which brings many changes to the military organisation and the defence system. Second, integration in the processes of joint decision-making and defence planning brings modifications and adaptations of national approaches in the functioning of the government, the diplomatic field, the provision of conditions for the protection of classified information and, ultimately, the public. It often appears that such changes are determined by the defence and military structure, especially with regard to participation in multinational operations and missions, when this structure needs to meet the

⁴ *More on this Šavc 2009, pp. 52-55.*

⁵ *This includes the operation of the government, creation of a positive public attitude to membership in the Alliance, and changes in the external activities. More on this Grizold (2005) and Bebler (2009).*

⁶ *Implementation of the plan was monitored and supported by JFC Naples, Italy.*

conditions of interoperability and integrating in joint operations. In the context of NATO, Slovenia is an example of a member that has successfully overcome the tests and challenges of the transition period. As such, it can be a good example for the integration of other small countries and candidate countries, particularly the ones in its immediate vicinity.

2 INTEGRATION PROCESS – LESSONS LEARNED

The integration into the Alliance is a comprehensive process including several procedures and activities that allow new members to be effectively integrated and to participate in the Alliance's mechanisms of decision making and fulfilment of its commitments and is, hence, given priority⁷. In discussing Slovenian lessons learned from the integration process, it should be stressed that the accession to the Alliance is only the beginning of intensive activities. The achievement of full membership is followed by a demanding period of association and integration as well as affiliation⁸ of declared forces to NATO Force Structure. In the case of Slovenia, this integration process spanned over five years. When these processes came to an end, it became evident that it would be followed by further transformation processes of the military organisation, standardisation procedures and processes of integrated multinational force structures as well as capability building for the needs of national and collective defence.

There is no uniform definition of what is part of integration processes. In Slovenia, **the integration process** has been divided into: (1) integration into the allied processes of political decision-making and defence planning, (2) introduction of NATO doctrines and standards, (3) integration in NATO Command Structure, (4) affiliation of declared forces into NATO Force Structure (corps), (5) military capability building in accordance with the adopted allied force goals, (6) provision and maintenance of interoperability of commands and units, including NATINADS⁹ and Air Policing, (7) participation in planning, preparing and conducting multinational operations and missions, (8) preparation and contribution in NATO Response Forces (NRF), (9) financing joint projects through the NATO Security Investment Programme (NSIP)¹⁰. Integration areas are also shown in Figure 1.

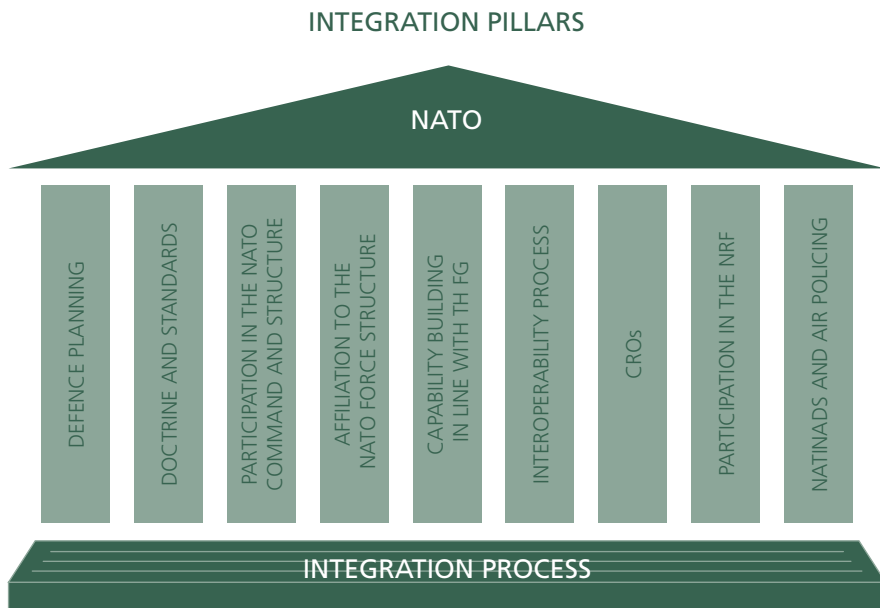
⁷ *Humar states that (Humar and others, 2009, p. 71) the NATO structure allows the respect of joint values and interests within the Alliance and, in particular, provides a frame, based on which member states may determine and implement common goals. In the NATO context, member states are the main decision-making players. As owners of the forces, they make decisions by consensus. Forces and capabilities which are provided by the member states for carrying out NATO activities are under NATO control and are, at the same time, part of the national chain of commands and control at all levels.*

⁸ *Affiliation refers to the integration of forces based on international agreements.*

⁹ *NATO Integrated Air Defence System is an integrated and interlinked system of the allied air defence. Air Policing is the surveillance of the air space, including its capabilities for such operational use.*

¹⁰ *NATO Security Investment Programme is the financial tool and programme for a joint investment into allied capabilities.*

Diagram 1:
Integration
areas



Source: Presentation by the SAF General Staff, 18 February 2010.

Slovenia was successfully integrated into the **allied political decision-making process and defence planning**. Defence planning encompasses seven different planning disciplines: force planning, resources planning, planning of defence investments, logistical planning, C3 planning, nuclear planning and civil emergency planning (Šavc 2009, p. 45). National defence planning as a whole is part of the sphere of defence policy and thus a matter of particular agencies and organisational units of defence ministries. Based on defence planning starting points, force planning is part of the domain of national as well as allied military staffs. In order to meet the purposes of military operation and operation within multinational operations and missions, operational planning for individual NATO operations is applied. All NATO planning categories are described in particular allied publications respectively instructions, which serve as bases for preparing national regulations and instructions. In 2006, the defence budget structure in Slovenia was harmonised with the NATO method based on which reporting on defence planning is carried out within the Alliance. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that Slovenia is successfully participating in activities and operation procedures of most allied committees and working bodies. Slovenia did not use the basic principle in the decision process, that is to say consensus, for hampering the operation of the Alliance.

Furthermore, the area of **introducing NATO doctrines and standards** presents a particular organisational and intellectual challenge. The Ministry of Defence and the Slovenian Armed Forces adopted and introduced most of the standards that are necessary for achieving the interoperability of armed forces or defence measures and

military procedures. As much as half of them were adopted in the original language with only the first page translated. These are used in the original language, whereas others were translated into the Slovenian language. Consequently, providing the capability of managing and employing standards in the English language is a speciality and ability, which is coupled with the fulfilment of English language standards. The Slovenian Armed Forces adapted and developed its Military Doctrine and the Military Logistics Doctrine, bringing them in line with allied documents. In addition, it has ambitious plans for continuing the preparations of doctrines in other areas.

Slovenia's integration into the **NATO Command Structure** is achieved in line with plans, taking into account changes that occur in its peace-time structure. The integration into the peace-establishment command structure¹¹ refers to national military personnel contributions to NATO commands and bodies as well as participation in its operational processes. The Slovenian Armed Forces is linked to the NATO Command Structure through military representations which, in 2009, were transformed into a peace-time structure of the Slovenian Armed Forces abroad. The Military Representative (MilRep) in Brussels can be considered as part of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to NATO and the EU. SHAPE near Mons, Belgium, includes the National Military Representation – (NMR) at the Allied Command Operations (ACO). In Norfolk, USA, the ACT includes the National Liaison Representation (NLR). Interaction with NATO's command structure does not only exist at the strategic level. Significant connections and cooperation are carried out through the Slovenian Armed Forces' Force Command, which cooperates with the JFC in Naples, Italy. Of a total of 80 military representatives abroad, this is as much as 1 percent of the peacetime national military structure. Around 30 representatives are assigned to NATO commands and their bodies as well centres of excellence, and approximately 10 representatives are part of unit commands, into which the Republic of Slovenia can affiliate its capabilities.

In 2010, Slovenia completed the second rotation of personnel which represented the Republic of Slovenia in NATO and the EU. In this context, national representations played an important role in performing integration activities and achieving interoperability by implementing set tasks, in particular in understanding the Alliance, the political decision-making process as well as the preparation of military advice and its implementation. Efficient cooperation in working bodies and committees requires great efforts as well as learning. Often, this involves learning from doing or learning from those who have gained experience within the Alliance. The Alliance considers Slovenia to be a positive surprise, as it is well integrated into NATO bodies, successfully communicates at the level of allied bodies and national decision-makers as well as processes. Furthermore, the positive experience of a balanced representation of national interests in relation to joint allied interests and goals should be emphasised.

¹¹ *NATO uses the term NATO Command Structure – NCS. More about this in Humar and others, 2009: Integration Slovenian Armed Forces in NATO, The Bulletin of the Slovenian Armed Forces, No. 11-3/2009 pp. 71-79.*

The Republic of Slovenia and the Slovenian Armed Forces have carried out initial activities for **affiliation declared forces into the NATO force structure**. Affiliation into corps as multinational allied structures is considered as the integration of national capabilities into tactical and operational structures or commands¹². One of the tasks of corps commands in peace is to increase the interoperability within NATO through training and preparing commands and units for possible combined joint operation. I have stated the fact that initial activities have been carried out in order to point out that comprehensive activities and changes that have to be carried out in the following years should be concerned.

Building military capacities in accordance with the adopted allied force goals is an area which reflects in particular the modernisation and transformation of armed forces and their capabilities. It is defined through national defence planning and force planning as well as harmonised with allied planning and based on the force goals. The force goals reflect the adopted political commitments to capability building that meet national requirements, as well as joint allied capabilities. This presents a special feature, as Capability Based Planning is carried out on the basis of capability requirements. During the Cold War, on the other hand, Threat Based Planning was prevalent with threats being easier to recognise and, hence, required capabilities being easily determined.

Capability building in states that are in transition or have just completed it, has certain particular features, as most of the jointly agreed capabilities usually have to be established from the very beginning. Therefore, it is necessary to provide required resources, such as financial, personnel, material and infrastructural resources. Capability building is based on the fact that it is expected to invest 20 percent of funds for modernisation and equipment. As the building of deployable capabilities is generally a priority task, there are not enough resources for other capabilities. Under such conditions, within the new member states and small states, it may occur that only joint or even foreign capabilities are invested in.

Modernisation of armed forces and the building of military capabilities present a special challenge during the economic crisis and recession. In this context, the countries are reducing expenses for defence and military purposes and (are) therefore, reducing investments, in particular in the defence sector. This results in an impaired capability building or even its end. Thus, we can speak of a crisis of implementing plans of military capability planning and confidence into national promises. Modern capability building is not only the purchase of military equipment and its modernisation, but also demanding relations with personnel, training and readiness for operating together with other allied forces in a complex environment. Furthermore, we should consider the introduction of doctrines and standards which contribute to interoperability.

¹² *It is about the affiliation of light battalion battle groups into the NATO Rapid Deployable Corp in Italy and the CBRN battalion into the Multinational Corp North-East in Poland.*

Provision and maintenance of interoperability of commands and units is an important area of integration which allows the Alliance's joint operation and is achieved through training, joint exercises and participation in operations. In addition to standardisation procedures, it is increasingly contributing to the transformation of the defence system and the achievement of comparability and interoperability. Interoperability should not be considered as a unification or cloning, but (particularly) reflects the ability to achieve shared points in procedures, equipment, qualified personnel and decision-making as well as participation in operations.

Interoperability is most clearly reflected in the areas of NATINADS and Air Policing. The Slovenian Air Space Operational Centre is integrated into the Alliance's system and closely cooperates with the NATO Combined Air Operations Centre in Poggio Renatico, Italy. Air Policing in Slovenia is performed jointly by NATO air forces and Slovenian air controllers. Similarly, the Maritime Operational Centre is linked to the Allied Naval Centre at the Maritime Component Command (CC MAR) in Naples. This reflects the achievements of the Republic of Slovenia's membership in the Alliance, since it does not have nor has it developed certain capabilities.

Participation in planning, preparing and conducting multinational operations and missions is an area which was very exposed during the preparations for membership and even later on. The contribution to NATO Crisis Response Operations outside Article 5 reflects the credibility of a country that is aware of the necessity of contributing to international peace¹³. The Republic of Slovenia has contributed little more than 0.6 percent of international peace-time forces in the past four years¹⁴.

Slovenia's military contribution to multinational operations and missions is directly linked to the remodelling of the military, its transition from a conscript to professional armed forces as well the development of deployable capabilities (Šteiner and Geder 2009, pp. 183-210). The Slovenian Armed Forces have been participating in multinational operations and missions for thirteen years, since 1997. So far, it has participated in nineteen multinational operations and missions and in three Continents. By the end of May 2010, a total of 6096 military persons and 15 civilian experts have been deployed. The Slovenian contribution has increased from its initial dispersion and participation of individuals and groups to the participation of smaller tactical units. In 2007, a battalion was engaged for the first time. This proves the connection of a structural change of the Slovenian Armed Forces and

¹³ *National contributions include operations that are under the auspices of the UN as well as those that are performed under the auspices of NATO and the EU. United Nations Peace Keeping Operations include: conflict prevention peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace enforcement and peace building. Non-Article 5 NATO crisis response operations are classified as peace support operations, which include (a) conflict prevention, (b) building, (c) exercise, (d) conservation and (e) the construction of peace and humanitarian operations. In addition, there are other NATO Non-Article 5 Operations and Crisis Response tasks, such as (a) humanitarian assistance operation, and (b) disaster relief, (c) search and rescue, (d) support in the evacuation of civilian personnel and (e) military support for civil authorities (AJP-3.4 2008: 4-1, 4-11; Šteiner and Geder, 2009 p. 185).*

¹⁴ *See also Jelušič 2009, pp 39-46).*

its endeavours for an increased and more active participation in ensuring stability as well as solving global crisis situations. In addition, multinational operations and missions have a significant impact on international activities, the provision of interoperability and joint actions on the international scene.

Lessons learned from various multinational operations and missions are a significant factor in building military capabilities. When multinational operations and missions are considered as a transformational tool at the national and international level, it can be established that lessons learned and good practice provide answers to various strategic, operational and tactical questions on the employment of armed forces and military capabilities. Operations provide an opportunity to test new equipment and resources as well as to confirm some experiments in the use of new capabilities or tactics, as well as to develop a combined and multinational interoperability and joint operation.

The thirteen years of participation of the Slovenian Armed Forces in multinational operations and missions can be divided in three periods: the first between 1997 and 2002, the second between 2003 and 2006 and the third after 2007 (Šteiner and Geder, 2009). The first period is characterised by the involvement of smaller and less-demanding modules up to platoon-level. During the second period, a progress in terms of quantity and quality can be observed, although dispersion is most noticeable in this period. The third period is characterised by the fact that challenges of a comprehensive approach in multinational operations and missions have been taken over. This enabled the integration of Slovenian companies in multinational structures as well as the formation of national structures in the form of battalion groups that also include modules of other countries. If the first period is characterised by the fact that Slovenian troops appear in the international environment and gain experience, one can say that the second can be referred to as a period of search and maturation within multinational operations and missions. Yet, the third period should be considered as a time when the Slovenian Armed Forces were given the opportunity to promote itself in the international crisis response environment. In all of these three periods, the Slovenian contingents were, from a certain point of view, dependent on partner or lead countries, in particular as a result of limitations in the strategic air lift and reduced capability to supply forces in remote areas.

By preparing and providing of **NATO Response Forces (NRF)**, joint and combined allied forces are designated that are ready for rapid deployment and use for rapid interventions in the entire spectrum of NATO's military engagement. The forces support the Allies based on rotations that is for a certain period of time. Most of these forces are part of NATO Force Structure (NFS). Through forming the NRF, NATO as a whole and member states transform their capabilities in order to achieve greater effectiveness and responsiveness. The Slovenian contribution has developed gradually. The Slovenian Armed Forces began with the contribution of platoon modules, later companies and ended with the contribution of battalion modules, as for example the CBRN battalion.

In order to finance **joint projects through the NSIP**, the Republic of Slovenia contributes financial resources and also receives recourses through it. In this context, Slovenia is a net beneficiary, in particular regarding NATO's contribution in arranging the multipurpose military airport in Cerklje. Furthermore, Slovenia has, through co-financing, been included in initiatives that enable access to knowledge and capabilities that otherwise would be hardly achievable (Strategic Air Lift and Air Ground Surveillance as well as AWACS).

In order to describe international areas and lessons learned, one can refer to the assessment that the Republic of Slovenia respectively the Slovenian Armed Forces in the last six years of NATO and EU membership has successfully completed processes of interoperability, deployability and also sustainability within multinational operations and missions. Slovenia is a good example, in particular due to its objectivity in what it offers and what it has managed to achieve. But also in what the Alliance gives back in the form of increased security or support through capabilities which the country cannot provide or will not provide by itself, such as air defence capabilities and airspace security. It would be advisable that all political elites be aware of success and the special features of the Alliance. Of course, certain joint plans and commitments in the capability development in the future depend on the further development of the economic situation and recession. In this context, it will be necessary to be realistic in order not to halt the development and modernisation of the Slovenian defence system or impact it to such a degree that it could stagnate, as this might result in long-term negative consequences.

3 TRANSFORMATION PARADIGM AND CHALLENGES

While Slovenia was preparing for participation in the Alliance and began functioning as a full member of NATO, a demanding transformation process took place within NATO, enabled by the 1999 concept. A period of transformation began, based on the knowledge of changes necessary for the future. NATO has been engaged in transformation challenges and processes for the entire decade¹⁵. The greatest challenge is its transformation and proper understanding as well as response to changes in the security environment, due also to the fact that there are more frequent questions on energy security and environmental issues, as well as questions on asymmetric threats which have long not only been in the form of traditional military threats. Transformation within NATO is a proactive and innovative process of development and integration of new concepts, doctrines and capabilities for the improvement of efficiency and interoperability within the Alliance and with its partners.

¹⁵ *This was intensified through searching for answers to new terrorist and asymmetric threats after the attacks on the World Trade Centre twin towers on 11 September 2001 in New York and the railway station in Madrid on 11 March 2004. The beginning of the transformation period was politically endorsed at the NATO Summit in Prague in 2002 (NATO Handbook, 2006, p. 20). Later, the Allied Command Transformation (ACT) was also established.*

Some see transformation changes as a **transformation paradigm** (Binnendijk and Kugler, 2006). In this regard, it is about a new approach and new understanding of changes, not only in narrow defence and military terms, but also in broader security and political terms. Transformation in its narrow sense of the word includes the area of remodelling and transfiguration within the defence and military system, which is extended to and connected with the social environment. Transformation is a global and transnational process. On the other hand, it puts an entirely new light on some national defence and security issues, particularly with regard to the provision of a stable and secure environment for the operation of governmental, economic and civil institutions. Transformation paradigm is actually a shift from the armed forces of the industrial age to the armed forces of the information age. Transformation in the defence and military field is therefore seen as a reasonable alternative to the social transformation in the use of military force, thus becoming a new theory of the changing of military organisation.

A special feature of transformation is its focus on the deliberate and voluntary, or non-revolutionary changes¹⁶, which, however, does not exclude the depth of changes. Revolutionary and radical changes in the defence and military sphere result in too many risks and negative consequences particularly due to the fact that the old is demolished while the new cannot be immediately established and simply replace the operation of the previous system. Transformation thus signifies abandonment of revolutionary approaches to change in military affairs, making it sometimes difficult to distinguish from changes and adjustments in the period of transition.

Transformation objectives are aimed at achieving new levels of quality and changes which correspond to modern requirements in key areas of the organisation and operation of military forces and the defence sector, namely in personnel, material, technological, information and political areas. In a practical manner, transformation is reflected in the changes of organisational structures, doctrines and operations, and in the focus on capabilities, especially the areas of research and development, experimentation and learning from experience. Perhaps the most important element of transformation is the intellectual element: knowledge, learning and understanding (Knott 2004). Education and training, research and development, experimentation and learning from experience, and consequently the profile of military professionals are becoming key areas of the transformation process.

For countries dealing with change from military transition to transformation, this signifies moving away from adjustments and focusing on renovation¹⁷. If military transition is characterised by the adaptation of military structures, organisation and operation with regard to the emerging situations, transformation is an attempt

¹⁶ *The following text has a very meaningful title: No Revolutions Please, We're British. It was written by Potts and Thackray (2005, 29-42) and compares models of changes of military capabilities, and gives reasons for abandoning the so-called revolutionary models.*

¹⁷ *More on this Šteiner 2009 117-134 in It is Time for Transformation.*

to create advantages not only in structure, organisation and operation, but also in the monitoring and anticipation of what is possible, bringing a decisive advantage over new situations.

The Republic of Slovenia, or its defence system and armed forces, has also found itself in the middle of these processes. Given the scope of current changes, the speed and relative success of transition from the model of mass territorial army to the model of deployable and non-deployable forces, as well as change in the manning system, one could argue that Slovenia has overcome the main transition changes. It is, however, aware of transformation challenges and is gradually realising them, conscious of the fact that continual transitional adaptation of the structure, tasks, organisation and operation of the army can no longer achieve the objectives for the future.

4 INTEGRATION ALSO MEANS UNDERSTANDING NATO

A particular challenge of integration is maintaining and expanding the understanding of NATO and characteristics of the Alliance. This is neither easy nor unambiguous, especially in the period of economic crisis and recession, or in situations when there is no immediate threat. In the first place, NATO membership requires proper understanding of joint military operations in accordance with Article 5 of the Treaty of Alliance¹⁸ as well as outside the scope of this Article. In the first case, it is about the understanding of collective defence which is, in the period of moving away from the bipolar division of the world and the threat this presents, changing its priorities. In the public and among the political elite, this may cast doubt on the necessity of the Alliance.

Through the participation in Non-Article 5 Operations, more commonly referred to as NATO Crisis Response Operations¹⁹, countries face challenges regarding the mission of the Alliance and its interests. This is particularly the case when it comes to the engagement of military forces in crisis areas, making it more difficult to identify common interests and the impact on the threat to national security and the Alliance²⁰. Hence it follows that national force structures must be adapted to both requirements, that is to the provision of joint forces for the needs of collective defence, as well as the provision of forces for participation in multinational operations and missions in crisis areas. Such willingness must be real and not merely in the form of promises. At the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008, members undertook to have half their forces as Deployable Forces, while ten percent of these would be in readiness or engaged in operations. This commitment is often

¹⁸ *Washington Treaty of 1949.*

¹⁹ *In the Strategy of Cooperation of the Republic of Slovenia in Multinational Operations and Missions, the term Multinational Operations and Missions (MOM) is adopted as common for all types of international operations.*

²⁰ *On account of this, the Republic of Slovenia offers its military contribution to NATO and other multinational operations and missions which have a UN mandate and are covered by relevant Security Council resolutions.*

decisive in planning the development of forces and their equipping, as well as in achieving interoperability.

Another important finding is related to the consensus and responsibility, which are the cornerstones of the Alliance. An important contribution to the achievement of consensus is also the harmonisation of efforts of individual members. Despite the multitude of interests and wishes, this harmonisation must be balanced, realistic, targeted, and based on the implementation of commitments undertaken by members (Šavc 2009, 54-55). Commitments to the Alliance are made through the processes of association, integration, and joint defence planning, and must be considered and treated responsibly. Should there be objections or even breaches of commitments, other countries and everything that connects the Alliance become faced with questions and challenges.

Slovenia is a member of two large international organisations, NATO and the EU, which brings some particularities and challenges, especially in the provision of capabilities. The Slovenian Armed Forces provides the same capabilities for both organisations, following the principle of the Single Set of Forces. In doing so, it supports better cooperation and efforts for the improvement of cooperation of both organisations in the military field.

There is another feature with which the Alliance members are faced. Frequently, the requirement to become an Alliance member is emphasised, the reason being the reduction of defence and military spending. However, the real issue is another aspect related to a more rational and efficient use of budgetary resources, which is seen in the investment in real defence needs and military capabilities. In the national environment, this is often seen as a limiting factor which prevents the use of defence resources for the purposes and needs that are not necessary or essential to defence capabilities. There are examples when defence budgets are trying to show expenses which have little in common with real defence matters in order to seemingly show an increase in expenditure. In cases when the issue is promoting the transparency of the defence and military budget, the sense of limitation on account of the Alliance is understandable. However, the real issue is promoting the quality aspect of use, which is the fundamental multiplier of joint military power and capabilities of the Alliance.

An important question is whether Slovenia has learned enough in the process of transition and is able to change its actions. Can this provide a basis for realistic national plans which will meet NATO's expectations? There is also the issue of how NATO planners understand force goals for particular countries and how they define expectations for the joint capability building, and particularly their deficiencies. Then, there is the question of what is of primary and what of secondary importance in case the resources are limited. Is it the national defence capabilities or those which, in addition to being used for national purposes, may also contribute to the overall Allied deployable capabilities? And finally, after joining the Alliance,

countries must be aware of the reasons which have led them along the path of integration and achievement of objectives which they wish to attain through membership. Such awareness is important because transition periods and changes cannot be taken back or become undone.

Conclusion The article tries to address some special features of the Slovenian path to transition in the defence and military field. Some of these features will be evident in the transformation process in which Slovenia is included as a NATO member. The article lists several experiences from the period of preparation for the accession to NATO, from the process of Membership Action Plan, and from the five-year period of integration, following the accession to the Alliance. The common denominator of all knowledge is reality as the foundation of credibility. The path to the Alliance should not be strewn with promises which cannot be fulfilled or are unrealistic and beyond national capabilities.

Transformation is a challenge which brings great expectations but also doubts, not only within the Alliance, but also in national environments. In the period of transformation, countries set themselves the goal of establishing an army which is small, but effective, highly professional, modern equipped, deployable and interoperable, and can, together with NATO, successfully implement national and allied tasks and missions.

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