

**Integrating the Bulgarian Security Sector in Euro-Atlantic Structures: Post-1989
Reforms in a Changing Landscape of (In)Securitisation**

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Introduction

The present paper problematises the process of reform in the Bulgarian security sector following the collapse of communism in 1989. It addresses the observable divergence of progress achieved by its two main sectors, the military and the police and asks why this is the case. The process is analysed with reference to both its international, e.g. the Euro-Atlantic integration of the country, and domestic determinants and consequences. In terms of definitions, 'security sector' is understood broadly to include the police and its specialised services as well as the military and its branches. Euro-Atlantic integration refers to the process of applying, negotiating accession and joining European-security relevant organisations with efficient and effective conditionality policies. In the case of Bulgaria, these are the European Union and NATO (and their member states). Through the years they have succeeded in pushing a large set of reforms through, often against strong domestic opposition, exercising both passive and active leverage. Finally, 'changing landscape of (in)securitisation' refers to the transformation of threats that the Bulgarian security sector has had to deal with and its shifting allegiances, both domestically and internationally. Also included here are the changing institutional structures and policies, i.e. what is considered a threat, particularly in comparison to pre-1989 ones.

Theoretically, the study draws insight from that strand of political sociology which deals with the role of informal networks in the process of state governance. Particularly with respect to post-communist polities, this has proved to be a recurring issue hindering reform and atomising social capital into closed and competing ‘circles of friends’. During the transition to liberal politics and market economy, the most important among the latter turned out to be those with exclusive access to political and economic power. In post-1989 Bulgaria such networks have had an openly negative impact on various reforms, profiting from their slow pace and partial implementation. This analytical foundation is closely associated with related conceptualisations, such as those of predatory elites (Moore, 1978; Levy, 1981; Ganev, 1999), state capture (Helmann *et al.*, 2000), weak states (Ganev, 2001; Sotiropoulos, 2001; Krastev, 2002), corruption (Shleifer and Vishny, 1993) and negative social capital (Kolankiewicz, 1996; Newton, 2001; Badescu and Uslander, 2003).

Methodologically, the study represents a review of events following the discontinuation of the authoritarian political system in the country in November 1989. The main object of analysis is the slow and lingering reform in the state police services and how its course influenced and was influenced by political and economic developments in Bulgaria and by its progress in international integration. As such, the process is juxtaposed to pre-1989 objectives, institutional structures and policies as well as to the accompanying reforms in the military, which have proved to be much more successful on a number of counts.¹ These two lines of comparison allow one to single out the most likely factors and reasons why this important element of the Bulgarian security sector has lagged behind in addressing and adapting to new threats and challenges. Research data has been obtained from three main sources: a) related academic studies and analyses; b) interviews with former and current security sector officials, politicians and analysts;² and c) media, both printed and broadcast, reports and programmes.

The paper forms an integral part of a wider research project, ‘Challenge – The Changing Landscape of European Liberty and Security’ (<http://www.libertysecurity.org>),

¹ What is meant here by ‘success’ is a swift reform that breaks away with the past, e.g. the adoption and implementation of new laws that do not require frequent amendments or revisions, the adoption and implementation of periodic programmes of reform with clear benchmarks, public discussion of progress, consistent PR strategy, providing for laid-off cadres, results in tackling security threats and integration (including participation in overseas missions) into related international organisations.

established through the partnership of 23 research institutes and universities, funded by the European Commission and enlisting the participation of a large number of researchers. The project is structured in 14 work-packages addressing *inter alia* themes of justice, security, nationalism, religion, migration, terrorism, sovereignty, human rights and foreign affairs. The present study belongs to Work Package No. 2 ‘Securitisation beyond borders: exceptionalism inside the EU and impact on policing beyond borders’, jointly managed by the Foundation Nationale de Sciences Politique (Sciences-Po), the London School of Economics and Political Science (Department of International Relations) and the Centre d’Etudes sur les Conflits, and including a number of other research papers relating to topical Europe-bound security issues.³

Summarised, the argument put forward below is the following. In comparison to the military, reform of the police and its specialised services has been much slower, has had a host of negative social and political consequences and has not yet delivered the necessary capacity to address existing and emerging threats. The most relevant reasons for this can be systemised in three broad categories: a) political standing and functions prior to 1989; b) institutional set-up and dependencies; and c) international integration. Firstly, the more a service had been involved in the authoritarian policies of the communist state, the more socially and politically estranged it turns out to be during transition, hence less likely to carry out quick and efficient reforms. Secondly, the more complex its institutional set-up and its dependence on other state structures, the slower the adaptation to new realities. Thirdly, the faster the process of integration in international organisations encouraging transparency and public accountability, the greater the incentive to reform and the higher the resulting social and political legitimacy of the service.

The study is embedded in two contextual layers, both having significant bearing on the quality, pace and outcome of reforms within the Bulgarian security sector. Firstly, this is the nature of the emerging security threats and the ‘securitisation’ opportunities and capabilities available to its two main constituent parts analysed here (the police and

² More than ten open-ended research interviews were conducted in March 2006. Among the interviewees are two Members of Parliament, a former Minister of the Interior, a security adviser to the Bulgarian executive, a lecturer at ‘G. S. Rakovski’ Defence and Staff College, Sofia, two employees at the Ministry of Defence and one at the Ministry of the Interior, a police officer and two NGO analysts.

³ In this context, I am thankful for the input of Karen Smith (LSE) in the writing-up process and the comments of Didier Bigo (Sciences Po) during the CHALLENGE Conference ‘Illiberal Practices of Liberal States’, CERF, Paris, 8 June 2006.

the military). That is, the extent to which they (as institutional structures) have been able to adapt, rhetorically but also in terms of tangible outcomes, to dominant European discourses of (in)securitisation,⁴ organised crime and terrorism being the two prevailing ones. In such conditions, when new threats have been easier to address because of their character and the usable experience accumulated by the given service, the chosen reform path seems to have commanded a wider support base and has turned out to be more effective in terms of enhancing its capacity to deliver concrete and presentable results. This relation also works the other way round, e.g. the more complex the threat, the higher the level of disagreement on strategies and on organisational re-arrangement.

Secondly, and on a more general note, informality (e.g. the use of informal networks in policy-making) within post-communist Bulgaria is another relevant background for the present research. As post-1989 politics developed, control over (and the frequent usage of) the security sector has been a wanted asset by consecutive political elites. The ability to withstand such calling has proven key in preserving the integrity and reform potential of the given service. Here again the military (highly likely because of a sustained tradition of non-involvement in politics) appears to have been better able to withdraw its power-base from accommodating demands by vested interest than police services. The robust, hierarchical structure of the army also helped avoid this trap. The decentralised structure of the police, following the dismantling of the communist state/party security apparatus, was an easier prey to those willing to abuse their power.⁵ It is thus not surprising that the police and its services have often been recognised as ‘partners in crime’ within informal networks of power-yielding (see Shentov *et al.*, 2004).

This is the conceptual background to the following text. In terms of structure, it progresses in four main parts. Part I clarifies the role of informality in post-communism and presents some related empirical studies. Part II focuses on the role and policies, institutional set-up and dependencies and the international integration of the less reformed element of Bulgaria’s security sector – that of the police and its services. The

⁴ See Taureck’s (2006) defence of securitisation theory as a tool to understand how given areas/phenomena enter the scene as security concerns. Visibly addressing them (both verbally and through institutional design) helps decrease one’s state of insecurity.

⁵ Following the removal of the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) from power in 2001, General Kiril Radev (the UDF-appointed Director of the National Security Service) admitted on national television (‘Every Sunday’ programme, 14 March 2004) that Prime Minister Kostov had openly asked him to involve his service in scaling down the economic might of his political opponent Sofianski (then mayor of Sofia).

current state of affairs is reviewed in conjunction with pre-1989 practices in order to elicit grounds for comparison. Part III then further enhances the comparative element of the study by presenting the process of reform in the military (and the process of its international integration), which serves as a kind of ideal type for benchmarking successes and failures in police reform. Part IV concludes.

Part I – Informality in Post-Communism

Informality⁶ in socio-political research is of highly ambiguous nature (Ledeneva, 2004). Disagreement persists on whether it is a product of institutional instability during reforms (Letki and Evans, 2005) or whether it exists independently and even perpetuates such instability by decreasing the state's capacity to transform itself into an effective and ordered ensemble of working institutions (Jackman and Miller, 1998). A related distinction is that between instrumental and embedded cultures of informality (Grødeland, 2005: 4). The former emerges as a result of the institutional and legislative failures of the state and is likely to wane as it stands corrected. The latter, to the contrary, is a permanent condition of the political and social fabric in the country, which does not change as one political system is replaced by another. In post-communism, informality is regarded as having transcended its innocuous purpose of providing a widespread coping mechanism⁷ and having generated powerful and particularistic (see Mungiu-Pippidi, 2005) networks able to challenge the effectiveness of state institutions.

With its pervasive and secure political, economic and social grip, the communist state saw no real threat in tolerating informality. But as it started to withdraw and give up control (see Ganev, 2001), space was left open for the undue influence over decision- and policy-making by informal networks. The effect has been evidently negative, stalling reform in key sectors or guiding it to serve particularistic interests at the expense of the public ones. The same mechanisms that created opportunities in the first place later restrained them (see Portes and Landolt, 1996), for example networks used to start up private businesses hindered further liberalisation of the business environment. Similarly with the security sector – the same networks and activities that addressed various threats

⁶ As used here, informality is a broad and all-encompassing category referring to the propensity and possibility to use personal contacts and networks within a discretionary environment of policy- and decision-making for the exclusive and disproportionate benefit of groups with political and economic concerns at the expense of the state and public interest.

to the state during communism later, once renounced and cast out, impaired its law-enforcement capacity. Reform was then undermined at the one locus where such networks had privileged access – police and its services. This is precisely the case of Bulgaria.

Only informality, however, is not capable of explaining why reform is or isn't paralysed. A number of studies demonstrate that it is primarily a context in which other factors play a role as well, whether related or not to its occurrence. Ledeneva (2003) studied Russian *blat* and Chinese *guanxi* before and during transition/reform.⁸ Both developed in response to a centralised economy characterised by an ineffective distribution of goods and simultaneously compensated for this shortcoming and subverted its normal functioning. In the post-communist period, due to the weakness of the state, the *blat* took a turn to more corrupt practices benefiting mostly powerful businesses to the detriment of society as a whole. Drawing on a number of surveys across Southeast Europe,⁹ Mungiu-Pippidi sought to understand 'the rules of the game operating in the Balkans' (2005: 50) and found that Balkan societies are historically particularistic, with status groups that have originated during communism persisting with a predatory behaviour towards an increasingly defenceless and disarrayed state.

Grødeland (2005) analysed how the culture of informality manifests itself in politics, public procurement and the judiciary in the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania.¹⁰ She sought to establish the ways in which it evolved in response to transition and the factors determining its relevance. The study found that EU membership aspiration and conditionality did not reduce the propensity to resort to informal networks. The stability and effectiveness of (reformed) institutions, however, did. Interviewed politicians admitted it was difficult to resist pressures coming from organised and

⁷ Within the institutional structure of the state, reliance on informal contacts helped one obtain better and faster access to health service, rare goods, preferred employment or education, etc..

⁸ The terms refer to the totality of personal networks spanning society and serving as an important organising principle in the conditions of a state planned economy.

⁹ Conducted during 2002 by the Centre for Regional and Urban Sociology for Romania and by BSS Gallup for Bulgaria, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro. The pooled sample includes a total of 4860 respondents, with the following contribution per country: Romania – 1600, Bulgaria and Macedonia – 1021 each, Serbia – 816 and Montenegro – 402.

¹⁰ The study is based on 360 in-depth interviews with nine different categories of elites (1. Elected representatives; 2. Political party representatives; 3. Judges and prosecutors; 4. Media representatives; 5. NGO representatives; 6. Local business representatives; 7. Representatives of international companies; 8. Public procurement officials; and 9. Government officials working in the area of anti-corruption, EU representatives and Council of Europe representatives) carried out in Prague, Ljubljana, Sofia and Bucharest during the winter of 2003/4. The project has been carried out by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research in collaboration with Centre for Social and Economic Strategies at Charles University/GfK-Prague (Czech Republic), University of Maribor/CATI (Slovenia), Vitoshka Research (Bulgaria) and Romanian Academic Society/Gallup (Romania).

influential networks, which sought particularistic gains. Hence the assumed relation between informal practices, on the one hand, and discretionary laws and favouritism, on the other. The state becomes inefficient in controlling illegitimate practices in which it, through its elite, is often implicated. Various ‘inflexibility traps’ appear,¹¹ while reforms do not successfully reclaim power for state institutions. This is the background against which the reorganisation of the Bulgarian security sector was conducted.

Part II – Police Reform: Factors and Outcomes

Within the security sector of the country, reform and international integration of the police and its specialised agencies has taken longer (than the military) to produce tangible results within the changing landscape of threats and challenges. Most broadly the reasons for this are two-fold. On a general level, what Okey called the dangers of ‘immediate liberalism’ (2004: 28) have generated space for a ‘status quo’ rhetoric on the part of those in power, including members of the elite security services. Much benefit was to be gained from stalled reform, particularly if one belonged to the side of the power-holders. As it turned out, access to the latter was essential for fledgling private enterprises in the post-1989 economic liberalisation. More specifically, the way police had operated during communism did not contribute to the requirements for a genuine service within a liberal democratic state, effective both in addressing security challenges and protecting fundamental rights.

The very nature of the regime pitted these functions against each other, e.g. keeping the elite secure in power meant by default that a number of citizen’s rights had to be violated (see Zhelev, 1990). And this is precisely the product that police and its specialised services were expected to deliver. They thus turned into a powerful tool in the hands of those members of the political and economic elite who were able to recruit and enlist their support for their purposes, which did not correspond to the general public interest. Inculcation of informal practices of decision- and policy-making (in an environment of legal obscurity) served its function of suppressing opposition, but also imbued police services officers with open arrogance towards rule-consistent behaviour.

¹¹ Like the ‘anti-corruption trap’ (see Krastev and Ganev, 2005), in which many Eastern European states, Bulgaria particularly, are argued to have fallen. Briefly, the argument is that the lack of unreserved support at the top for anti-corruption campaigns has resulted in their ineffectiveness, hence any such new campaigns bear the risk of repelling, rather than attracting voters and for this reason are not undertaken by Bulgarian governments.

Later (post-1989) this translated into what Williams and Deletant dubbed the ‘culture of cynicism’ (2001: 20), i.e. the regrouping of security personnel into informal networks with no interest in reform and with strong preference for ‘business as usual’.

In analysing the course of police reform in Bulgaria, the following text addresses three inter-related issues. Firstly, the involvement of police services (particularly secret police) in pre-1989 domestic politics. As it turns out, they were key in maintaining Zhivkov’s hold on power, in the process detaching themselves from other relevant state institutions and establishing a large informal network of agents. Secondly, the emerging structural dependencies of police services following their re-integration within the reforming law-enforcement machinery of the state. In order to produce tangible results they had to start liaising and cooperating with other state institutions, particularly the (now independent of Party control) judiciary and its branches, and rely on their input as well, hence losing control over outcomes and having to comply with liberal democratic rules and procedures. Thirdly, the process of integration into relevant international structures established by Western European states, most notably the EU and its developing Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

II.1 – Involvement in pre-1989 domestic politics

Three elements of security policing during communism contributed to a troubled reform path and an induced ineffectiveness in the transition period. Firstly, extremely deep political involvement with the party’s leadership. Control by the latter had been quasi-absolute in terms of screening, appointment, promotion and dismissal of officers and personnel. The legal regulations of the above were obscure, hence job security was mostly a matter of obedience. Secondly, institutional isolation from the rest of the law enforcement machinery of the state. The chain of investigation, prosecution and court trial had not normally been the compulsory and only way to punish recalcitrance. In fact, political dissidents (when not assassinated) were jailed or silenced without proper judicial process. Thirdly, this is the evidently one-track international orientation, whereby Bulgarian police services draw inspiration exclusively from KGB policies and experience. Each of these is addressed below.

Relations with the KGB were so close that a number of foreign observers considered Bulgaria's police security services (KDS)¹² as its branch. The cooperation has been twofold. On the one hand, up until the end of 1989 high-ranking KGB officials were consistently employed as consultants (on organisational and operational matters) by KDS. On the other, all senior KDS personnel had to undergo training at KGB bases across the USSR (see Hristov, 2004: 30-31). On KGB's example, ever since its inception KDS (and hence the whole police service, which was subordinated to it) was under the direct control of the party (nominally) and its leader (in practice). This was regulated by two seminal State Council Decrees. Decree No. 1467 of 16th July 1974, which determined that KDS 'is answerable to the ruling Communist Party and its Secretary General' and Decree No. 1670 of 20th August 1974, which outlined its structure and the functions of each of its departments.¹³

Institutionally, in addition to being extremely centralised, KDS was highly contained and isolated from the non-police branches of law enforcement. The six Directorates of KDS were nominally under the hat of the Minister of the Interior, but in practice controlled by the Party's Secretary General. The first, second, third and fourth Directorates were responsible for reconnaissance, respectively external political and technological, counter-reconnaissance, military and reconnaissance technology. The fifth and sixth were more specialised in political and social affairs and dealt with, respectively, the security of party and state officials and with political policing. They maintained the ideological grip of the Party over politics and society and held agent information as well as information on political dissidents. Apart from control exercised by the Party leadership, these police services were aloof from any public or judicial accountability. All six Directorates were practically above the law and beyond public scrutiny and there was no need for publicly justifying what they were up to or how they carried it out.¹⁴

Police in general and KDS in particular were thus mechanisms of keeping power in the hands of the Communist Party and its leaders. Rather than operating in conformity

¹² Their official name 'Committee for State Security' closely matched that of KGB. In Bulgarian – Комитет за Държавна Сигурност (КАС), hereinafter KDS.

¹³ State Gazette No. 65, 1974.

¹⁴ In keeping the communist elite in power, KDS had masterminded many atrocious acts. A number of concentration camps were set up throughout the country, Belene (see Chakurov, 2000), Lovech (see Hristov, 1999), Bogdanov Dol (see Kolev, 1999), to intern political dissidents traced down by police. The assassination of Georgi Markov in September 1978 was ordered by Deputy Interior Minister Savov and carried out by KDS (see Sunday Times, 5 June 2005). The campaign of renaming Bulgarian Turks in the 1980s (Vaksberg, 2001; Levy,

with the public interest, they took exclusive care of ensuring the pervasiveness of the ruling political ideology. In the process they generated a huge informal network of agents and became repositories of large amounts of important information, including of illegal cross-border activities.¹⁵ After 1989 this information served well-placed individuals with a vested interest against reform. The efficiency of the law-enforcing state apparatus, of which the police formed an essential part, was compromised by actors who enjoyed privileged access to law- and policy-making, such as the emerging class of the ‘nationally responsible capital’ (see Avramov, 2005). This is key to understanding how the culture of informality stalled reform within the police branch of the security sector. I return to this in the concluding section.

II.2 – Institutional dependencies

The restructuring of the communist-designed police services was the result of two parallel pressures. On the one hand, former Cold War rivals in Western Europe and North America conditioned their help for Bulgaria’s transition to democracy on the reform of what they saw as an unscrupulous tool of ideological control.¹⁶ On the other, the new leadership of the (quickly revamped as ‘socialist’) party was keen to disassociate itself from Zhivkov’s legacy following his ousting in November 1989. Far-reaching reforms were initiated, taking the form of institutional restructuring, legal redress and sweeping redundancies. The objective was to integrate police services into a system of law application consistent with accepted norms and practices in liberal democratic states, which is what Bulgaria aspired to become. In fulfilling it, a number of institutional dependencies within an integrated chain of law enforcement, as well as certain constraints to action were introduced.

In a bid to weaken their power base, the six KDS directorates were renamed, restructured and spread across different authorities. Some remained within the Ministry of the Interior. The National Guard (former fifth directorate) was transferred to the

2003) involved senior official such as Velko Palin (head of Social and National Security Department at the Communist Party), Georgi Tanev (Minister of the Interior) and Stoyan Mihailov (in charge of ideology policy across police services).

¹⁵ A number of companies were set up overseas with the purpose of acquiring COMECON restricted technologies, such as the projects ‘Neva’ (1984) and ‘Montblanc’ (1986) or engaging in illicit foreign trade (through state owned companies such as ‘Kintex’, ‘Alltrade’, ‘Sokotrade’ and ‘Insist’) with excise goods, weapons and medicines (allegedly narcotic drugs as well, see Centre for the Study of Democracy Report No. 12 ‘The Drug Market in Bulgaria’) in order to accumulate foreign currency reserves.

Presidency, while Military Intelligence (former third) went to the Ministry of Defence. The MIA Act of July 1991¹⁷ became the first post-1989 legal re-arrangement of police structures and functions. It revamped the remaining directorates into various services, such as the National Security Service, the National Service for Combating Organised Crime and the Anti-Terrorism Squad (Article 11) and placed them all under the hat of the Interior Ministry, overriding any previous provisions imposing party control. In addition, a number of horizontal (i.e. applying to all services) clauses were introduced binding police officers to an obligation ‘to protect the rights and freedoms and citizens and to respect human dignity’ (Article 5 and others).

The follow-up Judiciary Act of July 1994¹⁸ created another line of institutional dependence for police services, this time of a more vertical nature. With the streamlining of the courts and the creation of independent prosecution, another layer of law enforcement was built over police work, making it but an element of a process involving key players formally external to the Interior Ministry. This system was so structured that police services not only lost control over outcomes, but had to also comply with orders coming from the prosecution, for example, particularly in undertaking investigation work.¹⁹ Since acquired evidence had to be presented in court in order to obtain a conviction, it is understandable that police work would be subject to such external control making sure cases are properly argued before a judge. Exemplifying the fact that such linkages presented a burden to a force used to standing on its own ground are the number of institutional conflicts between police and the judiciary blaming each other for the lack of effective sentences against known criminals.²⁰

Further along the line of binding police work into a system of norms derived from liberal democratic societies are the numerous other restrictions imposed by the October 1997 Special Intelligence Methods Act.²¹ Besides the plentiful (again horizontal) references to citizen’s rights protection and respect for human dignity, the Act regulates

¹⁶ In 1988, a Bulgarian governmental delegation visited the USA. The agenda of Foreign Minister Gotsev included talks about the future of the specialised police services, during which the US side asked that KDS be disbanded - interview with Colonel Peniu Kostadinov, former KDS employee and a KDS agent in the US (Hristov, 2004: 122-126).

¹⁷ Official name ‘Law on the Ministry of Internal Affairs’, see State Gazette No 57, 1991.

¹⁸ Official name ‘Law on Judicial Power’, see State Gazette No 59, 1994.

¹⁹ Article 119.4 of the Judiciary Act states that ‘within the limits of its competence the prosecution can issue binding orders for the police’.

²⁰ This has been a recurring theme in printed media, with many reports of police capturing criminals and courts setting them free. Police then blames judges of yielding to threats or corruption, judges retort that police does not provide enough evidence for successful conviction.

²¹ See State Gazette No 95, 1997.

the discharge of investigation functions in a way unheard of prior to 1989. It is explicit about methods widely employed during communism but never talked of, such as surveillance, eavesdropping, breaking in, marking and intercepting correspondence and computer data, controlled delivery, confidence-winning deal (otherwise known as entrapment) and the employment of undercover officers (Article 2.3). In addition, together with the 1991 MIA Act, it establishes a system of integrity testing and discipline control meant to expose and punish recalcitrance within the police, which had obviously become a problem within police services in the first years of transition.

II.3 – International integration

Apart from the close relations with KGB during the period of communist rule (see above), Bulgarian police services have not had much experience in international cooperation, let alone deeper integration within multi-national law-enforcement frameworks. Since the 1970s, they have been part of the Hague-based Interpol system, mostly in terms of information exchange during overseas investigations.²² Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Bulgaria failed to establish a National Central Bureau (NCB, the national point of contact for Interpol's General Secretariat), which demonstrates the lack of interest in deeper integration. Things started to change in the 1990s, when reform and the international re-orientation of police services became part of the wider process of transition to liberal democracy. A number of related laws were adopted, the 1991 MIA Act finally established a Bulgarian Interpol NCB, and the first proposals for integration into the EU started to emerge.

Around the time when Bulgaria's formal application for EU membership (14 December 1995) was evaluated by the Commission,²³ the Union started to strengthen its Justice and Home Affairs *acquis*. The policy emerged as a framework of cooperation codified in Title VI of the Maastricht Treaty as the 'third pillar' of the EU and involved a number of fields of practical coordination (mostly police related), as well as the introduction of related legislation and its effective implementation. The follow-up Treaty of Amsterdam strengthened JHA provisions and established an 'area of freedom, security

²² It has to be noted that Interpol does not exercise membership conditionality with respect to states' political systems. Its membership currently numbers 184. Similarly to the UN it strives for global coverage and does not distinguish between liberal democratic or authoritarian political regimes.

²³ See 'Commission Opinion on Bulgaria's Application for Membership of the European Union', DOC/97/11, Brussels, 15 July 1997.

and justice' (Article 2), which translated into closer cooperation of police forces, both directly and through Europol (Article 29). None of these developments was reflected in the new MIA Act of December 1997,²⁴ which was drafted internally by the Ministry itself and rushed through the National Assembly, without much public debate or parliamentary discussions. It was meant to continue the on-going reform of the police, but failed to contribute to its international integration.

In the meantime, EU member states were pressing on with cooperation efforts, recognising that national police forces could effectively tackle emerging threats only through integrating into a working model of law enforcement. Most relevant among the institutionalised activities were the European Police College, the European Police Chiefs Task Force, Europol and the European Rapid Reaction Force, also open to the then twelve applicant states upon their initiative for inclusion. Due mostly to the lack of language proficiency in their midst, Bulgarian police services failed to grasp this possibility of adjusting their reform path to the ongoing process of European accession. Through these initiatives, Union membership conditionality acquired concrete dimensions regarding the law-enforcement machineries of applicant states. As the continuing problems with Chapter 24 concerns reveal, a number of issues still persist within Bulgaria, mainly due to the slow reform of its police.

EU-Bulgaria's Chapter 24 (Justice and Home Affairs) negotiations opened in June 2001 and were concluded in October 2003. By a number of accounts,²⁵ due to a political deal between Bulgaria and some of the Union members, they were closed prematurely without addressing all relevant issues, thorough police reform among them. On hindsight this does not come as a surprise given the most recent (16 May 2006) Commission Report on Bulgaria's EU accession.²⁶ It outlined six remaining problem areas to be addressed before accession, three of which relate directly to Chapter 24 issues and, more particularly, to police work. They are: a) clearer evidence of results in investigating and prosecuting organised crime networks; b) more effective and efficient implementation of laws for the fight against fraud and corruption and c) intensified enforcement of anti-money laundering provisions, and are only the top of the iceberg. A number of other

²⁴ Official name 'Law on the Ministry of Internal Affairs', see State Gazette No 122, 1997.

²⁵ E.g. some of the experts in the Bulgarian negotiating team interviewed by the author.

²⁶ See 'Commission Staff Working Document – Bulgaria: May 2006 Monitoring Report', SEC (2006) 595, Brussels, 16 May 2006.

outstanding issues, also indicated in the report and outlined below, exemplify the poor effectiveness of Bulgarian police services.

Firstly, and most importantly, police services still must prove they can integrate with each other domestically and cooperate successfully with their international counterparts. Notwithstanding regional (e.g. South East Europe) and wider European coordination frameworks, in which they are involved, transnational organised crime networks continue their existence and operation, with very low success rates in effective convictions within the country. Secondly, staffing is a problem (including staff trained to operate in a multi-lingual/multi-national environment), the National Service for Combating Organised Crime being the prime example. Corruption within the system, as well as links between law enforcement officers and criminal groups, are a problem that has generated much public attention (particularly in the written media), but no visible consequences. Finally, an integrated multi-disciplinary approach to crime investigation is necessary, incorporating mechanisms of witness protection, harmonised statistics, etc. Most of these issues have been addressed by the newest MIA Act of February 2006,²⁷ but it remains to be seen whether its provisions will produce any real change.

Not only then has police reform been lacking in creating the conditions for effective international cooperation, but its slow path remains among the factors still holding uncertain the prospects for Bulgaria's accession to the EU. The past decade has shown that external conditionality (operationalised through the regular progress reports of the European Commission) has proven to be the best stimulus for change. There has not been any domestically debated and agreed programme or white paper of steps that need to be taken in order to produce tangible results in law-enforcement. In addition, a number of institutional antagonisms between investigation and judicial authorities (Schönfelder, 2005) have plagued the on-going process of reform. Obviously, as of 2006, Bulgarian police services have failed to integrate themselves recognisably within the international (i.e. European, including regional efforts within South East Europe) law-enforcement system.

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²⁷ Official name 'Law on the Ministry of Internal Affairs', see State Gazette No 18, 2006.

Because of their track record in supporting Zhivkov's regime, in the period after 1989 police services have had to deal with a double belligerence. On the one hand, was the antagonism of the communist party itself, whose new leaders were keen to disassociate themselves from the negative legacy of the past decades. In January 1990, the new party chairman Lilov convened a meeting with senior police officials and asked them to acknowledge publicly their role during the renaming campaign (see footnote 14), which they refused to do. Already then he was convinced he needed to get rid of many of them and so he did.²⁸ On the other hand, antagonism was also coming from the newly established democratic opposition party which initiated a *lustration* process in order to prevent any further political involvement of those servicemen closest to the communist regime.²⁹ Care was also taken to control the information files police services amassed prior to 1989. Both initiatives were not very successful in achieving their objectives as ensuing developments demonstrated (Tsenkov, 2005).

Politics, the business environment and law enforcement were all negatively affected by the resulting fall-out, which stalled further reform of police services for years. Redundant (redundancies were in huge numbers) as well as remaining officers entered into a web of (often overlapping) informal networks, powerful in generating political/economic outcomes to their liking. The dossier war is one example,³⁰ the criminal use of former smuggling channels another,³¹ intimidating or recruiting senior law-enforcement/judicial officials into protecting criminal bosses yet another.³² Against this background of ubiquitous informality, building an integrated and effective law-enforcement machinery became impossible. The state was weakened in its law-making capacity (adopted laws were discretionary or incomplete, as the 1991 MIA Act

²⁸ Whom he used to call 'non-remorseful zhivkovists', see 'Trud' newspaper, 12 February 2001.

²⁹ The process aimed at breaking up the informal networks of solidarity among people taking key roles in the communist regime (see Offe, 1998), however, it did not erase them completely. Many of them spilled into economic structures, from where they continued to exercise undue political influence (see Letki, 2005).

³⁰ Basically, it was about leaking information (or threatening to do so) to discredit members of the political elite on both sides of the political spectrum. Through the help of an extensive network of secret agents, this information had been collected for years in police dossiers, which in the 1990s were only available to insiders.

³¹ It was not long before KDS officers involved in setting up smuggling channels for foreign currency revenues in the 1970s and 1980s saw a profitable opportunity in sharing their model with emerging criminal groups.

³² The friendship of former Chief Prosecutor Ivan Tatarchev and the late Bulgarian mafia 'don' Ivan Karamanski is but one example. Quoting from a January 1996 news report: 'Tatarchev and Karamanski spent Sunday together at a well-known luxury restaurant near Sofia. The two Ivans celebrated their name-day with plenty of drinks. Karamanski, who has twice been jailed on charges of heading organised crime in Sofia, was seen singing together with Tatarchev, the prosecutor who has so far twice released him from jail for health reasons. The party was heavily guarded by two teams of bodyguards – police and private' ('Trud' newspaper, 8 January 1996).

demonstrates), institutional effectiveness (e.g. investigation offices suffered from regular information leaks) and coordination (police and judiciary did not cooperate sufficiently) and ultimately in its ability to adjust and integrate into European models of crime limitation.

Part III – Reform in the Military: Steady Course and Positive Outcomes

On a number of important scores relating to its post-communist reform, the Bulgarian military (a two-pronged structure of the Ministry of the Defence and the Army) boasts significant achievements. Among them is a streamlined structure and updated and effective normative regulation, the implementation of three consecutive reform programmes and a coherent PR strategy (including a specialised TV channel, a daily newspaper, a monthly journal and a hotline for signals on corruption or other irregularities). In the period since 1989, the military have kept away from politics and have subordinated themselves to strict domestic civil control over strategies, deployments, international cooperation, etc. The participation in a number of missions abroad (under the auspices of the EU and NATO) has raised the public profile and legitimacy and the expertise and professionalism of the army and its personnel. Finally, the military have successfully worked towards Bulgaria's integration in NATO – currently the single most important military alliance providing for European security.

All of the above have contributed to, and formed part of, a consistent effort for reform, followed through by consecutive Ministers of Defence and Chiefs of Staff. It has certainly helped that, ever since the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact (WP) in July 1991, there has been no firmer integration anchor than NATO, an alliance based on liberal democratic values and principles and slowly and relatively successfully adjusting to post Cold War realities. That all former Central and Eastern European WP allies vied for NATO accession was also an important factor in defining Bulgaria's orientation. Such sense of direction, plus the role model of NATO member states, has obviously had a positive impact. Two more relevant factors, both derived from the preceding discussion of police reform, are also considered below. They are, firstly, the lack of negative track-record of military involvement in pre-1989 domestic politics and, secondly, the relative

structural independence (in relation to other state bodies) in generating outcomes and the pronounced hierarchical organisation of the army.

III.1 Military involvement in pre-1989 domestic politics

In the years following WW II, and particularly after the signing of the WP treaty in 1955, the Bulgarian military was practically subject to Soviet control, rather than to the control of the local Communist Party. This state of affairs contributed to enhancing its domestic independence and enabled its leadership to stay aloof from the politics of suppressing any internal opposition to the communist regime. Article 6 of the WP treaty established the main decision-making body of the organisation, the Consultative Committee, which was required to meet at least twice a year. In practice, between 1955 and 1969, the Committee met only ten times, its debates were never published and its communiqués were usually identical with foreign policy statements issued by the Soviet Union (Mackintosh, 1984: 44). In short, almost everything about the WP was Soviet Union-like: decision-making, military planning, training, equipment, etc. Through this quasi-transnational institutional belonging, the Bulgarian military (e.g. its leadership) was thus spared complete domestic party guidance.

This arrangement reveals undoubtedly the ulterior motive of its designers. Soviet leadership preferred to keep Eastern European militaries under direct supervision and rightly so, as they turned out to be the ultimate guardian of international communism.³³ They were the tool of last resort when secret police failed to quash dissidence or when reformers took the upper hand within domestic communist parties. As such they formed an indispensable element of the so-called Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty (see Jones, 1989), and the Bulgarian military was no exception. Its troops were flown into Prague in the spring of 1968 under Soviet command (Dawisha, 1984). Similarly during the crises in Hungary in 1956 and in Poland in the 1980s – the Bulgarian military was again on stand-by to help if necessary. Hence the army and the Ministry of Defence maintained an exclusively international focus,³⁴ without antagonising Bulgarian society in the way and to the extent to which the communist police services did.

³³ Without exception military top brass across Eastern Europe were Moscow-trained. This was a *sine qua non* for taking offices in high command.

³⁴ In the sense that they protected the Bulgarian communist polity against external, and others against both internal and external, threats.

Involvement in domestic politics was either non-existent or remained largely invisible to the ordinary citizen, with the notable exception of the mid-1980s renaming campaign against the Bulgarian Turks, where the military took part as a fall-back support but was not the mastermind and the main organiser of the project (Mihaylov, 1992). It also helped (in terms of arousing popular sympathy) that the bulk of the military, particularly the lower ranks, were conscript recruits. Each male citizen above 18 years of age and meeting certain health criteria was required to serve for 24 months (36 for those serving in the marine forces) and remain available in reserve following that. Almost every Bulgarian family had some experience with the army, thus making it an institution less sinister and more recognisable for society at large than the police. In addition, due to its hierarchical structure to which I turn below, the army (through its officers) was much less likely to engage in post-1989 informal circles of policy-making.

*III.2 Structural organisation and dependencies of the Bulgarian military*³⁵

Militaries are by default hierarchical structures; else they would not be able to function. Prior to 1989, the parallelism of party and state meant that all decisions relating to national security issues are taken by the Central Committee. This was explicitly codified in the Constitutions (of the People's Republic of Bulgaria) of December 1947 and May 1971. The Chief of Staff was appointed by the Chairperson of the State Council (the executive), who was also the Party Chair. Within the WP treaty, however, security planning and decision-making rested with the Kremlin-controlled Consultative Committee thus detaching the army top brass from strict domestic influence and control. The hierarchy within the military meant that all of its branches, ground, naval and air forces, were centrally commanded by HQ, at which each was represented. Rules of rank promotion and military conduct translated into obedience and discipline, unmatched by any other security-related institution, through which the army could speak with one voice and deliver tangible results.

Not much of this internal hierarchical organisation changed after 1989. Soviet influence waned and was replaced by more robust domestic political control,³⁶ but the

³⁵ A PhD project dealing with this topic is now in progress (see Doikov, no date). The following paragraphs benefit from the offered synopsis.

³⁶ See the Constitution of July 1991 (Article 100) and the Defence and Armed Forces Act of December 1995 (Article 25).

army remained an essentially top-down structure. Moreover, in addressing security challenges (both traditional and emerging ones) the military was and remains a self-sufficient institution. That is, in discharging its functions it does not depend too much on other state bodies. It possesses its own prosecution and court (see December 1995 Defence and Armed Forces Act, Chapter 11 and the July 1994 Judiciary Act, Articles 3.1 and 18), hence does not have to rely on the civilian judicial system to the extent to which the police does. As far as outcomes are concerned, the military has the benefit of the doubt, no real-life situation has yet proven whether it is capable (or not) of addressing threats.³⁷ Post-1989, the military has only been used in international missions (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan and Iraq) and during civilian crises at home (the floods in the summer of 2005), lacking any other real military-type threat to the country.³⁸

*III.3 International integration*³⁹

Voices for NATO accession were heard in Bulgaria already before the WP was officially disbanded. In the early 1990s, while the first democratically elected parliament considered a declaration condemning Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, a group of politicians, diplomats, academics, journalists and military professionals founded the Bulgarian Atlantic Club.⁴⁰ The Club quickly became the focal point in the accession process. Through its members it commanded a great potential to influence policies, both domestically and internationally. During a visit to Brussels in November 1990 its leaders discussed the possibility of Bulgaria's joining NATO with Secretary-General Manfred Wörner. Several Bulgarian MPs were then granted association status with NATO's Parliamentary Assembly. At these early stages of Bulgaria's transition, however, NATO accession was not unconditionally endorsed by the entire political and military elite. Significant antagonism remained, particularly among those in high places who were

³⁷ The Ministry of Defence's April 2002 White Paper determines the tasks of the military as: a) maintaining high level of preparedness; b) early warning capacity; c) assistance during natural crises; d) protection of military sites; e) participation in overseas missions aimed at securing peace and stability in the world, etc. Apart from the latter, which does not have any concrete domestic implications, these are all traditional tasks, where the military is able to agree on strategies and reforms and able to deliver.

³⁸ During the 1990s conflicts across former Yugoslavia, the Bulgarian army kept at bay. It granted logistic support to NATO planes leaving Serbian territory during the 1999 bombing campaign in Kosovo, but did not participate directly in it.

³⁹ Parts of the following section are based on the information and publications available at NATO's official website (<http://www.nato.int>) and the website of the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria (<http://www.natoinfo.bg>).

⁴⁰ As early as August 1990, anticipating the dissolution of the USSR, Solomon Passy (MP, Union of Democratic Forces (UDF)) spoke in Parliament in favour of Bulgaria's accession to NATO.

closely associated with the former Communist Party and its security policies (Pantev, 2005).

Opposition was two-pronged, uniting Socialist Party leaders and senior (in terms of age as well) military officers. Both practical (losing jobs/control) and ideological (most of them being Moscow-trained/oriented) reasons played a role. The Atlantic Club then set out to facilitate the establishment of generous pension funds for retiring military, NATO scholarships for younger officers and a robust local structure across the country. It enjoyed the support (not only verbal) of then President Zhelev and PM Dimitrov (both of the UDF). Circumstances also helped overcome antagonism, e.g. the wars in Yugoslavia and the fact that the neighbours were either NATO members (Greece and Turkey) or aspirants (Romania). In December 1993, the UDF controlled Parliament adopted a declaration confirming Bulgaria's wish to join NATO and when in January 1994 (apparently judging enlargement to be premature) the Brussels NATO Summit announced the 'Partnership for Peace' (PfP) initiative, the government immediately decided to take part.⁴¹

With the governmental change in mid-1994 following the general elections won by the Socialist Party, the NATO accession push declined. Premier Videnov only spoke about it lukewarmly, pressured by the old guard in the Party. In a bid to soften domestic anxieties, in June 1995 the Atlantic Club invited Marshal Viktor Kulikov (the last WP Chief of Staff) to speak on NATO enlargement. In the meantime, the Bulgarian military continued its involvement in a number of PfP initiatives⁴² thus achieving a higher level of integration with the alliance command and operative structures. Following several years of enhanced cooperation, however, NATO officials expressed their concerns that Western-trained Bulgarian military (mostly junior officers) were kept well away from senior command positions. It is then that the top brass started to engage more actively in NATO training abroad, which further softened its intransigence to accession and reform.⁴³

⁴¹ This decision was later (February 1994) endorsed by President Zhelev as well.

⁴² PfP is a flexible, e.g. each partner decides what activities they are willing and able to take part in, framework of engaging non-member OSCE countries in NATO activities, such as joint planning and exercises, seminars, workshops, day-to-day representation in Brussels, etc. (see 'Study on NATO enlargement', September 1995, Brussels: NATO Basic Texts, Chapter III).

⁴³ It is indicative that all four generals at the top (the current Chief of Staff and his three deputies) have been trained in the Chief of Staff academy in Moscow or other Russian military academies in the 1980s and in the Texas based military institute in San Antonio in the 1990s.

In September 1995 NATO came up with an ‘Enlargement’ report, which took on board OSCE’s principles of democracy and respect for human rights and required potential applicants *inter alia* to strengthen their free institutions and to work towards military ‘standardisation’ and ‘interoperability’.⁴⁴ The latter meant initiating far-reaching reforms within the Bulgarian military, which could only muster the necessary support after the political change of 1997 when UDF forced the increasingly ineffective Socialist government to consent to pre-term elections. This is when the first talks of NATO’s eastward enlargement were completed with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic (all three joined in 1999) thus making the prospect of Bulgaria’s accession more tangible (see Rachev, 2003). The process entered fast track after Solomon Passy became Foreign Minister in 2001.⁴⁵ At the Prague Summit in November 2002 NATO members invited Bulgaria (together with six other Eastern European countries) to start accession talks. They all joined the organisation in May 2004.

* * *

The Bulgarian military has carried out a number of reform plans, all post-1997 (see Simon, 1998). Most generally, they envisaged reduction in armed forces and the army’s budget (due to IMF restrictions on public spending) and streamlining of organisation, particularly in terms of civilian control. The process has not been easy and has provoked conflicts between the generals and their political masters, however, reforms were eventually carried (and are being carried) through.⁴⁶ Two among the reform projects deserve attention. Plan 2004⁴⁷ was meant to prepare the military for NATO accession and envisaged the reduction of armed forces by over 50% to reach the peace-time target figure of 45,000. Plan 2015⁴⁸ envisages reforms in the command structure to account for Bulgaria’s participation in NATO decision-making as well as the acquisition of NATO-

⁴⁴ See ‘Study on NATO enlargement’, September 1995, Brussels: NATO Basic Texts, Chapter V.

⁴⁵ Most certainly the single most relevant figure working actively and consistently for NATO accession since 1990. In the process Passy had built a large network of interlocutors (both domestically and internationally), which he was able to skilfully use as Foreign Minister.

⁴⁶ Criticisms of the downsizing have triggered the dismissals in 1998 of commander of construction troops General Peshlevsky, commander of missile and artillery forces General Marin (currently Vice President), and two deputy Defence Ministers, Petkovski and Kunchev. On one of those occasions, Premier Kostov commented that ‘the fairest way for all officers who do not accept the reform of the army is to resign’ (Michael Shafir ‘Reforming the Bulgarian military’, Radio Free Europe News Reports, 3 September 1999).

⁴⁷ Official name ‘Plan for the Build-Up and Organisation of the Armed Forces of Republic of Bulgaria by 2004’, adopted by the government in 2002.

compliant weaponry, such as the recently signed deal for French-made Cougar combat helicopters.⁴⁹

Admittance to NATO is undoubtedly the most important acknowledgement that reform in the military has been successfully carried out. Participation in missions abroad stems from membership, but is in itself a further international endorsement of the transformed service.⁵⁰ Moreover, it generates stimulus for further reform in making the military more effective and bringing it in line with accepted standards in liberal democratic states. Overall, the developments in the past decade have contributed to streamlining and professionalising the Bulgarian army and its administration. In comparison to the Interior Ministry, the Ministry of Defence has a much better developed international cooperation bureaucracy.⁵¹ Political involvement of military personnel has been rare or non-existent, civil control over the army has never been challenged.

Part IV – Conclusions

Both in terms of input and output, e.g. institutional reform, expediency in addressing threats and successful international integration, one part (the military) of the Bulgarian security sector fares significantly better than the other (police services). Notwithstanding the divergence of their concrete security agendas (e.g. the military operates within a clearer boundaries of challenge-response and has not really had to prove its worthiness in addressing real-life threats, while the police faces a higher amount of pressure to resolve publicly tangible but difficult to tackle new threats, such as transnational organised crime, corruption, etc.), there are also a number of other, domestic and international, determinants of current achievements or lack thereof. They can be traced back to the way Cold War politics functioned within the country and the institutional relations they determined across its security establishment for years following its end. Developments after 1989 reflected practices inculcated for decades, an

⁴⁸ Official name 'Defence Modernisation Plan' also adopted in 2002 with a more long-term perspective. It envisages reforms in the command structure to account for Bulgaria's participation in NATO decision-making and the acquisition of NATO-compliant weaponry.

⁴⁹ Interview with Defence Minister Bliznakov, BTV, 7 May 2006.

⁵⁰ In addition to NATO and other foreign missions abroad, the Bulgarian military is also involved in missions under the EU's Security and Defence Policy, such as 'Alteia' in BiH and the multinational Union Battle Groups standing by for deployment.

⁵¹ For example there is no special Directorate on European integration in the Interior Ministry. EU accession issues are all subsumed under the general Directorate on International Cooperation. The Ministry of Defence's institutional structure is much more elaborate. This line of comparison holds for the staff employed as well, both in terms of language and professional qualifications.

experience difficult to erase overnight. The present study has taken the task of discussing some of the relevant factors conditioning reform and its current progress.

Reform was clearly easier where less of it was required, but that on its own is not sufficient to completely explain the observed disparity. Both police and military have had to adjust structurally (institutional revamping and legal regulation), doctrinally (perception of threats and international allegiances) and in terms of personnel (re-organisation and downsizing), however, the settings in which these were carried out were different. The military appears to have enjoyed a number of advantages. To start with, post-1989 it was formally a much larger formation than police services, with an immediately visible anchor for international integration (NATO) and usable templates for change (NATO member states' militaries). Already in the early 1990s, there were strong voices among the political elite for reform and NATO membership. Potential antagonism was swiftly addressed through a consistent public discussion, a clever PR strategy, identifying and promoting reform-minded officers and investment in retraining and pension funds for redundant personnel.

It did take some time for the military to get their act together after 1989; substantial reforms did not start before 1997. The years until then, however, were not really wasted as reform-related discussions were kept alive in the public space. The wars in neighbouring Yugoslavia quickly precipitated a new international alignment as Bulgaria toed the (however loose) line of Western European powers at the expense of Russia. With NATO shifting its security doctrine and operational capabilities to address emerging regional conflicts, it logically became the only anchor of international cooperation for the Bulgarian military. Moreover it was willing to enlarge swiftly and to offer meaningful partnership in the meantime. The lack of involvement in pre-1989 domestic politics by the army quashed any desire for involvement in post-1989 ones. The military submitted to strict civilian/political control; those generals who opposed reform were simply replaced. Moreover, as an institutional ensemble the army did not really depend on being reintegrated into a larger institutional construction in order to discharge its functions. In these circumstances, the military was relatively successful in adapting to and addressing a changing landscape of securitisation.

To the contrary, police and its services had to overcome antagonism from the three most influential political parties.⁵² Openly engaging in promoting a constructive reform agenda was politically dangerous for a number of reasons. Firstly, these services were part of a discredited institution, having been instrumental in maintaining power in the hands of a much detested clique and brutally suffocating any opposition to its total control over society. Secondly, they were the guardians of heaps of information on virtually every member of the post-1989 political elite; many politicians were thus kept hostage by those having access to their files. Thirdly, and most importantly, there was an unfading feeling of camaraderie and solidarity within the services strengthened by years of common training, service ethics, execution of operations, etc. These were networks that transcended political ideology and were kept alive even after some of their members were made redundant. The emerging economic elite, much of their wealth acquired in the first year of transition of dubious nature, was only happy to recruit every cadre with connections, valuable information and expertise in law-breaking that the state released.

While the military has had to adjust its doctrines, but largely preserve the way of doing things, police services have had to undergo a thorough restructuring, adopting completely new rules of law-enforcement and entering into institutional dependencies that diminished their control over outcomes. In contrast to the 1970s and 1980s, post-1989 police faced a higher crime rate, to which it could only offer a limited response due to the dismantling of many of its most effective services.⁵³ The resulting sense of impunity has lingered on to the present day. Shifting security challenges meant that a weakened and de-motivated police was confronted by criminal groups (increasingly well organised) more fearless of, and better capable to evade, the state's law-enforcement power than ever before. International integration has been slow, police services not only failing to anchor themselves to a working model of law application, but through their slow reform and the resulting ineffectiveness⁵⁴ also offsetting the numerous other

⁵² Including, besides the Socialists and the Democrats, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms – the party that formed as a response to the renaming campaign in the 1980s and went on to become the third political force in the country after 1989 and a key balancing player (see Eminov, 1999).

⁵³ In 1992 MIA-registered crimes are four times the number in 1989. The peak in crime is reached in 1997 (a total 241 732 crimes during the year). Simultaneously with this increase, a decrease in punishing criminals is observed. In 1989, every third crime has been sanctioned, while in the period 1992-1994 – only every twentieth. Parallel to these trends is the trend of crime becoming increasingly organised (MIA Statistics).

⁵⁴ As Glenn (2004) had argued tangible outcomes are indispensable to convincing EU member states that an applicant is a worthy future member. Superficial changes are unable to deceive in the absence of concrete results. The lack of indictments and prison sentences for known underworld bosses can not be compensated by cosmetic measures of reform.

achievements of the government in adjusting to liberal democratic standards of governance.

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This study was aimed at explaining the divergence of accomplishments in post-communist reform within the Bulgarian security sector. In a changing landscape of securitisation, e.g. what leading liberal democratic states and the international institutions they have formed have taken to define as emerging threats (e.g. terrorism and organised crime), the Bulgarian military has been quicker to adapt than its police services. The reasons, as spelled out above, are both domestic and international. Structural dependencies and track record of involvement in politics fall within the former, the swift integration into relevant international structures (to a large extent dependant as well on their enlargement policies) within the latter. It has to be noted that, lately, reforms of the police services have picked up an unprecedented speed, obviously owing to the troubled course of Bulgaria's integration into the European Union. Only time will tell, however, whether they will be capable of matching the achievements observed within the military segment of the Bulgarian security sector.

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