

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL Monterey, California



## THESIS

**ESTONIAN ROAD TO EFFECTIVE DEFENSE: CIVIL-  
MILITARY DIMENSION**

by

Harry Lahtein

March 2002

Thesis Advisor:  
Second Reader:

Donald Abenheim  
Mikhail Tsyarkin

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**ESTONIAN ROAD TO EFFECTIVE DEFENSE: CIVIL-MILITARY  
DIMENSION**

Harry Lahtein  
Head of Defense Planning Bureau, Ministry of Defense of Estonia  
B.A., Law Department, Tartu University, 1993

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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March 2002**

Author: Harry Lahtein

Approved by: Donald Abenheim, Thesis Advisor

Mikhail Tsypkin, Second Reader

James Wirtz  
Chairman, Department of National Security Affairs

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## ABSTRACT

Today's world is characterized by rapid changes in international relations. Most of Europe is engaged in transatlantic cooperation founded upon common democratic values. For Estonia, the most significant development in the international environment is the process of Euro-Atlantic integration: the continued enlargement of the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). From the time they were formed, these structures have guaranteed peace, stable social development and economic growth for the member nations. For Estonia, membership offers a realistic and historically unique opportunity to secure its democracy and sovereignty. This thesis addresses how participation in the NATO MAP process has contributed to Estonia's national security goals, specifically the construction of a civilian consensus on defense matters and the setting of realistic goals. Moreover, the thesis shows how Estonia will reach two main goals of defense policy:

- First, to develop and maintain an indigenous and credible national defense capable of defending the nation's vital interests, which requires a national security planning process that contributes to a civilian consensus on defense matters; and to create a national security planning process that sets realistic goals.

- Second, to develop the Estonian Defense Forces (EDF) in a way that ensures their interoperability with the armed forces of NATO and EU member states and their capability to participate in Peace Support Operations.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is characterized by rapid changes in international relations. Most of Europe is engaged in transatlantic cooperation founded upon common democratic values. Global cooperation among states and international organizations is increasing in both the security and economic spheres. Despite progress within its security environment, Europe and the World as a whole has not yet achieved stability. The recent terrorist attacks in Washington and New York have deeply shaken security. These atrocious acts were both an attack against the USA as well as a serious blow to the entire community of democratic nations that share common values of democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. Terrorism has evolved as one of the main threats to stability. Security-related changes around the world have brought with them new security risks as defined in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) April 1999 Strategic Concept.<sup>1</sup> States and international organizations have already had to strengthen their capacity to tackle these risks, but as previously seen after the 11 September 2001, more security measures are needed to further bolster that capacity.

Estonia stands ready to co-operate in the fight against terrorism in any possible way. Government supports the statement of the North Atlantic Council of 12 September 2001,<sup>2</sup> condemning the appalling attacks perpetrated against the United States of America and regards this an action covered by Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. According to Article 5, an armed attack against one or more of the Allies shall be considered an attack against them all. Estonia as a candidate country for NATO membership, associates itself with the message contained in the statement and is prepared to provide to the United States any assistance within the scope of its capabilities.

12 February 2002 in the meeting between Estonian Foreign Minister Kristiina Ojuland, Latvia's Foreign Minister Indulis Beržinš, Lithuania's Foreign Minister Antanas Valionis and Germany's Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, all Ministers expressed support to the USA-led international operation "Enduring Freedom", in the framework of

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<sup>1</sup> Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb0203.htm> on 06 March 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2001/p01-124e.htm> on 06 March 2002.



which Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian troops also participate within a Danish military contingent.<sup>3</sup> In his speech Mr. Sven Mikser, the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Estonia, at the Panel Discussion on the Baltic NATO Membership said,

Most recently, on February 27, the Estonian Parliament Unanimously supported the decision to send ten of our military personnel to participate in the operation “Enduring Freedom”. Together with Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark we will form a logistic and transportation unit, which will be deployed to the Kyrgyz Republic to support the air operations. As you well know, this is not the first time our military have taken on international obligations. Since 1995, Estonia has been participating in NATO and UN-led peace operations with approximately 900 troops; currently our troops are deployed in KFOR,<sup>4</sup> SFOR<sup>5</sup> and UNTSO<sup>6</sup> missions. The figure itself may not seem very big, but the number of soldiers *per capita* we commit to international operations is among the highest in the world...

After September 11, new asymmetric threats have become apparent from which no nation, big or small, can feel entirely secure, and against which no country is any more or any less defensible than its neighbor. Only if the likeminded nations stand together, can we effectively “expect the unexpected”, as the US Secretary Of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it. Here, the principles of democracy, individual liberty and rule of law, which were laid down in the preamble to the Washington Treaty, have lost none of their relevance.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Accessed at [http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat\\_137/1098.html](http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat_137/1098.html) on 06 March 2002

<sup>4</sup> KFOR is a NATO-led international force responsible for establishing a security presence in Kosovo. This peace-enforcement force entered Kosovo on 12 June 1999 under a UN mandate, two days after the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (UNSCR 1244). In doing so, the international community showed its determination to resolve a grave humanitarian crisis in Kosovo and to provide for the safe return of all refugees and displaced people in the region. Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/kfor/kfor/default.htm> on 14 March 2002.

<sup>5</sup> The Stabilization Force (SFOR) will deter hostilities and stabilize the peace, contribute to a secure environment by providing a continued military presence in the Area Of Responsibility (AOR), target and coordinate SFOR support to key areas including primary civil implementation organizations, and progress towards a lasting consolidation of peace, without further need for NATO-led forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/sfor/organisation/mission.htm> on 14 March 2002.

<sup>6</sup> The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) set up in 1948 was the first peacekeeping operation established by the United Nations (UN). The UNTSO military observers remain in the Middle East to monitor ceasefires, supervise armistice agreements, prevent isolated incidents from escalating and assist other UN peacekeeping operations in the region. Accessed at [http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/untso/body\\_untso.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/untso/body_untso.htm) on 14 March 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Sven Mikser, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Estonia, Speech at the Panel Discussion on Baltic NATO Membership, Washington, 13 March 2002. Accessed at <http://www.mod.gov.ee/downloads/kone140302.pdf> on 14 March 2002.

For Estonia, the best expression of international cooperation is the process of Euro-Atlantic integration, which is based on democratic principles and aimed at bolstering the security environment. Through membership in the EU and NATO, Estonia's goal is to fully and effectively consolidate sovereignty and security, thus supporting Estonia's democratic and economic progress while strengthening the international security environment.

It is in Estonia's national interest to cooperate internationally in order to reinforce their security environment. This assumes that Estonia will defend and unequivocally support democratic values at home as well as abroad. Estonia's primary contribution is its own stability, its readiness to fend off security risks, and its cultivation of the Armed Forces and a defense capable of engaging in cooperation.

For Estonia, the most significant development in the international environment is the process of Euro-Atlantic integration: the continued enlargement of the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As stated in Article Two of the North Atlantic Treaty

The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them.<sup>8</sup>

Estonia fully shares the basic democratic principles and goals upon which the EU and NATO were established and aims to become a full member of both the EU and NATO. From the time these entities were formed, they have guaranteed peace, stable social development and economic growth for the member nations. For Estonia, membership in Alliance offers a realistic and historically unique opportunity to cement its democracy and sovereignty. Nonetheless, this goal requires the concrete steps of transition.

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<sup>8</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, Washington D.C. – 4 April 1949, accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/basicxt/treaty.htm> on 04 March 2002.

## A. RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis will examine the evolution of the basic principles of Estonia's defense policy: deterrence, territorial defense, the strengthening of security and stability in the region, co-operation with, and transition into, European and transatlantic institutions.

To evaluate the process one could ask, in order to reach these ambitious objectives whether participating in the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP)<sup>9</sup> process has contributed to Estonia's national security goals? More specifically, how the questions to be addressed here reach the civilian consensus on defense matters and how to set the realistic objectives for the Estonian Defense Forces (EDF). Identifying Estonia's process in achieving these two main goals of defense policy is important:

- Developing and maintaining an indigenous and credible national defense capable of defending the nation's vital interests requires
  - A national security planning process that contributes to a civilian consensus on defense matters.
  - A national security planning process that sets realistic goals.
- Developing the EDF in a way that ensures their interoperability with the Armed Forces of NATO and EU member states and ensures their capability to participate in Peace Support Operations (PSO).

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<sup>9</sup> The Membership Action Plan (MAP) is designed to assist those countries, which wish to join the Alliance in their preparations by providing advice, assistance and practical support on all aspects of NATO membership. Its main features are: 1) the submission by aspiring members of individual annual national programs on their preparations for possible future membership, covering political, economic, defense, resource, security and legal aspects; 2) a focused and candid feedback mechanism on aspirant countries' progress on their programs that includes both political and technical advice, as well as annual 19+1 meetings at Council level to assess progress; 3) a clearing-house to help coordinate assistance by NATO and by member states to aspirant countries in the defense/military field; 4) a defense planning approach for aspirants which includes elaboration and review of agreed planning targets. The launching of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) in April 1999 has helped the countries aspiring to NATO membership to increasingly focus their preparations on meeting the goals and priorities set out in the Plan. Moreover, its implementation has ceased to be a matter concerning only ministries of foreign affairs and defense. With the establishment of inter-ministerial meetings at the national level, fulfilling the objectives of the Plan is increasingly engaging other government departments in a coordinated and systematic effort. The MAP provides for concrete feedback and advice from NATO for aspiring countries on their preparations directed at achieving future membership. It provides for a range of activities designed to strengthen each aspirant country's candidacy. The MAP does not replace the Partnership for Peace (PFP) program. The aspirants' participation in PFP and its Planning and Review Process (PARP) has been tailored to their needs. Full participation in PFP/PARP is essential because it allows aspirant countries to develop interoperability with NATO forces and to prepare their force structures and capabilities for possible future membership. NATO Handbook, updated 01 October 2001. Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030103.htm> on 04 March 2002.

The main risks to Estonia's security are isolation and encroachment during periods of instability and developments beyond political control in the Euro-Atlantic region. The new post-cold war Euro-Atlantic security framework has not completed its evolution towards a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe. In consequence, the possibility exists for a delayed international resolution of a crisis involving Estonia that could leave the country to its own devices for a critical period of time. As stated in the National Security Concept, Estonia will act to defend itself in the face of a threat.<sup>10</sup>

NATO has made it clear that if aspirant countries wish to become a member, they should put a significant amount of money toward defense.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, a much more solid base occurs for building up the national defense structures, because countries should be interoperable with NATO structures. Increased spending is justified with the need to regain an international security umbrella. In order to give substance to its aspirations to NATO membership, Estonia has committed itself to increase its defense spending to 2% of its GDP for 2002. This gradual process has already started. In 2000, the defense spending was 1.6% of the GDP, a significant increase from 1999<sup>12</sup>. Since 2001, defense budget has increased up to 1.8% of the GDP. It is important to mention, that increase of defense budget up to 2% from GDP is secured by a consensus between governmental and oppositional parties.

Allocating a substantial amount of money for the defense expenditure has been always question of public debate, one of the cornerstone issues of civil-military relations in Estonia. Since the beginning of Nineties public opinion, which was very negative towards the EDF, because of the in heritage of the Soviet occupation, has changed dramatically. In a public poll in the beginning of 2000, the percentage of citizens willing to defend the country using arms was surprisingly high: 74%.

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<sup>10</sup> National Security Concept approved by the Government of Estonia on 06 March 2001, accessed at [http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat\\_177/838.html](http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat_177/838.html) on 04 March 2002.

<sup>11</sup> The nine countries that have declared an interest in joining NATO and are participating in the MAP are Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. (Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030103.htm> on 04 March 2002)

<sup>12</sup> 1,4% from GDP

The author will show that, because Estonia is a democratic country and shares the same values with NATO and EU, there is no need for critical shifts in internal or foreign policy. Moreover, if Estonia becomes a member of NATO and EU, its economy will thrive. Membership will decrease risks for international business and their investments will create new entrepreneurs and jobs for society. This enhances the prosperity and stability of the country, while securing and stabilizing the environment in the whole region. Participation in the MAP process has further enabled the MoD to establish liable civilian control over the EDF, which over recent years has strengthened public confidence in the Armed Forces of Estonia.

## **B. AREA OF RESEARCH**

This thesis analyzes Estonian defense policy and strategy from the civil-military relations point of view. Today's world is characterized by rapid changes in international relations. Most of Europe is enveloped in transatlantic cooperation founded upon common democratic values. Global cooperation among states and international organizations is increasing in both security and economic spheres.

Although the security environment in Europe has improved with NATO and EU progress, a stable security environment in Europe and in the world as a whole has not yet been achieved. The dynamics of local and regional crises, often arising without warning, may exert a ripple effect. EU and NATO have recently expanded into the Baltic Sea area; presently, Estonia's northern neighbors, Finland and Sweden, have joined the EU. Norway, as well as Poland, belongs to NATO along with Denmark and Germany who are members of both.

The Russian Federation has not supported NATO enlargement including the Baltic States, but the Federation has no direct objections against EU enlargement. The discussion on Estonia's activities in the framework of the EU and NATO enlargement cannot ignore the role of Russia in this field. During the last ten years Russia, who initially defined the Baltic States as its *near abroad*,<sup>13</sup> has voiced loudly its discontent

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<sup>13</sup> The autumn of 1992 brought two important developments in the Russian Federation. Foreign policy had become a major issue of domestic politics and the moderate liberals (to whom Kozyrev belonged) were pushed aside from policy-making (but not implementing) by the moderate conservatives (e.g. S.Karaganov) and hard-liners (e.g. S.Baburin, G. Ziuganov). This was reflected in the concept of *near abroad* that evolved gradually during 1992 connecting of the withdrawal to the Russian minority and military pensioners issues in Estonia by the Russian side. Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev defined the *near*

with the status of Russian minority in Latvia and Estonia and has even applied economic sanctions against the Baltic States. This suggests that the Russian Federation has been perceived at least in the Baltic States as a potential risk to security.

Nevertheless, after the tragic events of 11 September 2001, Russia has accepted the political reality of NATO enlargement. Moreover, the Russian Federation is part of Euro-Atlantic cooperation through various EU and NATO programs, including the Northern Dimension, Partnership for Peace (PfP), and the Northern European Initiative, and the United State's strategic action plan for the development of stability, democracy and cooperation in the Baltic Sea region. Furthermore, "Building Security in an Uncertain World," on 14 February 2002, NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson in his speech stated,

At the (Prague) Summit, we will also move the enlargement process forward -- because our experience since the Washington Summit proves definitively that enlargement is good for NATO, and good for Euro-Atlantic security... ..We cannot wait for a similar tragedy as September 11 before we close ranks against proliferation or other contemporary threats. Simply put, a deeper and more trusting cooperation between NATO and Russia is essential to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area. To achieve this NATO and Russia have agreed to work toward the creation of a new council, to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at 20... ..The new mechanism under development will permit NATO and Russia to act together "at 20" in areas, such as the struggle against terrorism, where we know we share such a "logic of common interests." But of course, we will preserve the Alliance's ability to act "at 19" on Alliance business, such as collective defense responsibilities, or where our interests and Russia's may diverge, such as on questions regarding the future membership of the Alliance... ..We have disagreed over NATO enlargement. But we agree that democratization and economic prosperity in Central and Eastern Europe - developments that NATO enlargement helps to encourage and solidify - are in the long-term

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*abroad* as a "unique, *sui generis* geopolitical space, to which nobody but Russia could bring peace." [Major General Karsten Moller, Danish Army, "Russian Security Policy – In Search of a Major Power Identity", *Baltic Defence Review*, no. 3, Vol. 2000: 69 <http://www.bdcpl.ee/bdr/index.htm> (accessed on 06 March 2002)]. Although assurances were given to Estonia that the concept of *near abroad* was not the basis for Russian foreign policy, the issue of "protecting compatriots abroad" found its reflection in the 1993 military doctrine of Russian Federation.

interest of both Russia and the West. And the evidence is that we are getting through to Russia on that point.<sup>14</sup>

For Russia, concern over its degraded power status and wounded sense of identity has fuelled preoccupations with territorial integrity. For instance, in the Baltic Sea region such moods have reinforced Russian concern about the status of Kaliningrad. In the Kaliningrad exclave military and civilian political groups disagreed over its possible transition from a military complex to an economic development area.<sup>15</sup> In addition, Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation regards Kaliningrad as a strategic necessity for the Baltic Fleet.

Although the role of NATO, and the EU in the Baltic region can hardly underestimated, Estonia realizes that its security is best guaranteed by building a stable economy with sound social and military structures, and by coming to terms with the fact that Russia is, and will remain, a neighbour with which it must establish working relations. A preparedness to make compromises does not, however, imply that Estonia and other Baltic States must accept a relationship with Russia comparable to which Finland had to accept during the Cold War.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, according to National Security Concept, presently no immediate military threat exists for Estonian territorial integrity or sovereignty. However, in the context of modern European history, military aggression has usually manifested itself unexpectedly. The goal of Estonian defense policy is deterrence in preventing any military aggression against Estonia; however, if deterrence fails, Estonia should be ready to defend its sovereignty.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> General Lord Robertson, NATO Secretary, "Building Security in an Uncertain World" Speech given in Warsaw, 14 February 2002. Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/2002/s020124a.htm> on 25 February 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Olav F. Knudsen "Cooperative security in the Baltic Sea region", Chaillot Paper 33, November 1998 (accessed at <http://www.iss-eu.org/challiot/chai33e.html> on 26 February 2002)

<sup>16</sup> Eitvidas Bajarnas, Mare Haab and Ilmars Viskne, "The Baltic States: Security and Defence After Independence", Chaillot Paper 19, June 1995 (accessed at <http://www.iss-eu.org/index.html> on 26 February 2002)

<sup>17</sup> National Security Concept, accessed at [http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat\\_177/838.html](http://www.vm.ee/eng/kat_177/838.html) on 04 March 2002.

## C. THESIS CONTENTS

The first part of this thesis, Chapter I through Chapter III, will conduct an analytical study of Estonian defense policy and strategy from a civil-military relations perspective. The thesis will first provide an overview of Estonia's security environment, policies in the Baltic Sea region and general oversight of Estonian Defense Forces (EDF). Security-building measures as multi- and bilateral cooperation are also important subjects in the first part. After a short overview of the international situation, the author will state possible security risks facing Estonia and discuss Estonia's participation in the NATO accession. Next, the thesis discusses civil-military relations in Estonia and finally, analyzes the fulfillment of the Annual National Program (ANP) and new developments in the defense area according to the National Military Strategy (NMS). To conduct this study of the MAP process, the author will primarily rely on materials from the Estonian Ministry of Defense (MoD) Annual National Program, and on its personal experience obtained while serving as a Head of Defense Planning Bureau.

The second part of the thesis, Chapter IV, will concentrate on the case study of Estonia's participation in the Baltic Peace Support Operations (PSO) Battalion (BALTBAT) project. The author answers the question whether continued participation in the PSOs has promoted Estonian goals in the international arena. This part of the paper is outlined as follows.

After the short background illustrating the Estonian involvement in BALTBAT and describing the necessary tasks in creating ESTBAT, the first section will give an insight to the legal framework regulating participation in PSOs along with general knowledge about the Estonian history of participation in PSOs. Additionally an evaluation of Estonian mission experiences and an overview of possible deployment scenarios in PSOs are presented.

The second section will illustrate, in depth, the requirements for the founding of ESTBAT giving the outline of obligations obtained by Estonia in fulfilling tasks of the NATO enlargement stated in Membership Action Plan/Annual National Program<sup>18</sup> and in

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<sup>18</sup> NATO enlargement process Membership Action Plan/Annual National Program – MAP/ANP.



the Partnership Goals (PG). It also describes tasks for ESTBAT inclusion in international missions.

The third section will give conclusions and recommendations for the Estonian future deployments in international PSOs through analysis of the material reviewed in the previous sections.

In conclusion, Chapter V will summarize how Estonia, during the last decade, developed and maintained an indigenous and credible national defense capable of defending the nation's vital interests. Author will also examine how the national security planning process contributed to a civilian consensus on defense matters. Moreover, is a national security planning process set on to reach realistic goals? Finally, the discussion will emphasize the development of the EDF and demonstrate its interoperability with the Allied Forces of NATO and EU member states, enhancing their capability to participate in Peace Support Operations (PSO).

## II. THE NATIONAL SECURITY PLANNING PROCESS AND NATIONAL SECURITY GOALS 1991-1998

For centuries, Estonians have had only two choices: to survive as nation or to merge into the large nations. You could say that we decided, subconsciously but collectively, to survive. Therefore, for us, nationalism is a mode of existence. In our position, you cannot have the broad perspective of the English or the French; this would threaten your very existence. To survive, you must be nationalist.<sup>19</sup>

Enn Soosaar, Estonian literate and translator

“Vercingetorix said: Caesar, you can take the land where we lived away from us, but you cannot take the land from us where we have died. ...

My anger will remain alive to shout like an owl in the hollow years. Destruction to you and your insatiable city, Caesar!”<sup>20</sup>

“Vercingetorix Said” by Jaan Kaplinski, Estonian writer and poet

### A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological evidence suggests that Finno-Ugric tribes, the ancestors of the modern Estonians, arrived the shores of the Baltic Sea some two and half thousand years B.C., making Estonians one of the longest-settled of European peoples. Tacitus<sup>21</sup> speaks of *Aesti*, living on the shores of the northern sea.<sup>22</sup>

Upon the right of the Suevoian Sea the Aestyian nations reside, who use the same customs and attire with the Suevians; their language more resembles that of Britain. They worship the Mother of the Gods. As the characteristic of their national superstition, they wear the images of wild boars. This alone serves them for arms, this is the safeguard of all, and by this every worshipper of the Goddess is secured even amidst his foes. Rare amongst them is the use of weapons of iron, but frequent that of clubs. In producing

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<sup>19</sup> Anatol Lieven, The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the path to independence Second Edition (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1994) 18.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. 38.

<sup>21</sup> Tacitus, an important Roman historian, wrote the most detailed early description of the Germans at then end of the first century CE.

<sup>22</sup> Lieven, 38.

of grain and the other fruits of the earth, they labour with more assiduity and patience than is suitable to the usual laziness of Germans.<sup>23</sup>

The Estonian struggle for independence and nationhood has been not only political but also existential. Situated in Europe's anteroom, open to the geopolitical ambitions of their larger neighbors, Estonians have seen statehood as their only guarantee of survival as a people.<sup>24</sup> For roughly seven hundred years Danes, Germans, Swedes, Poles, and Russians have occupied Estonia. Estonia was a part of the Russian Empire two and a half centuries. Historical background is well described by Mari-Ann Rikken in her essay "The restoration of Estonian Independence":

Having been dominated since the 13th century by Danes, Germans, Poles, Swedes and Russians, Estonia was established as a modern nation-state on February 24, 1918. However, from the very beginning Estonians had to fight for their independence against the imperialist ambitions of both Germany and Bolshevik Russia. The war of independence ended with the signing of the 1920 Tartu Peace Treaty, in which Soviet Russia recognized Estonia's independence unconditionally and for all time. This treaty remains the cornerstone of Estonia-Russian relations today. In quick order, Estonia became a member of the League of Nations and other international organizations; the young nation developed a parliamentary democracy. Rapid economic growth soon brought Estonia to a par with Scandinavia.<sup>25</sup>

During only a comparatively short period of twenty-two years (1918-1940) did it enjoy independent statehood as a democratic Republic of Estonia. In 1940 Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union.

Under the secret protocols of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact, Estonia was invaded and occupied by the Soviet Union on June 17, 1940. A reign of terror ensued: thousands of Estonians were arrested and killed, while tens of thousands were deported. The entire Estonian political and social infrastructure was destroyed and replaced with Soviet institutions.

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<sup>23</sup> Tacitus [Germania](#). Tacitus gives a geographical account of the locations of the main German tribes is from the 18th-century translation by Thomas Gordon. Accessed at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/tacitus1.html> on 24 February 2002.

<sup>24</sup> Mari-Ann Rikken, "[The restoration of Estonian independence](#)" Institute of Baltic Studies, September 1993 (accessed at <http://www.ibs.ee/ibs/history/restoration.html> on 24 February 2002)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

For the next fifty years, the Soviet regime tried to do everything to colonize Estonia, to russify and assimilate the people. Even so, guerilla-style resistance was not crushed until the early fifties. The vehemently anti-Communist Estonian refugee community in the West continued to demand an end to the Soviet occupation of their homeland. The de jure continuity of the Republic of Estonia was recognized by Western powers, who refused to view occupied Estonia as being legally part of the Soviet Union.

Despite the all-pervasive Communist ideology which tried to stamp out independent thinking and national identity, Estonians continued to resist, shifting to the preservation of cultural identity and family values. Traditional song festivals, organized every five years, offered an opportunity to express a feeling of national togetherness.<sup>26</sup>

Estonia is presumably no longer *terra incognita* on the international political landscape. Since the second half of the 1980s, Estonia has captured the attention of the international community with its peaceful struggle to regain independence. This cherished goal was attained on 20 August 1991, making Estonia one of the several newcomers to Europe.<sup>27</sup>

The independence of Baltic countries was one of the factors, which accelerated the break up process of Soviet Union. Central European countries possessed the formal attributes of independent statehood. Estonia, like the two other Baltic States, Latvia and Lithuania, all constituent parts of the former Soviet Union, were in an unfavorable position to reform and build up the state and economy. These Baltic countries had to start from scratch. They lacked working state institutions, a world-wide network of diplomatic services, armed forces and currencies, not to speak of a constitution or up-to-date legislation on a par with other democratic, market-economy societies.<sup>28</sup>

The development of the Estonia's defense structures began soon after regaining independence in August 1991. By the end of that year, the Estonian Defense Forces (EDF) and its General Staff were legally established. The Estonian Ministry of Defense was set up in July 1992.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Bajarnas, Haab, Viskne. Accessed at <http://www.iss-eu.org/index.html> on 26 February 2002

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Almost simultaneously, an active Estonian involvement began in political-military cooperation initiated by NATO. Estonia participated in North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) in 1991, and subsequently in Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). Estonia joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP)<sup>29</sup> program in February 1994 followed by joining the PfP Planning and Review Process (PARP)<sup>30</sup> in the beginning of 1995. Since 1996, intensive bilateral dialogue on issues concerning the extension of NATO has taken place between Estonia and NATO. Already in September 2001, Estonia submitted the third annual plan in the framework of the Membership Action Plan to NATO. As of 2001, Estonia has worked on reaching the 62 Partnership Goals.<sup>31</sup> The scope of the work associated with an implementation of the Partnership Goals is illustrated by the fact that the most general of these goals (PG G 0028) required a comprehensive Force Structure Review (FSR) to be conducted in 2001. The fundamental outcome of the Review was to define the required military capabilities, the future organization of the EDF, and a proposal for a new command and control structure of the EDF. The very short term priorities of the EDF development include establishing the Joint Operations Staff within Headquarters Estonian Defense Forces, developing surveillance capabilities, training units for one mechanized infantry brigade and carrying out a training review to bring EDF training into accordance with the new requirements.

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<sup>29</sup> PfP is described in the NATO Handbook accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030201.htm> on 13 March 2002.

<sup>30</sup> PARP process is described in the NATO Handbook accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/handbook/2001/hb030208.htm> on 13 March 2002.

<sup>31</sup> In January 1995, NATO introduced the First Planning Cycle of PARP under the aegis of PfP. Estonia was one of 14 countries that joined the first cycle of PARP. The aims of PARP are: to acquaint the Partner States with the NATO requirements and procedures that ensure the interoperability with the defense structures of the NATO states; to unify defense planning of the Partner States with that of the Alliance; to evaluate the possibilities of a partner state through bilateral discussions; to specify goals and areas that have to be elaborated during the subsequent Planning Cycle in order to guarantee the interoperability of the partner state with NATO. The process makes the aims transparent for the military development of the Partner States improves the interoperability in the fields of Peacekeeping, Humanitarian Missions and Rescue Operations. In the beginning of every two-year PARP Planning Cycle, Estonia presents a survey about its defense policy and defense structures, PfP projects and the military units that could be used in the NATO undertakings. Besides requirements on interoperability, the Partnership Goals will be determined. According to the PARP Ministerial Guidance and to MAP initiated in the Washington Summit Meeting, NATO Military Staffs in co-operation with the International Staff and the Partnership Co-ordination Cell worked out the Partnership Goals for nine countries that have joined MAP. Estonia has accepted the 62 Partnership Goals and is carrying them out. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/nato/parp.html> on 06 March 2002.

Within the last 7-8 years, bilateral defense co-operation has been directed towards building up the EDF preparing Estonia for prospective NATO membership. At present, Estonia has signed bilateral defense related cooperation agreements or Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with 20 countries, including MoUs with 14 NATO countries. In 2001, cooperation agreements with Georgia and the Slovak Republic were signed. Estonia is ready to sign MoUs with Belgium, Greece, and Portugal. Additionally, Estonia has a trilateral co-operation agreement with Latvia and Lithuania.<sup>32</sup> EDF are engaged in practical defense co-operation with Latvia and Lithuania through the joint co-operation projects BALTBAT (Baltic Battalion),<sup>33</sup> BALTRON (Baltic Naval Squadron),<sup>34</sup> BALTNET (Baltic Air Surveillance Network).<sup>35</sup> The senior staff officers of the defense forces of the Baltic States are being trained in BALTDEFCOL (Baltic Defense College).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Membership Action Plan/Estonian Annual National Programme 2001/2002 (Tallinn: *Kaitseministeerium* – Ministry of Defense, 2001), 46. ANP 2001/2002 was approved by the Government of Estonia on 18 September 2001.

<sup>33</sup> BALTBAT- Infantry battalion for participating in international peace support operations- is the first and probably the best-known Baltic cooperation project. It was created under the auspices of international peace support operations and operations contributing to the regional stability. The Baltic Battalion has served as an example of regional co-operation. The Battalion has supported and contributed to the development of national Defense Forces and self-defense capabilities of each of the countries. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/cooperation/baltbat.html> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>34</sup> BALTRON - Naval force with mine countermeasures capabilities- was established as a multinational squadron for the purpose of countering mine threats. It enhances the security of peaceful seafaring and contributes to the reduction of environmental hazards in the territorial waters and the economic zones of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. As a result of the co-operation of the three Baltic countries and the international support to the project, the national naval forces mature and develop more quickly, thereby increasing the self-defense capabilities of each of the countries. The BALTRON project also promotes the integration of the national naval units with the respective NATO units. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/cooperation/baltron.html> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>35</sup> BALTNET- Air-surveillance information system- is a physical system for acquisition, co-ordination, distribution and display of the air-surveillance data in the Baltic States. It is designed to improve the efficiency of international co-operation between the civil and military authorities in the aviation matters and to increase operational efficiency. BALTNET is a combination of efforts by several nations to develop air surveillance and air traffic management capabilities in Central and Eastern Europe. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/cooperation/baltnet.html> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>36</sup> BALDEFCOL– Joint military educational institution for training senior staff officers. In 1992, the Baltic Defense Ministers agreed in principle that co-operation should be established in the field of officer and specialist training. In 1997, Defense Ministers of Nordic and Baltic countries decided to establish a joint Baltic educational institution for senior staff training, aiming to ensure the rapid development of a pool of qualified officers who would be able to lead development of the defense structures. BALDEFCOL is the first joint military educational institution; it helps to create a common background for the officer corps of the three countries. The main objective of the college is to improve training and development of senior staff officers continuously. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/cooperation/baldefcol.html> on 19 March 2002.

During this past decade, Estonia has achieved a great deal. By 2001, Estonia reached a status where it has, for the first time, a comprehensive set of documents (laws, security concept, military strategy) regulating and guiding the development of the national defense.

## **B. OVERVIEW OF ESTONIA'S SECURITY ENVIRONMENT**

The Republic of Estonia will defend and unequivocally support democratic values at home as well as abroad. Estonia's primary contributions reside in its own stability, its readiness to fend off security risks, its cultivation of professional Armed Forces, and its defense establishment, capable of engaging in effective international cooperation. Presently there is no immediate military threat to Estonian territorial integrity or sovereignty. However, in European history, military aggression has often manifested itself unexpectedly. The goal of Estonian defense policy is deterrence to prevent any military aggression against the nation. Nonetheless, if deterrence fails, Estonia should be ready to defend its sovereignty.

For this purpose, the nation maintains the Estonian Defense Forces (EDF). The EDF consists of a regular component (Kaitsevägi) and a voluntary military organization, the Defense League (Kaitseliit). The EDF peacetime structure is divided into a number of training and operational units. During times of crisis or war, the operational readiness of the EDF is increased through mobilization because the standing units of the EDF are relatively small. Moreover, the militarily organized institutions and units under the Ministry of Interior will also be subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief.

Figure 1 Personnel figures of the EDF and of the militarily organized units under the Ministry of Interior as of June 1, 2001<sup>37</sup>

	Army	Air Force	Navy	Defense League	Border Guards	Rescue Board	Total
Officers	500	69	49	89	393	26	1126
NCOs	525	31	49	73	650	32	1360
Contract soldiers	419	30	46	36	1024	34	1589
Defense officials	332	7	21	42	82	0	484
Conscripts	1905	51	183	0	273	213	2625
Civilians	510	13	36	62	192	51	864
<b>Total</b>	<b>4191</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>302*</b>	<b>2614</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>8048</b>

\* In addition, the Defense League has 8292 voluntary members.

## C. ESTONIA'S DEFENSE POLICY AND THE NATO MAP/ANP PROCESS

### 1. Estonia's Defense Policy

In Estonia the defense policy constitutes part of the security policy; a notion of security policy is similar to that in Nordic countries. In addition to the military field the defense policy covers other areas vital to the proper functioning of society. The only official Estonian definition of the term “defense policy” has been so far given in the document “Estonia’s Defense Policy Guidelines” approved by the Parliament on 7 May 1996. It states: “The state’s defense policy is a collection of political and military measures to guarantee an independence of state, an indivisible integrity of its territory, territorial waters and air space, a constitutional order and the vital capacity of the nation”.<sup>38</sup>

Estonia’s National Security Concept mentioned above states that the defense policy in Estonia has been guided by the state’s security policy. This order of policies is strongly supported by Estonia’s experience from the 1990s when the state had to rely mostly on its political power (not supported by any credible defense capability) to achieve its goals and to deter outside pressure.

To facilitate the analysis of the development of Estonia’s national defense, “defense policy” can be defined as a flow of purposive action over time in the field of national defense.<sup>39</sup> As a flow of action it must then respectively have goals, allocated resources and some sort of results. The environment in which this action has taken place was described earlier.

### 2. The Defense Policy Goals

The goals of Estonia’s defense policy proceed directly from the general security policy goals stipulated in the National Security Concept (NSC). They are following:

- To maintain the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Estonia;

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<sup>37</sup> ANP 2001/2002, 46.

<sup>38</sup> “Eesti riigi kaitsepoliitika põhisuundade heakskiitmine,” *Riigi Teataja I* (Official Parliament Journal) [Tallinn, *Riigikogu* (Estonian Parliament), 1996] part 33, *otsus* (decision) no. 684, 7 May 1996. Accessed at [http://trip.rk.ee/cgi-in/ihw?\\${BASE}=akt&\\${OOHTML}=rtd&TA=1996&TO=1&AN=684](http://trip.rk.ee/cgi-in/ihw?${BASE}=akt&${OOHTML}=rtd&TA=1996&TO=1&AN=684) on 8 May 2001.

<sup>39</sup> J. Baylis, K. Booth, J. Garnett, and P. Williams, Contemporary Strategy. Volume II: The Nuclear Powers, Second and enlarged edition (New York and London: Holmes and Meier, 1987.) 2.



- To safeguard the existence and progressive development of Estonia as a democratic state; and
- To promote national welfare and preserve the cultural heritage, to safeguard the preservation of the Estonian people, Estonian language and culture as well as Estonian identity over time, while promoting international co-operation in the globalizing world.<sup>40</sup>

These goals are, in principle, more or less identical to the fundamental security interests of any other state. The first two priorities in achieving these goals are the integration into and cooperation with European and transatlantic security, political and economic structures (NATO, European Union, WEU) and the development of a national defense system that safeguards Estonia's independence.<sup>41</sup>

The National Military Strategy approved by Estonia's Government on 20 February 2001 postulates the following defense policy objectives in support of attainment of the above mentioned security goals:<sup>42</sup>

- To ensure the capability to encounter security risks by military means;
- To support the integration of Estonia into Euro-Atlantic structures;
- To ensure a readiness to participate in peace support operations and collective defense; and
- To ensure participation in national crisis management system.

The above goals represent a further clarification than to those stipulated in the earlier documents. The "Defense Policy Guidelines" (May 1996) defined the prevention of aggression against Estonia as the primary goal of a defense policy and, in case of its failure, an active and passive defense against the aggressor throughout the territory.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>40</sup> National Security Concept – approved by the Government of the Republic of Estonia on 14 November 2000. Accessed at <http://web-static.vm.ee/static/failid/491/SecurityConcept.pdf> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>41</sup> Erik Männik, "Estonian Defence Forces: Ten Years of Development," (2002), forthcoming, 13.

<sup>42</sup> Estonian Military Strategy (*Eesti sõjalise kaitse strateegia*): 5. Accessed at <http://www.mod.gov.ee/pdf/kaitsestrateegia.pdf> on 07 March 2002.

<sup>43</sup> Männik, 14.

For that purpose, the defense had to be built up in two mutually complementary directions:

- The development and maintenance of the indigenous and credible national defense capability for defense of the nation's vital interests; and
- The development of the Estonian Defense Forces in a way that ensures interoperability with the Armed Forces of NATO and WEU member states, and their capability to participate in peace support operations.

These directions were indicated as the defense policy goals in several documents prior to the National Military Strategy.<sup>44</sup>

### **3. The Military Strategy**

Estonia's military strategy has to solve a fundamental problem, that is to ensure an equally efficient fulfilling of the defense requirements arising from the need to strengthen the national defense (security) as well as the requirements arising from the national integration efforts. Although it seems that these requirements naturally overlap (which has also been occasionally stated) it has not necessarily been so in all possible scenarios. The crucial point in balancing the requirements is that of the military defense solution *vis-à-vis* envisioned threat.<sup>45</sup>

Three major papers have attempted to solve this problem. The first attempt was made already in 1992-1993 followed by papers from 1996 and 2001.

The first attempts to formulate the conceptual basis of Estonia's national defense were already made in 1993 when the Ministry of Defense proposal "The Fundamentals of National Defense" was discussed in the Parliament. The draft of this paper envisioned a defense build-up according to the total defense concept. It estimated that Estonian Defense Forces could train 5,500-6,000 conscripts annually with the total mobilization reserve constituting some 110,000 men.<sup>46</sup> The military defense structure would have been divided into three defense regions each containing one brigade, creating one *Jaeger*, one

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<sup>44</sup> "Annual Exchange of Information on Defence Planning," (Tallinn, Ministry of Defence, 2000), 2.

<sup>45</sup> Männik, 14.

<sup>46</sup> "The Fundamentals of National Defense," *Eesti Vabariigi Riigikaitsekontseptsioon, Projekt*, 1993, unapproved and unpublished document.

Guerilla and one Marine brigade. That document was considered incomplete and, therefore, not approved.<sup>47</sup>

The next document having a fundamental importance to the development of national defense was “Estonia’s Defense Policy Guidelines” mentioned earlier. In addition to stipulating the general goal of national defense, this document postulated, from the political side, the objective of joining NATO and the WEU and stressed the need for international co-operation at various levels. The document also described the national and military command lines and the general structure of defense forces. Although the term “total defense” has not been directly used in the “Estonia’s Defense Policy Guidelines” the envisioned basis of the national defense is the same – the maximum use of all available resources for defense purposes.<sup>48</sup>

Here the latest document, “The National Military Strategy”, represents further development of strategic thinking in Estonia. It includes the declaration of resisting aggression in any case. The document does not envision a direct military threat to Estonia presently or in the near future, which probably means that Estonia currently observes the lack of intention rather than lack of capability or formal reason of any potential aggressor. Compared to the previous papers, a detailed description of the military threat scenarios is added. The document returns to the term “total defense” and stipulates it as the basis of national defense, being composed of military, economic and psychological defenses and civil readiness. The force development is to proceed on the basis of Annual National Programs, Partnership Goals, and Partnership for Peace Program Planning and Review Process in achieving interoperability.<sup>49</sup>

Another big step forward is defining the territorial defense concept as the basis of military defense. For the first time Estonia has reflected on its basic documents by addressing how it is going to defend itself militarily if the need arises. Describing the different scenarios is also very important as it shows what the defense is aimed against. Estonia sees military resistance to aggression as covering the full territory of the State.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Männik, 14.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>50</sup> Männik, 15.

The purpose of military resistance is to tie down the attacking forces, to defend strategically important areas, to gain the time necessary to invoke international reaction and to take measures aimed at halting the aggression.<sup>51</sup>

There are three concrete military threat scenarios outlined in the current Estonian military strategy. These are

- Intimidation – the opponent conducts out large-scale military exercises, partial sea blockade, and over-flights of Estonia’s territory. This scenario may be transformed into full naval and aerial conflict.
- Coup, attack – the opponent carries out Special Forces’ operations to seize strategic objects in Estonia which undermines the functioning of state institutions. This scenario is characterized by the lack of or a very short warning time. Tallinn, as the capital, is likely to be the primary target.
- Full Military Attack – an attack will be carried out as a joint operation with forces outnumbering the defenders. The emphasis will be on the ground operations supported by the Naval and Air Force units.<sup>52</sup>

The main direction of Estonia’s foreign and security policy has remained unchanged throughout the last decade. The most important development influencing Estonian foreign and security policy is the Euro-Atlantic integration process. The continuing enlargement of NATO reinforces peace, democratic development, social stability and economic growth in the whole Euro-Atlantic area; therefore, it makes NATO membership very attractive to Estonia and to its neighbors.

To continue NATO enlargement and to assist aspirant countries in their preparations to join the organization, NATO developed the Membership Action Plan (MAP).<sup>53</sup> The MAP enables NATO to estimate progress in satisfying membership

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<sup>51</sup> Estonian Military Strategy, 7. Accessed at <http://www.mod.gov.ee/pdf/kaitsestrateegia.pdf> on 07 March 2002.

<sup>52</sup> Männik, 15.

<sup>53</sup> Overview of MAP. Accessed at [http://mod.gov.ee/english/nato/membership\\_action\\_plan.htm](http://mod.gov.ee/english/nato/membership_action_plan.htm) on 19 March 2002.

criteria by the aspirant states. Additionally MAP also enables the Alliance to evaluate the political and military preparedness of these states to join NATO. An invitation presented to a state to join NATO is a political decision; however, the military and technical preparedness of the state is taken into account. In its ANP, Estonia will inform NATO about its goals and principles while integrating with Alliance.<sup>54</sup> The plans and capability of the state to fulfill the obligations of a NATO member state are described. The MAP/ANP has proven to be one of the most dynamic initiatives launched at the NATO Washington Summit in 1999. From the beginning, Estonia has supported the MAP process as a practical tool for the applicant countries to prepare for future membership. In the third MAP cycle Estonia is satisfied with its progress confirming its decision to be prepared for accession to NATO in the next round of enlargement.

Preparing for NATO membership has changed the opinion of the public towards the Estonian military. At the beginning of the 1990s, public opinion towards the EDF was very negative. Reasons for that will be discussed more precisely in the next section of this chapter. According to a public opinion poll at the beginning of 2000, the percentage of citizens willing to defend the country with arms was surprisingly high - 74%. Moreover, the policy of accession to NATO enjoys wide public support throughout Estonia. The poll, conducted in November 2001, showed that 66% of Estonians are in favor of joining NATO. Furthermore, becoming a member of NATO and the EU will support the Estonian economy. Membership will decrease risks for international business investments, which will create new enterprises and jobs for the society. This will enhance the prosperity and stability of the country while securing and stabilizing the environment in the whole region.<sup>55</sup>

#### **D. CIVIL – MILITARY RELATIONS IN ESTONIA**

The intention of this section is to give an overview about civil-military relations in the republic of Estonia. The first part of the section examines the evolution of civil-military relations after the country regained its independence in 1991. The second part

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<sup>54</sup> Overview of ANP. Accessed at [http://mod.gov.ee/english/nato/anp\\_summary.html](http://mod.gov.ee/english/nato/anp_summary.html) on 19 March 2002.

<sup>55</sup> *Pressikonverents: suhtumine NATOsse ning julgeoleku-ja kaitsepoliitikasse Eestis* [Press conference: Support for NATO and defense- and security policy goals (Tallinn, Press Release No. 4, Ministry of Defense, 15 January 2002)] Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/news/index.php3?mode=read&id=163> on 24 March 2002.

concentrates on the analysis of civil-military relations in Estonia from the perspective of various authors and through the prism of several levels of analysis.

## 1. Soviet Legacy

To understand civil-military relations in Estonia, one must begin from the time before the fall of Soviet Union. As expressed by Anatol Lieven,

It is difficult to exaggerate the amount of damage done to the Baltic States by Soviet rule. Hundreds of thousands of Balts [Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians] preserve the memory of Stalinist savagery in the 1940s, which left few families untouched. Population losses in the Baltic States as a result of execution, killings in the war, deaths in Siberia [concentration camps] and flight to the West, were enormous. The Estonian population declined by some 25 per cent between 1939 and 1945. Given the low Estonian birth-rate, it means that the number of ethnic Estonians alive today is barely higher than it was in 1939.<sup>56</sup>

If a fundamental characteristic of the modern state is its monopoly of armed force, then the Baltic States still have long way to go. In contrast to the Independent Wars of 1918-20, the independence struggle in 1988-91 was not a military undertaking. No one suggested that it would have been possible to defeat Soviet forces in battle, even if weapons had been available. Until the August 1991, OMON<sup>57</sup> and Soviet Army repeatedly raided the headquarters of the Baltic volunteers.<sup>58</sup> Soviet propagandists warned the local Russian population that these “fascist militias” would become their oppressors.<sup>59</sup>

The Baltic [Defense] forces have been formed above all on the basis of volunteers from the national movements. Former Soviet officers who joined included the Chiefs of Staff of both the Latvian and Estonian

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<sup>56</sup> Lieven, 82.

<sup>57</sup> OMON - *Otryad Militsii Osobogo Naznacheniya*. OMON is the Russian acronym for Police Detachment of Special Designation and they are within the Russian Ministry of the Interior (MVD). There is much misinformation in existence about the OMON, often they are lumped in with military units and intelligence units. They are not a Special Forces unit in the sense of that term as meaning British SOF, U.S. Delta Force, Germany's KSK, or Israeli SOF. Although OMON is often described as a SWAT type organization, it is more correctly a task force type operation as used in many police agencies (LAPD Metropolitan Division is an example as are the German Lander riot police) where they are a reserve force used in special situations and hot spots; SWAT is only one function. OMON is utilized throughout the Russian Federation and has responsibility for counter-terrorism, riot suppression and serious crime suppression. Accessed at [http://www.copsrus.com/omon\\_chechen2.html](http://www.copsrus.com/omon_chechen2.html) on 24 March 2002.

<sup>58</sup> *Kaitseliit* (Defense League) and *Kodukaitse* (Home Defense) in Estonia.

<sup>59</sup> Lieven, 319.

armies... Relatively few Balts had been allowed or wished to become officers in the Soviet Army. Though it included 700 Latvian officers, many of these, like Viktor Alksnis, were Russified and absolutely loyal to Moscow. However, as elsewhere in the former Union, a certain number of Baltic Afghan veterans are among the “elite troops” of each national force. Few other Balts have any recent fighting experience at all, with the exception of one or two émigrés from the US armed forces.

There are widespread doubts in all three states – influenced by the Soviet propaganda – as to whether there is any point in paying for defence force at all if it could offer only formal resistance to a Russian attack. Even a Latvian defence official replied “twelve minutes” when asked how long the Latvian forces could hold on.<sup>60</sup>

When Estonia regained its independence in 1991, its first priorities were to re-build previously destroyed state institutions and to introduce a market economy. After the collapse of Soviet Union, there were no defense or security institutions left in Estonia. It was a difficult task to build defense and security structures from zero. Moreover, at that time, defense was not the highest priority. Very little money was allocated for the defense structures of the country. Furthermore, at the end of 1991, neither a dedicated Armed Force, nor a Ministry of Defense (MoD) existed. In fact, only a small nucleus of General Staff (GS) officers for the nascent EDF was available. Most of the staff had a military background from the Soviet Army and few officers had Western military background. Thus, the country relied entirely on police and border guards assisted by voluntary semi-military units of the Home Guard and Defense League for its national security. This situation is well described by a distinguished colleague and life-long friend, Erik Männik, in his essay “Estonian Defense Forces: Ten Years of Development”:

The re-establishment of the Estonian Defense Forces in [the] 1990s started from the Defense League. It was reanimated by a national initiative on 17 February 1990 in one of Estonia’s counties, i.e. already one and half years before regaining the independence in August 1991. On 28 April 1992 the EDL was included into the Estonian Defense Forces. Two weeks after regaining independence, the Supreme Council adopted the decision on general conscription. The next steps included the formation of the General Staff under the command of then Colonel Ants Laaneots and on 13 April 1992 the Ministry of Defense was established with Mr. Ülo Uluots as the first Minister of Defense.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 320.

The number of available trained personnel was, however, much smaller than in 1917. By 1 January 1992 there were 27 officers, 48 NCOs and 10 conscripts in the Estonian Defense Forces. A year later there were 84 officers, 213 NCOs and 829 conscripts. Despite the lack of trained personnel and interruption of the military tradition for a half of century, there was present in 1991 a strong national conviction as to the necessity of having Estonian defense structures. It found its expression in the creation of the EDL on the basis of public initiative even before collapse of [the] Soviet Union.

Other circumstances favored the re-establishment of the EDF. In sharp contrast to the situation in 1917-1918 when Estonia was actually in the middle of an ongoing war, the situation was a peaceful one in 1991-1992. Whereas there have been fears of some unexpected and aggressive behavior from Russia (discussed below)[.Since] 1991 Estonia has enjoyed a decade of considerable stability during which to build up its defenses, strengthen its security and not to allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated.<sup>61</sup>

Because of the psychological legacy of Soviet occupation, civil society was highly anti-military. The Armed Forces (EDF and Defense League), even though they were now Estonian forces, were still unpopular because they reminded people of the only army they had experience with – the Soviet Army. The Soviet Army was regarded as a force of occupation, and most importantly, was seen as a form of imprisonment for conscripts. This situation, at the end of Soviet era, was described well in the book *European Security Policy After the Revolutions of 1989*:<sup>62</sup>

Army General Moiseev, early in 1990, indicated that “as for the question of establishing national formations, about which much is being said, I can confirm with full confidence that today, to entrust weapons to national formations is not only unacceptable, but criminal.”<sup>63</sup> ...While competing concepts for structuring, manning, and mobilizing the Armed Forces have their relative merits and shortcomings, rising anti-military attitudes and actions throughout much of the USSR threaten to undermine any system which might be implemented. The Soviet military press and other media have detailed widespread “anti-army” activities, associated heavily but not exclusively with ethnic/national problems and non-Slavic populations.

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<sup>61</sup> Männik, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Graham H. Turbiville Jr., Jeffrey Simon (Editor), *European Security Policy After the Revolutions of 1989*, (Washington, DC, The National Defense University Press, 1991), 99.

<sup>63</sup> M. A. Moiseev, “Zadachi u nas odin” (The Mission are Ours Alone) *Kraznyja Zvezda* (Moscow, Red Star – Soviet Army Daily Newspaper), 10 February 1990.



While some 6,500 conscripts who failed to report for the fall 1989 semiannual troop induction and some 1,200 troops who deserted early 1990 in the Caucasus alone alarmed and angered the Soviet military leadership, future call-ups could be even worse.<sup>64</sup>In March 1990, Army General Moiseev highlighted recent and projected problems. He pointed to anti-Army activities by various organized groups and fronts, acute problems in the Baltic republics, the Ukraine, Azerbaidzhan, and elsewhere, and the lack of response from republic and local authorities to military service law violations.<sup>65</sup>

Estonia was seen as defenseless against superior military powers, therefore, civil society in general and even some political parties at the beginning of the Nineties did not necessitate investing any money to build defense forces, believing that the Police and the Border Guard could provide effective protection and policing. In her part of the paper Mare Haab said,

Since the restoration of independence, a wide debate has been conducted on the necessity of creating the country's own national army, and the size of such an army. Not very surprisingly, views on this matter have diverged widely. At the one extreme there have been the social democrats and representatives of some rural parties who have preferred small, highly professional units of border guards, national defense forces and a rescue service. At the other extreme, there have been the liberal democrats who have been advocating the clearest but most controversial alternative: Estonia should have a high-technology, highly trained professional army, but all men (and those women who wish it) must receive military training. Other political factions have argued for options lying between these extremes.

The idea that Estonia should build up its own army to defend the country and resist any foreign aggression has prevailed. The dominant way of thinking has followed these lines: `If Estonia has a certain potential to resist an aggression, the aggressor would have certain hesitations; these hesitations will be stronger if the potential of Estonia to resist is increased.<sup>66</sup>The idea of territorial defense as the supreme responsibility of the Army - an idea that is often accompanied by rather emotional statements that Estonia should offer military resistance even in the face of

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> V. Badurkin, "The Boycotters of Army Service: Army General Moiseev, Chief of the General Staff and USSR First Deputy Defense Minister, Considers the Problems of the Spring Draft," *Trud* (Work – Soviet Daily), 13 March 1990, as translated in FBIS, *Soviet Union: Daily Report*, FBIS-SOV-90-051, 95-97.

<sup>66</sup> This idea was put forward by Hannes Walter, former Secretary-General of the Estonian Ministry of Defense. See *Hommikuleht* (Morning Paper - Estonian daily), 03 May 1993.

defeat - has been the main argument of the right-wing conservative and nationalist parties when coping with security and defense problems since the elections of September 1992 that brought them to power.<sup>67</sup>

## **2. A New Beginning**

To establish civilian control over the military, at the end of 1992 a small MoD was established. It consisted of only a few people who were mostly young and uneducated in military affairs, which constricted functions in the defense area. In the beginning, the civil servants in the MoD had no idea what the military forces were doing or any notion of how to execute ministerial oversight, because of the lack of proper education, inexperience in governing state defense affairs, the absence of a tradition of democratic civilian control.

When the MoD had more educated personnel, it started to establish effective civilian control by investing more effort in establishing a defense policy implementing it, and harmonizing the planning and budgeting with its defense policy. The MoD demanded that all expenditures in the defense area be explained, justified, and designed to fulfill the defense policy goals of the government.

As one might expect, conflicts immediately arose between the civilian MoD and the military General Staff (GS). The GS was staffed with relatively old people with Soviet military backgrounds. The MoD was staffed with young well-educated people inexperienced in the defense field. A paramount reason for disagreements between the MoD and the GS was the lack of specific regulating laws. The existing laws were vague and did not regulate the national defense area properly. This resulted in problems and misunderstandings for militaries in command and control issues and for civilians in establishing proper oversight. There was short period of time when CHOD did not talk to the Minister of Defense and civil servants from the Ministry were *persona non grata* in the General Staff building.

A new comprehensive Military Service Act was adopted in 2000. It defined the legal status of military personnel, their social benefits and career system, and compulsory

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<sup>67</sup> Eitvidas Bajarnas, Mare Haab and Ilmars Viskne, "The Baltic States: Security and Defence After Independence", Chaillot Paper 19, June 1995. Accessed at <http://www.iss-eu.org/index.html> on 26 February 2002.

military service. Before that, the compulsory military service was not, in fact, mandatory for students. As most of the students were excused from the compulsory service in the EDF, the educational level of the recruits diminished. This serious mismatch created serious problems in the EDF, undereducated conscripts stayed in the EDF and became NCOs. Significant level of NCOs headed for promotion into the Officer Corp. This situation effected negatively on the level of professionalism in the EDF. Mare Haab describes the effect of this situation very precisely:

On 3 September 1991, the Estonian Supreme Council (the parliament of the time) adopted a decision to start the process of creating National Defense Forces.<sup>68</sup> It has taken more than two years for consensus to be reached on this matter, and on 9 March 1994 the State Assembly (the elected parliament) passed the law on 'Service in the Defense Forces.'<sup>69</sup> This law makes service in the Defense Forces compulsory for all male citizens of Estonia. Active military training for a period of 8 to 12 months (the exact period depending upon the kind of unit and the tasks of the military units in which conscripts serve) is required of young men aged between 18 and 27. Those who have finished their period of service enter the reserve forces and can be conscripted for military training in the future. The law also provides for alternative service of 15 months for those who have ideological or religious reasons for refusing military service. When the law was being discussed in the State Assembly, the deputies of the ruling right-wing coalition were of the opinion that the army should not consist of just 'workers and farmers',<sup>70</sup> and therefore university graduates are also supposed to serve (although they have the right to choose specific training programs and may become reserve officers instead of doing the ordinary routine service).<sup>71</sup>

Eventually, the GS accepted the right of MoD to determine the defense policy guidelines; however, difficulties continued in accepting civilian control over military affairs.

In addition to the problems between the civilian authorities and the military, the GS had difficulty establishing efficient command and control over the units of the EDF. The lack of sufficient command and control sparked a mutiny in one of the EDF

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<sup>68</sup> Jaan Laas (Editor), *Eesti Kroonika 1999* (Annual of Current Estonian Affairs), (Tallinn, Esintell Ltd., 1992), 57.

<sup>69</sup> *Eesti Sõnumid* [Estonian Messages - Estonian daily (Tallinn, Printall Press)], 8 April 1994.

<sup>70</sup> The Baltic Observer, 17-23 March 1994.

<sup>71</sup> Bajarnas, Haab, Viskne. Accessed at (<http://www.iss-eu.org/index.html>) on 26 February 2002.

battalions in 1994. The *Jaegerbattalion* refused to obey the command of the GS to relocate. This mutiny occurred because the *Jaegerbattalion* mistakenly believed that the government was not conducting needed reforms for the EDF.

Nonetheless while direct a direct challenge to Government authority, the incident was not even close to a *coup d'etat*. No shots were ever fired. Police along with security forces demilitarized and disbanded the battalion. This incident greatly frightened the civilian society and the Government.

Three years later, a real world crisis occurred in September 1997 that further aggravated the situation. During a survival exercise of the reconnaissance platoon of Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT) Estonian contingent, 14 professional soldiers died. Investigations conducted by a governmental committee revealed that safety regulations were not followed and huge gaps still existed in command and control over the EDF. It was established that the MoD did not have proper civilian control over the EDF. The civilian society was outraged by the meaningless loss of lives. The Estonian Government was forced to take immediate decisive steps to strengthen civilian control. In conclusion, the years of 1991-1998 were evidently a period of troublesome civil-military relations in Estonia.

#### **E. SEEKING NATO MEMBERSHIP**

The opportunity for membership in NATO has proven to be one of the uniting forces behind civilian and military personnel in the state level defense area. The positive effects in all aspects of the nation are required to meet the NATO membership requirements. An excerpt from the National Military Strategy (NMS) illustrates this unity:

The most important development of the international environment for Estonia is the Euro-Atlantic integration process: continuation of the expansion of the European Union and NATO. Estonia fully shares the democratic principles and aims upon which the European Union and NATO were established and has set the goal of becoming a full member of both. Ever since they were established, these structures have ensured peace, stable development of society, and economic growth in their area. Expanding to embrace like-minded countries will make those alliances

stronger and the membership will create a realistic and historically unique opportunity for Estonia to consolidate its democracy and sovereignty.<sup>72</sup>

In national defense, it is necessary to achieve a wide social agreement. With the added close cooperation of politicians, civil servants and personnel of the EDF, as well as open communication with the leaders in power. The involvement of the public in forming expectations about the Nation's security and in making vital decisions will become a key issue in the near future. The strength to defend the Nation will grow in the State and citizens. The credibility of national defense starts with every individual citizen.

Several priorities have been published that will enhance civil-military relations in Estonia in the future:

- The division of roles between the MoD and the EDF that ideally unify tasks and continue the structural reform of national defense.
- Improved service conditions that bring the living conditions of officers, non-commissioned officers and conscripts to the standards generally accepted in the society.
- An increase in the administrative capability that improving the control system in the national defense system and a policy of openness.
- A personnel policy that applies the law on service in the EDF, develops a single rotation-based career system and the raises the professionalism of personnel.<sup>73</sup>

Have civil-military relations in Estonia evolved during this developmental period? There is no Western standard agreement among scholars about the elements of “good” civil-military relations. This means that any given set of rules is unavoidably imperfect. Nevertheless, Major General H.Kujat from the German Armed Forces states some rules that qualify as reasonable.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Estonian National Military Strategy, approved on February 28, 2001 by the Government Executive Order No 156-k. 1.

<sup>73</sup> Priorities for National Defense in 2001; Set by the Minister of Defense and CHOD. Accessed at <http://mod.gov.ee/english/minister/goals2001.html> on 25 March 2002.

<sup>74</sup> H. Kujat, “The Role of the Military in a Democracy,” speech to Officials from the three ethnic groups of Bosnia-Herzegovina, NATO Information Seminar, Sarajevo 2-3 July 1998. Accessed at <http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1998/s980702h.htm> on 13 March 2002.

There is no common model of how to establish armed forces in a democratic society and how to exercise control over the military. There is, however, a number of shared principles. They include indispensable prerequisites to organize and to guarantee a proper civilian direction and control of armed forces. These are essentially

1. The existence of a clear legal and constitutional framework, defining the basic relationship between the state and the armed forces
2. A significant role of parliament in legislating on defense and security matters, in influencing the formulation of national strategy, in contributing transparency to decisions concerning defense and security policy, in giving budget approval and in controlling spending - using "the power of the purse" in issues related to "the power of the sword"
3. The hierarchical responsibility of the military to the government through a civilian organ of public administration - a ministry or department of defense - that is charged, as a general rule, with the direction and supervision of its activity.
4. The presence of a well trained and experienced military corps that is respected and funded by a civilian authority. It acknowledges the principle of civilian control, including the principle of political neutrality and non-partisanship of the armed forces.
5. The existence of a developed civil society, with a clear understanding of democratic institutions and values, and, as a part of the political culture, a nationwide consensus on the role and mission of their military.
6. The presence of a reasonable non-governmental component within the defense community capable of participating in public debate on defense and security policy, presenting alternative views and programs.

According to those rules Estonia is heading to the right direction. There is a civilian Minister of Defense who has his civilian professional staff in MoD. The EDF are structurally situated under the MoD and the same rules and laws apply to them, as to the rest of society. The military establishment is embedded within the society through broad recruitment of officers and conscripts.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the understanding of military issues and public support has grown tremendously during the last decade. Thanks to the open public relations policy and because of the numerous NGO active in the defense and security area.

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<sup>75</sup> University students did not serve as conscripts before 2000, this created educationally unbalanced Defense Forces and it tensioned relations in the society. This situation changed, when new comprehensive Military Service Act was adopted in 2000.

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### III. ESTONIAN ANNUAL NATIONAL PROGRAM FROM 1999 TO 2001 AND THE NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY

President Lennart Meri in his address to the National Press Club in the March 1999 stated

The road map should take into account that NATO is not only a well-oiled military machine, but that it is also a political and strategic community, a community based on common values where small countries' small contributions are equally valued as are big countries' big contributions.<sup>76</sup>

The purpose of the first part of the section is to give an analytical overview of the MAP process through the discussion of several aspects of the ANP from 1999 to 2002. This evolution process has provided the basis for the National Military Strategy, which will be studied in the second part of the chapter.

According to official statements, the future enhancement of the Estonian security and defense situation relies mainly on the NATO enlargement process. Security and defense policy goals have not changed during the last ten years. However, since 1999, these goals have been firmly shaped by the MAP/ANP process. As stated in the ANP 2001/2002

The main direction of Estonian foreign and security policy has remained unchanged throughout the last decade. The most important development influencing Estonian foreign and security policy is the Euro-Atlantic integration process. The continuing enlargement of NATO reinforces peace, development of democracy, social stability and economic growth in the whole Euro-Atlantic area.<sup>77</sup>

A key factor of this discussion is Estonian public opinion. At the beginning of the Nineties, civilian society held very negative opinions towards the EDF. Since 1999, those opinions have changed dramatically. To safeguard Estonia's security, joining NATO is the priority of the Government of the Republic of Estonia. Within the framework of the Membership Action Plan, Estonia is adopting the third Annual National Program

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<sup>76</sup> Accessed at <http://www.vm.ee/eng/nato/index.htm> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>77</sup> Membership Action Plan/Estonian Annual National Program 2000/2001, Executive Summary: a.



(2001/2002), which includes *inter alia* the obligation to inform the Estonian public of the process of joining NATO and to conduct regularly public opinion polls.

The Estonian MoD has commissioned many national defense related public opinion monitoring studies starting from the year 2000. On November 9th, the results of the sixth public opinion poll, “Public Opinion and State Defense” were released.<sup>78</sup> The poll, which was initiated in January 2000 by the Ministry of Defense, has been focused on three main topics:

- Attitudes towards joining NATO;
- Attitudes towards defending the Estonian State and the willingness to participate personally in the national defense;
- Opinions on increasing defense expenditure.

The latest public opinion poll shows that after the terrorists’ attacks on 11 September 2001, the support of the Estonian population for joining NATO has grown. In June 2001, about 61% of the population (60% of the citizens) supported NATO integration, while in October the support of the Estonians had increased to 66%. Non-ethnic Estonians’ 31%-support (non-citizens 25%) has grown even more: in February and June 2001, the support was stable – around 20% - while in October it rose to 31%. The overall support of the Estonian population for joining NATO is 54%.

The poll demonstrates that, although people recognize these stirring changes in the world as the reality today, the basic attitudes concerning Estonian defense policy have not changed drastically. The EDF are still among the most reliable institutions, taking third place after the President and the Border Guards. Special mention should be made of the reliability factor among the non-Estonians (from 45% in June up to 49% in October) that has grown considerably. Among the younger people, the support is higher than the average among both Estonians and non-Estonians. Citizen awareness of the process of joining NATO has continuously improved.

This evidence suggests that participation in the MAP process through the ANP cycle has helped Estonia to build a credible national defense system capable of

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<sup>78</sup> Ministry of Defense of Estonia, Press release N<sup>o</sup> 99, 09 November 2001. Accessed at

interaction with NATO forces in deterring any kind of attack against the country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. For the defense of the state all citizens and civil resources are mustered as established by law. Estonia will act to defend itself militarily in all circumstances and against any aggressor, no matter how overpowering. Estonian sovereignty is immutable and, therefore, Estonia shall not capitulate.<sup>79</sup>

Since 1995, Estonia's progress in defense building has been hampered by the lack of security and defense-related documentation. Defense Policy Guidelines were introduced by the MoD in 1995 and adopted by the Parliament on May 1996. During the following years, attempts to continue fulfilling the needs for strategic documents failed because of different opinions among the MoD, the GS and various political parties in the Parliament.

Participation in the MAP process, as well as bi- and multilateral consultations with NATO and PfP countries, gave Estonians valuable information about how to satisfy the security needs of the country. Moreover, since 1999 the ANP has provided the missing link in Estonian defense planning. The ANP has given Estonia clear guidelines and provided needed information in reaching consensus on defense issues inside the country. Estonia's activities in preparing for NATO membership are continuously focused on the development of its defense capabilities, defense planning and management in accordance with the principles of the Alliance. As a next step, sixty-two Partnership Goals (PG), agreed upon between Estonia and NATO in 2000, were introduced in the defense planning, so the implementation process has begun.<sup>80</sup>

In 2001, two fundamental security and defense-related documents were completed. Firstly, the adoption of the National Security Concept (NSC) by an overwhelming majority in the Parliament in March 2001 reflects the national consensus on security issues. Secondly, the National Military Strategy (NMS) defines the tasks of the defense forces and guidelines for developing Estonian military capabilities.

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<http://mod.gov.ee/english/news/print.php3?id=25> on 19 March 2002.

<sup>79</sup> National Military Strategy, 3.

<sup>80</sup> Membership Action Plan/Estonian Annual National Programme 2000/2001 (Tallinn, *Kaitseministeerium* – Ministry of Defense, 2000), Executive Summary, b. ANP 2000/2001 was approved by the Government of Estonia on 26 September 2000.

The National Security Concept summarizes the most important national security policy issues and provides guidelines for the future. The Concept summarizes the most important national security policy issues and provides guidelines for the future. Derived from the National Security Concept, Estonia's security policy goals are

- To maintain the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Estonia;
- To safeguard the existence and development of Estonia as a democratic state; and
- To promote national welfare and preserve its cultural heritage.

Based upon the security policy goals above, Estonia has the following security policy priorities:

- Integration into European and transatlantic security, political and economic institutions (NATO, EU);
- Development of a national defense system that safeguards Estonia's independence and territorial integrity, which provides the defense capacity compatible with NATO requirements and the capability to participate in joint defense and international crisis response operations;
- Good neighborly relations and co-operation with all states in the Euro-Atlantic region;
- Continued development of close ties, including military co-operation, with Lithuania and Latvia;
- A strengthen the rule of law and a liberal market economy; and
- A strengthen internal security.

As the National Military Strategy defines the tasks of the defense forces it shows that, in order to give substance to its aspirations for NATO membership, Estonia has committed itself to increase its defense spending to 2% of GDP for 2002. This commitment has been included in the National Security Concept approved by the Parliament.

In defense issues, the main emphasis in 2001 was on improving the EDF conceptual and doctrinal basis. The National Military Strategy (NMS) determines the tasks and sets the priorities for the further development of the military capabilities of the EDF. In order to implement the guidelines of the NMS and ensure the readiness of the EDF for prospective NATO membership, a comprehensive Force Structure Review (according to PG G 0028) was conducted in 2001.

As a result, of the Review, the military capabilities necessary to fulfill assigned tasks as well as the future organization of the EDF were defined. The results of the Force Structure Review (FSR) will be the subject of further consultations with the Alliance and its member countries. One can not underestimate the fundamental importance of the FSR since this was the first time that the EDF and MoD put money value on enforcing force structure; therefore, Estonia now has a financially-supportable structure of Defense. During the FSR a series of operational analysis were conducted to investigate the affordability of the proposed structure. As a result, several major decisions have been made:

- The Army will consist of one mechanized infantry brigade supported by combat support and combat service support units, and a territorial defense structure;
- One of the infantry battalions within the brigade will be a rapid reaction force (ESTBAT) also available for deployments for Article 5 operations as well as Crisis Response Operations by the end of 2005;
- The Defense League will have a primary role in territorial defense; and
- The Navy will continue to concentrate on mine warfare while the Air Force concentrates on air surveillance, air defense command and control capabilities.<sup>81</sup>

When comparing these EDF goals with the previous goals stated in the MAP/ANP of 1999, these new plans are much more realistic. For example, in 1999, the medium term plan for the Army was to train and equip three light infantry brigades. Under the existing budget constraints, this task has been recognized as pure “sci-fi”. Another important development is to produce the rapid reaction capability – ESTBAT – for the EDF. A possible problem here is that ESTBAT is not only the rapid reaction battalion only inside the country, but also the declared lead in NATO-lead PSOs, as well as EU and UN missions. This *Quattro-hated* situation could create situation, when ESTBAT is needed to fulfill its tasks in different places simultaneously.

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<sup>81</sup> MAP/ANP 2001/2002, Executive Summary, b.

The strongest points of Estonian defense include Baltic military projects, which will enhance overall security in the region. Baltic military co-operation continues to develop according to the plans aimed at advancing specific military capabilities. The establishment of ESTBAT, as well as similar battalions in Latvia and Lithuania, will help to achieve the sustainability of the Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT). During 2001, the activities of the Baltic Naval Squadron (BALTRON) focused on preparing for mine-countermeasures operations and for participation in NATO-led PfP operations. Since January 2001, air surveillance operations have been executed on a 24-hour duty basis in the framework of the Baltic Air Surveillance Network (BALTNET). The Baltic Defense College (BALTDEFCOL) has expanded its activities as an international center for training staff officers.

To enhance good military cooperation between Baltic countries, and to take it to the next political level, an appropriate response maybe pursuing a Baltic Mutual Military and Defense Cooperation Pact. Opponents of this proposition would say that no need exist for this kind of pact, because the Baltic States are already NATO aspirant countries. Supporters would argue that this pact would, in addition to increasing internal and regional security, also upgrade the potential of the Baltic States to join NATO in the near future. Defense and intelligence analysts Eerik-Niiles Kross in his article “Need for Baltic Military Pact” states important points to support the idea:<sup>82</sup>

- Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are historically and culturally quiet different countries, but by the geopolitical reality, regarding the security and defense policy, these countries are one entity;
- Baltic military cooperation projects BALTBAT, BALTRON, BALTNET and BALTDEFCOL are real success-stories, highly regarded by the NATO officials, bolstering future Baltic membership in the Alliance and enhancing other political cooperation between Baltic States.

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<sup>82</sup> Eerik-Niiles Kross, “*Vajame Balti sõjalist liitu*” (Need for Baltic Military Pact), *Eesti Päevaleht* (Estonian Daily), 14 March 2002, translated by author, accessed at <http://www.epl.ee/leht/artikkel.php?ID=198389&P=1> on 13 March 2002.

In conclusion, there could not be the better time for a Baltic Mutual Military and Defense Cooperation Pact, to re-ensure Alliance of sincere united willingness of Baltic States to defend their domain against all odds.

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## IV. BALTIC PEACEKEEPING BATTALION

“One of the main reasons to join NATO is that we share and believe the same values as people in the NATO countries. Proof of that is large participation of Estonian soldiers in the Balkan Peacekeeping missions.”<sup>83</sup>

Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Baltic Battalion (BALTBAT) represents an extraordinary opportunity for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to contribute effectively to international peace and security. Created to operate under the auspices of the United Nations for authorized peacekeeping activities, BALTBAT is an excellent example of regional and international cooperation. Its development has facilitated the transfer of skills and knowledge between those involved, thereby nurturing the reform and progressive development of the three countries' defense forces. The battalion's exposure to the high level of NATO procedural discipline and standards will assist in ensuring that reforms, in the defense forces as a whole, will endure and benefit Estonian society.

Professor Daniel F.C. Austin, at United Kingdoms Conflict Studies Research Center, describes BALTBAT as:

The joint Nordic-Baltic battalion, BALTBAT is really a multinational effort designed for United Nations peacekeeping missions and to demonstrate good neighborliness in the region. It is not a battalion for the purpose of defending the Baltic states and certainly not the embryonic stage of any army. It is a multinational effort of symbolic and political importance, otherwise BALTBAT is militarily useless. The Baltic states need armies that can defend their own sovereignty, if necessary on their own, not an army for taking part in multinational exercises and in out-of-area operations. The BALTBAT battalion has demonstrated usefulness in training individual soldiers about Western military techniques in peacekeeping and armed combat in defensive situations etc, but it is not an end in itself. The creation of a whole army cannot be based upon this

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<sup>83</sup> The Meeting with the Delegation of United States Senators - Gordon Smith (Oregon), Paul S. Sarbanes and Barbara Mikulski (Maryland), Richard Durbin (Illinois), George V. Voinovich (Ohio) on 27 May 2001 Tallinn, Estonia [*Eesti Päevaleht* (Estonian Daily Newspaper) 28 May 2001]



single cooperative venture alone which is politically symbolic but not very useful.<sup>84</sup>

The notion of establishing BALTBAT as a joint Baltic peacekeeping unit was introduced in a meeting of the Chiefs of Defence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in November 1993. Having found support for the idea both within the Baltic States and among Western States, an agreement was signed in September 1994 by the Prime Ministers of the Baltic States.

BALTBAT would be a trilateral battalion dedicated for PSOs, with permanent headquarters (HQ) in Latvia (Adazhi) and rotating units from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. BALTBAT was established as a catalyst for improving military standards demonstrating the will and ability of the Baltic States to cooperate in a multinational environment. Later, the purpose of increasing NATO interoperability of the Baltic States defense forces was added to the list.<sup>85</sup> Development of self-defense capabilities of each of the Baltic States is recognized as one of the major objectives of the project, which forwardly channel BALTBAT training standards into the national defense forces through personnel rotations.

Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have made a commitment to continue participation in international PSOs. Conducting this study on BALTBAT as a multinational peacekeeping battalion is essential because of the impact on the Baltic countries defense forces, regional security, and international cooperation in the field of peacekeeping, which enhances the international security environment. Each country is creating a battalion size unit for PSOs – ESTBAT, LATBAT, and LITBAT – that should be operational in 2005. This commitment is very resource consuming and generates a heavy burden for the national defense budget. Therefore, it is important to examine the benefits and costs that future participation in BALTBAT will create for Estonia. This chapter will

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<sup>84</sup> Daniel F.C. Austin “NATO Expansion and the Baltic States,” CSRC - Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (February 1999). Accessed at <http://www.ppc.pims.org/csrc/g70-dfca-compl.htm> on 24 March 2002.

<sup>85</sup> *Interoperability* is understood as the ability of systems, units or forces to provide services to and accept services from other systems, units or forces and to use the services so exchanged to enable them to operate effectively together (NATO Glossary, The Military Agency for Standardization). Accordingly, by interoperability is not understood interchange-ability or commonality.

analyze Estonia's experience with BALTBAT to demonstrate the costs and benefits that each country might experience.

Safeguarding the interests of the Republic of Estonia is vital; therefore costs and benefits should be identified in order to continue participation in PSOs. Annual participation with approximately company-sized unit remains militarily and financially feasible for the near future. Moreover, Estonia will build up the country's defense and participation in BALTPAT to increase the chances of being invited to join NATO.

The continued participation in the PSOs to promote Estonian goals in the international arena; will be discussed as follows. First section will give an insight to the Estonian involvement in BALTBAT and describe the necessary tasks on creating ESTBAT, also reviling the legal framework regulating participation in PSOs. Next part further process general knowledge about the Estonian history of participation in PSOs. Finally, it evaluates Estonian mission experiences and presents possible deployment scenarios in a PSO.

To go more in depth, the second section will illustrate requirements for the founding of ESTBAT. It will give an outline of obligations obtained by Estonia in fulfilling tasks of the NATO enlargement stated in the Membership Action Plan/Annual National Program and in the Partnership Goals (PG). It also describes tasks for inclusion of ESTPAT in international missions.

To conduct this study of BALTBAT, author is relying primarily on the materials from the Estonian Ministry of Defense (MoD) "BALTBAT/ESTBAT Working Group", and on his personal experiences obtained while serving as a member of the same working group.<sup>86</sup>

## **B. BALTBAT – HISTORY AND POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENTS TO AN INTERNATIONAL PSO**

One of the significant priorities in Estonian security policy has been participating in PSOs<sup>87</sup>. This is achieved by participating in multilateral deployments or by deploying units as a part of BALTBAT. Discussion will center on the framework for engaging

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<sup>86</sup> "BALTBAT/ESTBAT Working Group Report" presented to the Minister of Defense 12 April 2001.

<sup>87</sup> The Estonian National Security Concept, paragraph 2.6.

Estonian units in PSOs, evaluation of the mission experience gained to date, and discusses the principles of future deployments.

### **1. The basis for participating in PSOs**

According to the Estonian Constitution, the Parliament of Estonia has the power, authorized by the President, to declare a state of war, to order mobilization and demobilization, and to decide on utilization of the EDF in the fulfillment of Estonian international obligations. As such, there are no constitutional barriers for Estonia to participate in any PSO led by the UN or by any other organization if performed in accordance with the UN Charter. The Estonian Constitution does not impose any limits on the use of the EDF in the defense of another country. Estonia will follow those limitations that are specified in the UN Charter.

Chapter 10 of the Estonian Constitution, “National Defense” provides the legal basis for integrating the EDF into the democratic system of government, including a definition of democratic control over the EDF. This chapter of the Constitution also refers to the basic statutory acts regulating National Defense. The general structure of Estonia’s National Defense is provided by two constitutional acts: the Peacetime National Defense Act and the Wartime National Defense Act.<sup>88</sup> The legal framework for the use of EDF is determined by three other acts: the State of Emergency Act, the State of Special Situations Act and “the use of the Defense Forces in Fulfillment of International Obligations” of the Estonian State Act. Except for the Ratification of the NATO/PfP Status of Forces Agreement Act, there is no statutory regulation concerning the status of foreign military forces on Estonian soil.

The general legal framework for Estonian participation in a PSO is provided in the “Use of the Defense Forces in Fulfillment of the International Obligations” of the Estonian State Act. The law states that the government can form units to fulfill international obligations undertaken by the Republic of Estonia. As a general basis for international military operations, the law also allows the Parliament to put Estonian military units at the disposal of international organizations. Additionally, combined units

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<sup>88</sup> The internal organization of the Defense Forces is provided by the regular Service in the Defense Forces Act and by the National Guard Act. The Border Guard Act, the State Secrets Act and the Surveillance Act cover other aspects of national security and defense.

can be established in cooperation with other states or international organizations for special purposes, as participation in the Kosovo Force (KFOR) <sup>89</sup> mission, or as a general potential contribution as a standby unit for PSOs, namely BALTBAT.

So far, legislative obstacles and procedures have not hampered Estonian participation in BALTBAT or subsequent deployments to international missions. In some areas, the need for clarifications and stringent regulations has become apparent over the past years, but these areas are not linked to constitutional requirements. Timely decisions have allowed participation in PSOs and command and control has – on an ad hoc basis – been relegated to international authorities.

However, in the process of drafting the MAP/ANP in 1999, changes were introduced to Estonian legislation in order to facilitate future membership in NATO and current participation in PSOs. A number of initiatives were identified, the main focus being the need to analyze the accuracy of the terms used in the "Use of the Defense Forces in the Fulfilment of the International Obligations" of the Estonian State Act.

## **2. Estonian participation in PSOs**

From 1996 to 2000, over 700 Estonian military personnel participated in international PSOs. The resources committed to participating in PSOs, training and deployments of units took up approximately 7.5 % of the defense budget in 2000. The current deployments of Baltic contingents to Stabilization Force (SFOR)<sup>90</sup> came out of the 1998 investigation of deployment alternatives for BALTBAT. The initial contingents deployed to Bosnia (BALTCO) rotated every six months in order to ensure that all BALTBAT personnel received practical experience in the mission area. BALTCO-1, which was deployed to Bosnia in October 1998, consisted of the Estonian Company, a multinational staff and support elements. In April 1999, it was replaced by BALTCO-2, manned by the Lithuanian Company, with the latter being replaced in October 1999 by BALTCO-3, manned by the Latvian Company. Contingents of BALTBAT in Bosnia are integral parts of the Danish Battalion, operating with a separate area of responsibility in the Doboj area. At the end of the rotation of the three BALTBAT contingents,

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<sup>89</sup> NATO-lead Peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

<sup>90</sup> NATO-lead Peacekeeping mission in Bosnia.

Denmark and the Baltic States decided to continue cooperation on Baltic deployments to SFOR outside the framework of BALTBAT.

Estonia has also participated in other multilateral operations. Additionally Estonia was invited to participate in the KFOR 5 HQ, established in April of 2001. One Estonian officer was assigned to the KFOR 5 HQ in mid-March of the same year. In the present Middle East mission, UNTSO, Estonia provides an observer. Presently, one military officer, a civilian policemen and a border guard are serving in the UN and Western-European Union (WEU) missions in Kosovo and Georgia.

### **3. Evaluation of Estonian Mission Experience**

Estonian units proved capable of deployment in PSOs with assistance from host units in the mission area and after appropriate pre-mission training. A Danish “lessons learned” report on the deployment of BALTCON-1 and 2 was issued in August 1999. It concluded that Estonian and Lithuanian contingents performed well and that they made a valuable contribution to the mission. Notably operational effectiveness generally increases in accordance with national homogeneity. Within the permissive environment of SFOR organic units of company size or higher with their own national commander were the most effective. The report also highlighted the importance of effective pre-mission planning and coordinating among all those involved, good starting standards, self-reliability and adequate English language skills at all levels.

To date, no formal internal evaluation has been conducted on Estonian participation in international missions; therefore, lessons learned depend on the evaluation offered by other states on Estonian performance. The main lessons the EDF has identified during participation in a PSO are

- 1) Language training and introduction of NATO staff procedures are crucial before the deployment;
- 2) Involvement of partner countries in the early stage of operational planning is needed in order to guarantee efficient use of forces;
- 3) Pre-mission training should remain a national priority;
- 4) Legal issues should be addressed before the deployment; and
- 5) The principles of logistic support should be determined before the missions.

Furthermore, current experience shows that deploying to a PSO is a highly motivating factor for soldiers with no major problems occurring in recruiting and selecting personnel for such missions.

The preparation for a PSO embodies a number of institutions at the governmental level. According to the Estonian Constitution, the participation of Estonian troops in international missions requires approval at highest political level. The Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Justice are involved in the decision-making process. The decision to participate in a PSO is made either by the MoD or by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The other ministries are consulted regarding financial and legal arrangements before a proposal is passed to the government. The Government then presents the proposal to the Parliament for final approval.

Thus, parliamentary approval and the whole procedure have been quite time-consuming, resulting in the MoD proposing a change in the decision-making process for participation in a PSO. This guarantees that, in the future, the decision-making period for sending troops abroad should take no longer than five days.

#### **4. Deployment scenarios and possibilities**

Estonia has international obligations to participate in NATO, the UN, and the EU missions. Following the Washington Summit<sup>91</sup> and the initiative to have Membership Action Plans (MAP) for PfP countries aspiring for NATO membership, the Baltic States submitted their respective Annual National Program (ANP) in the fall of 1999 as part of the MAP-process. The commitments made to BALTBAT are repeated in the ANP 2001-2002 for each of the three states, and in the Partnership Goal L 0041, and Multinational

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<sup>91</sup>The NATO Summit in Washington in 1999: The Washington Summit Meeting in April 1999 approved several documents, such as the Washington Summit communiqué, the Membership Action Plan (MAP) and the updated Strategic Concept. The communiqué named those countries, including Estonia, considered as serious aspirants for NATO membership. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Romania were recognized as five countries that have made progress since the Madrid Summit 1997. To better prepare the aspirant countries, the Summit approved a Membership Action Plan to aid the countries in their prospective future NATO membership. The MAP whose first cycle came to an end in spring 2000, has also revealed a political cohesion and co-operation on enlargement. This first year has been successful not just for candidate countries, but for NATO as a whole, as it stressed in the Final Communiqué of EAPC Ministerial meeting in May 2000. At the Washington Summit, NATO Heads of State and the Government decided to review the enlargement process at their next Summit meeting, which will be held no later than 2002. More info on MAP [http://www.mod.gov.ee/english/nato/membership\\_action\\_plan.htm](http://www.mod.gov.ee/english/nato/membership_action_plan.htm) accessed on 20 March 2002.

Formations for NATO-led PfP Operations. With the acceptance of the Partnership Goal L 0041, Estonia is committed, by the end of 2005, to have one Light Infantry Battalion ready as a combat unit for NATO-led PfP operations.<sup>92</sup>

The UN concept of standby arrangements for peacekeeping operations seeks to provide a precise understanding of the forces and other capabilities a member state will have available at a given state of readiness, if it agrees to contribute to a peacekeeping operation. Such resources may include military units, individual, civilian and military specialists, specialized services, equipment, and other capabilities. The key element in the system of standby arrangements is the bilateral exchange of detailed information that facilitates planning and preparing for both the participating member state and the UN. The information provided to the Secretariat is stored in a database and is used only by personnel at HQ on a “need-to-know” basis.

As of 31 December 1999, Estonia had joined the eighty-seven UN member states that had indicated their willingness to provide resources to the standby arrangements system. Estonia does not formalize its standby contribution, nor has it completed a “standby arrangement planning sheet” with detailed technical information on the contributions. Sixty-six member states have provided a list of capabilities, covering some or all of the following information: type of resources that in principle can be made available for peacekeeping operations upon request, number or quantities of personnel/equipment included in their contribution, response time, and any restrictions concerning their contribution. Of the 66, forty-four states have submitted a Planning Data Sheet. This includes, among other things, a list of major equipment, organization, the level of self-sufficiency and movement data. Of the 44, thirty-one have formalized their standby contributions by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations, providing information on the specific capabilities that they are prepared to offer.

In response to the Helsinki European Council, the European Commission (EC) in December 1999 was called on to set up a Rapid Reaction Facility. It was designed to accelerate the provision of financial support for EU activities worldwide, to contribute to operations run by international organizations and to fund Non-Governmental

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<sup>92</sup> PG L 0046 – NATO Partnership Goals for the Land Forces.

Organization (NGO) activities. The aim was to enable the EU to develop a comprehensive and coherent approach in security-related measures abroad while increasing EU visibility and efficiency. The Rapid Reaction Facility and the creation of an EC crisis management unit are the first steps in preparing the EC to fulfill its civilian role within the Common European Security and Defense Policy. The next step will be the establishment of non-military headline goals to match the military ones and the creation of the Rapid Reaction Force by 2003.

In November 2000 at the Defense Ministers Contribution Conference (specified, in March 2001), Estonia solidified its support to the EU Headline Goal by committing one infantry battalion to EU Rapid Reaction Force operations by the end of 2005. Other contributions including a military police unit, an EOD unit, and Mine Counter Measures vessels have been committed by Estonia well prior to the target date.

The Estonian contribution is subjected to the same readiness criteria and the geographical limitations set for the Estonian unit that are established in accordance with the NATO Partnership Goals. Estonia further guaranteed the EU that the unit would be available upon a national political decision unless the unit is already deployed for other operations.

According to the Estonian MAP/ANP, Estonia intends to continue the current participation in any NATO-led PSO as well as in the UN and future EU-led missions. In addition, Estonia intends to increase troop participation in the coming years. Preparing the supporting units for a PSO, especially in the fields of medicine, CIMIC, and mine countermeasures support, is being considered. The land forces designated as being available for NATO-led PfP operations and as contributory to a PSO are

- One light infantry company (to be deployed in 2001 to SFOR);
- One military police group (deployed in KFOR);
- Combined Joint Task Force Headquarters Augmentation (to be deployed in 2001 to KFOR HQ).

In the longer term, Estonia has stated in the Partnership Goal that by the end of 2005 it will have the capacity to make one light infantry battalion ready for NATO-led PfP Operations. In principle, the forces designed to be available for such operations are also available for selected EU operations.



The initial emphasis in BALTBAT political guidance of April 1999 is on anchoring BALTBAT to the national structures and for using the project as an opportunity to train and develop the national capacities both within and around the battalion. In accordance with the Development Plan, this will be accomplished by focusing the Mid-term Plan (2001-2005) on the three national battalions currently being developed (ESTBAT, LATBAT and LITBAT) and to firmly embedding them in the national defense structures. In turn, they will act as “feeder or parent units” for BALTBAT. In order to optimize cost-effectiveness, the BALTBAT HQ and the Baltic Support Group will be the only permanent standing and multinational units in the project. All other units will be national, located in the respective countries, and rotating from their national parent unit into BALTBAT.

The future deployment targets are based on a report produced jointly by the Danish and the UK Ministries of Defense in January 2001<sup>93</sup>. According to the report, future development plans for BALTBAT include the following:

- First, after the redeployment of BALTCO 3 at the end of April 2000 and until the end of 2000, no deployments should take place due to the restructuring associated with the present Support MOU period (and Project Plan);
- Second, from 2001 to 2005, the battalion will be able to deploy and sustain a company group to a mission area. In the same period, there will also be a possibility for a one-time deployment of the full battalion for a maximum period of one year.
- Third, in the long-term planning period (i.e. 2006+) BALTBAT will be able to deploy, sustain and rotate to a PSO. The battalion will rotate with units and personnel from the national battalions;
- Fourth, deployment of the battalion will in each case depend on the exact mission area, the mandate as well as the preconditions for cooperation

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<sup>93</sup> Julian Elgaard Brett, “Lessons Learned from the BALTBAT Project – an evaluation of the multilateral project supporting the Baltic Battalion between 1994 and 2000,” written for MOD of Denmark and for MOD of UK, January 2001.

with other supporting nations in the mission area. There will be some geographical and climatic restrictions with regard to desert, alpine, and polar areas.

The Baltic States have practiced deploying tri-laterally for NATO SFOR missions for several years as a part of the training of BALTBAT units (BALTCO). Having concluded the project plan for BALTBAT, the Baltic States decided to stay involved in the operation and contribute to peace support efforts in the area (BALTSQ).

This type of deployment has major benefits for the Baltic States: it exercises Baltic cooperation, but puts minimum constraints on the national structure allowing one year to prepare the next unit. At the same time, it allows the Baltic States to remain involved in on-going operations. If the same contingents were deployed as purely national units, rotating yearly among the three states, each of the states would become a non-contributing nation for one year at the end of a deployment period.

The mission experience gained shows that cooperation with international organizations has proven successful, but internally the increased participation in PSOs has made it evident that legislative action and tight procedures are needed to secure speedy decision-making and to react rapidly as required. Therefore, several amendments to the laws regulating Estonian participation in a PSO will be proposed in order to ease the decision-making and facilitate the coordination between different government agencies. By the end of 2002, all necessary changes should be concluded in the legislation and new procedures related to a PSO should be implemented.

According to the BALTBAT Report<sup>94</sup>, by the end of 2005 Estonia should have ESTBAT ready as a full battalion capable of participation in Conflict Prevention, Peacekeeping, Peace Enforcement and Humanitarian Aid Operations. Deployments are designed to provide training for ESTBAT units. The opportunity to pursue on-the-job experience has proven very valuable, and continuous deployment of Estonian contingents as a part of the trilateral cooperation in BALTBAT, either as a separate trilateral arrangement or on a bilateral basis, remains a priority.

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<sup>94</sup> "Report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development" was handed over mid January 2000, and Baltic Chiefs of Defense approved it by a joint statement in May 2000. The Ministers of Defense of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia expressed their approval of the document in September-October 2000.

## **C. FUTURE OF BALTBAT/ESTBAT - PURPOSE AND TASKS FOR AN ESTONIAN BATTALION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PSO**

This part of the thesis provides an outline of the requirements by ESTBAT for an international PSO. The Estonian contribution to BALTBAT is one infantry company plus several specialized, supporting units<sup>95</sup>. To train one company for the purpose of fulfilling Estonian obligations in BALTBAT and to maintain a capacity on high readiness for rotational deployments in a PSO, either as a part of BALTBAT or as a purely national contribution, one battalion is required to remain at home.

### **1. ESTBAT Tasks - BALTBAT and Partnership Goals Requirements**

From 62 Partnership Goals a vast number of goals are addressed to the EDF. Partnership Goals by themselves do not specifically mention the linkage between ESTBAT and BALTBAT. The supporting documents, however, stress that ESTBAT will serve as a parent unit from which the Estonian contingent to BALTBAT can be rotated<sup>96</sup>.

Based on the Political Guidance<sup>97</sup>, the “Report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development” was submitted by the Baltic BALTBAT Coordination Group in January 2000. The report established the aim of further development of the BALTBAT project,

- To further integrate the skills and knowledge acquired through training and deployment into the national defense structures,
- To ensure full support of the battalion in terms of management, personnel, logistics, equipment and funding, and
- To enhance BALTBAT deployment capabilities.

In accordance with these aims and the principles set forth in the Political Guidance, the report on BALTBAT foresees the formation of three national battalions, ESTBAT, LATBAT and LITBAT, already underway, will be completed. This provides the capacity to sustain BALTBAT, through promising a sufficient number of trained

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<sup>95</sup> Estonian Annual National Program, 1999, Annex 1

<sup>96</sup> "PFP PLANNING AND REVIEW PROCESS (PARP) 2000 PARTNERSHIP GOALS, ESTONIA", NATO document EAPC (PARP-C) D (2000) 00.

<sup>97</sup> In December 1998, the objectives – and the vision for the future – were captured in the Political Guidance issued by the Baltic Ministers of Defense. The Political Guidance presents the overall collective vision for the future development and employment of BALTBAT.

personnel, and ensures uniformity of training, equipment and weapons in order to maximize interoperability. Rotating personnel into and out of BALTBAT will enable the BALTBAT experience to be shared by national units.

Meanwhile, the Development Plan fulfills the planning objectives defined in the Political Guidance. The Plan sets a priority on channeling the BALTBAT experience and standards into the national defense structures through troop contributions and logistic support capabilities. Continued support can be tailored focusing on the further development of BALTBAT and its ability to train and work in accordance with NATO/PfP staff procedures. The model also supports the notion that the Baltic States should gradually assume greater responsibility for the development of the project, including financial and logistic support.

From the Partnership Goal that agreed with NATO for BALTBAT, and the national Partnership Goals that were agreed upon Estonia and NATO for ESTBAT, and adopted in BALTBAT Operational Directive. The following assumptions were made about the tasks derived.

- ESTBAT should be trained as an ordinary operational infantry battalion with the capability of participating in an UN/NATO-lead PSO.
- Battalion should operate according to common NATO doctrine and procedures relating to command and control, and joint and combined land operations. This includes training according to doctrines; standards or concepts agreed for NATO led PfP operations. ESTBAT should be trained to become familiar with UN standards, operational procedures, etc. And,
- The battalion should be able to conduct defensive and offensive operations at the operational and tactical level in accordance with NATO Land Force Tactical Doctrine<sup>98</sup>.

No major geographical limitations have been set for BALTBAT. In the report on BALTBAT Status and Future Development, any deployment of BALTBAT, in each case, depends on the exact mission area, the mandate, as well as the preconditions for

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<sup>98</sup> NATO Publication ATP-35 (B).

cooperation with other supporting nations in the mission area. In that context, some geographical and climatic restrictions with regard to desert, alpine, and polar areas will be applied. As for the Estonian Partnership Goals, ESTBAT will be able to operate in different meteorological and geographical conditions<sup>99</sup>. Depending on the climate, special training and equipment may be required. According to Partnership Goal L0041, BALTBAT should be prepared to move within 30 days to take part in a NATO-led PfP operation when directed by a competent authority, i.e. after a political decision to deploy<sup>100</sup>. The Partnership Goal applies the same criterion to ESTBAT. The internal readiness criterion will be determined in the national readiness and mobilization plans.

In this context, readiness is understood as the ability to move when a political decision to deploy for certain mission has been made. Readiness requires preparations to be completed, including mission oriented training, before that decision is made. Plans for mobilizing personnel including necessary resource allocation and completion of mission oriented training must be incorporated in the national planning. Additionally, the plans must proceed concurrently with the force generation process and with national political decision-making, in order to deploy the unit at the agreed upon time.

Preparedness is the key factor enabling deploying units to perform their tasking. Estonia's aim is to establish ESTBAT as a unit capable of executing its tasks with minimal additional training. The extent and duration of additional training, however, depends on the character of the expected operations. When planning the basic training level, the following minimum time requirements are envisioned for providing the unit of ESTBAT with relevant mission oriented training before the political decision to deploy. This training is parallel with the force generation process:

- Peacekeeping: 30 days
- Peace enforcement: 45 days<sup>101</sup> (currently depending also on Western assistance)
- High intensity operation within a coalition (battle) (only extremely limited tasks): 90 days<sup>102</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Partnership Goals, L0041, L0046.

<sup>100</sup> Report on BALBAT Status and Future Development, Chapter 1.4, g.: It is assumed that this goal will not be met by the end of 2000, primarily due to the lack of logistic support and shortfalls in personnel capacity.

<sup>101</sup> The estimated time required is still subject to analysis.

<sup>102</sup> The estimated time required is still subject to analysis.

## **2. Earmarking ESTBAT for Further International Operations**

A principle discussion centers on whether ESTBAT can be earmarked for more than one type of international deployment, such as BALBAT commitment, national contributions to NATO lead operations, and national contributions to other missions led by the UN or a regional organization in accordance with the UN Charter. Based on the experience of Denmark, Norway and other countries, ESTBAT is usable as an organization with clear priorities to accomplish multiple tasks; Therefore, ESTBAT should be organized and trained for a variety of functions. By the end of year 2005, in principle, ESTBAT will be deployable as a battalion size unit in a mission under either the UN, NATO, or the EU command – as a part of BALTBAT or as a purely Estonian contribution.

Earmarking ESTBAT for more than one type of task or for possible deployment within more than one organization means that ESTBAT needs to prepare for participating in multiple types of operations. However, this does not mean that ESTBAT can undertake more than one battalion size deployment at the time. As a result the decision to deploy ESTBAT either as a part of BALTBAT or as a national contribution affects ESTBAT's availability for other operations. This assumption is based on ESTBAT being staffed with personnel designated or contracted in deploying these missions and for augmenting plans designed to provide ESTBAT with necessary units from within the EDF.

Simultaneous deployments will affect the sustainability of the missions with actual contributions being decided on a case-by-case basis while taking into account the commitments made to the BALTBAT project. These deployments include agreed training, exercises, and current deployment commitments (e.g. KFOR).

ESTBAT's first role is – as any other land force unit - to be an organic part of the EDF. It must be capable of both fulfilling operations in the framework of EDF structure as a part of brigade, and in conducting operations as a single task force if required. ESTBAT should be capable of carrying out active territorial defense in all areas of Estonia, with high mobility and readiness. Unit priorities and roles in the national defense will be determined by Estonian national doctrine on territorial defense. It is outside the

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scope of this thesis to speculate on the possible areas of responsibility for ESTBAT in national mobilization and defense planning. Personnel mobilization and deployment contracts should reflect that ESTBAT fills a national function as well as supporting PSOs. Additionally, mobilization systems will ensure that ESTBAT is mobilized for territorial defense. However, the role of ESTBAT in the national defense plans needs to reflect the demands already put on the readiness of the personnel and equipment due to possible deployments supporting PSOs. The planning related to ESTBAT also needs to reflect the time and procedures required for withdrawing ESTBAT in case national security considerations make it imperative. Furthermore, participation in PSOs creates the dilemma of units possibly not being immediately available for national tasking during the term of deployment.

## V. CONCLUSION

As it declared by the Jeffrey Simon in his essay “Roadmap to NATO Accession: Preparing for Membership”,

The enlargement process continues to play vital role in shaping the progressive transformation of Central and Eastern Europe military institutions. MAP/ANP has helped create a structure for defence reform and civil-military coordination that otherwise might not have arisen... MAP also has helped aspiring Alliance members to contribute more effectively to NATO operations as well as to look hard at security challenges within their own areas.<sup>103</sup>

In the end, many practical and often difficult questions need to be answered, when one is creating credible defense for ones country:

- Do we have a clear idea of what, when and how we need to do in order to achieve our objectives?

- Do we have the political commitment to allocate the resources necessary for carrying out the reforms?

- What are we able to contribute to the security of the alliance, and of the world?

A nation’s effective integration into the NATO is an arduous, time-consuming, and resource-intensive task. Estonia, now aspiring to Alliance membership should heed the problems that Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have encountered since accession and redouble their efforts on defense integration and civil-military reforms in the MAP program.<sup>104</sup>

During the past year, MAP/ANP has become a more versatile instrument for forging defence and civil-military reform. With further strengthening, the process will help not only to inform Alliance decision on choosing new members at the 2002 Prague Summit but also to ease post-accession challenges for invitees.

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<sup>103</sup> Jeffrey Simon “Roadmap to NATO Accession: Preparing for Membership”, INSS Special Report (Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, October 2001) 8.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 1.



The MAP/ANP process has positively influenced the growth of interministerial coordination within MAP countries and enhanced international cooperation among those countries...[Also,] MAP has become an increasingly important tool for member governments to build public support for NATO as well as parliamentary support for necessary resources.<sup>105</sup>

One of the most significant defense-related milestones for Estonia was reached in November 2001, when the Government approved a comprehensive Review of the Force Structure of the Estonian Defense Forces. This document, which is based on the evaluation of our security risks, includes a detailed analysis of the force structure nation can afford given our limited resources. The guiding principles in this process have been a sober calculation of financial affordability. Ministry of Defense has critically assessed our commitments and goals, which should be in line with the available financial and human resources. Another vitally important principle is concentrating on capabilities and anticipating an integrated approach towards fulfilling NATO criteria. With the implementation of the Force Structure Review, the capabilities of the Estonian Defense Forces, both for self-defense and possible future Article 5 deployment, have been substantially enhanced.

There is no doubt that for a small nation, proper planning and proper budgeting are absolutely critical. In Estonian state budget for 2002, defense spending has reached 2 per cent of GDP for the first time. The growth has been significant, bearing in mind that the defense budget has grown to the present proportion from less than 1.7 percent of GDP in the year 2000 and 1.79 in 2001. The commitment to keep the defense spending at the level of 2 per cent of GDP has enjoyed almost unanimous support among the parliament parties, and it was reiterated in the new government's coalition agreement. As a recent poll shows, the commitment to keep the defense spending at this level enjoys a wide public support of approximately 70 per cent.

The critical point here is that Estonia will not be a "free rider" in the Alliance. Estonia can and will provide a positive contribution to the Alliance. Today, one of the priorities for EDF is improving combat readiness and creating a rapid reaction capability.

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<sup>105</sup> Simon, 1.

The development of a rapid reaction capability will be realized through the formation of the Estonian Rapid Reaction Battalion ESTBAT. By the year 2005, the battalion will be available for missions under Article 5 of the Washington treaty as well as for crisis response and peace support operations. Yet it is obvious that small countries – and the three Baltic countries are relatively small, even compared to most European NATO countries, and cannot obtain all the same capabilities as larger countries. Therefore, in order to be able to effectively contribute, we need to be able to specialize and co-operate. For example, the Estonian Navy concentrates its efforts to developing mine countermeasures capability, and the Air Force effectively limits their efforts to enhancing air surveillance capabilities. The recent acquisition of the long-range Lockheed-Martin 3D radar, installation of which will be completed later this year, will raise our air surveillance capability to a contemporary level.

Most recently (27 February 2002) the Estonian Parliament unanimously supported the decision to send ten of our military personnel to participate in the operation “Enduring Freedom”. Together with Latvia, Lithuania and Denmark Estonia will form a logistics and transportation unit, which will be deployed to the Kyrgyz Republic to support the air operations.

This is not the first time EDF have taken on international obligations. Since 1995, Estonia has been participating in NATO and UN-led peace operations with approximately 900 troops; currently our troops are deployed in KFOR, SFOR and UNTSO missions. The figure itself may not seem very big, but the number of soldiers per capita we commit to international operations is among the highest in the world.<sup>106</sup>

Since 1994 the Baltic military co-operation has been ever more active and covers a wide range of issues today. The author would like to highlight the importance of the four major Baltic cooperation initiatives – BALTBAT, BALTRON, BALTNET and BALTDEFCOL – and the role they have played in improving our skills and in helping Baltic States to become more interoperable with the Western defense community. The assistance of our Western partners here cannot be stressed enough. Alongside with the

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<sup>106</sup> Sven Mikser, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Estonia, Speech at the Panel Discussion on Baltic NATO Membership, Washington, 13 March 2002. Accessed at <http://www.mod.gov.ee/downloads/kone140302.pdf> on 14 March 2002.

Baltic cooperation, there are numerous bilateral and multilateral defense projects under way between Estonia and many NATO and Nordic countries.

From the start of the project in 1994, BALTBAT has been successfully deployed in the several international PSOs. It is worthy to note that it remains one of the most successful examples of military cooperation in the Baltic region and serves as a good example of what can be done, given the necessary will and determination. In a little over five years, the vague idea proposed by three Chiefs of Defense had been turned into a functioning unit with operational experience at most levels. This unit will soon have better training and equipment to carry out the tasks of a PSO than many units presently actually deployed on such missions. Undoubtedly, there will be weaknesses. But, these weaknesses will continue to be addressed. The transformation from a “peacekeeping” unit to a rapid reaction infantry battalion is a proud moment for Estonia. However, it is almost “cosmetic” when compared to what else has been achieved: the training of several hundred professionals from different backgrounds into a single unit with common doctrine and ethos.

BALTBAT would not be possible without the help of donating countries, especially Denmark and the United Kingdom. As, Colonel Janis Kazocins said,<sup>107</sup>

BALTBAT offered the opportunity to receive western military training and even equipment aid in an uncontroversial way – who could complain about military support for the formation of UN peacekeeping battalion? BALTBAT gave significant boost to the development of common Baltic training methods and operating procedures, all with a decidedly western orientation, and was a practical demonstration of the ability to cooperate in the military field without which regional security could be problematic and future membership of NATO questionable.<sup>108</sup>

However, the key-word for the future of the BALTBAT is *baltification*, meaning the burden of deployment in the PSO will be carried out by Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. This will be a heavy burden for Estonia’s defense budget. The cost of

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<sup>107</sup> Colonel Janis Kazocins was involved in the BALTBAT project between December 1993 and June 1997 as the first British Defense Attaché to the Baltic States and then as Deputy to the Chief of Staff of the Latvian National Armed Forces. He is currently serving as the UK Chief of Staff of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division in Aldershot.

<sup>108</sup> Colonel Janis Kazocins, “The Baltic Battalion five years on – Cornerstone of Baltic Military Cooperation or Expensive White Elephant?” Baltic Defense Review 2/1999 (Tartu, BALTDEFCOL

deploying one person for one month is approximately \$2470 including personnel, operations and maintenance costs. Therefore, the cost of deploying one rifle company for six months is \$1,748,760. Deploying the whole battalion for one year would cost \$19 million. In addition, during such a deployment, the battalion needs to be trained and Estonia would have to face costs for ammunition and vehicle mileage.

Moreover, in addition to the monetary cost, a concern exists that professional soldiers working outside the Estonian defense system, deployed in the “non-military” missions, will eventually erode their military capabilities. Furthermore, all the money that will be spent on the creation of ESTBAT for maintaining the Estonian Peace Operations Center (base and training facilities for PSOs) could be spent for the other needs in the EDF or for domestic needs.

Despite the costs, the benefits of participating in a PSO make the cost worthwhile. Looking back to 1993/94, it was initially important for Estonia, as a newly re-independent country “to show the flag”. Estonia chose to do that through the BALTBAT project because it encouraged regional cooperation with the burden being shared among the three Baltic States. On a national level, the project allowed the possibility of training military personnel according to Western Standard Operating Procedures while arming them by NATO standards. The opportunity now exists to combine *baltification* with a better value for its money from small Baltic defense budgets. Properly handled, BALTBAT can deliver, both by opening the door for more coherent practice in Baltic participation in PSOs as well as by communicating BALTBAT training and ethical values throughout the national Armed Forces.

Today, Estonia is prepared to establish a battalion by the end of 2005 that will fulfill its commitments to BALTBAT. Estonia has also undertaken obligations to provide, by the end of 2005, a Light Infantry Battalion for ESTBAT that can be made available for NATO-led PSOs. Accordingly, ESTBAT has been tasked to be a high-readiness unit available for international missions led by NATO, the EU, the OSCE or the UN<sup>109</sup>.

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publishing, 1999), 48.

<sup>109</sup> In a security political context, the OSCE, NATO and the EU are complementary organizations in respect to taking lead in Peace Support Operations mandated by the UN. Participation under the OSCE, NATO or the EU should therefore be determined in parallel with the decision making process, in which the two organisations in question decide which of them will take lead in a particular operation.

Earmarking ESTBAT for more than one type of task or for possible deployment within more than one organization means that ESTBAT will be equally fit to participate in the said type of operations. It does not mean that ESTBAT can undertake more than one battalion size deployment at a time. Accordingly, national plans for ESTBAT need to reflect the possibility of a battalion being deployed to a mission while not being available for national tasks until withdrawn or otherwise released from the mission.

Estonia is creating a rapid reaction capability for EDF. All present battalions in the EDF are training centers for compulsory service concentrating on training company size formations for Estonia's wartime reserve. Until the time where operational staffs at higher levels are formed, EDF battalions will, at intervals, be responsible for planning and conducting battalion-level formation exercises. The ESTBAT differs from the other EDF battalions by being an operational unit tasked to be ready for deployments as a full battalion to PSOs and by maintaining the highest readiness level.

To summarize, according to Estonian self-interest, continued participation is important in the PSOs because this increases Estonia's participation in the international community while enhancing multi- and bilateral cooperation. Moreover, this ties Estonia to the Western security environment. At the same time, through troop rotation, EDF will be interoperable with NATO countries and will prove Estonia's capability to provide a well-trained multinational military unit in the international community. Participation in BALTBAT will help build strong regional cooperation and enhance the security level in the Baltic Sea area. Domestically, ESTBAT/BALTBAT is an example of how a motivated and well-trained military unit aided the building of public support for the EDF. Finally, ESTBAT will give Estonia the opportunity to have a standing force with rapid reaction capability.

To conclude, even though serious problems existed with civil-military relations in Estonia during the nation-building period in 1991 to 1998, no crisis exists in Estonian civil-military relations today. Moreover, civilian and military personnel work together in healthy cooperation. The EDF forms part of the State structure, interacting with other actors based on the same democratic rules. The need for a NATO security guarantee has

unified not only the defense community, but also the whole nation in building a sufficient and effective EDF, which has the capabilities of being interoperable with NATO.

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