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Policy Brief
“Security Management Network”

ALBANIA
Developing a National Security Concept

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1. Introduction

The periodical review of the fundamental security document of the Republic of Albania, known as “National Security Strategy” is necessary, nay legally obligatory,¹ for the main political and institutional actors of the country. This review raises a lot of concerns mainly due to the dynamics of the security environment either domestically or regionally or even globally. The old security strategy of Albania, dating from 2004², as well as the military strategy of our country³, does not fit any more with the Albanian reality, either from a regional or an international perspective. This proves to be true especially after Albania’s integration into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (being as such an institutional and structural part of the Euro-Atlantic security paradigm), Kosovo’s independence (on February 19, 2008 – an event that reshaped nearly all geopolitical alignments and realignments of the Balkans), and the clear reconfiguration of the international system, beyond traditional state-centric threats: towards non-state challenges (like terrorism), and towards problems of a more comprehensive nature, like democratization, weak states, global environmental devolution, etc.

This reevaluation process must begin as soon as possible from the actual Albanian government which came into power after the June 28, 2009 elections. It has become much more necessary especially after our integration into NATO and our application into EU, because these two events affect unequivocally the geopolitical reality in the Western Balkans and the economic and cultural field. They influence the regional stability and the acceleration or slowdown of its integration processes. At this very historical moment, any strategic analysis may go through traditional (or “semi-traditional”) aspects into some more recent ones, notably in the geoeconomic field, showing potentially high levels of stability and bigger opportunities for cross-border cooperation and foreign investments. It is for this reason that our diplomacy, based on a fundamental document of our foreign policy such as the forthcoming strategy of national security, should be even more oriented towards the economic and pragmatic realm identifying concrete alliances, properly classifying priorities, taking account of our reality, geoeconomic and geostrategic position in accordance with our national goals as determined by the strategy.

In this respect, this Policy Brief will focus on some key aspects missing from any public, academic or political debate in Albania regarding the reevaluation of our national security strategy. It also aims at raising awareness among key actors regarding this issue. So, it will first analyze the theoretical framework for security and the meaning of a national security strategy. Furthermore it will focus on the challenges of developing a national security concept for Albania through analyzing civil society and international community’s role in formulating a national security strategy. At this point we found the experience from other security concepts and paradigms from countries similar to ours very helpful. Last but not least it will present some findings and conclusions regarding this process in the light of new perspectives for a new NATO member already knocking the doors of integration into EU.

¹ Based on Law 9322, Ar. 84, November, 2004.

² Adopted in November 2004.

³ Adopted in 2005.

2. Theoretical Framework for Security and a National Security Strategy

The national security policy is a document describing the way a state goals' are fulfilled either domestically or externally, aiming to provide for state security and through it to provide for the individual security of its citizens.⁴

This dynamic and less normative definition of a National Security Strategy demands **first of all** *a clear and functional definition of security per se*. This can be achieved firstly only through making a distinction between the different levels of security: human security, state security and international security.

Second, it demands the *articulation and proclamation* of a nation-state's aims in accordance with the geographic, economic, social, political, military and cultural resources of a society.

Third, in order for this political document to obtain a more comprehensive and thoroughgoing shape, it calls for the identification and *drawing of a national strategy* aiming to fulfill the goals defined in accordance with all the available resources.

2.1. Security? What do you mean?

The first step of defining security plays the role of a conceptual means seeks to establish the bigger operational framework of a National Security Strategy.

For many years the notion of security was firmly linked exclusively with the state institutions and authority. Nonetheless with the passing of the time state structures have lost more and more their monopoly and hegemony on security discourse and security policies. New actors have emerged giving the decision making process in the security sector a more balanced dimension. In times of security tension the state-level institutions (government and defense forces) become dominant, tending to broaden and extend their powers through constraints such as censorship or restrictions on freedom to organize, accompanied by increased delegitimization of individualist and anti-hegemonic discourse. On the other hand in order to act effectively, maintain morale and prevent leaks to the enemy, army have underscored the need for secrecy and for minimizing civilian control to rapidly implement policy by circumventing the civilian level.⁵

In the contemporary era the first component –*human security*– attempts to give a thorough and firm answer to the questions: “What does it mean to feel secure? How much security? Security for whom? And so on.” First of all human security means the absence of chronic threats, such as famine, diseases and repression. Secondly it implies protection from unpredicted ruptures of the daily models of life – like in home, work or community.⁶ Third it implies guaranteeing physical security either from state violence or from violence practiced by non-state actors (like political violence, criminality, and accidental deaths or from natural disasters).

⁴ David Law, “*Praktikat më të mira në fushën e strategjisë së sigurisë kombëtare*”, “Mbi zhvillimin e strategjisë së sigurisë kombëtare”, IDN, Tirana, 2007, p. 11.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See UNDP, 1994, p. 23.

State security implies the security of a state's structural and infrastructural capabilities in order to ensure the life of its citizens from internal and external threats.⁷ The concept of state security has been reconsidered focusing more in the new threats against state mainly inherent in character (such as terrorism, environment, ethnic issues, security problems in transitional democracies, organized crime, etc.) *vis-à-vis* traditional threats from the external environment. Pursue of individual (or personal) security through the establishment of a state is followed necessarily by a perception of national and/or international insecurity rooted in the anarchical nature of the state system.⁸ The achievement of state security should be the final goal of every national security strategy, which must take account of all the security dilemmas and the endemic insecurity of the international system. Any concept of state security must also take into consideration the concept and meaning of societal and environmental security as far as the fruition of them cannot be understood without the state's supervision and engagement.

Therefore would be inevitable (and not at all a theoretical abstraction) a thorough *analysis of the international (and regional) system* to identify all main conflictual and cooperative trends, to recognize possible opportunities or threats as well as to enter into alliances or avoid threats either from state actors or from non-state ones. Objectively enough, the analysis of international security should be present in every national security strategy of any given state, no matter what approach it develops towards international security problems (like the last wars on Afghanistan (2002), on Iraq (2004) or War Against Terror (Bush Doctrines of 2002 and 2006⁹) and independently the priority on the internal focus he can chose (like in the case of Switzerland or other neutral states). But it is also clear that the analysis of security or insecurity descending from the international system cannot be achieved without a clear methodology and without the appropriate epistemological means. These are necessary to take account of the different theories and approaches towards international relations and to use them in order to build up a national security strategy able to protect a country from today's threats, to promote national interest and to predict the opportunities and possible threats of the future.¹⁰

2.2. *How are the aims of a nation-state defined? How is the ratio between the interests and capacities of a country built, in accordance with its resources?*

In order to find objective and realist answers to the above questions, and to optimize the goals of a national strategic concept, it would be useful to refer to the definition of interest from the realist school of thought, especially Hans Morgenthau, based on the *elements of power* (measurable and immeasurable) that a state holds, such as: the geographical position, natural resources (food and raw materials), industrial capabilities, military (such as technology, leadership, quantity and quality of the armed forces, geographical distribution of the armed forces on the territory, etc.), national

⁷ See Stephen J. Del Rosso Jr. "The Insecure State" *Daedalus*. Vol. 124, No. 2, 1995, pp. 177-180. Barry Buzan, "People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations", Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983.

⁸ See George Sorensen, "After the Security Dilemma: The Challenges of Insecurity in Weak States and the Dilemma of Liberal Values", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 38, No. 3, 2007, p. 358.

⁹ See National Security Strategy, White House US 2002, esp. "Introduction".

¹⁰ More on the construction of threat can be found at: Weldes, J. (et. al.) (1999), "Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities and the Production of Dangers", Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

character (its existence, the ethnical composition of a nation-state and its degree of homogeneity, the commensurability of its ethnic borders with state borders –as in the case of Albania– and so on), the national moral, the level of diplomacy and the quality of governance (the level of democratic consolidation, of the democratization and transparency of the decision-making processes in domestic and foreign policy and security, the balance between resources and political decisions, level of public support), and so on.¹¹

Following the objective determination of these components of a state's power, the next step would be to *define the interests* and, therefore, *the goals* of a nation-state. Thus, as in the case of the Western nation-states belonging to NATO or EU which have long before during the twentieth century assimilated and incorporated the Euro-Atlantic national security paradigm, generally the goals relate to guaranteeing the stability of their democratic systems from external threats generated during the Cold War years by the Soviet Union and in the aftermath by the weak states and the asymmetrical non-state threats, by threats towards the environment, by the transnational organized crime or immigration, even by different economic crisis like the last one which are able to touch upon the welfare structures of states and their ability to guarantee the basic elements of livelihood and prosperity for their citizens.

But other nations or groups of states may have different interests emanated from the abovementioned aspects of power, which may clash with the Euro-Atlantic paradigm. This may result in frictions and may give birth to the exigency of a new concept of security and national strategies of the democratic western countries, like the one developed after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 or the one taking place during this very period within NATO itself.¹² At the last stage of the process of identifying their interests *states formulate their goals* which induct the right proportion between capacities (the elements of power) and the interests of a state. After all, *strategy* in its classical form is but the art of elaborating all the resources of a nation-state to fulfill its interests in peace and war.¹³

It is possible though to identify some criteria of evaluation of a national security strategy based on: (a) *its adaptability*; (b) *its domestic cohesion/coherence*; (c) *its efficiency*; (d) *its level of reconciliation of capability and goals*; and (e) *its capacity to resist the errors*. Certainly, this methodology may have some shortcomings, especially when applied on a small state, like Albania, but nonetheless it could provide us with a rational instrument of “measuring” the success and applicability of the future security strategy of our country.

2.3. *What is the national security policy? How is it framed, formulated and structured?*

As mentioned at the beginning, the national security strategy is a document with a general-orienting character for the decision-making actors, describing the way and the steps a state takes in order to guarantee its security as well as the protection of its citizens,

¹¹ See Hans Morgenthau, “*Politika Midis Kombeve*” [“Politics Among Nations”], AIIS-Tiranë, 2009, pp. 125-185.

¹² See for the “New Strategic Concept of NATO” and the debate it has generated at the organisation’s webpage: www.nato.org.

¹³ Regarding the definition of strategy has been developed a large literature. Among the most known scholars one can mention: Sun Tzu, Hart, Clausewitz, Beaufre and many others.

defying the interest of today, and projecting the future routes of its security policy (either domestic or external) in the foreseeable future.

The national security strategy enjoys top priority among other security documents (such as the military strategy, the homeland security strategy, and so on) and is positioned at the top of their hierarchy.¹⁴ It can be found in a variety of terms, such as “policy”, “strategy”, “concept” or “doctrine”. Even though in literature these terms imply different processes and concepts, they have the same utility when used in order to specify the main aims of a state’s security: the reconciliation, coordination and integrations of various actors of national security towards one or some common goals.

States need a strategy of national security in order to: (1) to safeguard them in an integrated manner from domestic and external threats; (2) to increase the effectiveness of the security sector optimizing the contribution of all actors; (3) to direct the implementations of this policy; (4) to build an internal consensus in order to respond to the second abovementioned criterion of evaluation of a security strategy; and (5) to increase the credibility and the regional and international collaboration.¹⁵

According to the model described in (2.2) the structure of a strategy is threefold: it defines a state’s vision of the international and/or regional system and the role that state aims to play in it; evaluates the current or future dangers and opportunities; as well as describes clearly the field of responsibility of every executive actor. Key questions regarding the formulation of a national security policy are those related to the actors engaged in the process of its elaboration, the instruments used in it, the transparency of the process and the clarity of the concepts it handles, the creation of oversight organs for its implementation in a political, institutional and civil society level, as well as keeping the confidentiality in crucial fields of the national security. Also, parts of the security documents are not only the interests but also the values which a state stands for. In our case these values coincide with those of the Euro-Atlantic security paradigm.

2.4. National Security Agenda: The (missing) role of civil society

Nonetheless, in times of peace and when existential threats seem distant, civil initiatives seeking to restrict the space of state control and the security-political complex responsible for shaping the security policy seems easier. Therefore the activity of Civil Society, including media, tends to limit and somehow restrict the actions of security sector official institutions and decision-making. Especially the media arena has become more and more a political institution undermining the state’s sovereignty in terms of shaping public policy. However it is claimed that above all, the media leads to a victimization of the civil discourse as it makes it clear to members of civil society that they are victims of state-level policies.¹⁶ In this framework the binomial media-independent organizations create a unique body which on the one hand resists to state policies and on the other hand oppose it in compliance with public interests having a significant role in the proper functioning of a democratic regime.

¹⁴ See David Law, “Praktikat më të mira në fushën e strategjisë së sigurisë kombëtare”, “Mbi zhvillimin e strategjisë së sigurisë kombëtare”, IDN, Tirana, 2007, p. 12.

¹⁵ Ibid. p 12

¹⁶ Udi Lebel, Civil Society versus Military Sovereignty, Armed Forces & Society, <http://afs.sagepub.com>

The contribution of civil society in the security sector policy making is pivotal and might constitute in facilitating dialogue and debate on policy issues, educating politicians, policy makers and the public on special issues of concern, sharing specialized information and knowledge of local needs and conditions with policy makers, parliamentarians and the media, encouraging security policies that are representative of and responsive to local communities, putting security reform issues on the political agenda, undertaking policy-relevant research etc¹⁷.

As Edmunds has observed, "...in practice public security reform inherently involves choices between competing values and interests. Thus, choices made between competing values and interests regarding security reflect political decisions that are insulated from popular contestation."¹⁸ Traditional

conceptualizations of security tend to reduce humans to their unified role as a means to secure a particular socio-economic model of statehood.¹⁹ Civil Society is by definition diverse, reflecting divisions and the multiple competing interests in wider society. Civil Society organizations serve as channels for expressing these diverse and sometimes contradictory interests, priorities and grievances²⁰ allowing for a broader context of public discourse and interests.

2.5. Models of Paradigms of National Security Strategies in Croatia, Slovenia and Estonia

In an attempt to identify similar patterns and experiences, that might be helpful to the Albanian institutional and political actors in order to formulate a new national security strategy, this Policy Brief displays some of the Euro-Atlantic national security paradigms found in the countries with similar circumstances, such as Croatia, Slovenia and Estonia. Certainly, the diverse geographical position and the diversity of the components of power of each country does not allow for the computation of interests, but only their approximation in issues regarding defense policies, engagement towards international security, the domestic security institutions, national interests, the structure of military command, the parliamentary oversight, emergency situations, and so on.

The national security documents of these countries rank their interests and values by prioritizing them, as one can denote in the Croatian Doctrine or those of other Western Balkan countries. Specifically, national interests in the Croatian security document are classified according to their importance or prominence, such as: highest values, vital national interests and other considerations. In the Croatian security pattern a very important position is filled by the issue of *national identity*, exemplified through expressions like: "The development of a national identity", "the safeguard of national identity and welfare of our co-nationals living in other countries", etc.²¹ Also, a more

¹⁷ Caparini, M & Cole, E, 'The case for Public Oversight of the Security Sector: Concepts and Strategies' in Oversight or Overlooked, Millar et al, www.fourthfreedom.org/pdf/0903_overlooked.pdf

¹⁸ Edmunds, Timothy, 2007. *Security Sector Reform in Transforming Societies*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

¹⁹ Barry J. Ryan, The EU's Emergent Security-First Agenda: Securing Albania and Montenegro, *Security Dialogue* 2009; 40; 311, <http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/40/3/311>.

²⁰ Caparini, M. 2005, 'Enabling Civil Society in Security Sector Reconstruction'.

²¹ See, "Croatian National Security System", 2002.

accurate view not only of the Croatian security strategy, but also of the Slovenian and Estonian ones, reveals that these countries dedicate environmental protection a strategic attention as a vital part of their national security, which is definitely dissimilar to the Albanian National Security Strategy.

Generally, the security documents of the abovementioned countries describe the security environment in a very similar way by using modern terminology, through a multidimensional approach towards security after the Cold War, and through the acceptance (all the three countries analyzed) the new type of threats. For this reason, the Croatian Defense Strategy deals with a multidimensional concept of international security. Unanimously, they consider NATO and European Union as key stability factors. Furthermore, the strategic concept of Croatia considers the country as a holder of “a regional position with multilateral dimensions”, linking East Europe with Southeast Europe and the Mediterranean region. In the Croatian document, as well as in the Slovenian and the Estonian ones, it is possible to observe an escalated and classifying approach towards the threats, diversifying them into local, regional and global ones. Two of them – the Croatian and the Slovenian documents – prioritize in their security agenda all threats originating from the transnational crime, which shows a peculiarity of the regional security environment when these strategies are confronted with those of other regions, such as North Europe, as is shown by the Estonian case.²² The later considers as principal threat the international instability originated from international crises with immediate domestic impact.²³ This makes the Estonian strategic concept much closer to the liberal and interdependent theory of international politics. Another distinctive feature of the National Security Concept of Estonia is the apparent importance it dedicates to the war against cybernetic terrorist threats, which distinguishes this approach from those of the countries of our region, such as Albania, Croatia or Slovenia.

Determining a clear concept regarding the national security strategy document is one of the most essential obligations of a state and of its decision-making actors. For these reasons and independently the distinct attributes it may take in different states, and taking account of the challenges facing humanity and the local environments, the concept should be able to act as a valuable guide towards framing of a national security strategy.

3. The Development and Challenges of an Albanian National Security Concept

Just as determined as of the above theoretical approaches, the challenge of developing a national security concept in Albania is not an exception in relation to the answers that it tries to give the role of the state in the international system, threats and security risks as well as actors responsible for coping with them. It is already known that after 90 years, the government and the Albanian state were found within a new security environment including the geopolitical situation in the Balkan region. From the concept of national security, which until the '90s is based upon the self-isolation, popular self-defense and the territorial distribution of the armed forces of all kinds, it was passed on the concept of "interdependent security", mainly through a policy that comes under the

²² See, for example, “*National Security Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia*”, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nr. 56/01 – ReSNV.

²³ See, for example, “*National Security Concept of the Republic of Estonia*”, 2004, pp. 4-7.

political and military cooperation with the structures of collective security and defence as the OSCE, CoE, NATO, etc..

But in the aftermath of the so-called "first transition" (1992-'97) Albania continued as for inertia to maintain the previous institutional security structures as the Defence Council, which on its side was seriously challenged by the unusual situation of civil unrest that accompanied the collapse of pyramid schemes²⁴. Lack of a genuine and crosscutting concept of national security in that period as well as the weakness, little experience and politicization of security institutions responsible in this regard, brought a security vacuum that appeared significantly during the riots of 1997. The second transition period (1997-2005) it seemed to reflect the change in the area concern when political rhetoric claimed through the slogan that Albania is not "security consumer" but "security producer"²⁵. But even during this period, this concept was put to the test again. The political unrest of 14 September 1998 demonstrated again the uncertainty and fragility of the concepts towards a genuine national security policy. On the other hand Albania faced again another challenge on the state security when during the NATO intervention in Kosovo was happening for the first time very close to direct involvement in an interstate conflict situation threshold. Meantime the increasing international pressure in this period to the Albanian government for an inadequate fight against phenomena of human trafficking, organized crime, corruption and money laundering, raised again the attention on a reassessment of concepts of national security that the Albanian government had adopted in documents of 2000 and 2004²⁶. Since 2005 onwards, Albania has entered a new transition phase of security policies through membership in NATO on 3 April 2009 as the entry into force on 1 April 2009 of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU. At this framework the review of current concepts of policy and national security strategy should serve to build a more inclusive approach in which have to take priority the quality of design, approval, implementation and monitoring of strategic document on national security policy.²⁷

²⁴ This approach is reflected in a set of rules that determine the progress of this structure such as Law No. 7528, dated 11.12.1991 "On the functions of the Council of Defence and the General Commander of Armed Forces (Official Bulletin No. 10 , 1991, Page 424); Decision of the Assembly No. 300, dated 02.03.1997 "On the appointment of special envoy from the Council of Defence (Official Bulletin No. 2, Year 1997, Page 47) Decision of the Assembly No. 319, dated 08.05.1997 "On establishment of the Council of Defence of the Republic of Albania (Official Bulletin No. 11, 1997, Page 291); Assembly Resolution No. 359 dated 27.04.1998" For a change in Decision No. 319, dated 05.08.1997 "On establishment of the Defence Council of the Republic of Albania (Official Bulletin No. 10, 1998, Page 359); Constitutional Court decision No. 77 dated 31.12.1998" The object of the request by the President of the Republic: Interpretation Article 178, paragraph 1 of the Constitution regarding the implementation of Law No. 7528, dated 11.12.1991 "On the functions of the Council of Defence and the General Commander of Armed Forces (Official Bulletin No. 3, Year 1999, Page 4)

²⁵ While the effort to change the content of the concept of security was also reflected in the renaming of the Council of Defence in the National Security Council and its functions .Also see the Law No. 8467, dated 31.03.1999 "On the powers of the President the Republic, as General Commander of the Armed Forces and National Security Council (Official Bulletin No. 10, 1999, Page 311)

²⁶ For this see also Law No. 8572, dated 27.01.2000 "On approval of the Security Strategy Document of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 3, Year 2000, page 43) and Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 " To approve the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania "(Official Bulletin No. 98, Year 2004, page 6696)

²⁷ For an analytical review of the document of national security strategy see also: Sotirag Hroni, Gjen.Let (in release) Pellumb Qazimi: View from India - Study on assessment of regional security threats and

3.1. *Dominant security concept in Albanian national security strategy*

The first document for a national security strategy was designed in 2000 to be followed again with a broader another document in 2004.²⁸ The approval period of these documents by the Albanian government coincides with a relative political and economic stability, as the country had overcome the riots of 97 year, political unrest of 1998, as well as the Kosovo crisis of 1999. While Albania's efforts to build a new institutional relationship with the EU through a Stabilization and Association Process and NATO by the Membership Action Plan adopted at the Istanbul Summit in 1999, has lead to a different concept of designing national security policy. In this way the concept of national security strategy which is presented in above documents was tried to maintain an appropriate ratio between the challenges and threat perceived by the Albanian and international institutions. Through review of this document it is noted that the core of security strategy concept is related to "respect the rule of law" to meet "the EU integration perspective"²⁹. The prevail of a "*two-dimension approach*" which connects a short and medium-term objective like integration with something as long-term such as respect for the rule of law, constitutes the basic structure that provides national security strategy. Consequently this concept as a whole tries to realize an environment of internal security (state law) by relying mainly on foreign means (in NATO and EU integration).

On the other hand, taking into account the regional security challenges the document has given a special place to the arguments which determine Albania as a factor which "produces and exports security" through the implementation of good neighborhood policy and regional dialogue. Through these concepts, national security strategy is trying to refer the principle of "equidistance" especially in relation to developments in the former republics of Yugoslavia where Albanians live, particular in Kosovo. However the presentation in this strategy the term "Albanian factor in the region" is somewhat which goes beyond the weight and the role that can play Albania as the parent state to influence it and at certain point may overcome its realistic expectations as an actor to regional security.

Meanwhile in paragraph 5 of this document is stated that "*the strategy supports the creation of a security planning system by giving priority of achieving a concrete outcome under the concept: "Who does what, when, and in cooperation with whom."*³⁰ Through this definition, the document of national security strategy is attached to the concept which is most centered to the producers in security rather than consumers. On the other hand in relation to the identification of security objectives in the short, medium-and long-term, the national security document provides shortcomings. For example the short

challenges in the Western Balkans, in Study on the Assessment threats of Regional Security and Challenges in the Western Balkans, Darko Istvam Gyarmati & Stancic (eds.), DCAF (Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces), 2007, p. 57.

²⁸ As mentioned above the first document was approved in 2000 through Law No. 8572, dated 27.01.2000 "On approval of the Security Strategy Document of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 3, Year 2000, page 43) and was reviewed after four years by Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 98, Year 2004, page 6696).

²⁹ Ibid, p. 2.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 3

and medium priorities here are defined as long-term while the opposite should be³¹. This "time mistake" testifies to the lack of a detailed typology of risks and threats which have to respond to the accurate assessments for coping with them. The whole concept of security prevailing in the document of national security strategy in Albania trying to be as clearly defined horizontal but without a concrete action model.

3.2. Key questions in formulating a national security policy concept

In the case of designing of a well-defined concept on national security policy, decision makers should have considered how to give answers such 8 questions related to: 1) values 2) the level of security level 3) threats and risks 4) transparency of the process 5) means to be used 6) cost 7) period 8) beneficiaries. At the same time the process of drafting a document on national security strategy should be accompanied by an approach that aims to effectively prevent risks and threats that arise in this sector as well as to keep these away from its national borders and have a more organized response. Initially the concept of a national security strategy policy should start with clarifying the term "national". Given that in other security institutions (eg. the name of SHIK-National Intelligence Service in the SHISH-State Intelligence Service) have changed the name in this case, to adapt to new circumstances, even the upcoming strategy document make sense to determine security state within the Republic of Albania as a term more accurate and in accordance with its objectives and priorities. In case of Albania the process of design, approval and implementation of the concept of national security strategy need to be developed in accordance with the assessment of the country's weight in the global structure of regional security. Albania's membership in NATO at the Bucharest Summit on 3-4 April 2009 puts it under new conditions to assess security threats. As a NATO member country it requires quantitative and qualitative changes in terms of facing the security challenges inside the country and abroad as places Albania in front of structural adjustment in the security sector.

In this context, the concept of a new strategy of national security must take into account this new qualitative change and have more focus on improving quality indicators within the country's security as well as readiness to meet not only benefits but also potential risks coming because of membership in such collective defense organization. The membership in NATO gives Albania the opportunity to remove from a national security strategy concept which was mainly centered on the safety of external borders as result of any potential instability of ethnic conflicts in the region.

Overall presentation of internal and external threats to the national security document should take into account the regional and European integration of Albania. The determination of Albania's position and role in this still geopolitical troubled area of Balkan region, especially after Kosovo's declaration of independence, return the concept of regional security in an important ingredient.³² The Kosovo independence declared on

³¹ In Chapter II: OBJECTIVES OF SECURITY (page 5) in Law No. 9322, dated 25.11.2004 "On approval of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 98, Year 2004, page 6696).

³² Study on the Assessment of Regional Security Challenges and threats in the Western Balkans, Darko Istvam Gyarmati & Stancic (editors), Edited from DCAF (Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces), 2007, p. 133.

17 February 2008 and the construction of highway Durrës-Kukës - Morinë has brought a radical change in terms of reducing threat from outside especially at the northeastern border part of Albania. But on the other hand Albania should carefully handle the challenge of increasing free movements of people through this highway by not transforming latter into a burden security issue in certain sectors such as integrated border management, illegal trafficking and Trans regional crime. In this case takes priority the way how to face this challenge in relation to EU justice and home affairs policy, particularly regarding the visa liberalization process. Determination of risks and threats at national, regional and global level remain among the first and most important step for the development of a national security strategy. The results of this assessment as well as preparation of a "*map of the risks of threats*" to the country could clearly identify the core concept which should constitute the solid basis for a policy of national security strategy. Since the period where the last document for the national security strategy was approved, the security situation in Albania has proved that it will face threats and dangers that the origins of their have mostly from within. The so-called syndrome of "*Albanian elections*", high level of corruption, organized crime, money laundering and ineffective judicial system constitute long-term threats in terms of internal security in the country. As it has been stated noted before, the size of Albania together with its resources, legacies of the past communist regime as well as the long transition urge for a move towards a genuine concept of national security which should be in focus of *human security approach*.³³

From the viewpoint of risks classifications, the national security strategy should not simply follow a ranking of geographic distribution (global, regional or local) but within each of them must determine the degree of intensity and the ways to face against short, medium and long term. Differentiation and prioritization of these risks is necessary be associated with other aspects rather than the use of classical concepts such as the sovereignty, territorial integrity, development of the rule of law, democratic institutions, freedoms and human rights etc. In this way, the national security strategy should be designed taking as spotlight an interlinked concept of human security depending on the importance that it presents in certain areas (eg *food, environmental, social, political, road security* etc.).³⁴

However, public safety against any form of crime must remain the focus of the basic concept of a national security document as long as any form of organized crime or not can affect not only aspects of human security but brings distortions of institutional structure, ruin the image of country and destroy free and fair market competition through the forms of money laundering, pressures and state capture.³⁵ Current institutional

³³ For the involvement of human security concept in a document of national security strategy see Prof. Rexhep Mejdani (former President of the Republic of Albania 1997-2002) in: Some thoughts on revising the document on national security strategy publication: On the development of strategy national security (Summary of proceedings of the International Conference: "On the development of the national security strategy", Tirana 21 September 2007, organized by IDM & DCAF), U.S. Toena, Tirana, 2007, page 26.

³⁴ See also: *Backgrounder on human security in Albania*, IDM, Tirana 2009, p. 60, which is the first paper drafted by a group of experts at the IDM (Institute for Democracy and Mediation) in terms of human security concept

³⁵ Regarding security aspects in the field of public order and combating organized crime phenomena , the document for a national security strategy must take into account and include those priorities that are projected in a range of strategies adopted by the Albanian government in years such as :Decision No. 674,

structure of national security policy based on three pillars which include the Committee on National Security Policy (Government), National Security Council (President), and Parliamentary Committee of Public Safety (Parliament). In this way one of the issues that the document of national security strategy must provide clear and detailed response is the hierarchy roles of these structures. For example, in addition to other aspects, Gerdec tragic event of 15 March 2008 brought out the lack of coordination between these institutions, particularly the vague role of National Security Council.

Also the remarks raised recently by experts and media on the determination of the maritime border with Greece prove that in particular the National Security Council chaired by the President of the Republic should have a more active role in the institutional hierarchy of the security sector. The interlink of the processes which ensure an environment of security within the country makes it necessary that the drafting of national security strategy should pass through Parliament Committee and to be approved by a qualified majority .At the same time the above Committee have to set up a clear timetable to periodically monitor and review the institutions and stakeholders responsible for its implementation.³⁶

In this way the parliament can integrate the concept of human security to human security budget as the highest authority that approves public expenditure in particular sectors. At the same time the expected changes of EU relations with Albania in the area of free movement pose new challenges on national security strategy that make an important priority the borders management and identity documents. As result of this the relevant institutions in the area concerned will be found under the pressure to ensure the

dated 07/12/2001 for approval of the National Strategy to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings (official bulletin No. 59, Year 2001, Page 1859); Decision No. 292 dated 07.05.2004 "On approval of the Strategy National Anti - drug 2004-2010 "(Official Bulletin No. 31, Year 2004, page 2539); Decision No. 171 dated 11.02.2005" On approval of the National Strategy against Child Trafficking and Protection of Children Victims of Trafficking and an additional CMD No. 8, dated 05.01.2002 "On establishment of the State Committee to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings" (Official Bulletin No. 21, Year 2005, page 808); Decision No. 668 dated 29.09.2007 "On approval of the National Strategy" Integrated Border Management Action Plan (Official Bulletin No. 147, Year 2007, Page 4087); Decision No. 14, at 09/01/2008 "On approval of the Public Order Sector Strategy and Plan Enforcement Action Strategy 2007-2013 State Police (Official Bulletin No. 5, Year 2008, Page 99); Decision No. 522, at 23/04/2008 "On approval of the National Action Plan for the Fight against trafficking in vehicles motor (Official Bulletin No. 72, Year 2008, Page 3156); Decision No. 1083, at 23/07/2008 To approve the National Strategy to Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings 2008-2010 and Supplementary Document "National Strategy for Combating Trafficking Children and the Protection of Children Victims of Trafficking (Official Bulletin No. 131, Year 2008, Page 5775); Decision No. 1140, 30/07/2008 For approval at inter-sectorial Strategy to Fight against organized crime, trafficking and terrorism (Official Bulletin No. 138, Year 2008, Page 6124)

³⁶ The armed forces (AAF) have an important role in the strategy of national security. Regarding the role and position of the armed forces in national security strategy, the Albanian government is trying to realize it through the adoption of an updated series of documents setting out the strategic framework in this field, such as Law No. 8571, dated 27 / 01/2000 "On approval of the Defence Policy Document of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 3, Year 2000, page 19), Law No. 8930, dated 25.07.2002 "On approval of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 50, Year 2002, page 1459); Law No. 9419, dated 20.05.2005 "On approval of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania" (Official Bulletin No. 46, Year 2005, page 1653); Decision No. 763, dated 14/11 / 2007 "On approval of the Strategy of the Ministry of Defence Sector 2007-2013 (Official Bulletin, No. 174, Year 2007, page 5332); Law No. 9858, at 27/12/2007" The adoption of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania "(Official Bulletin No. 184, Year 2007, page 5801)

credibility of this process and any violation from other groups would possess the risk for the image of country. In this context the new concept for national security should provide a greater attention to protect the electronic databases networks - *so-called cyber security* - (for the first time Albania run a database with the group of blood and fingerprints of citizens) and considered part of the country's critical infrastructure. This aspect should receive a special importance in other areas, indeed. During the last 4 years and on Albania will have on its territory a series of critical infrastructure facilities such as highway tunnels, major bridges, power plants with oil and coal, new hydropower plant dams (on rivers Devoll, Bushat), oil and gas pipelines, which despite improving the socio-economic life also poses an increasing the risks as potential target from the viewpoint of security. The declared goal of the Albanian government to transform Albania into a "*regional energy superpower*" except a challenge of economic development should be considered a security challenge, too. It should be noted that a good coverage of sound theoretical concepts in national security strategy document will further strengthen its explanatory power and serve better as an orientation to the institutions and stakeholders of this sector in Albania. On the other hand, this process should proceed through the definition of a clear "road map" about the risk assessment methodology, analysis of human and financial resources as well as the monitoring process. Within this framework the measuring of public perception on risks in the country and running a participatory consultation process with civil society and independent experts, make important steps to ensure a document of the national security strategy as an useful guide for achieving the human security in the country.

3.3. Civil Society and the Security Sector in Albania: Oversight and Contribution in Developing a National Security Strategy

The civil society's role in consolidating the national security policies has been widely recognized by academics and policy-makers.³⁷ So, the fact that during communism there were no independent civil society organizations³⁸ may be considered as one of the variables that led to poor democratic standards and authoritarianism in the early years of democracy in Albania. However, during the 90's media in particular but civil society organizations too, grew more and more as important pressure groups but not as stakeholders of the democratic process.³⁹

However despite the 1998 constitutional liberal framework which provided for freedom of association for any lawful purpose, the legal framework remained incomplete. Regardless expanding market and donors, the role of civil society in security sector reform, in the last 10 years, has been vague and insignificant. Although most of the usual civil society structures exist in the country (non-Governmental organizations, trade unions, professional associations, think tanks, research institutes etc) they are weak and need to develop further in order to efficiently contribute to Albania's security sector

³⁷ Caparini. Marina, 'Civil Society and Democratic Oversight of the Security Sector: A Preliminary Investigation'. Working Paper - No. 132, Geneva, January 2004

³⁸ Vickers. Miranda & Pettifer. James, "Albania: From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity", Hurst & Company, London 1997, p:12

³⁹ Henri Cili, "Security and Defence – Civil Society and the Media", in Fluri et al (eds.), '*Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe: Insights and Perspectives*', Volume 1; Albania; Bulgaria; Croatia; A Self-Assessment Study.

development. Non-governmental organizations regardless steady progress concerning the involvement in security sector reform is lacking authority as an independent actor⁴⁰. In addition civic engagement in security issues remains low. On the other hand Albania has only a limited number of influential NGOs and policy institutes. It is the duty of civil society to take greater responsibility for demanding progress and holding the government accountable as well as pressuring to become part of the consultations in drafting security policies.

During the last years there have been little or no expectations from citizens toward these organizations. This because the civil society has little influence in legislative or other activity related with the government.⁴¹ As such with regard to national policy formulation, coordination between government and parliament with civil society remains frail. The inter-ministerial consultations with civil society actors on draft laws work poorly in practice.⁴² Often the state has hindered the role of civil society and on the other hand it has turned it into an obedient partner, severely undermining its role in a democratic society.⁴³ Participation of research institutes in the area of security reform policies has been rather limited except few cases such as the involvement of civil society and other independent actors in the implementation of the Strategy of Community Policing in Albania. Parliamentary expertise on specific matters in relation to security sector is mainly provided by experts from government institutions. The government, a product of political majority who holds power in parliament, drafts the defense and security policies, obtains the approval from the majority of the parliament, and implements these policies through its government structures avoiding in the overall process the independent actors. Such system establishes a closed institutional system where the only opposing voice comes from the opposition in parliament undermining the role of civil society and sometimes even media.⁴⁴ As such overwhelmingly the laws and strategic documents are drafted from the executive itself and represented to parliament for approval without any prior consultations with CS.⁴⁵

The civilian control and oversight functions of security sector in Albania, as widely opposed by theories of third generation security sector reform, is mostly

⁴⁰ European Commission, 'Albania stabilization report 2003', Brussels 26. 3. 2003
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/com03_339_en.pdf, Accessed July 2009

⁴¹ Arbana Lora, "*Understanding Defense and Security In Correlation to Civil Society and Media*", Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2003,
http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache:IrHWUcCdeiwJ:https://intra.css.ethz.ch/civsoc/ev_belgrade_031114Arbana.pdf+%22civil+society%22+%22security+sector%22+albania&hl=en, Accessed July 2009

⁴² European Commission, '*Albania, progress report 2008*', Brussels 05.11.2008,
http://www.delalb.ec.europa.eu/files/albania_progress_report_2008.pdf, Accessed July 2009

⁴³ Cili Henri, '*Security and Defence – Civil Society and the Media*' in Trapans. J & Fluri. H, "*Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe*", Vol.1 & II, DCAF & Center for Civil-Military Relations, 2003, <http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21335&nav1=4>, Accessed July 2009

⁴⁴ Cili Henri, "*Security and Defence*" – *Civil Society and the Media*' in Trapans et al, '*Defence and Security Sector Governance and Reform in South East Europe*', Vol.1 & II, DCAF & Center for Civil-Military Relations, 2003, <http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21335&nav1=4>, Accessed July 2009

⁴⁵ Arbana Lora, "*Understanding Defense and Security In Correlation to Civil Society and Media*", Albanian Institute for International Studies, 2003,
http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache:IrHWUcCdeiwJ:https://intra.css.ethz.ch/civsoc/ev_belgrade_031114Arbana.pdf+%22civil+society%22+%22security+sector%22+albania&hl=en, Accessed July 2009

exercised by the monopole of governmental executive branch, bypassing the role of civil society which is viewed as an unalloyed “partner”⁴⁶. Nonetheless, this might not be enough in governing the Security Sector, due to political influence and hidden interests involved in the executive branch. In this framework it is important to value the capacity of civil society in shaping and monitor security sector and provide constructive input to the political debate on security policies.

Civil society empowerment in SSR concerns, first, the building up of civilian expertise and capacities to independently evaluate, challenge, or endorse governmental decisions and analyses of defense and security affairs and requirements on which policy is based. Expertise on some aspect of defense and security affairs may include university departments and academic institutes, professional associations, human rights and civil liberties groups, peace groups, interest groups, journalists, and non-governmental organizations. Certain CSOs can also closely examine government policy and approaches from their particular areas of expertise, drawing public and political attention to aspects and approaches that have been ignored, overlooked, or misunderstood⁴⁷ as well as conducting policy-relevant research and analysis of existing policies and identify ways to improve these in specific areas.

Additionally some civil society actors may seek to act as a type of watchdog over the state and so function as a force for accountability (requesting that officials inform about decisions concerning a particular issue and explain what they are doing, thereby attempting to hold them responsible for what they have decided), and may even challenge some of its policies and decisions.⁴⁸ The engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the security policy domain strongly contributes to accountability and good governance: CSOs act not only as a government ‘watchdog’ but also as an index of public contentment with the performance of institutions and agencies responsible for public security and related services.⁴⁹

In particular security sector reform must address citizen’s demands for security at the local level, using existing civil society organizations whose advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups representing the interests of local communities and giving voice to them such as women, the poor, the abused, or the underrepresented.⁵⁰ These actions can contribute to the formation and balance of the internal environment – economic, social, civil and military.

3.4. *International Community: A driving or impeding force*

⁴⁶ USAID, PROMOTING SECURITY SECTOR, PPC Issue Paper No. 11 April 2005

⁴⁷ Caparini, Marina & Fluri, Philipp, “*Civil Society Actors in Defence and Security Affairs*” in (Caparini et al), “*Civil Society and the Security Sector*”, DCAF, 2006,
<http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21660&nav1=4>

⁴⁸ Caparini, Marina & Fluri, Philipp, “*Civil Society Actors in Defence and Security Affairs*” in (Caparini et al), “*Civil Society and the Security Sector*”, DCAF, 2006

⁴⁹ Cole et al (ed), “*Public Oversight of the Security Sector*”, DCAF & UNDP, 2008,
<http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/index.cfm>

⁵⁰ Forman Johanna, “*Security Sector Reform: What Role for Civil Society?*” in “*Defence and Security Affairs in Caparini et al, Civil Society and the Security Sector, DCAF, 2006,*
<http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/details.cfm?lng=en&id=21660&nav1=4>

International community signifies a crucial actor in policy and decision making process in security sector in developing countries in general and Albania in particular. Especially in the framework of European integration, EU institutions have imposed various requirements and obligations towards aspiring countries on different issues related to national security. The pressure from European Union bodies through special representatives and daily reports has become a reference point for the past and present efforts to reform the security sector, by undermining sometimes the internal actors such as civil society and even governments. As such the priority areas as defined by the Stabilization and Association Agreement⁵¹ and the Stability Pact⁵² clearly exhibit a top-down approach to security reform. Moreover, in bypassing local concerns, it suggests that security is something imposed by the EU on its neighbors rather than a bottom up approach where local security concerns are reflected on respective strategies and policies.⁵³ This might constitute a handicap for the establishment and implementation of security sector policies in Albania.

The self-referential nature of reforms (mostly focused on border controls, migration control, and organized crime and trafficking) is more and more lending credence to contentions that the Western Balkans has been securitized by the EU. On the other hand there is little engagement with societal actors who might point out the tremendous distance between the actual everyday security concerns of citizens and the priorities of the EU and other international actors.⁵⁴ In this regards it is believed that reforms are insulating neighboring EU member-states from the possible effects of instability that might very well be caused by policies that ignore the actual security needs of inhabitants in Montenegro and Albania.⁵⁵

4. Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

-The process of formulation, design and implementation of the concept of national security strategy should be developed in accordance with specific assessment of the country's weight in the global structure of regional security

-Assessing and drafting of a "*national map of the risks of threats*" by establishing the degree of importance of each and the timeframe to cope with them.

-Albania for the size, resources and problems inherited from the past communist regime as well as the long transition, must now move towards a genuine concept of national security which should be in focus towards human security approach.

⁵¹ http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/glossary/terms/saa_en.htm

⁵² <http://www.stabilitypact.org/>

⁵³ Barry J. Ryan, "*The EU's Emergent Security-First Agenda: Securing Albania and Montenegro*", Security Dialogue 2009; 40; 311, <http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/40/3/311>

⁵⁴ Barry J. Ryan, "*The EU's Emergent Security-First Agenda: Securing Albania and Montenegro*", Security Dialogue 2009; 40; 311, <http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/40/3/311>

⁵⁵ Barry J. Ryan, "*The EU's Emergent Security-First Agenda: Securing Albania and Montenegro*", Security Dialogue 2009; 40; 311, <http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/40/3/311>

-Drafting and approval of the document of national security strategy should pass to the Parliamentary Commission through a qualified majority vote and by setting a clear timetable to periodically monitor and review the institutions responsible for its implementation. Based on their competencies and procedures the Commission can held hearings with interest groups and representatives of civil society, thus making this process more inclusive and accountable.

-New strategic concept of national security should provide a greater attention to critical infrastructure that is growing rapidly, including not only traditional infrastructure (road tunnels, bridges, oil pipelines, dams) but also networks of electronic databases which are important for the individuals security (fingerprint, blood groups, fiscal or banking information).