

*'Civil Society Capacity Building to Map and Monitor Security Sector Reform
in the Western Balkans, 2009-2011'*

Context Analysis & Chronology of the Security Sector Reform in Albania 1991-2009

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Abbreviations

| | |
|--------|--|
| C3I | Command, Control, Communication and Information |
| DP | Democratic Party |
| EU | European Union |
| FIU | Financial Intelligence Unit |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HCJ | High Council of Justice |
| ICS | Internal Control Service |
| ICITAP | International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IPP | Individual Partnership Programme |
| LP | Labour Party |
| MAP | Membership Action Plan |
| MIA | Ministry of Internal Affairs |
| MIS | Military Intelligence Service |
| MPO | Ministry of Public Order |
| NATO | NATO |
| NGO | non-governmental organizations |
| NIS | National Intelligence Service |
| PAMECA | Police Assistance Mission of the European Community to Albania |
| PfP | Partnership for Peace |
| PIU | Prisons' Intelligence Unit |
| GP | General Prosecutor |
| PSC | Private Security Companies |
| RTSH | Albanian Radio and Television |
| SAA | Stabilization and Association Agreement |
| SAP | Stabilization and Association Process |
| SIS | State Intelligence Services |
| SIU | Military Intelligence Services |
| SP | Socialist Party |
| SSR | Security Sector Reform |
| US | United States |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |

Introduction

This study analyses the context in which the Security Sector Reform (SSR) has taken place in Albania since the fall of the communist regime. It has been conceptualised in three main periods, based on the social, political and economic perspectives that featured each phase during the process of Security Sector Reform. In this perspective, the beginning of the **first period** coincides with the collapse of communist regime **in 1991 and ends with the 1997 crisis.**

Although Albania was never involved in the armed conflict and border reshuffle that featured the Former Yugoslav countries during the 90s, it largely suffered from backwardness and isolation, a legacy from the Cold War. This period was mostly characterised by the establishment of first generation reforms: the establishment of new institutions, structures, and chains of responsibility for the security sector. Nonetheless the process of first generation reform was not finalised, due to the crisis in 1997¹ which led to the collapse of the government. This represents the beginning of **the second period: from 1997 to 2000.**

The prevailing dominant context during the second period, (considering the 1997 crisis, harsh political struggle for power that culminated with governmental instability in 1998, and the subsequent Kosovo conflict) is framed in the post-authoritarian, and partially limited in the post-conflict patterns. This period can be branded as the turning point of embarking upon first generation reforms and the threshold of second generation reforms – those establishing effective structures for the democratic governance and oversight of security sectors. The **third and final period** efforts, namely the period **from 2000 until 2009**, seem to be more benefiting and realistic for the country considering the pace of SSR, contributing in the consolidation of the security sector institutions and governance.

This context analysis lies in a chronological framework and analyses each security sector actor in the light of what has shaped their attitude and their relations with other actors and the general context.

¹ During 1997 Albania experienced a devastating collapse of state institutions, plunging the country into anarchy which lasted few months. Almost all the security institutions dissolved, including military bases which were looted and thousands of weapons were handed to the civilian population adding some post-conflict elements.



PERIOD I: THE FALL OF COMMUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE OLD STATE STRUCTURE (1991-1997)

This section will analyse SSR during the 1991 to 1997 period. This period is marked by three main events: firstly, the collapse of communism and the organisation of the first multi-party elections in 1991, secondly, the 1992 election, which marked the ultimate split with communism, in terms of political forces being in power, and finally, the 1997 crisis which saw the state institutions and authority crumble, although for a short period of time. At first, this section will examine the general political context by focusing on the main internal and external forces and factors that contributed in shaping the reforms, and second, it will look at each of the security sector actors, what were the main features of their reform, and the role played by each.

Being primarily a political process (OECD DAC: 2007:28), and conditioned by the willingness of political parties and parliamentarians to conduct reforms (Born: 2002), the Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Albania commenced with the establishment of the first pluralist parliament. However the outcome of two successive elections that took place in 1991 and 1992 was of key importance because the nature of the political conflict that emerged in these years, along with the past legacy, defined the substance and the path of the SSR.

The security sector was highly politicised during communism and served as the main instrument of maintaining political power; therefore the reform of this sector was seen as the main challenge for the Opposition. The victory of Labour Party (LP)² in the first multiparty elections in 1991 was seen by the Opposition as being favoured by the security apparatus (Vickers and Pettifer: 1997). So for the Opposition the reform of the security sector became a key issue in the period until the 1992 elections. Although the Socialist Party (SP)³ had the majority in the parliament⁴ it was interested to split

² Albania's Communist Party, its official name was The Labour Party of Albania, won 67% of the seats

³ In June 1991 the Labour Party changed its name to the Socialist Party. The SP controlled 67 percent of the seats in the parliament



with the old security apparatus and supported the reform. The Opposition led by the Democratic Party (DP) played an important role in setting the agenda of the reforms and thus influencing their substance. Consequently, the period between the 1991 and 1992 elections saw the adoption of the majority of key legislation on the de-politicisation of the security sector and the reform of key security institutions such as the military, police, and intelligence agencies.

After the victory in the 1992 elections, the DP became the main driving force of the reforms. It enjoyed a large majority in Parliament⁵ and strong international support. The identity crisis and internal divisions of the Socialist Party (SP)⁶ allowed the DP to emerge as the dominant actor of the reforms. Driven by the concern of breaking the link between the security sector and the SP, which DP saw as the extension of the Communist Party, the reform path headed towards the wrong direction in two aspects. Firstly, the SP, as the only Opposition party, was entirely marginalised from the reform process. Secondly, the majority of the security sector personnel was removed and replaced by people with party loyalty to the DP (The Economist: 1993:56).

This domination of the political stage by the DP led gradually to a new form of authoritarianism with a system of free elections in place but without proper rule of law, separation of powers, and protection of basic liberties (Zakaria: 1997). The legacy of the cult of the individual led to a new form of personalisation of institutional power under the President, who controlled the all-powerful Defence Council. Political trials, media campaigns and police were used as tools against members of the political Opposition and others who expressed views different from the state (Human Rights Watch: 1996). This had a negative impact on the reforms as it undermined the professionalism of the security institutions and weakened dramatically the oversight role of the parliament.

Amongst external factors, the war in Yugoslavia played an important role, as it shaped US-Albania relations (The Economist: 1993:55). Albania became strategically important as an outpost for NATO and the US in particular, given its leading military role in the conflict.⁷ The US became Albania's second

⁵ DP won the March 1992 elections by a majority of 65.7

⁶ In June 1991 the Labour Party changed its name to the Socialist Party.

⁷ Until 1996 Albania opened its ports and airstrips for US military use and housed CIA spy planes for flights over Bosnia.



largest bilateral donor after Italy, providing economic, political and military aid. The need for a stable ally led the US to unreservedly support the ruling political force rather than supporting the political process (Abrahams: 1997). The US position was endorsed by many Western European capitals also, which considered that in the aftermath of communism, Albania needed a strong government (Pettifer & Vickers: 2007:7). This kind of support by the major international partners of Albania sent the wrong signal to the government, which embarked on further partisan policies and the marginalisation of the Opposition from the reform process. This position was modified only after the fraudulent elections of May 1996, which draw the criticism of the international community (The Economist: 1996:52).

In economic terms, although during this period Albania initiated the most free market policies among the former communist countries of Europe, and was considered a model country in this regard (Dirk. J: 2001), by 1995, a string of fraudulent pyramid schemes were established. Under the pressure of the upcoming elections, the government ignored IMF warnings and did not intervene to shut down these schemes, seeking to take electoral benefit by lending them state credibility (Jarvis 1999). When the pyramids collapsed by January 1997, the government, which was seen as politically corrupt, was perceived by the public as responsible for the financial losses too. The revolts that ensued led to the collapse of the state authority, the country fell into anarchy and armed civilians took cities under control. Normality was returned only after strong international mediation and the presence of a multinational military force to help restore order and assist in protecting the election process (Human Rights Watch: 1998).

Sectorial Analysis

Defence reform

The isolation policy pursued by the communist regime for over 30 years had devastating effects, both on the defence policies and the modernisation of equipments. So, the defence sector reform had to address many issues such as the redefinition of the defence concept, de-politicisation, force reduction, professionalisation, and the institutional and legal framework for ensuring democratic control.



The force reduction and reorganisation of the military bases advanced considerably in numbers, but indicators about the quality are hard to be drawn. The beginning of the war in Yugoslavia led to a re-examination of the force reduction priority as troops were deployed to the northern borders. The Yugoslav conflict had an effect on security and defence concepts as immediate military threats and territorial defence continued to be paramount in the perceptions of the public and the political elite. However, force reduction and the closure of military bases continued to take place, and in order to help address this issue, the Military Academy was shut down for two years. It reopened in 1995 when military forces personnel were reduced by forty percent (Vickers & Pettifer: 1997:217). Besides the need to suspend the input of new personnel in an organisation which was undergoing dramatic reductions, the interruption of the military education process was also meant to reform the structure and curricula of the Military Academy and adjust it to the new environment (Bazo: 2006).

As a result of international support, Albania became the first among the former East European communist countries to join the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Partnership for Peace in 1994, which despite the problems in the transition to democracy, had positive spill-over effects. The cooperation with NATO and individual member states such as the US, Turkey, Germany, Italy and Britain, was an important vehicle for reforms during this period. Participation in NATO exercises allowed military personnel, who did not have such experience in the past on account of Albania's isolation, to personally experience how armed forces operate in a democratic system (Çopani: 1996: 24-28). This was an important input for a better understanding of the new concept of the democratic control of the armed forces.

However, similarly to the reform in the civil service (The Economist: 1993:56), the force reduction process was politicised and the criteria for promoting qualified military personnel remained questionable as it was made based on political preferences (Bumçi: 2004). On the other hand, the declining image of the military in the immediate post-communist period, the meagre wages and the incentive to migrate all became an obstacle for the recruitment of quality personnel and the building of positive and well-functioning relations between civilian and military personnel (Çopani: 1998). One of the persisting problems remained the poor financial situation, as almost all the budget was spent for salaries, food and clothing for the personnel, with almost nothing left to cover training and operational costs. In the military budget for 1996,



98.4 percent was allocated for payments, food and clothing of the personnel, 1.6 percent for investment, and nothing for operational needs (Çopani: 1998).

Another flaw of the reforms in this period was that the police forces and the intelligence service remained as part of the armed forces, similar to the system seen during the communist regime. As a result, the military, the police, and the intelligence service were interchangeably used without clear division of roles. Gradually, the intelligence service took over as the most important actor and contributed on how the reforms in the military and the police were shaped. In addition, in the position of the head of the Defence Council the President could make important decisions that were not always compatible with the nature and legal mandate the security institutions.⁸ Striking evidence was the Presidential appointment of the head of NIS as the top official in charge of restoring law and order during the 1997 crisis, instead of the Chief of the General Staff. (Luarasi: 1997)

Police reform

Given the alleged involvement of the security and police in influencing the outcome of the 1991 elections, reform of Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), which included all internal security and police forces, became a priority for the Opposition. In July 1991, just four months after the first elections, legislation was enacted to reform the MIA. The dominant concept of the reform consisted of the separation of security and intelligence activities from police and public order activities. Thus the State Security Directorate became the National Intelligence Service, the Frontier Guard was placed under the Ministry of Defence, and the People's Police structures were reformed to become the core of the Ministry of Public Order (MPO) (Bala: 2008). Given that the reforms in this period consisted of reshaping security institutions on the basis of democratic models, the separation of intelligence and police functions was considered in the right direction.

The reformed MPO was composed of the Public Order Police, the Criminal Police, the Prompt Intervention Forces, the Police of Surveillance of Important Objects, the National Guard, and the Judiciary Police, which was established by Presidential Decree in 1995 after the amendment of the Penal

⁸The Defence Council held decision making powers which were compulsory for the government.



Code (Luarasi: 1997). Nonetheless, after the 1992 elections, police reform was not considered so important and was not pursued and structured in clear terms (Mobekk: 2005). This was different from the situation seen in the military, where the external dimension of NATO integration contributed in shaping the path of reforms. Instead, the model of the police reform was internally developed and was therefore influenced by short term agendas. The legacy of the communist period, back when the police's key mission was state security, had an impact on the ability of the police to adapt to the needs of the new era. The position within the armed forces was another factor that slowed down the adaptation process. As a result of the lack of accountability mechanisms and the prevalence of political interference, the police was used as a tool to intimidate political adversaries and was at the centre of many serious human rights breaches throughout this period (Human Rights Watch: 1996). This weakened the legitimacy of the police and eroded its public support.

The way the police was used by the government had serious implications on its professionalism and policing concept. Hence, during the 1997 crisis, the police not only failed to deal with it professionally, but also suffered heavy damages as it became a target of the rioters.

Para-police structures

As a result of the decentralisation of the functions of the MIA, several para-police structures were established during this period, namely the Fire Police under the MPO, the Military Police (Law Nr.7508:1991) under the Ministry of Defence, the Customs and Tax Police under the Ministry of Finances (Law Nr.7938 & Decree Nr.7463:1991), the Construction Police under the Ministry for Construction, Housing, and Territory Planning (Law Nr.7752: 1993), and the Forests Police under the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Law No.7623: 1992). However, the efficiency and efficacy of these para-police units remained questionable due to poor recruitment procedures, training, and resources. Being small and fragmented units placed under the responsibility of several ministries, they had to continuously rely on the state police for support in performing their tasks. (Hroni: 2007)

Intelligence services reform

During the communist period, the entire intelligence apparatus was placed



under the Ministry of Interior. The 1991 reform package intended to decentralise the existing intelligence apparatus by establishing four separate intelligence services: The National Intelligence Service (NIS), including both domestic and foreign intelligence, the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) under the Ministry of Defence, the Counter-Intelligence Service of the Organs of the Public Order under the Ministry of Public Order, and the Prisons Service under the Ministry of Justice (Bala: 2008). This decentralisation was meant to improve professionalism by allocating them based on each institution's needs but the domination of the intelligence community by the NIS prevented the development of the other services during this period.

As mentioned above, the personnel-driven reform led to the dismissal of 98 percent of the personnel of the NIS. Subsequently, the service was staffed with people based on their party loyalty. Gradually, the NIS was turned into a political instrument under the control of the President (Vickers & Pettifer: 1997:131) and was used against political opponents, journalists, and independent intellectuals.

Just like the police, it remained as a part of the armed forces and enjoyed executive powers including right to detention and interrogation. These powers turned the NIS into a fearsome secret police, which was very influential over the other segments of the security sector and the government.

Reform of the judiciary

Concerning reform of the judiciary, the new legislation sanctioned the principles of the independence over the judicial power, obligation for trials to be open to the public, and respect for international conventions. In order to protect their independence, judges and prosecutors were granted immunity from prosecution. The authority for appointment and dismissal of the judges and the prosecutors was granted to the High Council of Justice. The judiciary was organised on three levels: the First Instance Courts, the Appeal Court, and the Cassation Court, as the highest judicial system authority (Law No.7574: 1992).

In order to protect and guarantee the Constitution and to provide for correct interpretation, the Constitutional Court was established. New legislation on human rights was enacted, including the ratification of the Eu-



ropean Convention on Protection of Basic Freedoms and Human Rights. Penal legislation was improved with a new Penal Code and Military Penal Code. However, despite the progress in the legislative framework and the structural and institutional reorganisation, the judiciary remained subject to interference by the executive and used for political purposes (HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH: 1993). In addition to political interference, the judiciary system began to suffer from corruption, an unknown phenomena during communism.

Private security companies

Liberalisation and the emergence of a free market economy inevitably led to the rules of demand and supply applying to the security sector as well. To reflect this new reality, legislation was enacted in as early as 1993 regulating the activity of the private security companies (PSC). The legislation provided for basic requirements such as the limit of personnel that PSC could recruit per district, the criteria for personnel recruitment and the authorities responsible for licensing and controlling their activity (Law No7696: 1993 & Law No7985: 1995). The PSC offered security services to private banks, international business, international institutions, construction sites, and private media, as well as close protection of persons. Such companies have reportedly contributed in improving public safety, particularly in crime prevention. Nonetheless, this sector was not spared from politicisation either, especially in the provision of licences to individuals that were close to the ruling party (Rynn et al: 2005).

The media and civil society

The democratic process set the stage for the emergence of the independent media, as well as independent interest groups. During this period, the media in particular but civil society organisations as well, began to grow, mainly as pressure groups, but without succeeding in becoming stakeholders of the democratic process (Çili: 2005). Pressure on the media and independent groups, including imprisonment, limited the scope of the civil society organisations and the media, which focused mostly on encroach with democratic standards (Amnesty International Albania: 1994; 1995; 1996; 1997).



PERIOD 2: RETURN TO NORMALITY AND EURO-ATLANTIC ORIENTATION OF REFORMS (1997 - 2000)

This section will analyse the period from 1997 to 2000. The failure of the government and the security institutions to peacefully address the 1997 crisis revealed the weakness of the reforms in the security sector. As a result, the crisis itself and its consequences became a turning point for Albania's course of reforms. This period, although short, was marked by events of great significance, such as:

- The approval of the Constitution, which had become a thorny political issue since the fall of communism
- The murder of one of the founders of the DP and Member of Parliament at the time
- A failed coup which raised further the already high political tensions
- The Kosovar refugee crisis and NATO intervention
- The provision of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) to join NATO
- The formalisation of the relationship with the EU through the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP).

After five years in Opposition, the SP came to power after the early elections organised in June 1997. As a result of the destructive effects of the crisis, the immediate challenges of the government were to normalise the economic and social order. The political situation remained very tense as the DP refused to recognise the outcome of the elections and the legitimacy of all the institutions deriving from the parliament's powers. It refused to participate in the constitutional drafting process, and its blocking practices included street protests, boycott of state institutions, and hunger strikes (East European Constitutional Review: 1998). The murder of one of the most prominent DP figures and the attempted coup that ensued was yet another test for the security sector institutions. The failure to deal with the crisis led to the resignation of the government, but the SP controlled a large majority in the Parliament and managed to form a new government.



Despite the political instability, the Constitution was adopted in November 1998, and became the key reference for the future reform. The Constitution provided for a more balanced allocation of powers, alternating to a system with a weaker President vis a vis the Parliament, the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister. The President remained the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and head of the National Security Council, which was turned into an advisory body, replacing the Defence Council. Almost all the legislation regulating the activity of security sector institutions was revised during this period in order to bring it in line with the Constitution. However, the Opposition maintained a firm position against the reforms, which had an impact in slowing down the implementation of the reform of the police and the judiciary, in particular. The personnel turnover saw the return of many people dismissed during the 1992 reforms, particularly in the police and intelligence services, leading the Opposition to oppose the reforms under the premise that the Socialists were attempting to restore the communist-era apparatus.

With regard to external influences, NATO's involvement in the Kosovo conflict played an important role in both the substance and the speed of reforms. The effects of the 1997 crisis in Albania and the looming Kosovo crisis led NATO and allied countries to rapidly intervene to provide Albania with assistance. As a result, while Operation Allied Force in Kosovo was still ongoing, the NATO Washington Summit provided Albania with the Membership Action Plan (MAP), becoming the first Western Balkan country to receive the MAP.⁹ This event, together with the launch of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) set Albania's course of reforms towards full Euro-Atlantic integration.

Sectorial Analysis

Defence reform

During the analysis of first period, we saw that the attempts at defence reform failed to develop a modern defence model and suffered from a lack of democratic oversight. Furthermore, the 1997 riots inflicted serious damage

⁹ The other MAP countries were Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia.



on military hardware and infrastructure. As a result, the reform had to address both issues: to develop a new defence concept and to restore the lost capabilities, which even before the crisis were in need of modernisation.

Immediately after the new government was formed, it officially requested assistance from NATO, which reacted positively and provided Albania with an Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) (Solana: 1997). The IPP consisted of two pillars and was renewed each year (NATO Update: 1999). The first pillar referred to the NATO assistance addressing conceptual, structural and technical issues. The second pillar was aimed at channelling bilateral assistance from allies and partner nations in a coordinated way, by establishing a special forum of coordination named the Clearing House on Albania (Katsirdakis: 1998: 22–26). In June 1998, NATO opened the NATO/Partnership for Peace Cell in Albania in order to coordinate implementation of the IPP (NATO: 1998).

In January 2000, documents such as the National Security Strategy, and a Defence Policy were approved by the Parliament. These documents reflected the progress made since 1997 and adopted a new defence and security model, setting the objectives for structural reforms to be conducted over a ten year period. In this phase, the reform in the armed forces was concentrated in structural re-organisation and adjustment of military command and the armed forces, increasing their operational abilities and efficiency by developing an essential Command, Control, Communication and Information (C3I) (Abazi: 2004).

Police reform

The police reform was another important issue to be addressed after the 1997 crisis. With the end of the crisis, the scope of police reform was to develop a new policing concept and to create a modern police force based on democratic models. However, political disagreement, the large number of illegally held weapons in the hands of the population, pressure from organised crime and corruption, made the police reform slow and problematic. Violent incidents involving armed gangs and the police were common (Human Rights Watch: 1999). As a result of the poor training and logistical problems during the period 1997-2000, more than 100 police officers were murdered (Smith: 2000). After the adoption of the Law on the State Police, which was passed in December 1999 (Law No.8553: 1999), the Ministry of Public Order began restructuring the police force. The law detached the po-



lice from the armed forces and oriented it towards the community policing concept. These efforts at police reform received international and bilateral assistance, which consisted on the drafting and implementation of the new law on police, enhancing border management, increasing capabilities to combat organised crime, improving recruitment procedures, and training new police chiefs (Mobekk: 2005). However, the police remained subject to contestations and criticism by the media and public opinion for its corruption, lack of professionalism and political bias, as all governments lacked the political will to refrain from interfering in police matters, particularly using personnel turnover as a tool in this regard.

Para-police structures

The reform process during this period led to the creation of new para-police structures such as the Prisons Police - responsible for the security of prisons and the implementation of their internal regulations - which reported to the Ministry of Justice (Law Nr.8321: 1998), the Construction Police, specialised in the implementation of laws in the field of construction and city planning (Law No.8408: 1998), the Municipality and Commune Police, established to guarantee order and welfare of public works within the territory of the municipalities and communes, complementing functions not performed by other policing state authorities (Law No.8224: 1997), the Electricity Police, specialised in the monitoring of the implementation of legislation on management and use of electric energy (Law No.8637: 2000).

Intelligence services reform

During the 1997 crisis, NIS was unprecedentedly tasked by the President to lead the operations for restoring law and order. This decision made NIS assets and personnel the main target of rioters in several districts, resulting in serious infrastructure damage and even loss of life. In order to control the situation, the transitional Government¹⁰ suspended NIS activity and blocked its funds (UNHCR: 1998). In order to address the reform of the intelligence sector, the Parliament adopted a new law, which detached the NIS from the armed forces and established it as a purely intelligence organisation with no executive powers (Law on NIS: 1998). Except for traditional

¹⁰ A National Reconciliation Government was established in March 1997 after the DP government resigned.



intelligence tasks, the new legislation provided for intelligence gathering operations on new threats including terrorism, drug manufacturing, illegal trafficking, and organised crime.¹¹ The legislation provided also for the establishment of a dedicated committee for the parliamentary oversight of the intelligence service (Law Nr.8391: 1998).

This new legislation and the more balanced executive control by both the President and the Prime Minister led to an improvement of the public image of the NIS. Its performance was particularly appreciated by the public during 1998 when it shut down several Islamic terrorist cells that were operating in Albania. However, the NIS was not spared from political pressure. The Opposition alleged that NIS was behind the murder of one of the DP's Members of Parliament in 1998 and put a lot of pressure in demanding for the dismissal of its Director. On the other hand, the performance of the NIS was under pressure from the rivalry between the President and the PM, who fought over its control (Albania Update: 1999). In the framework of military intelligence reform, a J2 Directorate was established within the Armed Forces, with the mission to produce military intelligence (Bala: 2008).

The reform of the judiciary

Regarding the reform of the judiciary, there were no major changes except for establishing an Ombudsman's office, as provided by the Constitution. A law regulating the Ombudsman's activities was passed on February 1999 (Law Nr.8454: 1998) and the first Ombudsman was elected in February 2000. After the adoption of the Constitution, which established the main basis of the judicial system, a new law on Judicial Powers was passed by the Parliament in December 1998 (Law 8436: 1998), in order to bring it in line with the Constitution. However, political influences and corruption remained a substantial threat to the functioning of the judiciary (American Bar Association: 2001).

Private security companies

As a result of the general insecurity caused by the 1997 crisis, the large num-

¹¹ The mandate NIS according to the previous law was to collect intelligence on anti-constitutional activities, protection of territorial integrity, espionage and sabotage, and so on, including all crimes foreseen by the penal code.



ber of armed criminal gangs, and the large amount of weapons possessed by private citizens, the very concept of security provision and threat perception was modified. So, for businesses in particular, the dependence on private security companies increased, mainly dealing with provision of personal and property security. As a result many unregistered private security companies operated in this period (Holtom, P. et al.: 2005).

The media and the civil society

The media and civil society received a boost as a result of the new liberal framework of the Constitution, which provided for freedom of association for any lawful purpose. Legislation adopted from 1997 to 1999, not only lifted restrictions on the media by stating that “the press is free,” but also sanctioned the establishment of legislation, for example, which facilitated private broadcasting and provided for a politically-diverse National Council of Radio-Television, which regulated and supervised broadcasting (Law Nr.8410:1998). In May 2000, Albania Radio and Television (RTSH) became independent public entities. Consequently, two private TV broadcasters, TV Klan and TV Arberia, also received licenses.

Commercial internet access providers began offering service from 1998-1999 onwards. As of 2000, however, the number of users was still very limited (Freedom House: 2002: A).

Despite the fact that the Law on Access to Official Documents, adopted by Parliament in June 1999 (Law Nr.8503: 1999), was aimed at increasing transparency towards the public, public access to official documentation proved to be quite difficult (Lora: 2003).

This particular time period (1998-2000) not only demarcated the ascendancy of electronic media, which provided better public access to information, but also underscored the fact that the reliability of the information may have been biased and arguably compromised by private interests and political influences.

With regard to developments in the Civil Society Sector, the organisational capacity of NGOs continued to remain weak and reliant upon foreign donor funding (Freedom House: 2002:B).



PERIOD 3: CONSOLIDATION OF SECURITY SECTOR INSTITUTIONS AND OVERSIGHT (1997 - 2000)

The third period regarding security sector reform in Albania encompasses the 2000-2009 time period. During this period, SSR focused on the consolidation of pre-existing (as early as 1998) reforms, on the one hand and the initiation of new ones, on the other.

The recovery of the democratic institutions and the rule of law after the crisis of 1997, together with steady improvements related to the NATO and European Union (EU) integration processes, led to another era of SSR in Albania. The Zagreb Summit (2000) and the Thessalonica Summit (2003) collectively facilitated and set the course for the Stabilisation Association Process¹², as well as the agenda for subsequent European Union integration. In February 2003, the EU initiated the negotiation process for the Stabilisation and Association Agreement¹³. The new government in 2005, under the direction of the Democratic Party, resulted in reforms and the signing of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the EU and Albania (during the June 2006 - April 2009 period). The successful implementation of the Stabilisation Association Process coupled with the signing of the Stabilisation Association Agreement Albania, demarcated the preliminary phase towards EU integration.

The ethnic conflict in neighbouring Kosovo (1999), and subsequently in Macedonia (2001) resulted in having security issues related to external threats added to the agenda. Nevertheless, the succeeding years demonstrated that security risks were generally derived from domestic issues. The revision of the National Security Strategy (2004) and the National Military

¹² The stabilisation and association process is the framework for EU negotiations with the Western Balkan countries, all the way to their eventual accession. It has three aims: stabilising the countries and encouraging their swift transition to a market economy; promoting regional cooperation; eventual membership of the EU

¹³ Stabilisation and Association Agreements is part of the EU Stabilisation and Association Process. Stabilisation and Association Agreements (SAA) have been implemented with various Balkan countries (see below) which explicitly include provisions for future EU membership of the country involved.



Strategy (2005) collectively confirmed that major security threats did not stem anymore from neighbouring countries, but from the lack of political stability and poor economic development within Albania, prolonging the process of transition (Islami: 2007).

The main aspect behind the process of reforms in SSR during this period has been related to the political context. The contentious political landscape, as suggested by the constant inter-party struggles, remained an omnipresent feature of this period. This situation is illustrated in the conclusions of OSCE, in regards to the parliamentary and local elections, which failed to achieve European standards (OSCE: 2000-2009). In this framework, the Opposition parties (regardless of their political orientation) generally declined to support security sector-related reforms initiated by the governing majorities, due to lack of political cooperation which essentially prolonged the process of reform.

Due to a polarised and conflictive political milieu, the work of the Parliament was often dominated by short-term political agendas. Contentious parliamentary debate and political polarisation diverted attention from important issues related to the efforts at reform. Approval of new laws was often delayed due to disputes focusing on narrow party interests or expedited without proper deliberation or parliamentary dialogue (European Commission: 2007). Furthermore, political deadlock hampered the Parliament's efforts to deal with important reform issues, particularly those which required qualified majority (3/5) and consequently broader political consensus (such as that of the judiciary). Despite improving legislation, the implementation of democratic control by Parliament over the security sector institutions remained limited. The reason being that there was a lack of debate among the parliamentarians, as well as between parliament and the government, combined with a lack of experience and expertise among parliamentary and governmental staff (Van Doel: 2004).

Firm political cooperation emerged during 2006-2008. The Parliament passed a number of important laws to approximate the Albanian legislation to the EU acquis (European Commission: 2008). In April 2008, the consensus between the two major parties (DP & SP) in the Parliament was finalised with several constitutional amendments, just before the general elections. Such changes, although believed to provide a better representation and political stability for the future, had negative consequences for the institutional power balance (Venice Commission: 2009). With the new amend-



ments, the neutrality of the position the President as an independent body was affected. Due to the new amendments, the President could be elected by a simple majority in Parliament. This caused the strengthening of the Prime Minister's position, while affecting the impartiality of the General Prosecutor (Shkempi: 2008). These amendments were contested by the majority of smaller parties (who represented national minorities) primarily because their political relevance declined.¹⁴ The agreement between SP and DP to amend the Constitution, in order to modify the electoral system and the re-composition of the Central Electoral Commission, was considered by the smaller parties leaders 'as a 'political collusion' between the two main parties to disadvantage them (Gazeta Shqiptare: 2008).

During this period, differences between parties have been more a matter of the personalities of the leaders of the parties than of serious programmatic or ideological differences between the two (Freedom House: 2006). The particularly polarised political environment was not limited to tension between left- and right-wing main parties, but was also extended to intra-party politics and alliances. During the period from 2001 to 2005, for example, four governments replaced each other; underscoring political tension within the left wing coalition. The contentious political dynamic was reflected in public opinion polls. It is noteworthy that 83 % (of the respondents) identified politics as the main source of conflict within the country, and cited political instability as a serious detriment to the national interests (and security) of the Republic of Albania (UNDP-AIIS: 2004). Such trends had a direct impact on the quality and notably slow progress of security sector reforms during the first half of this period.

Domestic aspects of the reform

The process of SSR was accompanied by substantial staff reallocation, enabling political forces in power to control the institutions by recruiting people from their respective political parties (Bumçi: 2004). This particular political dynamic permanently affected the performance of security sector institutions. One of the significant features of the transition in this period in Albania was the control of state institutions by the political parties - which in turn were aligned

¹⁴ Most of the smaller parties did not pass the needed quorum to enter the parliament. Therefore, the parliament was dominated by larger political parties namely: DP-48.5, SP-46.4%, others-5%.(CEC:2009)



with the government (Gumi: 2004). The parliamentary elections of 2005, won by the right-wing alliance, resulted in a noticeably smooth transitory phase in the security sector reform process. The post-2005 election period was demarcated by a relatively peaceful rotation of power, which provided continuity of the reforms initiated by the former government led by the SP.

The replacement of the central government with the right-wing coalition led by the DP brought new trends in the process of SSR. Nonetheless, the initiatives in the SSR during this period were overwhelmingly symptomatic of the new Prime Minister's decision-making skills. The prime minister was formerly the leader of the Democratic Party (the Opposition party for the previous 8 years). Many routine technical decisions were taken by the Prime Minister, and ultimately had the effect of prolonging the reform process (European Commission: 2006). Throughout this time period, the Prime Minister aimed to increase the number of institutions directly accountable to him, such as the Council of Ministers. This was reflected in the revision of the legal framework, where the Council of Ministers initiated the process of revised laws, and constitutional amendments that were supported in the parliament by the right-wing MPs. This centralisation process had the result of reinforcing the Prime Minister's power.

During this period, the PM designed tangible actions in regards to existing security issues, such as illegal trafficking and corruption. New legislative amendments were devoted to short-term results such as the Action Plan on Corruption Prevention 2002-2003 (Dec. 339:2002). Other measures focused on improving the cooperation between the governing institutions and bodies in the fight against organised crime, drugs, and human trafficking. Nevertheless, the urgency and sometimes the excessive nature of the actions raised questions with respect to the abuse of power and the lack of sustainability of these policies from a long-term perspective. Some legislative measures were opposed by the media and the civil society claiming that these measures were infringing civil freedoms. In other scenarios, legal cases were rejected by the Constitutional Court on the basis of the violation of individual rights or the infringement of the independence of state institutions¹⁵ (European Commission: 2006).

¹⁵ During the period 2005-2009, there were nine cases in which the Council of Minister's decisions were rejected. Specifically, there were two laws, two decisions of CM concerning private companies, and five cases pertaining to "unconstitutional dismissals" of high officials from local governance. Source: Constitutional Court



Despite ongoing political dialogue and consensus between the big parties (who championed security sector reforms), there was a deadlock in the aftermath of the 2009 Parliamentary elections. The Socialist Party refused to enter the Parliament (on the basis of alleged manipulation of the voting process), and continued to demand early elections and an investigation of the voting process. Such a scenario had the impact of stalling security sector reforms, especially in regards to the laws that require specified majority in the voting process.

Foreign Policy aspect

An important actor in supporting and promoting Security Sector Reform during the overall period has been the international community. In contrast to the first and second period where the US had been the main actor to influence the foreign policy aspects, during this period, Albania has gradually been more oriented towards the European Union policies. On the other hand, the US can also be considered as an important actor in the process of SSR. While military reforms have been supervised and assisted by NATO, the reforms in the judiciary, police, and other actors have been supported and monitored by the EU and US agencies. An aspect of this dynamic can be highlighted by the pace of the financial support for security sector reforms from the EU and the US. The EU budget for Albania, within the two components, Transition Assistance and Institution Building and Cross-border Cooperation, increased by 62.95% from 2007 to 2012. In 2007, the amount of the budget was USD 20 million in contrast to EUR 61 million from the European Union (European Commission: 2007-2012). On the other hand, the budget dedicated to Albania from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was reduced by 53.9%, during the period 2004-2007 (USAID: 2004-2007).

Nonetheless during this period, the US has provided strong political support for reforms in the security sector. The partnership with US in the field of security was essential during the Kosovo crisis, and was further strengthened after the events of 11 September 2001. Albania since the beginning supported U.S. policies in the global war against terrorism by freezing terrorist assets, shutting down NGOs with possible links to terrorist financing, expelling extremists, and providing military troops for the U.S.-led actions in Afghanistan and Iraq (Binaj: 2004). On May 2003, with the support of the US, three NATO partner countries - Albania, Croatia and Macedonia – col-



lectively signed the Adriatic Charter, a military partnership (US Department of State: 2009). The member parties were committed to strengthening their individual and cooperative efforts to intensify domestic reforms that enhanced security and stability within the Western Balkans region.

Due to the European integration agenda, there have been measurable results in the short-term period. For example, recommendations stemming from EU and other influential international bodies have been formulated and implemented as national strategies. Nonetheless, such initiatives have had a self-referential nature, mostly being designed by the international community, and sometimes overshadowing and undermining local needs and capacities (Ryan: 2009:311). This has resulted in a difficult implementation process and the adoption of many strategic documents which lack authority and often are not implemented.

During this phase, the EU approach towards Albania has mainly focused on two paths: (1) *the reform of democratic institutions* and (2) *the approximation of legislation and the implementation of the aligned legal acts*. Due to internal political stability, the international community in many cases has aimed to serve as an instrument of balance and mediation between the parties.

In some cases, Albania has been under the pressure to embrace United States policies and simultaneously pursue European Union membership. In 2003, an agreement regarding the non-surrender of American soldiers to the International Criminal Court, signed between Albania and USA, sparked criticism (US State Department: 2009). Consequently, this dynamic had an adverse impact on relations with the EU primarily because the agreement was not in compliance with EU guidelines pertaining to bilateral immunity agreements (European Commission: 2007).

Sectorial Analysis

Defence reform

The reform in the defence sector was driven by the NATO integration agenda. During this particular period, defence sector reforms advanced faster compared to other sectors (Donais: 2005), primarily because there was a prevailing political consensus with respect to NATO-related integrated re-



forms. Such an approach was reflected in the increase of the defence budget by 0.1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) per year—as a means of reaching the NATO standards of 2% of national GDP by 2010. Due to the political commitment, such a goal was achieved in 2008.

In the quest to define the course of the reforms in the defence sector and simultaneously prepare for NATO membership, the Albanian Parliament (August 2002) adopted the “National Military Strategy”, which replaced the “Supporting Defence Policy” approved in 2000 together with the National Security Strategy. The National Military Strategy (NMS) entailed re-estimating internal and external security environments, restructuring the Armed Forces, and acknowledging that NATO membership was the most important objective of the reform (National Military Strategy: 2002). The strategy was mostly based on the “Action Plan of NATO Accession” and the “Long-term Plan of Armed Forces”, aiming to create a small and effective professional army in accordance with NATO standards (IDM: 2006). In order to better adapt to the developing security sector challenges, the National Military Strategy was revised twice. In May 2005, for example, the NMS re-assessed the internal and external security environment, and essentially restructured the Armed Forces. In December 2007, the NMS intended to upgrade basic concepts of the Armed Forces from the traditional independent defence system, to a collective defence system, in accordance with the commitments stemming from Albania’s prospective NATO membership (which came to fruition in April 2009).

Police reform

In regards to police reform, this period was notably demarcated by short-sightedness and an absence of long-term policies. In this regard, the revision of the National Security Strategy (Law No.9322: 2004) emphasised asymmetric threats such as crime and terrorism, and also provided for a more comprehensive police reform. It can be argued that in the last 10 years, the state police force has undergone significant improvements and has had emergent influence in the security sector. The consolidation of the Ministry of Public Order and the Ministry of Local Government into the Ministry of Interior (2005), was intended to improve conditions for cooperation between the police and the local administration in combating the manufacturing and trafficking of drugs. In this regard, the authority and competences of the Ministry of Interior were thereby strengthened, and it thus became an influential agent



throughout the security sector reform process.

Due to stagnant levels of police performance, coupled with new objectives stipulated in the Association Stabilization Agreement, the “Strategy of State Police 2007-2013” (Ministry of Interior: 2007), was adopted in 2007. This strategy laid the foundations for the practice of community policing, which set one of the future priorities in the Police reform in Albania. Due to increased sophistication of criminal activity in the preceding decade and the need to tackle it, the Strategy of State Police set new objectives targeting money laundering, finance and economic-oriented crimes, organised crime, terrorism, drug-related and cyber-related crimes, trafficking, and protecting witnesses (Ministry of Interior: 2007). On the other hand, some notable achievements with respect to organised crime were made at the regional and international levels. Albanian police authorities signed a strategic agreement with Europol (Europol: 2008) providing closer cooperation and a better exchange of information with foreign partner organisations.

Within this framework, the National Police Strategy (NPS) prioritised the adoption of the “community policing” model, and therefore, recognised and mitigated the gap between the police and the Albanian public. The driving forces behind these reforms were international organisations such as *ICITAP* and *PAMECA*. Under the direction of the NPS, the “Action Plan on Implementation of Community Policing 2008-2010” was adopted to raise the trust, legitimacy, and effectiveness of police structures. However, the implementation of the reforms is taking place rather slowly due to an incomplete legal framework, a poor and nascent ‘community policing’ heritage, lack of training, and low levels of cooperation between police, local, and central governmental forces (Baka: 2009).

In an effort to clearly delineate the division of labour between the State Police and the Ministry of Interior, the “Law on State Police” (No.8553: 1999) was revised by the Parliament in 2007. Nonetheless, the process sparked disagreements from members of civil society groups and the ombudsperson, who were excluded from the consultations of drafting the new law. Civil society groups requested that the law should be revised since there might be prospective inconsistencies with this particular law, international standards, and the Albanian legal framework (NOSA: 2006). Regardless of the objections raised by these groups, the law was approved by Parliament, signifying the beginning of the implementation process.



Intelligence Services

With the exception of pre-existing State Intelligence Services – SIS¹⁶ and Military Intelligence Services – SIU (Law Nr.9074: 2003), other intelligence agencies such as the Internal Controlling Service – ICS (Law Nr.10002: 2008) – under the Ministry of Interior, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) under the Ministry of Finance, and the Prison Intelligence Unit (PIU) under the direction of the Ministry of Justice were established. It is unclear whether such a proliferation of agencies was a genuine effort to increase the intelligence or an attempt to circumvent SIS which was considered to be somewhat independent from the executive.

The politicisation of the services during the past periods, and the insufficient democratic oversight of the process were two key elements which negatively impacted the transformation process of the intelligence services during this period. Allegations of interference by SIS in the electoral process led to the dismissal of the head of the service following the 2002 Presidential elections. A post-election investigation by the Parliament into the activities of SIS was followed by a series of legislated measures designed to further professionalize the service and to preclude its involvement in partisan policy. The right-wing government that came into power after 2005 issued public declarations in support of structural changes regarding the dependency of the SIS from central government.

The Democratic Party's vision to reform the National Intelligence Service under the authority of Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs was followed by the adoption of some changes in the law of Internal Controlling Services (Law Nr.10002: 2008). Consequently, this structure was transferred under the direct authority of the Ministry of Interior and essentially had the effect of giving more competences for controlling the activity of police. This raised concerns that this institutional re-organisation was intended to increase political control of important bodies engaging in sensitive intelligence activity (Shqip: 2008). On the other hand, the revision of the "Law on Telecommunication Interception" (Law Nr.10172: 2009) basically granted the privilege of conducting telecommunication interception to all the police/intelligence agencies created by law—a privilege that, in the past, was granted only to the General Prosecution and SIS. Such actions were opposed by civil society and the Opposition.

¹⁶The name of "National Intelligent Services" was changed to "State Intelligent Services" as a result of Law Nr. Nr.8479, date 29.4.1999 "On some changes to Law Nr. 8391."



These groups, for example, were concerned about the prospect of the misuse and abuse of these agencies by political elites (Rapushi: 2008).

Generally, effective oversight and management of intelligence activities is continuously limited by a long tradition of secrecy regarding the functioning of intelligence services (Dempsey: 2009). In this regard, the Ombudsperson has rarely dealt with issues of abuse of power by the intelligence services, and therefore, has never reported on their activities. In addition, the intelligence services remained exempt from public scrutiny pertaining to transparency or public access to their modes of work, sources of non-classified and classified information, structures, job descriptions, names, official titles, salaries, and numbers of personnel. Only the Parliamentary Commissions have the right to scrutinise the expenditure of the budget and inquire about the nature of various intelligence operations. With the encroaching threat from organised crime and the recognition of terrorism as a global and national threat, the Council of Ministers (2004) defined the priorities, fields and levels of cooperation of the SIS with intelligence services of other states (Council of Ministers: 2004).

While SIS has been the main focus of reforms in Albania, similar efforts have been made to reform the Military Intelligence Service (MIS)--whose activities, in contrast to the SIS, have been less a subject of debate due to the field due to limited competences only in the field of defence. In 2003, the new law "On Military Intelligence Service" (Law No.9074: 2003), defined the mission and roles of MIS. Moreover, this particular law clarified the relationship with SIS which had been a controversial issue in the past. Albanian membership in NATO, the Partnership for Peace, and active participation in the global efforts against terrorism resulted in a reorganisation of the Military Intelligence Service (Bala: 2008). Albania's nascent NATO membership will most likely have a significant impact on SSR and intelligence reform. In this regard, it is expected that Albanian intelligence organisations, both civilian and military, will function effectively in a collaborative role with fellow NATO members (Dempsey: 2009).

Judiciary

The Judiciary sector underwent much public scrutiny primarily because it lacked independence, engaged in a faulty and biased decision-making process, and was corrupted by politics. The Judiciary, which was often considered the branch of the state which was impervious to corruption, became one of the most corrupted sectors (TIA: 2006:13). Despite the fact that cases



of judges being prosecuted for corruption were rare, in 2007 over 60% of the public reportedly had little or no trust in the judiciary (SIDA: 2007).

Furthermore, the rule of law was jeopardised by the fact that the General Prosecutor and the judiciary's decisions were susceptible to politics, corruption, and personal gain. The stagnant progress of justice reform has attracted public scrutiny throughout this period. However, measures undertaken by the government to combat corruption in the judiciary have led to ongoing conflict between the Executive and the Judiciary. During this period, the tradition of politically-motivated dismissals of General Prosecutors by the Parliament continued, weakening the autonomy of this institution, as well as increasing its vulnerability to political pressures. In 2002, the controversial dismissal of the General Prosecutor was considered unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court (Home Office–UK: 2003). In 2007, a Parliamentary Investigatory Committee was established solely as a means to dismiss the General Prosecutor's successor (who was accused by the Prime Minister of being personally affiliated with organised crime members and lacking the ability to pursue corruption cases objectively (Cela: 2007). The aforementioned actions (involving external influences) essentially weakened the position of the General Prosecution Office and further highlighted the Sisyphean nature of this institution's inability to confront and endure political attacks.

Despite constitutional and legal guarantees of autonomy in the decision-making level, judges have been subject to pressures from politicians and organised crime groups (SIDA: 2007). A major concern was not only the amount of political influence, but also the lack of transparency in the judicial discipline and removal process. Since the two main bodies: High Council of Justice (HCJ) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), both had inspectorates with overlapping responsibilities in their activity (American Bar Association: 2006) a new law "On the Judiciary" (Law Nr.9877: 2008) was adopted. It created the bases for a merit-driven appointment and evaluation system for judges, bringing some balance and stability to this sector.

In an effort to increase the efficiency of the judiciary vis-à-vis the ascendancy of organised crime, Serious Crimes Courts were established on January 1, 2004. While Albania's legislation on money laundering had improved during the last period, implementation and enforcement remained weak due to a lack of expertise, co-operation, and resources within the Albanian supervising authorities, i.e. the judiciary and law enforcement agencies



(Santiago: 2006). Cognizant of these deficiencies, institutional cooperation was seen as the need of the hour (May 2007), and various actors were encouraged to enter into an agreement with the State Police, Ministries of the Interior and of Finance, the State Intelligence Service and the General Prosecution Office. This agreement facilitated the creation of a task force (with representatives from each institution) targeting financial crime and corruption offences (Panorama: 2007).

Private Security Companies

Due to the emergent needs for additional, non-statutory security sector actors that use force, the private security companies have expanded their activity and have emerged as an alternative to the traditional security providers – the police. During this period the rapid economic growth and the liberalisation of the market economy created a demand for security services, leading to an increase in its numbers and services. In 2005, according to Ministry of Public Order figures, there were 269 Private Security Companies¹⁷ (Centre for Peace and Disarmament Education: 2005). However the activity of PSCs remained obscure and the background checking of individual security guards proved to be insufficient despite some achievements in regards to establishing a complete legal framework.

Civil Society

The civil society and media, however, were not presented as significant actors in the SSR efforts which took place during this period. Their contribution in policy-making, decision-making, and oversight of the security sector has been limited. The narrow impact that civil society has had in the overall process may be attributed to lacking the capability, opportunities, or expertise to make the security sector accessible to members of the civil society. The organisational capacity of civil society has been limited with most of them being run by small core groups of people and constantly dependent upon foreign donor funding and hence, vulnerable to external agendas (European Commission: 2003).

Civic engagement in security issues remained low and had little influence with respect to legislation or governance-related matters (Lora: 2003). Albania had only a limited number of influential NGOs and policy institutes in the field of

¹⁷ 120 PSC were operating in Tirana. This sector is believed to employ 4,093 security guards in all of Albania.



security sector. In the context of national policy formulation, coordination between the government, the Parliament, and civil society is tenuous. As a result, dialogue between NGOs and the Albanian government are articulated in a weak manner. Often, the state has turned the civil society into an obedient partner, severely undermining its role in a democratic society (Çili: 2005). Nonetheless, during recent years, independent non-governmental organisations have been considered relatively active, and their influence on the government has been gradually increasing (Freedom House: 2007). Moreover, the last phase of this period is arguably demarcated by some improvements pertaining to the cooperation amid law enforcement organs, university experts, and civil society (as suggested by the case developing the Action Plan on Community Policing together with State Police, ICITAP and PAMECA).

Another component – the media – has not been a steadily influential actor. It is basically monopolised by a few media groups, which have mainly sought to protect their narrow business interests, particularly in light of the involvement of politicians as stakeholders (Londo: 2004). This intermingling of powerful business, political, and media interests have inhibited the development of independent outlets (Freedom House: 2008).

On the other hand, there has been a tendency for government officials to treat pro-government media and opposition media in a noticeably different manner (Lora: 2003). Generally speaking, this phenomenon has had a negative impact on media professionalism, and its role as a watchdog of government activity and the security sector. This period may be distinguished by two themes: (1) the control of the media by the government and (2) the lack of competence to administer and deal with information pertaining to security and defence (Lora: 2003).

Conclusions

As discussed, the totalitarian past had an important impact on the SSR during the first period. With the legacy of a highly centralised system, when security was a dominant leitmotif, the control of the security apparatus was seen as one of the most important issues during the first period of reforms. The extensive powers allocated to the President, although Law on Major Constitutional Provision provided for a parliamentary system, was a clear



sign of the totalitarian institutional culture. The Presidential responsibilities encompassed control over executive, defence, security and judiciary sectors, as well as foreign policy matters and legislation.¹⁸ The checks and balances system failed. The parliament grew weak, and the judiciary's autonomy was marred by political interferences.

Beginning with the 1997 crisis, followed by the attempted coup d'état in 1998 and the volatile situation in the Kosovo crisis in 1999, the second period was the most conflict-laden of all three. The second period ended with a renewal of international commitment and the new perspective that was shared with the entire region. However, although SSR entered an irreversible path towards Euro-Atlantic integration, problems such as weak state institutions and high levels of crime and corruption remained the major security concerns.

In regards to the last period (2000-2009), SSR followed a new path that consisted in two perspectives. On the one hand, this process focused on the consolidation of pre-existing (as early as 1998) reforms. On the other hand, the SSR established new initiatives pertaining to the reform of key institutions and pertinent actors of SSR. Crucial progress and improvements were accomplished in various fields of security sector reform, such as the military, justice, and police. However important gaps and problems remain especially in the implementation of the legislation. On the other hand various aspects of democratic control were embraced such as introducing oversight and transparency procedures, implementing institutional policies related to effectiveness and efficiency, and engaging the civil society with respect to SSR reforms.

Nonetheless, it can be noted that the polarised political context represented a serious setback for the SSR during this period. The political infighting and lack of political will to support the SSR had an adverse impact on the SSR process at large. Furthermore, the efforts to fight organised crime and strengthen the rule of law lead to a concentration of powers under the direction of the Prime Minister - soliciting grave concerns about the institutional autonomy of the security sector. The most problematic sector has undoubtedly been the judiciary which has been permanently engaged in an ongoing conflict with the central government. Other institutions such as the police, military, and private security companies have also experienced and undergone steady progress towards security sector reform.

¹⁸ As the Chairman of the High Council of Justice, the President had a strong influence with respect to judicial appointments.

Annex 1: Analysis of Key Political Actors

| Type of Actor | Interests | Strategies | Capabilities | Relations |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Democratic Party | | | | |
| Political party: democratic, pro-regime. | <p><u>Political orientation</u>: centre right, conservative, <u>Motivation</u>: access to power, Having predominant actors all over the three periods, SSR has been based on their interests, vision, capability, and interaction.</p> | <p>Besides use of democratic and institutional means of politics, it has reverted to less democratic means also, in particular during 1996-1999. Although it came to power as anti-authoritarian and anti-communist party during its first term in power 1992-1997 it was highly criticised for lack of respect for human rights and authoritarian trends.</p> | <p>During 1991-1997 it shrank from a broad-based party, to a party which was identified as geographically rooted in the north of the country. Having recovered its national support after eight years in Opposition, it won the 2005 elections. In the 2009 elections, it scored only 50 percent of the seats and entered into a coalition with the centre left party to secure the governing majority.</p> | <p>Traditional <u>main allies</u> include other right and centre right parties except for a coalition with the Social Democrats in 1992-1994 and the coalition with the Socialist Movement for Integration in 2009. <u>Main opponents</u>: Socialist Party and its support groups.</p> |
| Socialist Party | | | | |
| Political party: democratic, pro-regime. | <p><u>Political orientation</u>: centre-left, social democratic, successor to communist party. <u>Motivation</u>: access to power.</p> | <p>Democratic and institutional means of politics. Since it was established as a successor of the Labour Party in 1991, it remained faithful to Marxist ideology until the 1996, but made no use of it.</p> | <p>Inheriting the structural capabilities of the old communist party it always enjoyed organisational superiority vis-à-vis its opponents. Except for the 1992 elections it has continued to have wide popular support that has not fallen under 40 percent. Since 2005 in Opposition.</p> | <p>Due to the communist legacy, it suffered from almost total isolation until 1996. During the pyramid schemes crisis it became the main coordinator of all Opposition factions, including the civil society and media. Since 1996 its <u>main allies</u> have been a range of smaller centre and centre left parties. <u>Main opponents</u>: Democratic Party and its allies.</p> |

Socialist Movement for Integration

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Political party: democratic, pro-regime. | <p><u>Political orientation</u>: social democratic</p> <p><u>Motivation</u>: access to political power.</p> | <p>It was established splinter of the SP in 2004. Despite its limited number of seats in parliament (5 in 2005 and 4 in 2009) it has become relevant as a decisive factor in shifting the power.</p> | <p>Emerging from within the parliament it pooled the support of various SP political figures.</p> <p>It has sought support among the retired and the young by appealing to the EU perspective.</p> | <p>During its relatively short existence it has entered in alliances with both SP and DP.</p> <p>Currently its main opponent is SP.</p> |
|--|---|--|--|---|

State Radio Television

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Regime supportive actor | <p><u>Political orientation</u>: It has done little to be impartial, thus remaining on the side of the government and the ruling majorities throughout the three periods—particularly during the first period.</p> <p>Despite legislation to provide for impartiality during the second period, little has been achieved.</p> <p><u>Motivation</u>: pressure to comply, high personnel turnover to force compliance.</p> | <p>Not any clearly owned strategy. Mainly driven by the interests of the government and parties forming the majority.</p> | <p>Throughout the first period, it was the only audiovisual media that could broadcast on national scale.</p> <p>Its domination was severely challenged by the quick spread of the private media leading to constant lowering of its credibility, particularly during the third period.</p> | <p><u>Main allies</u>: government, ruling political parties.</p> <p><u>Main opponents</u>: no natural opponents except the competition by private media which in any case does not affect its budget and resources.</p> |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|

Private Media

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Various, but mostly democratic. | <p><u>Political orientation</u>: various, some pro-government, some anti-government, depending on the ownership structure.</p> <p><u>Motivation</u>: economic gain, share of the media market.</p> | <p>Some degree of investigative journalism but mainly developed to damage opponents rather than driven by professionalism or serving the public good.</p> | <p>Since early 2000, it has overcome the state owned media in terms of market share and capabilities.</p> <p>Considerable contribution in influencing decisions and policy making through their influence on the public perception, although not always in the positive course.</p> | <p><u>Main allies</u>: depending on the ownership structure, political parties, single politician, private enterprises.</p> <p><u>Main opponents</u>: their competitors.</p> |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|--|

| Business Community | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Regime actors, but not too democratic | <p><u>Political orientation:</u> depending on the party in government. During the first period given the DP selective practices the majority of the business community was supporting it.</p> <p>Much more diverse and fluid in its choices during the two other periods.</p> <p><u>Motivation:</u> economic gain; access to power through influence over the policy process.</p> | <p><u>Method of influence:</u> by financing the political parties and their electoral campaigns.</p> | <p>Large financial and patronage base for offer to political parties.</p> <p>Not cohesive in political terms, and politics often used to harm the competition.</p> <p>With no particular influence over SSR, except through the quality of their services when contracted by security related institutions.</p> |
| International Organizations | | | |
| Pro-democratic | <p><u>Political orientation:</u> given Albania's isolation policy and the fact that it was the last communist country to adopt change, during the first period it was quite biased in favour of the ruling DP, rather than supporting the overall democratic processes.</p> <p>Much more balanced afterwards but their ubiquity has been misused by the conflicting political actors.</p> <p><u>Motivation:</u> contribution to the stability and democracy</p> | <p><u>Method of political action:</u> both pressure and incentives.</p> <p><u>Respect for human rights and democracy:</u> very committed to respect for human rights and to a great extent filling the vacuum of the weaker domestic CSOs.</p> | <p><u>Important leverage in influencing the behaviour of domestic actors,</u> but not always cohesive (individual states vs. IOs)</p> <p>Strong support for security reforms through political conditionality and financial and technical support.</p> |
| | | | <p><u>Main allies:</u> enjoy broad support from political parties, CSOs and even wider popular</p> <p><u>Main opponents:</u> no opponents.</p> |



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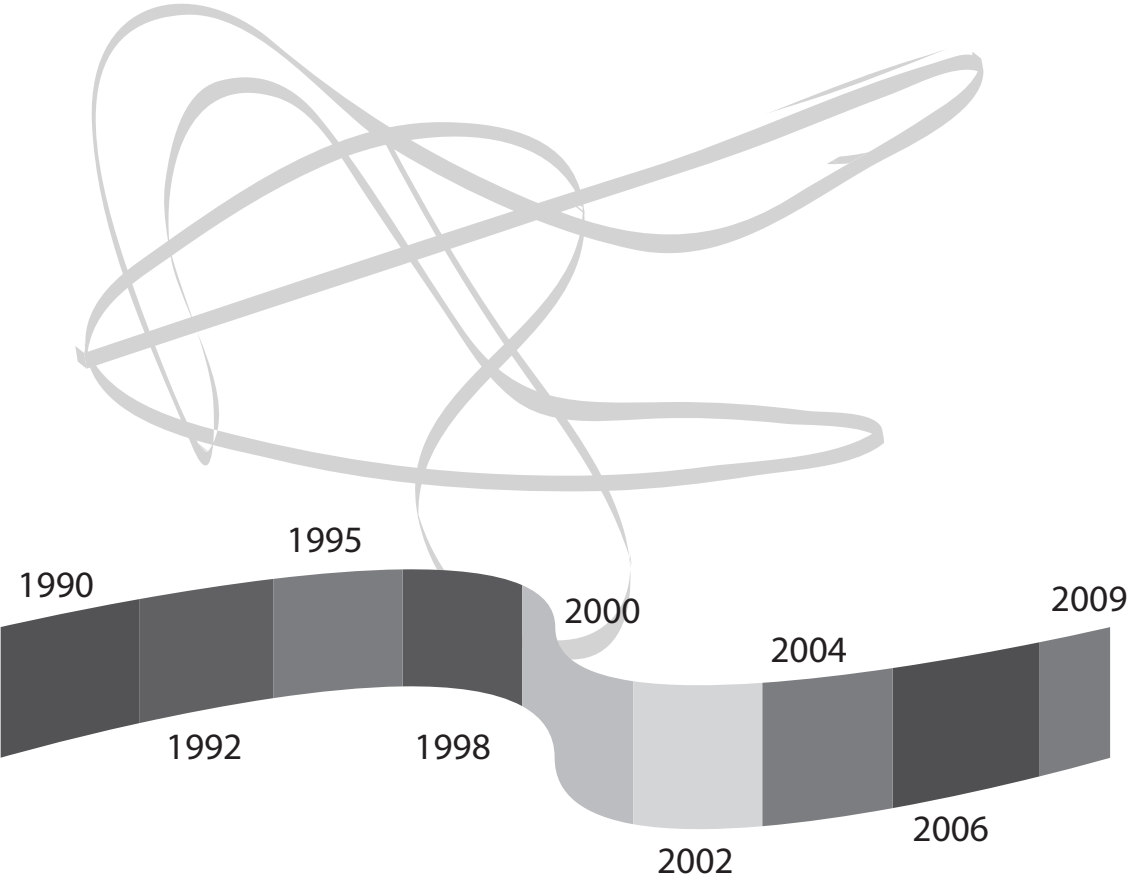
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CHRONOLOGY





CHRONOLOGY OF THE SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA

Periodisation and chronology of events related to the Security Sector Reform in Albania

The Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Albania can be divided in three different periods. This division is closely connected to the main political developments. This highlights OECD DAC finding that SSR is above all a political process¹⁹.

The first period begins with the collapse of the single-party system, followed by the installation of competitive party politics and market economy, and ends in 1997 with the collapse of the political and security order. During this period there were substantial legal and institutional reforms, which marked a total break with the communist regime. However, due to the past political culture, the political processes failed to meet liberal democratic standards,²⁰ leading also to major failures for the SSR. During this period, SSR in Albania developed in a post-authoritarian context.

The second period begins in 1997 and ends in 2001. During this period, SSR was aimed at addressing not only issues relating to a post-authoritarian context, but also to a post-conflict context²¹.

The third period, which continues even to date, began in 2001, with the European Union (EU) launch of the Stabilisation and Association Process

¹⁹ OECD, DAC 'Handbook on security system reform: supporting security and justice'. OECD Publishing, 2007.

²⁰ Fareed Zakaria, 'The Rise of Illiberal Democracy'. Foreign Affairs, November/December 1997.

²¹ The difference of Albania with other post-conflict Balkan states relates to the fact that the conciliation was not a matter of ethnic divisions but of divided and highly personalized party politics.



(SAP), which offered EU membership in exchange for democracy and regional reconciliation and cooperation²².

Chronology of main events

The events reported in this chronology are considered to represent important domestic, regional and world events with direct or indirect impact on Albania's political processes and SSR. The main sources consulted are media reporting, reports of international organisations researches, official websites of Albanian Centre for Official Publications, NATO, European Union, US State Department etc.

1990

April

Albania declares its willingness to establish diplomatic relations with the former Soviet Union and the United States²³.

May

12. United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar visits Albania for talks with Communist leaders²⁴.

Albania declares its willingness to join the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe²⁵.

September

29. Albanian President, Ramiz Alia, called for an end to Albania's self-imposed isolation in his first address before the United Nations General Assembly²⁶.

²² Zagreb Summit 24 November 2000, Final Declaration
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/enlargement_process/accession_process/how_does_a_country_join_the_eu/sap/zagreb_summit_en.htm. Retrieved June 2009

²³ Chris Hedges, 'After a 51-Year Break, Albania Seeks Diplomatic Ties with US'. The New York Times, September 29, 1990.

²⁴ David Binder, 'Evolution in Europe; Perez de Cuellar visits Albanians'. The New York Times, May 12, 1990

²⁵ Chris Hedges, 'After a 51-Year Break, Albania Seeks Diplomatic Ties with US'. The New York Times, September 29, 1990.

²⁶ Ibid.



December

18. Albanian Democratic Party is established as the first Opposition party, paving the path to a multi-party democratic regime.

24. Albanian government was re-shuffled in an attempt to bring in reform-minded officials. Fatos Nano was appointed to the post of General Secretary to the Government²⁷.

1991

January

14. The first Western leader to visit Albania since the establishment of the Communist regime, the Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis visits Albania with the intention to reach an agreement over the flood into Greece of Albanian refugees. Greece considers the exodus as incited by Albania with the intention to rid the country of a potentially threatening minority and to weaken the political Opposition in view of the first multi-party elections scheduled for February²⁸.

31. Financial Police is established by Presidential Decree²⁹.

February

21. About 100,000 people gathered in Tirana's main square "Skanderbeg" and knocked over Enver Hoxha's statue³⁰.

23. Four people were killed in a clash involving security forces and civilians in the capital Tirana. In an effort to deflect protests, President Ramiz Alia appointed a caretaker Government led by Fatos Nano as Prime Minister³¹.

March

7. Parliament approves the law on the status of the military personnel of the Armed Forces³².

12. The Albanian Government issues an amnesty for all the remaining po-

²⁷ Reuters, 'Albania Alters Cabinet, Naming a Reformist'. December 24, 1990.

²⁸ Paul Anastasi, 'Greek-Albanian Talks Stalled Over Ethnic Issues'. The New York Times, January 14, 1991.

²⁹ Decree No. 7463, 31.01.1991, Financial Police, Official Gazette, No. 4/1991.

³⁰ David Binder, 'Political Violence Kills 5 In Albania'. The New York Times, February 26, 1991.

³¹ David Binder, 'Albanian Names Cabinet Amid Unrest'. The New York Times, February 23, 1991.

³² Official Gazette Nr. 4, 1991, page 215.



litical prisoners³³.

15. Albania and the United States re-establish diplomatic relations after a thirty-five year break. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in Washington by the Albanian Foreign Minister and the US Assistant Secretary³⁴.

31. First multiparty elections held since the 1920s. The two rounds elections gave a large majority to the Party of Labour which together with its affiliate Veterans Committee won about 56 percent of the votes and 68 percent of the seats in the parliament. The Democratic Party won 30 percent³⁵.

- Italian authorities allowed several ships with about 25,000 Albanians into the port of Bari but later arrivals were sent back home³⁶.

April

3. Three people were killed and many wounded in the Northern town of Shkoder, when army units fired on demonstrators protesting against the election results³⁷.

29. Parliament passes the Law on Major Constitutional Provisions providing for fundamental human rights and separation of powers and invalidates 1976 constitution. The political system is defined as Parliamentary Republic with the Parliament as the only body exercising legislative powers, electing the President of the Republic, the Council of Ministers, Cassation Court and more than half of the Constitutional Court^{38 39}.

May

10. Fatos Nano announces a 25-member Cabinet. Nano divided the former Ministry of Interior into the Ministry of Public Order responsible for the

³³ David Binder, 'Albanian Names Cabinet amid Unrest'. The New York Times, February 23, 1991.

³⁴ Fact Sheet: Albania, Anonymous. U.S. Department of State Dispatch; Mar 18, 1991; 2, 11; Research Library Core p.196.

³⁵ Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 'The Elections in Albania; March-April 1991'. Report prepared by the staff of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

³⁶ Rusell King and Juli Vullnetari, 'Migration and Development in Albania, Working Paper C5, Sussex Centre for Migration Research. December 2003.

³⁷ David Binder, 'Albanian Troops Kill 3 Protesters and Wound 30' Special to The New York Times, April 3, 1991.

³⁸ Aleks Luarasi, 'Legal and Institutional Reform in Albania after the Democratic Revolution (1991 - 1997)'. Tirana University, Albania. May, 1997.

<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/95-97/luarasi.pdf>. Retrieved June 2009.

³⁹ Law No. 7491, 29 April 1991, "Main Constitutional Provisions", Official Gazette No. 4/1991.



uniformed police and a National Security Committee responsible for the security police⁴⁰.

June

5. The government resigns after trade unions call for general strike to protest worsening economic conditions and the killing of three Opposition demonstrators in the town of Shkoder. A broad-based coalition government is formed with the participation of the opposition parties⁴¹.

19. Albania accepted as a full member of OSCE⁴².

23. US Secretary of State James A. Baker III makes first visit ever by a senior American official in Albania^{43 44}.

July

2. 'Sigurimi', the state security agency during communism is replaced by the National Intelligence Agency, an informative-detective body, part of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania⁴⁵. Nearly 98 percent of the personnel were released from duty⁴⁶.

3. Parliament approves the law on the Status of the Military in the Armed Forces. According to this law the main tasks of the military are faithfulness towards the homeland, military skills, willingness to sacrifice, obey the Constitution and the law, keep military and state secrets and safeguard military property. Among the major limitations are participation in political parties and trade-unions, and the prohibition of strikes and collective objection⁴⁷.

6. Military ranks, abolished in Albania since 1966 under the influence of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, were re-introduced in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania⁴⁸.

⁴⁰ Associated Press, 'Albanian Names an All-Communist Cabinet'. May 10, 1991.

⁴¹ David Binder, 'Albania Picks a Caretaker Chief'. The New York Times, June 6, 1991.

⁴² OSCE, Participating States, <http://www.osce.org/about/13131.html>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁴³ The New York Times, '300,000 Albanians Pour into Streets to Welcome Baker', June 23, 1991.

⁴⁴ 'Fact Sheet: Secretary Baker Visits Yugoslavia and Albania', Anonymous, U.S. Department of State Dispatch; Jul 1, 1991; 2, 26; Research Library Core, pg. 469

⁴⁵ Law Nr. 7495, 2 July 1991 'On the Organisation of the National Intelligence Service', Official Gazette Nr. 4, 1991, pg 207.

⁴⁶ Aleks Luarasi, 'Legal and institutional reform in albania after the democratic revolution (1991 - 1997); Tirana University, Albania. May, 1997. <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/95-97/luarasi.pdf>. Retrieved June 2009..

⁴⁷ Law Nr. 7496, 3 July 1991 "The Status of the Military in the Armed Forces' Official Gazette Nr. 4, 1991, pg 215.

⁴⁸ Law No. 7499, dated 6 July 1991, "Re-Establishing the Grades System in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Albania". Official Gazette Nr. 10, 1991, pg 232.



August

Parliament decides on the measures to be taken on the positioning and role of the military, internal affairs organisations and justice under the circumstances of a multi-party system. Later the same month, Parliament approves a law on depoliticising of security related institutions⁴⁹.

October

1. After 52 years, since its closure due to the beginning of WWII, the United States Embassy opens in Albania⁵⁰.

15. Albania joins International Monetary Fund⁵¹.

December

5. Democratic Party pulls out of the coalition government. Coalition government resigns. An interim government is tasked to prepare the country for new elections⁵².

11. Parliament approves law on establishing the Military Intelligence Service and the Counterintelligence⁵³.

17. Parliament amends the law on prosecution and on the investigatory powers⁵⁴.

1992

January

30. Parliament amends the law on the Penal Code⁵⁵.

22. Parliament approves the law on "On the Prompt Intervention Forces".

⁴⁹ Aleks Luarasi, 'Legal and Institutional Reform in Albania after the Democratic Revolution (1991 - 1997)', Tirana, University, Albania. May, 1997.

⁵⁰ Albania (03/99), <http://www.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/a/9200.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁵¹ Albania and the IMF. <http://www.imf.org/external/country/ALB/index.htm?pn=0>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁵² The New York Times, 'Main Opposition Party Quits Albania Cabinet', December 5, 1991.

⁵³ Law Nr. 7530, 11.12.1991, 'On the organization of the Military Intelligence Service and the Counterintelligence Service in the Public Order Organs', Official Gazette Nr. 10, 1991, page 433.

⁵⁴ Law Nr. 7538, 17.12.1991 "On some amendments to the law Nr. 6298, 27.03.1981" "On the Prosecution in the Republic of Albania", Official Gazette Nr. 10, 1991, page 446.

Law Nr. 7539, 17.12.1991, "On the Investigation in the Republic of Albania Nr. 6800, 29.06.1983", Official Gazette Nr. 10, 1991, page 448.

⁵⁵ Law Nr. 7553, 30.01.1992, "On some amendments to the Penal Code of the Republic of Albania" Official Gazette Nr. 1, 1992, p 31.



The service is subordinated to the Ministry of Interiors and includes specially trained units to be used for prompt intervention when grave encroachments of the public order are verified, violence acts, terror, vandalism, as well as when other means of public order are not efficient⁵⁶.

May

Albania signs Trade, Commercial and Economic Co-operation Agreement with European Union. Agreement entered into force on December 1992⁵⁷.

16. Albanian President Sali Berisha meets with the US President George HW Bush. Maintaining stability in the Balkans was the main topic theme⁵⁸.

March

22. The second multiparty general elections are held. Democratic Party wins 92 of the 140 seats in Parliament⁵⁹.

April

5. President Ramiz Alia, hands his resignation to the newly elected Parliament. Democratic Party leader Sali Berisha is nominated to be the party's candidate, becoming the first post-communist President⁶⁰.

June

5. Albania joins the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in 1997)⁶¹.

September

Parliament dismisses the General Prosecutor Maksim Haxhia from office. A month later the Constitutional Court finds the Parliament's decision unconstitutional. However, later in November, Alush Dragoshi is appointed to

⁵⁶ Law No. 7551, dated 22 January 1992, 'On the Prompt Intervention Forces', Official Gazette Nr.1, 1992, pg 24.

⁵⁷ Delegation of the European Commission (EC) to Albania
http://www.delalb.ec.europa.eu/en/eu_and_albania/agreements. Retrieved June 2009.

⁵⁸ David Binder, 'Albanian Leader Tells Bush of His Fear of Serbia', The New York Times, June 16, 1992.

⁵⁹ Henry Kamm, 'Ex-Communists Lose in Albania Vote', The New York Times, March 23, 1992.

⁶⁰ 'Albania's Democratic Party Names Surgeon to Fill President's Post', The New York Times, April 5, 1992.

⁶¹ NATO news, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_23923.htm?selectedLocale=en. Retrieved June 2009.



this position⁶². This precedent set the beginning of similar replacements of future General Prosecutors.

29. European Community finance ministers have agreed to make a grant of about \$95 million, to Albania to help the country pay for imports⁶³.

October

6. Albania ratifies the Agreement on Commerce and Commercial and Economic Cooperation with the European Community⁶⁴.

13. Parliament approves the law on Forestry and Forest Police⁶⁵.

- Albania joins the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. The move, sponsored mainly by President Berisha himself, raised criticism within the country and suspicions in the chancelleries of the Western countries⁶⁶.

December

16. Albanian President Berisha visited NATO Headquarters. The President delivered a speech at the North Atlantic Council and conversed with the Secretary-General Manfred Worner⁶⁷.

17. In a meeting with Secretary General Manfred Worner and the envoys of the 16 nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, President Berisha declares that Albania wants to join NATO, becoming the first former Warsaw Pact country to formally seek membership in the Western alliance⁶⁸.

1993

January

- Albanian government offers its sea and air bases to NATO to help enforce

⁶² Parliament Decision Nr. 231, 17.09.1992 "On the dismissal of the General Prosecutor Mr. Maks Haxhia", Official Gazette Nr. 8, 1992, p. 389.

Decison of the Constitutional Court Nr. 12, 28.10.1992.

-'Request from Maks Haxhia, former General Prosecutor: On the Parliament Decision Nr. 231, 17.09.1992 for his dismissal from duty', Nr. 231, 17.09.1992, Official Gazette Nr. 9, 1992, p.491.

⁶³ 'European Grant to Albania', The New York Times, September 29, 1992.

⁶⁴ Law No. 7617, 6.10.1992, 'Ratification of the Agreement between the Republic of Albania and the European Community on Commerce and Commercial and Economic Cooperation', Official Gazette No. 6/1992.

⁶⁵ Law No. 7623, 13.Ocober 1992, 'Forestry and Forest Police', Official Gazette No. 6/1992.

⁶⁶ Remzi Lani and Fabian Schmidt, Albanian Foreign Policy between Geography and History', The International Spectator, Volume XXXIII No. 2 (April-June 1998).

⁶⁷ Adem Copani 'The new dimensions of Albania security posture', 1996 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1996/9602-6.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁶⁸ 'Albania Seeks Tie to NATO, and Protection', December 17, 1992.



the UN sanctions and operations against Yugoslavia⁶⁹.

March

19. Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Manfred Wornier visits Albania. Addressing to the Albanian Parliament he said that “Albania may well be a small country but it has an important role to play”⁷⁰.

28. Parliament approves the law on Construction Police⁷¹.

April

- Albania recognizes the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

7. Parliament approves the law on Civilian Guards Services⁷².

25. Pope John Paul II visits Albania. In his speech, Pope John Paul II compared the fate of Albania with the passion of Christ, saying it had been ‘enriched by so many martyrs’ and now enjoys the ‘freedom of Resurrection’^{73 74}.

May

31. President Sali Berisha has urged the United States and NATO to send troops to Kosovo Province in Serbia to prevent a spread of “ethnic cleansing” to the Albanian population of the region⁷⁵.

June

- Albania expelled a Greek Orthodox priest for allegedly fomenting unrest among ethnic Greeks in southern Albania. Greece retaliated by deporting 30,000 Albanian illegal immigrants⁷⁶.

- The civil service goes in turmoil, as technocrats and members of the old

⁶⁹ Adem Copani ‘The new dimensions of Albania security posture’, 1996 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1996/9602-6.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁷⁰ ‘NATO Secretary General addresses Albanian Parliament’, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_24105.htm?selectedLocale=en. Retrieved June 2009.

⁷¹ Law No. 7752, 28 March 1993, ‘Construction Police’, Official Gazette No. 12/1993.

⁷² Law No. 7696, 7 April 1993, Civilian Guards Services, Official Gazette No. 5/1993.

⁷³ Alan Cowell, ‘Pope Goes to Albania and Warns of ‘Aggressive Nationalism’, The New York Times, Monday, April 26, 1993.

⁷⁴ ‘Pope’s Visit Confirms Albania’s New Status’, National Catholic Reporter; May 7, 1993; 29, 27; Research Library Core, pg. 13.

⁷⁵ Henry Kamm, ‘Albania Chief Urges West to Send Troops to Kosovo to Prevent War’, The New York Times, May 31, 1993.

⁷⁶ Human Rights Watch, ‘ALBANIA, THE GREEK MINORITY’, February 1994 Vol. 7, No. 4 (D), http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1995/Albania.htm#P196_34923#P196_34923. Retrieved June 2009.



regime are being fired and replaced by Democratic Party supporters. Local government also turns chaotic, as Democratic Party central government administrators clash with mayors from the Socialist Party, who won the last summer's municipal elections⁷⁷.

July

- The leader of the Socialist Party, former Prime Minister Nano, is arrested on allegations of abuse of power.
- Albania ratifies the Chemical Weapons Convention⁷⁸.

August

- Former communist President Ramiz Alia, is arrested and legally proceeded charged for abuse of power. More than 30 former senior communist officials, including former President Alia, were detained for investigation on charges of "genocide" and "crimes against humanity". By the end of the year, 30 had been convicted, 10 of them in absentia, for conducting "crimes against humanity"⁷⁹.

October

8 and 14. The US signed an agreement with Albania, the first of its kind with a former Communist country. The agreement affirms "the readiness to broaden and expand defense and military relations between the two countries". It was signed on the 8th of October in Washington by Defense Secretary Les Aspin and on the 14th of October in Tirana by Albania's Defense Minister, Safet Zhulali⁸⁰.

1994

January

30. Albania makes available its airbases for use by US spy planes that relayed photographic images of battles and troop movements in Serbia and Bosnia

⁷⁷ 'Albania: Oh, dear', Anonymous. *The Economist*. London: Jun 5, 1993. Vol. 327, Iss. 7814; pg. 56.

⁷⁸ Law Nr. 7747, 29.07.1993, 'On the Ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction' Official Gazette Nr. 10, 1993, p.667.

⁷⁹ Amnesty International, 1997 Annual Report for Albania, <http://www.amnestyusa.org/annualreport.php?id=D8FADB8615E000C880256A0F005BEA9D&c=ALB>, Retrieved June 2009.

⁸⁰ David Binder 'U.S. and Albania Sign a Military Agreement', *The New York Times*, October 21, 1993.



and Herzegovina⁸¹.

February

23. The President of Albania, Sali Berisha, visits the NATO Headquarters to sign the PfP Framework Document.

April

3. The Leader of the Opposition Fatos Nano is sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for misuse of state funds during his 1991 term as Prime Minister. The trial was considered as a political show⁸².

10. In a raid on an army training camp in which two Albanian conscripts were killed by raiders claiming to be from the North Epirus Liberation Front. Greek-Albanian relations deteriorate further^{83 84}.

18. A coordinated police action is undertaken in the southern region where the Greek minority is concentrated leading to the arrest of thirty people. Relations between Greece and Albania took an immediate plunge, including diplomatic expulsions and a closure of the border⁸⁵.

20. Parliament ratifies the Partnership for Peace framework agreement between Albania and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation⁸⁶.

May

5. President Sali Berisha forgives five journalists convicted earlier the same year for charges that included defamation of Albania's secret service, publishing state secrets and insulting Mr. Berisha⁸⁷.

July

3. Former President, Ramiz Alia, sentenced to nine years of prison for abusing with power and violating citizens' rights. His conviction, along

⁸¹ 'US to Base Balkans Spy Plane in Albania', The New York Times, January 30, 1994.

⁸² 'Albania: Just for show', Anonymous. The Economist. London: Apr 9, 1994. Vol. 331, Iss. 7858; pg. 53.

⁸³ Maria Vidali, Living in a Policy Vacuum: The plight of Albanian immigrants in Greece, Central Europe Review Vol 1, No 21, 15 November 1999.

⁸⁴ Greece and Albania: Border blows, Anonymous. The Economist. London: Apr 30, 1994. Vol. 331, Iss. 7861; pg. 60.

⁸⁵ Human Rights Watch, 'Albania: The Greek Minority', February 1994 Vol. 7, No. 4 (D), http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1995/Albania.htm#P196_34923#P196_34923. Retrieved June 2009.

⁸⁶ Law No. 7816, 20 April 1994, Ratification of the 'Framework Document of Partnership for Peace' between the Republic of Albania and NATO, Official Gazette No. 6/1994.

⁸⁷ The New York Times, 'Albania Pardons 5 journalists', May 5, 1994.



with those of nine former top officials of the dictatorial government, led by Enver Hoxha, completed the prosecution of Albania's former communist elite by its new democratic rulers⁸⁸.

September

7. Five prominent members of Omonia (the ethnic Greek political movement), arrested in April, were sentenced with prison sentences that varied between six and eight years, for spying for Greece and illegally possessing weapons⁸⁹.

22. Albania submits its Partnership for Peace Presentation Document to NATO⁹⁰.

November

6. The Majority (53.9%) of Albanian voters rejected a draft constitution in which President Berisha had invested much of his political credit⁹¹.

December

Relations between Albania and Greece deteriorated with countries mutually expelling diplomats and ending military cooperation⁹².

1995

December

27. Albania adopts a new Penal Code⁹³.

February

- Relations with Greece begin to improve. Supreme Court decided to release from prison four Greek activists⁹⁴.

⁸⁸'9 Years for Albanian', The New York Times, July 3, 1994.

⁸⁹'Greece v Albania: Elsewhere in the Balkans ...'Anonymous. The Economist. London: Sep 17, 1994. Vol. 332, Iss. 7881; pg. 59.

⁹⁰ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1994/9409e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁹¹ Henry Kamm, 'President of Albania is Rebuffed on Charter', The New York Times, December 1, 1994.

⁹² Henry Kamm, 'Conflict With Greece Leaves Some in Albania Perplexed', The New York Times, December 19, 1994.

⁹³ Law Nr. 7895, 27 January 1995, 'Penal Code of the Republic of Albania', Official Gazette No 2, 1995, pg 23.

⁹⁴ Human Rights Watch, Human Rights Developments, Albania 1995, http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/WR96/Helsinki-01.htm#P125_26490. Retrieved June 2009.



April

- The Council of Defence approved the country's first defence White Paper, on 'The Security and Defence Policy of Albania'⁹⁵.
- Albania is subject to critics for breaching the UN embargo on Yugoslavia⁹⁶.

May

24. The Parliament approves the law on Abolishing the Financial Police and Establishing Financial and Customs Police⁹⁷.

July

8. Former President Ramiz Alia was released from jail. His release was seen as a reaction to Albania's forthcoming membership in the Council of Europe⁹⁸.

13. Albania becomes the 35th member of the Council of Europe⁹⁹.

17-21. US and Albania organise joint military exercise 'Rescue Eagle'. The Albanian Armed Forces were joined by the US amphibious force of the Sixth Fleet and 1,700 US marines of the 24th Marine Expedition Unit, along with the helicopter carrier USS Kearsarge and the USS Nashville¹⁰⁰.

26. Parliament approves the law on the Armed Forces. According to this law the armed forces are divided in three parts: the army, the forces of the Ministry of Public Order and the National Intelligence Service¹⁰¹.

August

10. The Judiciary Police is established after the approval of the Penal Procedure Code. Its task is to detect and inquire criminal activities through their initiative or by authorisation of the prosecutor. Officials and agents of this body are administratively subordinated to the Ministry of Interiors, but

⁹⁵ Adem Copani 'The new dimensions of Albania security posture', 1996 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1996/9602-6.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

⁹⁶ Raymond Bonner, 'Embargo against Belgrade Has a Major Leak', the New York Times, April 15, 1995.

⁹⁷ Law No. 7938, 24.05.1995, 'Some Changes to the Decree No. 1074, 21 April 1995, Abolishing the Financial Police and Establishing Financial and Customs Police', Official Gazette No. 12/1995.

⁹⁸ The New York Times, 'Albania Frees Communist', July 8, 1995.

⁹⁹ 'Albania and Council of Europe', http://www.coe.int/T/e/com/about_coe/member_states/e_al.asp. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁰⁰ Adem Copani 'The new dimensions of Albania security posture', 1996 <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1996/9602-6.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁰¹ Law No. 7978, 26 July 1995 'The Armed Forces in the Republic of Albania', Official Gazette Nr. 19, 1995, page 813.



carry out services for the prosecutor's office or the court on the basis of the Code of Penal Procedure¹⁰².

- Albanian troops take part in joint exercise with the US military in 'Operation Cooperative Nugget '95, at Fort Pol, Louisiana¹⁰³.

September

11. Albanian President Sali Berisha visits U.S.A. He meets the President of U.S.A., Bill Clinton. The United States continued to be a vocal supporter of Albania¹⁰⁴.

21. The Head of the Supreme Court Zef Brozi was dismissed from his post by a parliamentary vote and President Berisha's recommendation after the Constitutional Court found some of his decisions unconstitutional¹⁰⁵.

22. Parliament passed a law that prohibits the election or designation in the central or local government, in the judicial system and in the mass-media, of those persons that have planned or materialised the above crimes and have held key positions during the communist regime¹⁰⁶.

28. Parliament approves the Military Penal Code¹⁰⁷.

November

22. Albania ratifies the multilateral agreement on the Status of Forces (SOFA) with NATO in the framework of the Partnership for Peace (PfP)¹⁰⁸.

30. Parliament passed a law that reiterates that individuals holding key positions in the communist party and administration since 28 November 1944, can-

¹⁰² Law No. 1188, 10 August 1995, 'Judiciary Police', Official Gazette No. 20, 1995, page 885.

¹⁰³ Adem Copani 'The new dimensions of Albania security posture', 1996
<http://www.nato.int/docu/review/1996/9602-6.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁰⁴ Steven Lee Myers, 'U.S. Long Shot in Albania Fails to Pay Off', The New York Times, March 20, 1997.

¹⁰⁵ Marianne Sullivan, 'ALBANIA: Tyranny in the Robes of Democracy', Transition - VOL. 2 NO. 3 - 9 February 1996.

¹⁰⁶ Aleks Luarasi, 'Legal and Institutional Reform in Albania after the Democratic Revolution (1991 - 1997)', Tirana, University, Albania. May, 1997.
<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/95-97/luarasi.pdf>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁰⁷ Law No. 8175, 28 September 1995, Military Penal Code, Official Gazette No. 22/1995.

¹⁰⁸ Law No. 8034, 22 November 1995, Ratification of "Agreement Between Parties of the NATO Regarding the Status of Forces", signed in London on 19 June 1951 and "Agreement Between Parties of the NATO and other States Participating in the Partners for Peace Treaty and the Status of their Forces" signed in Brussels on 10 January 1994, as well as the Additional Protocol on agreement between parties of NATO and other states participating at the partners for peace and the status of their forces. Official Gazette No. 25/1995.



not be elected, or hold important functions in the democratic government¹⁰⁹.

1996

December

23. Amendments were made to the Penal Code, to toughen some of the sentences concerning smuggling, drugs, arms and prostitution trafficking, kidnapping and corruption¹¹⁰.

February

26. A car bomb in Albania killed 5 people and wounded 30 outside a supermarket in the centre of Tirana¹¹¹.

26. EU adopts a Regional Approach to the countries of South-Eastern Europe¹¹².

May

26. The third post communist parliamentary elections plunge the country into a deep political crisis. Opposition parties accused the government of vote rigging and staged protests which were violently broken up by special units of the police. The international community reacts and Albania is threatened with isolation and expulsion from the Council of Europe on the grounds of imperfections in its democratic institutions^{113, 114, 115}.

July

31. Albania ratifies the European Convention on Human Rights¹¹⁶.

¹⁰⁹ Aleks Luarasi, 'Legal and Institutional Reform in Albania after the Democratic Revolution (1991 - 1997)', Tirana, University, Albania. May, 1997.

<http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/95-97/luarasi.pdf>. Retrieved June 2009

¹¹⁰ Law No. 8175, 23 December 1996, Some Changes to the Law No. 7895, 27 January 1995 "Penal Code of the Republic of Albania", Official Gazette No. 29/1996.

¹¹¹ The New York Times, 'Bomb Kills 5 in Albania; 2 Ex-Officers Arrested' February 27, 1996.

¹¹² Conclusions of the General Affairs Council of 26 February 1996.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/028a0001.htm. Retrieved June 2009

¹¹³ Jane Perlez, 'Riot Police Beat and Arrest Albania Election Protesters', The New York Times, May 29, 1996

¹¹⁴ Jane Perlez '2 Monitoring Groups Call Albania Vote Marred', The New York Times, May 30, 1996

¹¹⁵ Daniels Anthony, 'Eye of the beholder', National Review. New York: Jul 1, 1996. Vol. 48, Iss. 12; pg. 43

¹¹⁶ Law No. 8137, 31 July 1996, Ratification of the European Convention on the Protection of Fundamental Freedoms and Human Rights, Official Gazette No. 20/1996



September

5. Albania decides to send troops to participate in the IFOR mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the first time that Albanian troops have been stationed abroad. The platoon with 33 military personnel would serve as part of the German contingent of IFOR¹¹⁷.

December

- Anti-government protests began in Tirana when investment schemes began to collapse¹¹⁸.

1997

January-February

- Government responds to the growing protests with repression and force. As the demonstrations grew more violent, and angry mobs ransack the DP headquarters and municipal buildings in towns across the south. President Berisha accuses the protesters as “red bandits” working in collaboration with “Albania’s traditional enemies”¹¹⁹.

March

2-3. Prime Minister Aleksander Meksi resigns. The next day a national state of emergency is declared. President Berisha is re-elected by the Parliament. The military and entire security establishment begun to collapse and the people armed themselves with every type of weapon they seized from the military depots¹²⁰.

9. Under international pressure and an internal security situation on free fall, an agreement was reached between the President Berisha and the main political parties to form a national reconciliation government¹²¹.

13. The first US citizens were evacuated from Albania. State Department calls on the 2,000 Americans in Albania to consider leaving the country¹²².

¹¹⁷ Law No. 8139, 5 September 1996, Participation of an Albanian Military Company in the NATO operation “Joint Effort” in the Former-Yugoslavia.

¹¹⁸ Human Rights Developments, Human Rights Watch World Report 1998, ALBANIA http://www.hrw.org/worldreport/Helsinki-01.htm#P125_41527. Retrieved June 2009

¹¹⁹ Ibid

¹²⁰ Ibid

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Jane Perlez ‘Bitter Albanians, Facing Anarchy, Arm Themselves’, The New York Times, March 14, 1997.



14. Albania's political leaders appeal for emergency help from NATO, the European Union and the United Nations. Austria's former Chancellor, Franz Vranitzky, conducts a political mediation in Albania appointed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe¹²³.

15. Defence Minister Safet Zhulali and other high officials flee abroad. Foreign countries evacuate their nationals from Albania¹²⁴.

28. 81 people died after the collision of an Italian Navy vessel with a small boat on which Albanians were fleeing to Italy. Allegations of a deliberate action by the Italian vessel put at risk the UN plans for an Italian led military mission in Albania¹²⁵.

28. The U.N. Security Council authorizes an eight-country military force, led by Italy, to secure the delivery of humanitarian aid, even though humanitarian organizations said that such protection was not required. Most observers believed the unspoken reason for the intervention was to stem the flow of Albanian refugees to Italy and other neighbouring countries^{126 127}.

April

- The Italian-led international protection force begins arriving in Albania under a UN Security Council decision. Some 7,000 troops from eight European countries participate in "Operation Alba."

14. Prime Minister of Italy Romano Prodi visits Albania, while the first Italian troops have already arrived to prepare the ground for the Italian led multinational force¹²⁸.

June

- The Socialist Party led by Fatos Nano wins parliamentary elections, with 100 seats out of 155. Their coalition allies win 17 seats, and Berisha's Democratic Party 27. In a referendum held at the same time, about one-third of voters support the restoration of the monarchy.

¹²³ 'Europe's Role in Albania', The New York Times, March 14, 1997.

¹²⁴ Jane Perlez, 'Albania Chief's Associates Flee; Gunfire Halts Evacuation by US', The New York Times, March 15, 1997.

¹²⁵ John Taligabue, 'Albania Envoy Accuses Italy in Sinking of Refugee Boat', The New York Times, March 31, 1997.

¹²⁶ Human Rights Developments. Human Rights Watch World Report 1998, ALBANIA. http://www.hrw.org/worldreport/Helsinki-01.htm#P125_41527. Retrieved June 2009.

¹²⁷ Paul Lewis, 'UN Backs Sending Troops to Restore Order in Albania', The New York Times, March 29, 1997.

¹²⁸ 'Italian Prime Minister, Visiting Albania, Vows to Restore Order', The New York Times, April 14, 1997.



July

- 23.** President Berisha resigns.
- 24.** Rexhep Mejdani is elected President by the Parliament. The same day, the five month long curfew state was lifted.
- 25.** A new coalition cabinet is presented by Fatos Nano with Paskal Milo as Foreign Minister, Sabit Brokaj as Defense Minister and Neritan Ceka as Minister of Interior¹²⁹.

August

- 8.** The General Prosecutor Alush Dragoshi resigns¹³⁰.
- 11.** The last sixty Italian peacekeeping troops under Operation ALBA leave Albania, one day before the official end of the mandate of Operation Alba¹³¹.
- 13.** Arben Rakipi is appointed as the new General Prosecutor¹³².

September

- 7.** President Rexhep Mejdani dismisses 17 generals. The move was justified as effort to reshape the armed forces for their inability to deal with the March civil unrest¹³³.
- 20.** The Democratic Party MP Azem Hajdari is wounded by gunfire by a Socialist Party MP inside the parliament¹³⁴.

November

- 4.** Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano meets with Yugoslav President Milosevic in Crete, Greece. The meeting which focused on Kosovo was the first high-level one between the two countries after 50 years¹³⁵.

¹²⁹ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/1997-07.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹³⁰ Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), 97-08-08
<https://www.hri.org/news/balkans/ata/1997/97-08-08.ata.html#10>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹³¹ RFE/RL Newline, Vol. 1, No. 93, 97-08-12 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
<http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/rferl/1997/97-08-12.rferl.html#11>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹³² Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), 97-08-13
<http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/ata/1997/97-08-13.ata.html#04>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹³³ 'Albania's New President Ousts 17 Generals', The New York Times, September 7, 1997.

¹³⁴ Human Rights Developments, Albania Human Rights Watch World Report 1998 http://www.hrw.org/worldreport/Helsinki-01.htm#P125_41527, Retrieved June 2009.

¹³⁵ Milosevic-Nano meeting focuses on Kosovo
<http://www.greekembassy.org/Embassy/content/en/Article.aspx?office=3&folder=259&article=1793>. Retrieved June 2009.



- The EU Council of Ministers establishes political and economic conditionality for the development of bilateral relations¹³⁶.

1998

March

12. NATO Secretary General Javier Solana visits Albania¹³⁷. The main reason of the visit is the discussion with Albanian officials about the deteriorating security situation in Kosovo.

June

1. NATO opens NATO/Partnership for Peace Cell in Albania. The Cell will play a direct role in the overall coordination and effective implementation of Albania's specially tailored Individual Partnership Program (IPP) within PfP for 1998¹³⁸.

15. NATO air exercise 'Determined Falcon' takes place in Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in agreement with the respective governments¹³⁹.

July

1. The NATO Secretary General Javier Solana visits Albania to discuss the situation in Albania and Kosovo and the influx of the Albanians of Kosovo towards Albania which hosts around 10 thousand Kosovars, mostly women and children¹⁴⁰. He declares that 'withdrawal of Serb forces from Kosovo will be the first step towards a dialogue between sides to find a solution to the crisis there'¹⁴¹.

August

- Joint Albanian and US security operations lead to the dismantling of Is-

¹³⁶ European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/potential-candidate-countries/albania/eu_albania_relations_en.htm. Retrieved June 2009.

¹³⁷ NATO, Press Release (98)31, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-031e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹³⁸ NATO Press Release (98)69, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-069e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹³⁹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1998/9806e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁴⁰ NATO, Press Release (98)87, <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/1998/p98-087e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁴¹ Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), 98-07-03 <http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/ata/1998/98-07-03.ata.html#01>, Retrieved June 2009.



lamic terrorist cell linked with Al Qaeda. An attack on the US embassy in Tirana was foiled.

16. The US Embassy in Tirana reduce activity to minimal services after two of its embassies, in Tanzania and Kenya were bombed. 200 Marines and 10 Navy SEALs were deployed to Albania to provide security to the embassy staff¹⁴².

22. Six former high officials including the former Minister of Defence, former Minister of Interior and Deputy Chairman of the Intelligence Service were arrested under charges of having ordered the use of chemical weapons, airplanes, and helicopters against civilians during the civil unrests of 1997¹⁴³.

September

11. Azem Hajdari, a leading Democratic Party figure and MP, is shot dead near the Democratic Party's office in Tirana¹⁴⁴.

14. Democratic Party supporters ransack and set on fire the Prime Minister's Office¹⁴⁵.

19. The parliament lifts the immunity from prosecution of Opposition leader Berisha, clearing the way for prosecutors to charge him with attempts for organizing a coup¹⁴⁶.

27. Albania joined Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece, Italy, Romania, and Turkey for setting up a multi-national peacekeeping force for South Eastern Europe named SEEBRIG, a brigade that will be composed of 3,000 to 4,000 troops¹⁴⁷.

- Ahmet Krasniqi, commander of the so-called 'Armed Forces of the Republic of Kosovo' (FARK) was shot dead in Tirana¹⁴⁸.

- Prime Minister Nano resigns after failing to get the backing of his coalition for a cabinet reshuffle.

¹⁴² Text of a letter from the President to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/news/1998/08/980818-wh1.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁴³ Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), 98-08-26 <http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/ata/1998/98-08-26.ata.html#16>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁴⁴ BBC World, 'Europe Concern over Albanian instability', <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/171535.stm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

¹⁴⁶ 'Albanians Clear the Way for the Arrest of Ex-President', The New York Times, September 19, 1998.

¹⁴⁷ Steven Lee Meyers, '7 Southeast Europe Nations Form a Joint Military Force', The New York Times, September 27, 1998.

¹⁴⁸ Tim Judah, 'Kosovo Liberation Army', Perceptions, September-November 2000.



19. The Albanian Parliament voted overwhelmingly to lift the immunity of former President Sali Berisha, clearing the way for his arrest on charges that he tried to overthrow the Government ¹⁴⁹.

October

2. Pandeli Majko is appointed as the new Prime Minister, Minister of Public Order Petro Koçi, Minister of Defence Luan Hajdaraga and Minister of Foreign Affairs Paskal Milo¹⁵⁰.

28. Parliament adopts a new law on the National Intelligence Services transforming it into a purely informative agency and stripping some of the controversial powers this institution was enjoying in the last years¹⁵¹.

November

22. More than 90 percent of voters voted in support of the new constitution¹⁵², which was symbolically signed by President Mejdani on Albania's Independence Day (28th of November). The 1998 Constitution is divided into 18 parts which sanction a parliamentary democracy, people's sovereignty and fundamental rights of the citizens as well as other important points. The Constitution is said to have fulfilled all the requirements for a modern European constitution¹⁵³.

1999

February

6. Kosovo Peace talks begin between Serb and Kosovo Albanian representatives in Rambouillet, France¹⁵⁴.

March

15. A NATO workshop on Civil Emergency Legislation was held in Tirana,

¹⁴⁹ 'Albanians Clear the Way For the Arrest Of Ex-President', The New York Times, September 19, 1998.

¹⁵⁰ Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA), 98-10-02
<http://www.hri.org/news/balkans/ata/1998/98-10-02.ata.html#12>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁵¹ Sotirahq Hroni & Enis Sulstarova, Republic of Albania: Survey on Intelligence Services, in Fluri et al, Security Sector Governance in the Western Balkans: Self-Assessment Studies on Defence, Intelligence, Police and Border Management Reform, DCAF 2007.

¹⁵² Constitution of the Republic of Albania: http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/western_balkans/r18003_en.htm, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁵³ For information on "Constitutional History in Albania" visit:
<http://www.ipls.org/services/others/chist.html>

¹⁵⁴ Tim Judah, "Kosovo Liberation Army", Perceptions, September-November 2000.



Albania, on 15-17 March 1999. Its aim was to assist the Albanian authorities in the development of new civil protection and civil emergency legislation by sharing relevant experiences of NATO and Partner countries¹⁵⁵.

24. Operation Allied Force began after months of intense effort by the International Community to find a political solution to the crisis in Kosovo.

31. 430,000 refugees from Kosovo pour into Albania and Macedonia since the beginning of the Operation Allied Force.

April

18. Yugoslavia breaks diplomatic relations with Albania. Yugoslav Foreign Ministry accuses Albania of involvement in the NATO attacks against Yugoslav targets¹⁵⁶.

23-25. NATO's Washington Summit provides Albania with a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP), along with Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. NATO Heads of State and Government discuss the crisis in Kosovo, its impact on the region and longer-term strategies for future security and stability in SEE with representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia¹⁵⁷.

28. The North Atlantic Council extended till the end of 1999 the mission of the team of experts from NATO and Partner countries, who are currently training the Albanian military in the clearance of unexploded munitions¹⁵⁸.

May

26. European Commission proposes the creation of a Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), as a new framework for the development of relations between these countries and the European Union¹⁵⁹.

June

11. NATO led Operation Allied Force ends. Kosovar refugees begin returning

¹⁵⁵ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1999/0310e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁵⁶ 'Yugoslavia breaks ties with Albania as NATO raids continue'

CNN News: <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/europe/9904/18/kosovo.02/>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁵⁷ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1999/upd1999.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

¹⁵⁹ Delegation of the European Commission (EC) to Albania

http://www.delalb.ec.europa.eu/al/eu_in_see/stabilisation.htm Retrieved June 2009.



to Kosovo.

- The EU proposes the new Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) for five countries of South-Eastern Europe, including Albania¹⁶⁰.

July

19. A consultative forum on security matters in South Eastern Europe takes place at NATO HQ. NATO Allies and Kosovo's seven neighbouring countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Slovenia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) met to discuss the situation in and around Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina and security in SEE¹⁶¹.

30. A Stability Pact for South East Europe is agreed by the European Union Council of Ministers held in Köln, Germany¹⁶².

August

31. NATO established Communication Zone West – COMMZ (W), in the port town of Durres¹⁶³.

September

- Former Socialist Party leader Fatos Nano, who had resigned from his position earlier the same year in February, publicly accuses PM Majko for tolerating arms smuggling from the northern Albania to the KLA.

October

- Prime Minister Majko resigns after losing the competition for the leadership of the Socialist Party against Fatos Nano. On October 27 President Rexhep Meidani asks Ilir Meta to form the next government. He is sworn in October 29¹⁶⁴.

November

- Parliament passes the first law on the civil service considered as a signifi-

¹⁶⁰ European Commission

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/potential-candidate-countries/albania/eu_albania_relations_en.htm. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶¹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1999/0714e.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶² NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/1999/0714e.htm>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶³ AJFCN Organization, <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHQTIRANA/index.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶⁴ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/1999-10.html>.



cant success for the public administration reform¹⁶⁵.

11. Parliament approves a new Law on the State Police which made significant changes compared to the previous authoritarian law¹⁶⁶.

2000

January

27. Albanian Parliament approves for the first time a National Security Strategy which would determine the foundations of security policies and decision-making in the security sector in Albania¹⁶⁷. Defence White Paper was approved also on the same day¹⁶⁸.

February

18. NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson visits Albania to discuss reform of the Armed Forces under the Membership Action Plan¹⁶⁹.

March

Albania receives €112 million for the rehabilitation of main infrastructures in the framework of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe.

20. In a visit to the NATO HQ Albanian Prime Minister Ilir Meta and NATO SG Lord Robertson discuss the defence reform in Albania, the South East European Stability Pact and situation in Montenegro¹⁷⁰.

April

Albania hosts the PfP exercise 'Adventure Express'¹⁷¹.

¹⁶⁵Law "On the Civil Service of the Republic of Albania" No. 8095 unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/.../unpan007214.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶⁶ Law on State Police– Nr. 9749 date 04. 06.2007 http://www.asp.gov.al/psh/legjislacioni/ligji_policia_shtetit.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶⁷ Bahja Zija, Security Sector Expert Formation: Achievements and Needs in Albania, DCAF, http://www.dcaf.ch/ssr_wg/pb_secsecexp_bahja.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁶⁸ Law Nr. 8571, 27.01.2000, 'On the approval of the Document of Defence Policy of the Republic of Albania'. Official Gazette Nr. 3, 2000, p. 19.

¹⁶⁹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2000/0216/eng.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷⁰ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2000/0315/eng.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷¹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2000/0621/eng.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.



May

17. Parliament approves the law on prohibition of money laundering¹⁷². While Albania's legislation on money laundering has improved, implementation and enforcement remain weak and of limited effectiveness due to a lack of expertise, co-operation, and resources within the Albanian supervisory authorities and judiciary and law enforcement agencies.

June

19-20. Feira European Council states that all the SAP countries are "potential candidates" for EU membership¹⁷³.

21. Albania hosts the PfP exercise "Cooperative Dragon 2000"¹⁷⁴.

July

7. In a cabinet reshuffle, Ilir Gjoni replaced Luan Hajdaraga as Defence Minister.

13. Aware of the growing concerns caused by the increase in acts of terrorism and wishing to take effective measures to ensure that the perpetrators of such acts do not escape prosecution and punishment Albania ratifies the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism¹⁷⁵.

September

8. Albania becomes the 138th member of the World Trade Organization¹⁷⁶.

October

26. Parliament approves the law on ranks and career of the military and the law on the authorities and powers of strategic commanding of Armed Forces. This law defines the criteria and the authority that can decide on ad-

¹⁷² Republic of Albania, LAW No. 8610, dated 17.05.2000 "On the Prevention of Money Laundering" amendment with Law no. 9084, dated 19.06.2003 "For some additional and amendment in Law no. 8610, dated 17.05.2000 on the Prevention of Money Laundering", <http://www.unicri.it/www/justice/docs/Albania/Law%20on%20the%20Prevention%20of%20Money%20Laundering-1.pdf>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷³ Santa Maria Da Feira European Council, "Conclusions of the Presidency", June 19th-20th - 2000, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/fei1_en.htm, Retrieved: June 2009.

¹⁷⁴ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2000/0621/eng.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷⁵ For more information visit European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/090.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷⁶ WTO Homepage, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres00_e/pr189_e.htm. Retrieved June 2009.



mission into the Armed Forces, the ranks, the promotion in rank and in career, the responsibilities stemming from the special character of one's task and the military service, as well as the suspension of the military career in the Armed Forces¹⁷⁷.

November

- The European Union officially endorses the Stabilization Association Process, for the Western Balkan countries. SAP is the EU's political strategy for the European integration of the Western Balkan countries, all the way through to their eventual accession¹⁷⁸.

17. A conference entitled "The Economic Development of the Balkans, an Important Factor for the establishment of Security and Peace in the Region" was held in the Albanian capital, Tirana, on 17-18 November discussing the role of the EU and NATO in the implementation of the Stability Pact. It attracted high-level representatives from Albanian political, military and academic circles, from NATO, Atlantic Associations and from diplomatic representations and international organisations based in Albania¹⁷⁹.

December

- Albania adheres to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs¹⁸⁰.

2001

January

25. NATO and Partner countries set up an assistance project to destroy, over the next 16 months, all of Albania's stockpiled anti-person mines. This project is the first to be initiated under NATO's Partnership for Peace Trust Fund on Anti-person Landmines Stockpile Destruction¹⁸¹.

¹⁷⁷ Centre for Parliamentary Studies, Revista No.1, 2000

http://www.ascpdp.org/revistaeng/revista1_eng.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷⁸ European Commission, "Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkan", 2005
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/nf5703249enc_web_en.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁷⁹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2000/1115/eng.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁸⁰ United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs Psychotropic Substances, http://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1988_en.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁸¹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2001/0122/e0125b.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.



February

12. The Parliament approves a new law on the organisation and functioning of the General Prosecution Office strengthening the independence of constitutional institutions and the institution of the prosecutor's office; appreciating the independence of this institution as one more guarantee in respecting human rights and another effective means for reinstating violated rights¹⁸².

March

Albanian government sides with international community and supports international peace negotiations for the solution of the conflict between the ethnic Albanian minority and the Macedonian government.

April

- Albanian government is strongly criticised for its unsuccessful policy toward human trafficking by the International Organization for Migration (IOM)¹⁸³.
- Albania hosts the initial phase of the Partnership for Peace exercise "Adventure Express 01"¹⁸⁴.

May

- SEEBRIG (South-Eastern Europe Brigade) became fully operational. Tasks: peace support operations under UN or OSCE mandate as stipulated by the Security Council resolutions, based on the UN Charter¹⁸⁵.

June

- The Göteborg European Council invites the Commission to present a draft negotiating directive for the negotiation of a SAA with Albania¹⁸⁶.

¹⁸² Albanian Helsinki Committee, Newsletter July-September 2008
http://www.ahc.org.al/kshh/te_tjera/ang%20buletin%20korrik-shtator%202008.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.

¹⁸³ IOM & ICRC, "Research Report on Third Country National Trafficking Victims in Albania", http://www.iomtirana.org.al/en/E-Library/Reports/3rd_country_Research_Report_2001.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁸⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Albania, Albania and PFP
http://www.mfa.gov.al/web/Albania_and_PfP_8609_2.php, Retrieved: June 2009.

¹⁸⁵ For more information visit: www.seebrig.org.

¹⁸⁶ European Union, Göteborg European Council – Presidency Conclusions, June 2001, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/00200-r1.en1.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.



- In the legislative elections, the ruling Socialist Party wins 73 seats of 140. The 2001 Parliamentary elections in Albania marked progress over past elections in terms of the conduct of the campaign, media and election administration. However, the election process was protracted, litigious, uncertain and fragmented. Five rounds of voting, on 24 June, 8 July, 22 July, 29 July, and 19 August were required to complete the process¹⁸⁷.

July

12. NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson, and the Alliance's 19 Permanent Representatives went on a visit to Albania to discuss NATO-Albania relations and the situation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹⁸⁸.

August

- Conflict in Macedonia ended by reaching a peace settlement under the Ohrid Agreement, mainly negotiated under the EU's auspices¹⁸⁹.

September

12. Parliament gives a vote of confidence to new government formed by the Socialist Party and its four allies. Ilir Meta is appointed to head an SP led government for second time. The government includes Arta Dade as Foreign Minister, Pandeli Majko as Defense Minister, and Ilir Gjoni as Minister of Interior¹⁹⁰.

October

15. Albanian parliament decides for Albania to join the alliance against international terrorism¹⁹¹.

November

- Albania adheres to the International Convention for the Suppression of

¹⁸⁷ OSCE, Republic of Albania, Parliamentary Elections June 24th – August 19th 2001, http://www.osce.org/documents/odihr/2001/10/1170_en.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁸⁸ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2001/0709/e0712a.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁸⁹ "Ohrid Agreement": www.coe.int/.../OHRID%20Agreement%2013august2001.asp, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁰ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/2001-09.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania, Report on the Implementation by the Republic of Albania of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, May 2003, http://mfa.gov.al/web/pub/raporti_20antiterrorizmit2912.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.



Terrorist Bombings¹⁹² and to the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages¹⁹³.

December

- Parliament adopts the National Strategy against Human Trafficking. This strategy aims to consolidate and develop legal and institutional methods to better face the phenomenon of human trafficking¹⁹⁴.

2002

January

17. NATO Secretary General, Lord Robertson visits Albania to discuss progress made by the country in meeting membership criteria¹⁹⁵.

29. Prime Minister Meta resigned after a debate with the leader of Socialist Party, Fatos Nano¹⁹⁶.

February

22. Defence Minister Pandeli Majko is appointed for the second time to Socialist Party to be the next SP Prime Minister.

- Large parts of the country both in the south and in the north were cut off due to deteriorating and unforeseen weather conditions. In this case the situation was not only unforeseen but it also presented a national security threat since the lives of large number of citizens was seriously endangered and entire communities faced lack of electricity or food supplies and could not communicate with the rest of the country.

March

After one year of a highly politicised debate the parliament proposes to the

¹⁹² Obeid Ghassan, Measures to eliminate international terrorism, Report of the Sixth Committee - United Nations, <http://www.un.org/law/cod/terroris.htm>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹³ United Nations, "International Convention against the taking of hostages" <http://untreaty.un.org/English/Terrorism/Conv5.pdf>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁴ National Strategy Against Human Trafficking: http://www.caaht.com/resources/NationalStrategy2005-7_ALB.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁵ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/01-january/e0117a.htm>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁶ New York Times, "As Split of Albania Socialists Worsens, Prime Minister Quits", 22 January 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/30/world/as-split-of-albania-socialists-worsens-prime-minister-quits.html>, Retrieved June 2009.



President to dismiss from office the General Prosecutor Arben Rakipi. The Constitutional Court finds such a dismissal unconstitutional but the parliament approves Theodhori Sollaku as the new General Prosecutor¹⁹⁷.

June

17. The KFOR Communication Zone WEST moves from Durres to Tirana, and transformed into the NATO HQ Tirana with the mission to assist Albania in the implementation of its defence capability reforms as well as to contribute to the command and control of KFOR.¹⁹⁸

24. Under the pressure of the European Parliament, political leaders Nano and Berisha reach compromise and the Parliament elects Alfred Moisiu as the first post-communist president to receive a bipartisan backing in Parliament¹⁹⁹.

July

25. Parliament approves the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania outlining the objectives of developing a professional army, reducing the number of conscripts, and increasing the defence budget by 0.1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) per year until 2010²⁰⁰.

25-31. Prime Minister Majko resigns. Parliament approves a new government with Socialist Party Chairman Fatos Nano as Prime Minister, Majko as Defence Minister, Ilir Meta as Foreign Minister, and Luan Rama as Minister of Interior²⁰¹.

August

- A platoon of 22 personnel of the Albanian AF has been deployed in Afghanistan to participate in ISAF mission²⁰².

- After months of politicised debate and the establishing of a parliamentary

¹⁹⁷ Virginie. Jouan, Nations in Transit- Albania 2003, Freedom House Report, http://www.freedomhouse.org/inc/content/pubs/nit/inc_country_detail.cfm?page=47&nit=158&year=2003&pf, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁸ NATO Headquarters Tirana <http://www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/NHQTIRANA/index.htm>, Retrieved June 2009.

¹⁹⁹ International Crisis Group, Albania State of Nation 2003, Report no.140 – March 11th 2003.

²⁰⁰ Caparini. Marina, Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Stabilization: The Case of the Western Balkans, SIPRI Yearbook 2004.

²⁰¹ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/2002-07.htm>, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰² Home Index, NATO's role in Afghanistan, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, <http://www.nato.int/issues/Afghanistan/index.html>, Retrieved June 2009, Retrieved June 2009.



investigative committee the Prime Minister Nano, acting on one of the key DP demands contained in the June agreement, proposed the removal of Fatos Klosi to the newly elected President. The dismissal of both the Head of the National Intelligence Service and the General Prosecutor were seen as resulting from an agreement between the Prime minister and the head of Opposition in exchange of the election of a consensual president²⁰³.

November

29. SG of NATO Lord Robertson visits Albania to deliver the message that the Alliance's door remains open, urging to continue reforms. Albania failed to be invited to join the Alliance during the Prague summit of 21-22 November²⁰⁴.

2003

January

Commission President Prodi officially launches the negotiations for a SAA between the EU and Albania²⁰⁵.

April

Albanian Armed Forces deploy 72 army personnel to take part in operation "Iraqi Freedom"²⁰⁶.

May

2. Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, and the US Secretary of State Colin Powell sign a partnership agreement, the Adriatic Charter, modelled on the Baltic Charter, as a mechanism for promoting regional cooperation to advance each country's NATO candidacy²⁰⁷.

In spite of strong EU objections, Albania also signed a bilateral agreement

²⁰³ Constitution Watch, Albania. East European Constitutional, Review fall 2002/winter 2003. http://www1.law.nyu.edu/eecr/vol11_12num4_1/constitutionwatch/constwatch.pdf. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰⁴ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2002/11-november/e1129b.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰⁵ European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/potential-candidate-countries/albania/eu_albania_relations_en.htm, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰⁶ General Staff of Albanian Armed Forces, <http://www.gs.mil.al/mat.php?idr=79&idm=451&lang=EN>, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰⁷ US Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/fs/112766.htm>.



with the United States on non-surrender of persons, based on the statute of International Criminal Court. Countries that sign these agreements with the United States agree not to surrender Americans to the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court²⁰⁸.

June

21. The Thessaloniki Summit confirmed the SAP as the EU policy for the countries of the Western Balkans, once they become ready. The EU offered a clear European prospect and a concrete agenda for the accomplishment of this objective²⁰⁹.

July

3. Albania adopts a law on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention²¹⁰.

17. NATO Ambassadors and Secretary General Lord Robertson visited Tirana from 16 to 17 July for two-day talks on Albania's efforts to join NATO and defence reform²¹¹.

18. Foreign Affairs Minister Ilir Meta resigns over disagreements with Prime Minister Fatos Nano. Meta's successor is rejected by the parliament. On the 22nd of July Marko Bello is nominated to be foreign minister, but he is rejected by parliament on the 28th of July. On the 29th of July Luan Hajdaraga is named acting foreign minister²¹².

24. Albania establishes the Court of Serious Crimes. The purpose of this law is the organization and functioning of the courts for serious crime, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of the fight against organized crime and serious crimes and improving the quality of their adjudication²¹³.

²⁰⁸ Find the official document in: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/97155.pdf>, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁰⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Albania, The Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation and Stabilization and Association Process, http://www.mfa.gov.al/web/The_Agreement_on_Trade_and_Economic_Coop_29_2.php, Retrieved June 2009.

²¹⁰ Law Nr. 9092, 03.07.2003, 'On the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction, Official Gazette, Nr. 63, 2003, p. 2809.

²¹¹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2003/07-july/e0717a.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

²¹² Rulers, <http://rulers.org/2003-07.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

²¹³ Law on the Courts for Serious Crimes: http://www.osce.org/documents/pia/2003/07/4345_en.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.



31. NATO officially launches a project aiming to destroy 11.6 thousand tons of small arms and light weapons (SALW) ammunition in Albania²¹⁴.

October

17. Minister of Interior, Luan Rama was dismissed after being accused of punching a journalist. On October 23 Prime Minister Fatos Nano's nominees for foreign minister, Namik Dokle, and for Interior Minister, Fatmir Xhafa, are rejected by parliament. On the 25th of October appoints Igli Toska as acting Minister of Interior²¹⁵.

December

4. Parliament approves the law on the interception of telecommunications, which provides for an overall regulation of the interception of telecommunications²¹⁶.

29. Parliament finally approves Kastriot Islami as Foreign Minister and Igli Toska as Public Order (interior) minister²¹⁷.

2004

January

22. Parliament approves a new law on the military ranks and career in the Armed Forces²¹⁸.

February

- A rally campaign organised by the Opposition, call for Prime Minister Nano to quit paving the way to early elections²¹⁹.

²¹⁴ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2003/07-july/e0717a.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

²¹⁵ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/2003-10.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

²¹⁶ Dyrnishi. Arian, Interception and Telecommunication in Albania – Control and Oversight, IDM Centre for Security Studies, www.idmalbania.org, Retrieved June 2009.

²¹⁷ Rulers, <http://rulers.org/2003-12.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

²¹⁸ Simon Jeffrey, Roadmap to NATO Accession: Preparing for Membership, The Institute for National Strategic Studies, http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/SR_02/SR_02.htm, Retrieved: June 2009.

²¹⁹ Agolli. Ilirian, 'Mijëra vetë marrin pjesë në protestën e opozitës kundër qeverisë së kryeministrit Nano', Voice of America 21 February 2004.

<http://www.voanews.com/albanian/archive/2004-02/a-2004-02-21-6-1.cfm?moddate=2004-02-21>, Retrieved: June 2009.



May

7. Government adopts a five years counter-narcotics national strategy aiming to create an effective system of risks related to drug trafficking and to improve the fight against production, dissemination, and use of narcotics²²⁰.

27. NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visits Albania and reiterates that the door to NATO remained opened but that membership depended on reforms²²¹.

June

17. Foreign Ministers of Albania, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to present to NATO Headquarters a joint strategy for NATO membership²²².

November

11. Parliament decides to continue maintaining Albania's military mission in Bosnia under the EU led Operation ALTHEA²²³.

25. Parliament adopts the new National Security Strategy of Albania which represents an updated important strategic document related to threats, risks and measures to protect national security²²⁴.

2005

April

Albania declared two PfP units to the contingent of "Pool of forces" of NATO, in the context of the implementation of the Operational Capability Concept (OCC), a mechanism through which units available for PfP operations are evaluated and better integrated with NATO forces to increase operational effectiveness²²⁵.

²²⁰ State Police, National Strategy Against Narcotics, Nr.292, 7.5.2004
http://asp.gov.al/strategjite/srategjia_antidroge.htm, Retrieved June 2009.

²²¹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/05-may/e0526a.htm>
Retrieved June 2009.

²²² NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2004/06-june/e0617a.htm>.
Retrieved June 2009.

²²³ Law Nr. 9315, 11.11.2004, 'On the participation of an Albanian peacekeeping platoon in Bosnia to take part in the EU Operation ALTHEA', Official Gazette, Nr. 95, 2004, p.6565.

²²⁴ Republic of Albania, The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Albania
http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Albania_English-2004.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.

²²⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania, Albania and PfP
http://www.mfa.gov.al/web/Albania_and_PfP_8609_2.php, Retrieved: June 2009.



May

4. Albania contracts the US based company Lockheed Martin to build an integrated surveillance system. The new system would be instrumental in fighting terrorism and trafficking, as well as enhancing safety on the sea. The project is expected to be completed in four years^{226 227}.

20. Parliament adopts the new Military Strategy of Albania. It estimates the internal and external security environment, progress in transformation and restructuring of the Armed Forces, and evolution of the Long Term Plan of the Development of the Armed Forces, and reflects required changes to Armed Forces missions, organisations, and Armed Forces development concepts²²⁸.

July

3. Albania holds legislative elections but due to irregularities and tense political climate, results will not be available until early September²²⁹.

August

A military unit of medical personnel is deployed in Afghanistan, attached to a Joint Medical Team with Croatia and Macedonia in the framework of the US–A3 Adriatic Charter²³⁰.

September

2. Democratic Party-led coalition was officially declared the winner of July 3rd Parliamentary elections, following weeks of delays in confirming final results. According to international monitoring bodies, these elections complied, only in part, with OSCE commitments and other international standards for democratic

²²⁶ Selimaj, Erlis, Lockheed Martin, Albania ink deal for maritime surveillance system, SETimes, http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2006/08/25/feature-02. Retrieved: June 2009.

²²⁷ Law Nr. 9384, 04.05.2005, 'On the ratification of the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania and the American Corporation Lockheed Martin Global Inc (LMGI), for the construction of the integrated surveillance system'. Official Gazette Nr.43, 2005, p.1560.

²²⁸ National Military Strategy, http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Albania_English-2005.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.

²²⁹ INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION, http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/2001_E.htm, Retrieved: June 2009.

²³⁰ Vincent Morelli, Carl Ek, Paul Belkin, Steven Woehrel, Jim Nichol, 'NATO Enlargement: Albania, Croatia, and Possible Future Candidates', Congressional Research Service <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34701.pdf>, Retrieved: June 2009.



elections, and marked some progress in the conduct of elections in Albania²³¹.

12-13. Albania hosts the PfP exercise “Cooperative Engagement 05”, in which 1,500 military personnel from NATO and partner countries participate²³².

October

Albania signed a European Commission energy treaty in Athens meant to promote cooperation by setting up a regional energy market. This initiative aims to establish among the Parties an integrated market in natural gas and electricity, based on common interest and solidarity²³³.

November

30. Prime Minister of Albania, Sali Berisha, visits NATO HQ to outline his government’s reform plans²³⁴.

December

21. US Congress adopts Resolution on the NATO membership of the Adriatic Charter Countries²³⁵.

2006

April

3. Albania enables a three years moratorium which aimed to outlaw the circulation of speedboats and several other varieties of water vessels on all of Albania’s territorial water. This drastic measure was imposed in an attempt to thwart illegal human and drugs trafficking²³⁶.

May

5. Albania hosts five Chinese (ethnic Uighur) detainees, held at Guantanamo

²³¹ OSCE/ODHIR, Republic of Albania: Parliamentary Elections 3 July 2003.

http://www.osce.org/documents/odhr/2005/11/16905_en.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.

²³² NATO’s relations with Albania.

http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-7467F0AB-31D46D24/natolive/topics_48891.htm.

²³³ European Commission, Treaty: Establishing the Energy Community, http://ec.europa.eu/energy/electricity/south_east/doc/treaty/treaty.pdf, Retrieved: June 2009.

²³⁴ NATO Homepage. Retrieved June 2009

<http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2005/11-november/e1130a.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.

²³⁵ U.S. Senate Resolution 342, <http://zagreb.usembassy.gov/policy/focus/nato/res342.html>, Retrieved June 2009.

²³⁶ US Department of State, International Narcotics Control Strategy Report - Europe and Central Asia, <http://www.state.gov/p/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2007/vol1/html/80860.htm>, retrieved: June 2009.



Bay, who could not return to China due to political repression²³⁷. International Human Rights groups have accused the Chinese authorities of oppressing the roughly nine million Uighurs in Xinjiang, where there have been occasional acts of separatist violence²³⁸.

7. In a meeting with the leaders of the three countries in Dubrovnik, Croatia, US Vice President Dick Cheney endorsed the NATO membership aspirations of Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia²³⁹.

- An explosion in a chain of 6 military bases in the south village of Dhëmblan, caused a mass destruction, leaving four dead. This area remains a hot-spot regarding unsettled military ammunition in military basis close to urban areas²⁴⁰.

June

Stabilisation and Association Agreement was signed at the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Luxembourg²⁴¹.

July

6. NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer visits Croatia and Albania saying that membership was not a question of 'if', but 'when'. He commends the two countries on '*the impressive progress they have made in preparing for NATO membership*'²⁴².

2007

May

10-11. Albania hosts the annual Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)

²³⁷ Neil A. Lewis, 'Freed From Guantánamo but Stranded Far From Home', The New York Times, August 15, 2006.

²³⁸ Golden Tim, Chinese Leave Guantánamo for Albanian Limbo, The New York Times, June 10 2007, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/10/world/europe/10resettle.html>, Retrieved: June 2009.

²³⁹ Remarks By Vice President Dick Cheney, Prime Minister Ivo Sanader of Croatia, Prime Minister Vlado Buckovski Of Macedonia, and Prime Minister Sali Berisha of Albania at a Meeting of the Adriatic 3 Leaders. http://www.southeasteurope.org/subpage.php?sub_site=2&id=17118&head=if&site=4. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴⁰ 'L'Albanie sur un baril de poudre', <http://www.avmaroc.com/actualite/albanie-baril-poudre-a124559.html>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴¹ European Commission - Enlargement - Albania - EU-Albania relations, http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/potential-candidate-countries/albania/eu_albania_relations_en.htm. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴² NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2006/07-july/e0706a.htm>. Retrieved June 2009.



meeting of the Euro-Atlantic Policy Advisory Group to discuss the integration of the Western Balkans into the Euro-Atlantic community of nations, the deepening and broadening of NATO's partnership relations, and the challenge of ensuring public support for security cooperation²⁴³.

24. NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer urges Albanian Prime Minister Berisha to carry on with domestic political reforms during his visit to NATO Headquarters²⁴⁴.

June

4. Parliament approves a new Law on the State Police²⁴⁵. This law aims to determine the norms and procedures of the relations during the work of police, as well as respect for rights and duties of the police staff towards democratic policing.

10. President George W. Bush makes an historic visit to Albania, the first visit ever made by an American president. Bush declares that the UN should quickly grant independence to Kosovo²⁴⁶.

July

- The Parliament elects ruling party Deputy Chairman Bamir Topi as President, after three failed rounds of voting. Three previous attempts to reach a consensual President failed, raising tensions amid major political instability, while risking to bring the country early elections and cause a deep political crisis²⁴⁷.

- Albania became the first nation in the world to complete destruction of a stockpile of chemical agents, left over from the communist regime, under the Chemical Weapons Convention. Since 2004, US President Bush had authorized the use of 20 million USD from the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program funds for projects in Albania, marking the first time such funds were used outside the former Soviet Union²⁴⁸.

²⁴³ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2007/05-may/e0524a.html>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴⁴ Ibid

²⁴⁵ Law Nr. 9749, Date 04.06.2007, "Law on State Police", http://asp.gov.al/psh/legjislacioni/ligji_policia_shtetit.pdf, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴⁶ Bush greeted as hero in Albania. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6738055.stm>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴⁷ http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/sq/infoCountryPage/setimes/resource_centre/bios/topi_bamir?country=Albania. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁴⁸ US Embassy in Albania, 'Shqipëria Përfundon Shkatërrimin e Armëve Kimike Vdekjeprurëse', 17.08.2007

http://albanian.tirana.usembassy.gov/07pr_0817.html. Retrieved June 2009.



October

4. NATO / Pfp Trust Fund project in Albania which was launched in December 2002 ends. The project enabled Albania to successfully respond to the problem posed by surplus munitions, small arms and light weapons (SALW) and destroy 105 million small arms cartridges, two million hand grenades and 130 000 mortar rounds²⁴⁹.

7. NATO, Partnership for Peace and Mediterranean Nations officially launch two exercises called Cooperative Longbow 07 and Cooperative Lancer 07 (CO LW / CO LR 07) in Tirana, Albania²⁵⁰.

19. During a visit of the President of Albania, Bamir Topi to NATO, Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer tells him that '*Further reforms are of great importance*', and that '*The invitation tickets are not punched yet*'²⁵¹.

- Parliament establishes an investigatory committee on illegal interception of communications requested by the Christian Democratic Party.

November

- After a long and highly politicised debate and an investigatory Parliamentary Commission, the incumbent General Prosecutor is dismissed from office by the President. Once more. the Constitutional Court finds such a decision as unconstitutional but the Parliament approves the President's proposal to appoint Ina Rama, the first woman to take over the position, as General Prosecutor²⁵².

December

27. Albanian Parliament approves adoption of a new Military Strategy in the verge of NATO membership²⁵³.

²⁴⁹ NATO Homepage, <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2007/10-october/index.html>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁵⁰ Ibid

²⁵¹ Ibid

²⁵² Weekly News, A Weekly Bulletin of the Council of Ministers Republic of Albania, Year 1/ Number 27 26 November 2007. <http://www.km.gov.al/skedaret/1196179084-Weekly%20news%20nr%2027.pdf>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁵³ Law Nr. 9858, 27.12.2007, 'On the approval of the Military Strategy of the Republic of Albania. Official Gazette Nr. 184, 2007, p. 5801.



2008

January

1. The visa facilitation agreement with the EU entered into force. Visa facilitation negotiations began in November 2006. This agreement was intended to facilitate the issuance of visas for an intended stay of no more than 90 days per period of 180 days to the citizens of the Republic of Albania²⁵⁴.

21. Parliament adopts resolution on Albania's membership to NATO. The resolution was supported by both the majority and the opposition parties²⁵⁵.

30. Prime Minister of Albania Sali Berisha visits the NATO Headquarters in order to discuss Albania's progress report within the Membership Action Plan with the Secretary General and the North Atlantic Council. All Allies agreed that Albania has made progress in implementing political, economic, and military reforms, but that more needs to be accomplished²⁵⁶.

March

3. Parliament amends the law on interception of telecommunications. The law gives to the Minister of Interior equal access with the Prosecutor General and the Director of State Intelligence Service. Amendments were opposed by the Opposition parties considering them as an attempt by the ruling Democratic Party to control the Opposition²⁵⁷.

16. Twenty-six people were killed and hundreds were injured by a large explosion at an army base in Gerdec, near the capital Tirana²⁵⁸.

April

3. Albania receives invitation to start accession talks with NATO during the Bucharest Summit²⁵⁹.

²⁵⁴ Official journal of European Union, Agreement: Between the European Community and the Republic of Albania on the facilitation of the issuance of visas, 19.12.2007, http://www.delalb.ec.europa.eu/files/visa_facilitation_agreement-EU_Official_Journal.pdf. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁵⁵ Parliament of Albania, 'Resolution on Albania's Membership into NATO' <http://www.parlament.al/>.

²⁵⁶ NATO Homepage. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2008/01-january/e0130a.html>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁵⁷ Law Nr. 9885, 03.03.2008, 'On some amendments on the Law on Interception of Telecommunications'. Official Gazette Nr. 44, 2008, p.1985.

²⁵⁸ 'Munitions depot explodes in Albania', The New York Times, March 16, 2008.

²⁵⁹ NATO Homepage. <http://www.nato.int/docu/update/2008/04-april/index.html>. Retrieved June 2009.



25. Albania begins accession talks to join the Alliance, after the invitation during the Bucharest Summit²⁶⁰.

- An UNDAC Mission Report²⁶¹ on Gërdec Explosions is published revealing that regardless significant progress in dealing with excess/surplus stock of ammunition, still in Albania is estimated to be 100,000 tonnes of surplus and/or obsolete ammunition.

June

16. The President dismisses from office the Chief of the General Staff, Luan Hoxha, for alleged responsibility on the explosion of Gërdec ammunition dismantling site. Hoxha's dismissal came after a request from Prime Minister Sali Berisha to fire him over his role in the depot explosion in village of Gërdec, ten kilometres outside Tirana, which killed 26 people and injured more than 300²⁶².

16. Parliament lifts the parliamentary immunity to allow further investigation to the former Minister of Defence Fatmir Mediu for alleged responsibility on the explosion of Gërdec ammunition dismantling site²⁶³.

July

9. NATO Allies sign protocols on Albania's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty. Following the signature, each of the NATO countries' Parliaments will begin the ratification of the Accession Protocols²⁶⁴.

- Albania sends 62 military personnel to take part in the EU led mission 'EU-FOR Chad/RCA' in Chad and Central African Republic. The mission in Chad is conducted in the framework of EU and Albanian troops are under the command of French military troops. For the first time, the Albanian Armed Forces are engaged in a peacekeeping mission in Africa²⁶⁵.

²⁶⁰ Ibid

²⁶¹ UNDAC, Assessment and Recommendations Following the Gerdec Explosion, April 8th 2009, <http://www.unep.org/greenstar/publications/Report%20Ammunition%20Blast,%20Albania,%202008%5B2%5D.pdf>, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁶² BIRN, 'Albania's Army Chief of Staff Sacked'

<http://balkaninsight.com/en/main/news/11051/?tpl=297>, Retrieved: June 2009.

²⁶³ US State Department, '2008 Human Rights Report: Albania'

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eur/119064.htm>, Retrieved: June 2009.

²⁶⁴ NATO, "NATO Allies sign Accession Protocols for Albania and Croatia", 09 Jul.

2008, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-80FADD50-F2042F0E/natolive/news_8091.htm?selectedLocale=en. Retrieved: June 2009.

²⁶⁵ Ministry of Defense of Albania, "Albania sends the First Peacekeeping Contingent in Chad and the third in Heart", <http://www.mod.gov.al/botime/html/revista/2008/08/faqe13.htm>, Retrieved: June 2009.



September

24. Albania contracts the French based company SAGEM SECURITE for producing biometric passports and biometric identity cards for Albanian citizens²⁶⁶.

December

3. NATO Foreign Ministers declare that Albania and Croatia are expected to become NATO's newest members by April by paving the path for the future accession²⁶⁷.

19. Albania withdraws its 218 troops from Iraq. During this mission, 1368 military personnel served in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul^{268 269}.

30. Albanian parliament passed a 'lustration' law which removes from public office people linked with the former Communist secret police. The law was opposed by Opposition parties and the international community also raised concerns over its constitutionality²⁷⁰.

2009

April

3. Albania becomes a full member of NATO²⁷¹.

28. Albania formally applies for membership in the European Union, as the first step towards full membership²⁷². Nevertheless, according to international experts' estimations, Albania is not expected to join the EU until 2015 at the earliest²⁷³.

²⁶⁶ 'Albania selects Sagem Sécurité for secure ID documents'

<http://www.sagem-securite.com/eng/site.php?spage=04010822>. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁶⁷ Congressional Research Service, "NATO enlargement: Albania, Croatia, and Possible future candidates, openrcs.com/document/RL34701/.

²⁶⁸ Albanian Ministry of Defence Homepage, http://www.mod.gov.al/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35&Itemid=74&lang=sq. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁶⁹ The Associated Press, Albania Now Pulling Its 218 Troops out of Iraq, December 18 2008, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=6486521>, Retrieved June 2009.

²⁷⁰ 'CoE urges changes to Albanian lustration law', http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/newsbriefs/2009/02/13/nb-11. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁷¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Member Countries", http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52044.htm?selectedLocale=en. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁷² EurActiv News, 'Albania files EU membership application', <http://www.euractiv.com/en/enlargement/albania-files-eu-membership-application/article-181819>. Retrieved June 2009. Retrieved June 2009.

²⁷³ BBC, Albania applies for EU membership, 28 April 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/8023127.stm>. Retrieved June 2009.



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