

REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS: ARMENIA

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Introduction

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the vision of national security in the South Caucasus was mainly dominated by the maintenance of independence and the wars in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia. Shortly following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Armenia was confronted with two blockades on its borders with Azerbaijan and Turkey; another troubling obstacle in addition to its geographically landlocked position. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict defined the external dimension of threats to its national security in its newly independent state amidst the unpredictable regional situation. The external threats and the internal chaotic situation within The Republic of Armenia (RA) called for an elaborated and organized system found in its National Security Document/Strategy. ‘The Development of National Security Strategy’¹ was initiated in 1992 and finalized in 2007. Between 2005 and 2007, as a part of a process of deepening cooperation with NATO, the South Caucasian states adopted their respective national security documents. There was a clear lack of experience in developing the National Security Strategy of

¹ National Security Strategy of Republic of Armenia, (approved at the session of National Security Council at the RA President office on January 26, 2007), Official web site of MOD RA, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/eng/index.php?page=49> (14.06.2017)

Armenia. Therefore for the state institutions; collaboration with international stakeholders is of high importance. Reviewing the evolution of Armenia's National Security Strategy shows that the document was drawn up by the following collaborative interagency commission: the Secretary of the Armenian Defense Ministry, and local and foreign experts. Consultations with NATO Partners on the development of a National Security Strategy and a Military Doctrine were held.

The National Security Strategy (hereinafter referred to as NSS) is perceived as the second most important document following the Constitution, and has high importance in terms of evaluating and analyzing Armenia's security and its regional cooperation and international engagement. The National Security Strategy serves as the basis for any policies that the Republic of Armenia may develop and implement to prevent and overcome threats and risks to national security. Additionally, the document provides a guide to guarantee the sustainable development of the Armenian state and society. The Military Doctrine (hereinafter referred to as MD) of RA specifies some important details in the Strategy that are related to the military field.

In the NSS introduction, one can find the paragraph on the issue of further amending this document: "in order to better address the domestic and international situation and to address the changing security threats and challenges, as well as to reflect the needs related to the effective implementation of the aims of this document" (NSS, Introduction.) However, no new institutional amendment was held during the past ten years.

In the MD, a paragraph on the provisions of the Doctrine states: "it may be amended based on the shifting realities and developments in the political-military situation, the changing nature of military threats and challenges, the building, development and application of the Military Security System, and according to other factors deemed necessary for ensuring military security, as well as specified and articulated by the President of the Republic of Armenia through addresses and public speeches."² The provisions of the Doctrine are implemented through the

² The Military Doctrine of Republic of Armenia, Official web site of MOD RA, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/media/2015/07/825.pdf> (14.06.2017)

application of the Defense Strategy (Strategic Defense Review 2011-2015,³) and military planning.

With its specific departments, the Presidential Administration and the National Security Council's staff⁴ are allowed to evaluate the implementation of the NSS and further amendments, and address the challenging new workload of Armenia's national security.

In the concluding revision of the NSS, it is stated that "any declarations made on behalf of the Republic of Armenia and by its state officials should preserve the wording, intent and the spirit of the National Security Strategy." In this context, the declarations and speeches by the President of the RA who also serves as the chairman of the National Security Council, and the Minister of Defense should be analyzed in order to review the NSS and MD documents.

1. NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY

The definition of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia "is a system of state policy aimed to guarantee state, public, and individual security, sustainable development and the maintenance of the Armenian identity. It is implemented through the development and execution of a unified state policy based on an all-inclusive system of democratic values for all spheres of life." (NSS, Introduction).

The main guarantees for the implementation of the National Security Strategy are the following: an efficient system of governance, the rule of law, a consolidation of democratic values, an independent and impartial judiciary, compatibility of the armed forces, efficient security and law-enforcement structures, foreign policy ensuring effective international engagement, and comprehensive social justice (NSS, Introduction.)

This list of guarantees reveals an important concept: the efficiency of the state's national security is greatly dependent on Armenia's internal situation. Armenia should be strong and/or stable enough to tackle its internal challenges while strengthening its sovereignty and statehood simultaneously.

³ Strategic Defense Review, Public Release, 2011-2015, Available at <http://www.mil.am/media/2015/07/779.pdf> (14.06.2017)

⁴ National Security Council's official website <http://www.nsc.am>.

From this perspective, Armenian foreign policy should ensure effective international engagement. Armenia's rank in the Transparency International's Corruption Perception index (95th in 2015 and 113th in 2016 among 167)⁵ shows that the implementation of these guarantees of the National Security Strategy are under question.

According to the NSS, Armenia's threats to national security – both internal and external – are defined as events, actions (or the absence thereof) that may threaten the existence of the Armenian state, society, family or individual. (NSS, Chapter I, 3)

The key issue in the National Security of the Republic of Armenia is the settlement of *the Nagorno Karabakh conflict*.

In the NSS, the source of its main domestic threats is considered as *Armenia's engagement in a difficult process of transition since attaining independence at the end of the 20th century*. A cursory reading of the chapter on 'Domestic Security Strategy' reveals the important fields in need of reform such as efficient public administration, building the armed forces, liberalization of the economy, and new quality of life and morale. (NSS, Chapter III, 3)

In addition to the difficulties of onset by the transition period, the National Security of the Republic of Armenia has also been faced with the emergence of several new inter- and intra-regional threats. Inter-regional threats stem mainly from unresolved ethnic and armed conflicts in neighboring states, whereas intra-regional threats are rooted in a clash of interests of the main regional powers.

In the document, the internal and external threats were discussed within the interregional and intra-regional/international levels, and within Armenia's bilateral relations.

2. NAGORNO KARABAKH ISSUE

In the NSS of Armenia, the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh is in a separate chapter. The just and peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict is a key issue for the National Security Strategy of the Republic of

⁵ Corruption Perception indexes available at: <https://www.transparency.org/cpi20150> and <https://www.transparency.org/country/ARM>. (16.06.2017)

Armenia, which is the guarantor of the safety and security of the population of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh).

The parties in the conflict have each assented to the mediation by the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) Minsk Group, and continue to support the Minsk Group co-chairing states (France, the Russian Federation, and the United States) in their effort to support a negotiated resolution to the Karabakh conflict.

The Republic of Armenia advocates for a peaceful and compromise-based solution to the conflict. The legal aspects for the foundation of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh are sound and not in question. The position of the Republic of Armenia is based on the principle that any final solution or final document should be approved by the Karabakh side, and where Armenia is ready to only accept a resolution that would affirm the irreversible reality of the existence of the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh (NSS, Chapter III.)

The following paragraph shows Armenia's resolution model for the Nagorno Karabakh issue: *“Nagorno Karabakh should have a geographic link to Armenia and its security should be guaranteed. Azerbaijan's militant policy vis-a-vis Nagorno Karabakh and its readiness to opt for the military solution of the problem are direct threats to the security of Armenia. Under such circumstances, Armenia needs to have an army with increased defense capability to guarantee its security. The main priority of the army is to safeguard the inviolability of the borders of the Republic of Armenia and to be the guarantor of the physical safety of the peoples of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.”* (NSS, Chapter III)

The same language has been repeated by the President of Armenia on several occasions and in statements. Moreover, after the April 2016 events, President Serzh Sargsyan reasserted that in a continuity of the military escalations, the Republic of Armenia will recognize the independence of Nagorno Karabakh⁶.

⁶ Serzh Sargsyan's opening remarks at the meeting with the Ambassadors of the OSCE Participating States, 04.04.2016, Available at: <http://www.president.am/en/press->

The current document developed by the Minsk Group is known as the “Madrid Proposals.” The published main principles show that the document is compromise-based that meet the principles declared in NSS, but did not secure the principle of irreversibility of Nagorno-Karabakh’s independence.

3. MILITARY SECURITY

Following the approval of the NSS (January 26, 2007), in December 2007, the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as MD/Doctrine) was approved by the following Presidential Decree: “The Military Doctrine of the Republic of Armenia is a set of official views embracing the political-military, military-strategic, military-economic and military-technical basis for ensuring the military security of the Republic of Armenia.”⁷

After analyzing two critical documents, – the National Security Strategy, and the Military Doctrine – the unresolved Nagorno Karabakh conflict remains as the core issue for Armenia’s security. In addition to the aforementioned external threats (especially those involving the use of force,) Armenia’s position in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict makes the role of the army in the significant and prestigious in its security system.

The doctrine identifies Azerbaijan’s aspirations to resolve the Karabakh conflict through military means as a main threat to the security of the Republic of Armenia and to Nagorno Karabakh. (MD section 1 chapter 1), (NSS, Chapter III)

The doctrine establishes the prioritized directions for military and military-technical cooperation. The first position is strategic partnership with the Russian Federation, and the establishment of permanently acting combined forces such as joint forces. The second priority is active and practical participation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO.) The third and fourth positions are bilateral military cooperation

release/item/2016/04/04/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-meeting-with-Ambassadors-of-OSCE-states/ (10.06.2017)

⁷ The Military Doctrine of Republic of Armenia, Official web site of MOD RA, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/media/2015/07/825.pdf>. (14.06.2017)

with the USA and NATO and its member partner states. The final priority position is “the cooperation with regional and non-regional states, the policy of which does not contradict the fundamental values of national security of the Republic of Armenia,” (MD chapter 5, art 23)

The Military Doctrine review was conducted by the Strategic Defense Review (2011-2015.) The conflict between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia in August 2008, and the regular ceasefire violations on the Armenian-Azerbaijani contact line provide the rationale behind NSS and MD, and its modernity. The identified threats and changes in the security environment also impacted the Strategic Defense Review (SDR) process.⁸

In the SDR, the strategic planning assumptions were considered for the short-, mid-, and long-term perspectives. It states: “taking into account the geopolitical situation in the region, two sets of *planning assumptions* were devised, based on two probable development scenarios. The first set assumes that the NK conflict will continue to stay unresolved, and the second set assumes that a peaceful and lasting solution has been reached in the course of the ongoing negotiations.”⁹

SDR is an excellent tool to bring the national defense system into conformity with the existing security environment requirements, which improves the interaction between the civilian and military bodies. The **Nation-Army Concept** can be described as the outcome of the implementation of SDR. Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan launched the program known as the “Nation Army Concept” in October 2016.¹⁰ The concept, as it has been articulated thus far, is vague yet seemingly far-reaching: it appears to potentially allow for the total mobilization of society in national security services. In initiating the program, President Serzh Sargsyan stated: “All the governmental bodies, civilians and anybody else

⁸ Strategic Defense Review, Public Release, 2011-2015, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/media/2015/07/779.pdf> (14.06.2017)

⁹ Ibid. p.6.

¹⁰ The “Nation Army” concept, Speech of the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Vigen Sargsyan at the Meeting of the Board under the Minister of Defense, 29.10.2016, published in a monograph related to the Nation-Army concept. Available at: <https://razmavaraget.wordpress.com/2017/01/09/nation-army-collective-monograph-armenian-army-defense-academic-journal-ndru-mod-armenia/>

must correctly carry out their role in the defense of the country.”¹¹ In January 2013, the President Serzh Sargsyan’s statement at the extended meeting held at the RA Ministry of Defense showed the trend for developments of the concept: *“It happened that from the first years of independence, the Army has been playing a special role in our society. It was the war, whose spirit was felt all over Armenia – in some places more than in the others. In those days, every family had a close or a distant relative in the Armenian Army; and the Army was in everyone’s heart. That feeling became stronger when our Army attained victory which was so important, which was vital. Twenty years later, we have the affection and respect towards our Army which must be engraved in the institutional memory of our country once and for all. That is, we have to do our best to keep the attitude of every strata of the society towards the Army explicitly positive. We have to get to that through the serious reformation of the Army, enhancement of information activities and everyday efforts aimed at the shaping of the proper public attitude to the Army related issues.”*¹²

This concept raises concerns about the militarization of the Society. However, during the Meeting of the Board Adjacent to the Minister of Defense (29 October, 2016) the Minister of Defense Vigen Sargsyan stated: *“The Nation Army is a society that acts as one whole. That does not mean the militarization of society, or the state. On the contrary, it means democratization of the army, its full integration into society, economy, culture, education, science, ecology and sports. ...This means using what*

¹¹ On April 20th, 2017, at a conference entitled “Nation-Army 2017,” dedicated to fundamental themes in military education Minister of Defense Presented two new programs, entitled “My Honor” and “I Am”. The aim of the “My Honor” state program is to link temporary exemption from military service for higher education with professional military service and the “I am” program aims to reward those, who volunteered to serve on the front line. For details see: Discussion of the fundamental topics in military education, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/en/news/4728> (18.06.2017)

¹² Statement by President Serzh Sargsyan at the extended meeting held at the RA Ministry of Defense, 15.01.2013. Available at: <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2013/01/15/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-session-Ministry-of-Defense/> (14.06.2017)

has been created by the army for the whole society and state, and building up the armed forces with all the achievements of civilian life."¹³

The Proclamation of the Nation-Army Concept includes the development of a new military and defensive-oriented system, and the adoption of a new law on military service. It should be noted that the process of drafting a new law at the stage of this research was initiated, but the document's absence does not provide an opportunity to address the issue thoroughly.

4. EXTERNAL SECURITY STRATEGY

Due to the NSS, Armenia implements its external security strategy based on the basic principles of *complementarity and engagement*. (NSS, Chapter IV)

In the NSS, Armenia's strategic partnership with Russia, its adoption of a European model of development, mutually beneficial cooperation with Iran and the United States, membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO,) and its intensification of the cooperation with the NATO alliance explained as contribution to the consolidation of the potential of Armenia's policy of complementarity. (NSS Chapter IV)

In his public statements, the President preserves all of the aforementioned definitions. One excerpt from the President's statement at the European People's Party Congress on March 29th, 2017 vividly shows the intent of complementarity and engagement of the Armenian State. While discussing the successful partnership between Armenia and the European Union, the President stated: "Throughout this process Armenia has vividly demonstrated that it has been possible to make compatible various integration processes while harvesting and sowing everything positive and useful, which unite and does not divide nations."¹⁴

¹³ The Speech Delivered by Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Vigen Sargsyan During the Meeting of the Board Adjacent to the Minister of Defense Available at: <http://www.mil.am/en/news/4466>. (16.06.2017)

¹⁴Statement by President Serzh Sargsyan at the Congress of the European People's Party, 29.03.2017, Available at: <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2017/03/29/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-statement-at-the-EPP-congress-in-Malta/> (16.06.2017)

There are three layers of Armenia's external security strategy: the international, regional, and pan-Armenian.

4.1. International dimensions

Relations with the **Collective Security Treaty Organization** (CSTO) and the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization** (NATO) were seen as the military-political components of Armenia's external security strategy. Armenia's interest in further integration into international organizations such as the UN, EU, CoE, OSCE, and economic ones (World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)) contributes to the efficiency of ongoing reforms in Armenia.

As a founding member of the CSTO, Armenia still views its participation in this organization as a security component. Furthermore, one of the key priorities for Armenia is the military component of this membership. The CSTO membership provides privileged conditions for the supply of military equipment.

In the last several years, however, the President of Armenia raises questions regarding the Organization's reputation and significance in his speeches at CSTO meetings. For example, in the paragraph from the President's speech at the CSTO Collective Security Council session December 21st, 2015: *“There is no doubt that each country has its own interests and priorities, but they should not be cited against our shared interests and mutual obligations. Every time when the armed forces of Azerbaijan use guns, rocket mortars, or artillery against the Republic of Armenia, they are firing at Astana, Dushanbe, Bishkek, Moscow, and Minsk. I would like to remind that we have a corresponding article in our Charter, and if we don't implement that article, if we don't discuss the situation, if we don't view it as necessary to pick up the phone and make a call to learn what's going on in the allied Armenia and along with that vote against each other's interests in international organizations, adopt with third countries bilateral declarations the essence of which is aimed against*

the CSTO allies, we simply bring under that fire our entire Organization, its reputation, and significance."¹⁵

Armenia strives to establish intensive relations with NATO through the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC,) and the Partnership for Peace (PfP.) The successful implementation of the PfP Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) will foster greater modernization and efficiency of the Armenian defense system. It will also bring it closer to conforming to the defense systems of advanced states, including their armed forces. Armenia is intensifying its political dialogue with NATO, and is establishing compatible military units such as the current peacekeeping battalion, which is capable of participating in NATO peacekeeping operations. Armenia is also a part of NATO's Planning and Review process. Based on the President's and the Defense Minister's speeches, there is proof of the deepening of relations with NATO.¹⁶

In a joint press point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and President Sargsyan, the question of to what extent is the broad NATO-Armenia agenda compatible with Armenia's membership in other security structures and the commitments assumed there. President Serzh Sargsyan's answer is the following: "...Of course the CSTO and NATO pursue different objectives but I reiterate that our practice has come to demonstrate that it is possible for a country in order to assure its security to find areas of cooperation with different organizations and in different formats."¹⁷

¹⁵ The Statement of the President of RA at the session of the CSTO Collective Security Council, Working visit of president Serzh Sargsyan to Russian Federation, 21.12.2015, <http://www.president.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2015/12/21/Working-visit-of-President-Serzh-Sargsyan-to-Russia-December-21/> (14.06.2017)

¹⁶ Statement by President Serzh Sargsyan at the meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the NATO member and non-member states dedicated to the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, 09.07.2016, Available at: <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2016/07/09/President-Serzh-Sargsyan-speech-at-NATO-summit-in-Poland/>, The interview of the Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia Vigen Sargsyan on RIA Novosti, February 22, 2017, Available at: <http://www.mil.am/en/news/4653> (14.06.2017)

¹⁷ Joint press point with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg and the President of Republic of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, 27 Feb 2017, available at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_141844.htm?selectedLocale=en (20.06.2017)

One of the most commonly discussed issues is the possibility of having balanced participation in competitive organizations such as CSTO and NATO. The Georgia-NATO Agile Spirit 2017 (September 3-11) multinational drills has been an interesting case. In addition to Georgia and the US, Bulgaria, Latvia, Romania, Ukraine, and Armenia will participate. In reality, however, Armenia did not participate, and Azerbaijan did. The Armenian official response did not reveal the real reason of non-participation.

Armenia's **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** membership provides the potential to establish greater cooperation in various domains in the politico-military arena, the security of external borders in combating international terrorism and in fighting organized crime, drug trafficking and illegal migration, and the promotion of economic, social, and humanitarian ties between its members.

In the NSS, the development and consolidation of Armenia's relations with European structures, and above all, with the **European Union (EU)** is considered as a priority direction for the country's foreign policy, which dates back to the EU-Armenia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) on January 1st, 1999. After Armenia gave up its potential Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU in 2013, and took the 'surprise decision' in light of Russian pressure to join the Eurasian Economic Union, relations between the EU and Armenia entered a period of 'strategic pause.' By becoming a member of the Eurasian Economic Union¹⁸ in February 2015, Armenia transferred core elements of its external trade policy to the Eurasian Economic Union and is bound by the Eurasian Economic Union's common external tariff, albeit with ~800 exemptions until 2020.¹⁹ The EU is Armenia's main trading partner, accounting for around 29.7% of

¹⁸ Treaty on the Accession of the Republic of Armenia to the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union, 29 May 2014, Available at: <https://docs.eaeunion.org/en-us/Pages/DisplayDocument.aspx?s=bef9c798-3978-42f3-9ef2-d0fb3d53b75f&w=632c7868-4ee2-4b21-bc64-1995328e6ef3&l=540294ae-c3c9-4511-9bf8-aaf5d6e0d169&EntityID=7297> (15.06.2017)

¹⁹ Hrant Kostanyan, The Rocky Road to an EU-Armenia Agreement: From U-turn to detour, 3 February 2015, available at: <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/rocky-road-eu-armenia-agreement-u-turn-detour> (16.06.2017)

Armenia's total trade, while Russia's share of its foreign trade is roughly 25%.

Moreover, the negotiations between Brussels and Yerevan are complex and face several constraints, such as Armenia's commitment to the EEU, and with inherent limits stemming from the Armenia-Russia bilateral gas deal signed in December 2013. This deal grants Gazprom a monopoly to operate pipelines in Armenia and prevents the Armenian government from making regulatory changes in this area until December 31st 2043, and some other legal issues.²⁰

Currently, Armenia's path to European integration means taking consistent steps towards institutional cooperation with Europe while carefully avoiding any declarative moves or ideological rhetoric that could make Russia, its strategic partner, nervous.

4.2. Bilateral dimensions

The main priorities in a bilateral context (both international and regional) are relations with the **Russian Federation, United States, European states, Middle Eastern, and Asia-Pacific countries (especially with China, India, and Japan,) and** all four of Armenia's neighbors: the **Islamic Republic of Iran, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey**. The relations between IRI and Georgia were considered as traditionally friendly, of which are based on a number of shared realities: borders, historic and cultural ties, and mutual economic interests.

In contrast of these two neighbors with high prospective for cooperation in many fields, the other two – Turkey and Azerbaijan – were considered as threats to Armenia's security. Closed borders by Turkey and the absence of normalized relations adversely affect the stability of the region as a whole and impede the development of regional cooperation. The normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations would decrease the risk of new dividing lines emerging in the region and would help create a conducive environment for the final settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh

²⁰Hrant Kostanyan and Richard Giragosian, EU-Armenian Relations: Seizing the Second Chance, CEPC Commentary, Thinking ahead for Europe, 31 October 2016, available at: <https://www.ceps.eu/publications/eu-armenian-relations-seizing-second-chance> (14.06.2017)

conflict. Due to this conflict, Azerbaijan has adopted a policy aimed at the exclusion of Armenia from all regional cooperation projects.

Armenia's isolation from regional projects and its energy dependence significantly influence the economic growth of the country and affect its internal stability. Economic stagnation is causing growing social dissatisfaction in Armenia.

President Serzh Sargsyan referred to this isolationist threat for Armenia in his speech at the 45th Munich Security Conference while discussing the stability in the South Caucasus and the exclusionist approach from regional projects that apply to Armenia repeatedly: "... *Contemporary South Caucasus is a model of the multi-polarity of the world. It is one of the regions, where there are seemingly unyielding dividing lines, where internationally recognized political map is very different from the real one, where stability is extremely vulnerable, and the re-establishment of peace requires joint and concentrated titanic efforts.*"²¹

Relations with Russia and the US are two of the National Security Strategy priorities. In the NSS, Armenian-Russian relations were considered as a strategic partnership: (NSS, Chapter IV, 1.3) "*The foundation for this strategic partnership was established through a Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance and the Declaration on the Collaboration towards the 21st Century. Both these agreements and a bilateral agreement on defense cooperation, including within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), serve as the main pillars of the Armenian security system*" (NSS, Chapter IV, 1.3). All these definitions in the National Security Strategy document and Military Doctrine vividly demonstrate that the military security dimension is a priority.

All international and intra-regional/inter-regional cooperation models which increase the security in the military field become preferable for Armenia's national security.

In the NSS, the US is considered as a global power with its own interests in the region; it plays a significant role in regional economic,

²¹ Munich Security Conference Speech of President Serzh Sargsyan, Available at: <http://www.president.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2009/02/07/news-30/> (14.06.2017)

military, and political developments. NSS considers the Armenian Diaspora, through its various organizations and centers in the US, as an additional asset in the development of bilateral relations between Armenia and the US.

5. ARMENIA-DIASPORA RELATIONS

Before the NSS provisions found in the conclusion, the third subchapter of Chapter IV is about Armenia-Diaspora relations. The main idea behind Armenia-Diaspora relations is “to preserve and develop the identity of Armenian nation, within both Armenia and throughout its Diaspora.” (Citation) The decline of national and cultural identity in the Armenian Diaspora is mentioned as threats to Armenia’s national security. Although the preservation of the Armenian identity is a key element in the NSS, there is no definition, which can be explained dubiously; either everyone knows what it means, or it is not defined in order to have a broad spectrum of its usage:

“Well-organized and efficiently integrated Diaspora communities are important contributions to the overall increase in Armenia’s international involvement. Any weakening of the Armenia-Diaspora ties and the absence of mutually enriching contacts may threaten the fundamental values of the National Security of the Republic of Armenia.” (NSS, Chapter IV).

NSS sees the consolidation of relations with the Diaspora in efforts to prevent the assimilation and loss of lingual and cultural identity among the Armenians living abroad. In general, Armenia considers the Diaspora as an important tool in the solutions of vital problems facing Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

Besides such formulations, the NSS did not provide any mechanisms of implementation of the aforementioned goals. As a result, the implementation of Diaspora-related ideas did not succeed.

CONCLUSION

1. Since 2007, when the NSS of RA was adopted, the different circumstances in Armenia’s external environment (global and regional,)

domestic policy environment, and the changed priorities are the main factors that create the need for a review and renewal of the National Security Strategy. The introduction to the security documents and the amendment processes shows that decision-making power was concentrated into the President's hands. December 6, 2015, after the Constitutional referendum the country's semi-presidential system transformed into a parliamentarian. As a result, this creates an unbalance between the previous decision-making power center (the President and its administration of 2007 National Security Strategy,) and the new one (Parliament.) Given the shift in power over decision-making, the Parliamentary governmental system needs to renew the document

The examination of the NSS of RA shows that the Strategy lacks a description of the necessary mechanisms and means for achieving its ends. Moreover, Armenia's National Security Strategy fails to discuss three important variables: goals, means, and ends.

2. In the NSS, conflict settlement negotiations are assented to the mediation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship (Russia, the US, and France,) which advocates for a peaceful and compromise-based solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Currently, negotiations are held on the basis of the Madrid proposals (November 2007.) The latest document suggested by the Minsk Group is the so-called Madrid proposals. The Madrid proposals are on the negotiation table, and its content (which is available to the public) does not contradict Armenia's NSS formulations with the exception of the following: Armenia is only ready to accept a resolution which would affirm the irreversible reality of the existence of the Republic or Nagorno Karabakh. (NSS, Chapter III).

The basis and foundation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between the two countries – Armenia and Azerbaijan – forms two significant contradictory concepts of International Law: the right of nations to self-determination, and the principle of territorial integrity. Moreover, Azerbaijan's aggressive policy, in addition to the fact that after the Madrid proposals, nothing new was on the negotiation table, military solution of the conflict became a real threat.

3. A review of the military components of the NSS and Military Doctrine vividly shows that the military security dimension is a top priority for Armenia. All international and intra-regional/inter-regional cooperation models, which increase the security militarily, become preferable for Armenia's national security.

4. The National Security Strategy stipulates that Armenia's main security threats are from Azerbaijan and Turkey. Armenia has only two functional neighbors – Iran and Georgia – with which it sustains positive relations that it entirely depends on for communication and trade with the outside world.

Notably, Armenia's largest trade partner is the European Union, not Russia despite all impediments and perceptions to the contrary. However, Russia's weight remains crucial in two decisive and important spheres: military security and investments, first and foremost in energy production.

In the regional and international contexts, the Republic of Armenia as one of the South Caucasian states tries to find or be a part of regional cooperation models, which can guarantee Armenian security and securing new opportunities of regional and international cooperation. The NSS document shows Armenia's engagement and complementarity policies toward its neighbors and internationally. While Armenia has served as an important Russian ally in the South Caucasus, it has a close and active relationship with NATO, and expanded bilateral military cooperation with key Western countries: US, France, Germany, and Italy. Moreover, Armenia has developed its participation in peace operations, pursuing both domestic defense reforms and modernization, and valuable international experience for its elite peacekeeping battalions.

However, the past and present models of cooperation do not counter the regional and international actors' real balance of power. In turn, Armenia is creating internal contradictions from the beginning. Among the challenges for regional cooperation and a stable security environment is the ethno-political conflicts. With different approaches to conflict resolution by each involved party, this leads to the absence of any perspective for regional cooperation even in the long-term. The next common challenge to the South Caucasus is the different levels of democratization and freedoms,

and the speed of democratic transformations in all three states. Another challenge is rooted in the existence of different types of security systems in the region, which also leads to the mutually-exclusive strategic interests between the regional states.

While reviewing the NSS and the President's speeches, it can be claimed that the basic goals, interests, instruments, and milieu of Armenian national security policy are unchangeable, especially within its external security strategy. The Nagorno Karabakh issue and Genocide "memory" (the enduring legacy of the Genocide) create the main platform of threats and "permanent" challenges for Armenia. Interdependence on Russia is considered as a strategic alliance in the military and energy sectors, and is justified within the security context.

5. Though the NSS stressed the broad spectrum of cooperation between Armenia and its Diaspora (which is supposed to utilize the Diaspora's potential in Armenia's interests broadly *and* preserve the Armenian identity,) the realpolitik reveals Armenia's unsystematic activities in its relations with the Diaspora.

Taking into account that states and societies become more interdependent, and given that today's information age creates new intertwined connections between the members of the states and societies with other members all over the world, the possible solution lies in a way of making horizontal networks and creating a Network State. Today, the flow and speed of information exceeds the policy decision-making rate and possibilities. Therefore, having Armenian communities in important places Armenia has relations with; RA should use the possibilities in receiving and sending necessary information to create a compatible "Armenian" global network. Every network from the state institution-society sector-diaspora connection will help resolve and overcome the challenges and threats to the National Security of Armenia.²²

²² For more details see D. Hovhannisyann, Network State, *Jam Session 16*, Available at: <http://am.epfarmeria.am/network-state-jam-session/> (24.06.2017)

**ՏԱՐԱԾԱՇՐՉԱՆԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ
ԴԻՆԱՄԻԿԱ. ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆ**

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***Բանալի բառեր՝** Ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարություն, ռազմական հայեցակարգ, Հայաստան, տարածաշրջանային անվտանգություն, ռազմական անվտանգություն, Լեռնային Ղարաբաղ, ցանցապետություն, Պաշտպանության ռազմավարական վերանայում*

Հետազոտությունը խնդիր է դնում հասկանալ տարածաշրջանային անվտանգության փոփոխվող դինամիկան և դրանց վերաբերյալ Հայաստանի Հանրապետության պաշտոնական դիրքորոշումը և արձագանքը այդ մարտահրավերներին ընդունված փաստաթղթերի մակարդակում: Սույն հետազոտության ուսումնասիրության հիմքն են կազմում Հայաստանի Հանրապետության անվտանգության ոլորտի փաստաթղթերը, մասնավորապես, Ազգային անվտանգության ռազմավարությունը և ռազմական անվտանգության հայեցակարգը, ինչպես նաև միջազգային հարթակներում ՀՀ բարձրաստիճան պաշտոնյաների արված հայտարարություններ, որոնք վերաբերում են անվտանգության հարցերին:

Հետազոտության հիմնական եզրակացություններից է Անվտանգության հայեցակարգի վերանայման անհրաժեշտությունը՝ պայմանավորված գլոբալ և տարածաշրջանային նոր մարտահրավերներով, ինչպես նաև ՀՀ կառավարման նախագահական մոդելից խորհրդարանական կառավարման մոդելին անցմամբ: