

Regional Security Environment And Reform - Threats And Risks

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In today's world, clearly defined threats are growing less common. For nations in transition, there are internal threats that may pose as much danger as those of an external nature. Threat analysis impacts heavily on defence and military budgets, as it does in the broader security sector in organizations such as police or border guards. By the nature of armed forces, the military services compete for scarce resources, each seeking to provide for the highest possible readiness of their service. As threat and risk analysis proceeds, each level in the military, MOD, government and parliaments, have responsibilities to ensure the accuracy of this information. Each level of review is obliged to identify the most credible and critical threats, to prioritise, and to justify the prioritisation. Only through such a process can funding be allocated in a manner that will provide for the most effective capabilities of armed forces, to ensure they are prepared to address the threats.

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1. Introduction

It is clear to those who have spent time analysing and defining threats how important it is to do this well. It is not always as clear how to identify some of the more subtle internal non-traditional threats. For defence and military planners, it should be apparent that the work they do in developing an accurate threat analysis is an essential part of the equation used by political leaders to evaluate the form and substance of a nation's armed forces, to determine what resources are necessary to create and sustain defence and military establishments that are capable of successfully dealing with these threats, should it become necessary to do so.

If threat analysis has become an art, it is an imperfect one, even when threats can be clearly defined. In today's world, clearly defined threats are growing less common. In Southeastern Europe (SEE) there are no forces poised on the borders, threatening other nations, and yet, very real threats exist, threats of instability, with the potential to disrupt a nation's progress towards a stable, democratic future. For nations in transition, there are internal threats that may pose as much danger as those of an external nature.

The first section of this paper offers a brief clarification of how certain terms are used. The second discusses prioritising threats and risks. In the third section the relationship between determining threats and the budget process is explored. Finally, an examination of the threat environment is presented, in which the nature and relevance of non-traditional internal threats are discussed.

2. Clarifying Terms

To set the stage, two of the terms to be used are going to be briefly clarified, information and intelligence. They are often used interchangeably, however, for many defence and military planners they are quite different. Information is the raw material, so to speak, gathered by various sources, both human and technological. Having said this, military terms are sometimes confusing in their own construction. We speak of HUMINT, human intelligence; SIGINT, signals intelligence; COMMINT, communications intelligence, and similar terms. These terms refer to an end product, intelligence, understanding that what comes, initially, from these sources is not intelligence, but information. Only after the information is analysed by trained analysts is intelligence produced, and as one might assume, the ratio of information to

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intelligence is very high. This clarification is intended for the purpose of the author's comments, and does not presuppose universal acceptance. Additionally, for simplicity sake, the word "threat" will be used to be inclusive of "risks".

The title of this presentation has been reordered from Risks and Threats, to Threats and Risks, to accurately reflect the order in which the process is conducted. The first step is to identify the threat, only then can the process begin to determine the risks associated with that threat. In most situations not only must individual threats be prioritised, but the associated risks as well. Constrained resources are a fact of life for military preparedness, or readiness, and therefore it is necessary to prioritise risks in order to determine those that are acceptable and unacceptable, so that a proper allocation of funding can be made to highest priority unacceptable risks. History is replete with examples of battles lost as a result of resources arrayed against the wrong threats or risks. Perhaps less dramatic are the circumstances of prolonged struggles of governments to conduct reforms based on an equally inadequate array of resources, but also due to a failure to recognise the importance of non-traditional internal threats.

3. Threats and Budgets

Threat analysis impacts heavily on defence and military budgets, as it does in the broader security sector in organizations such as police or border guards. Once threats are identified, the military uses this information, and intelligence, to establish priorities for their limited resources. In well functioning democracies, defence and military establishments are obliged to justify their demands for resources, both human and capital resources, and both internally as well as to their parliaments which control the resources. Responsible governments demand detailed information, and intelligence, that confirm the nature of threats against the nation's national security interests, foremost among them, its population.

By the nature of armed forces, the military services compete for scarce resources, each seeking to provide for the highest possible readiness of their service. With the rapid advances in technology applicable to military hardware, the cost of equipment is spiralling upwards. In such an environment, civilian leadership are faced with the task of assessing the needs, and prioritising. The analytical development of threats and risks provides national leaders with a key tool for assisting in this prioritisation. As threat and risk analysis proceeds, each level in the military, MOD, government and parliaments, have responsibilities to ensure the accuracy of this information. Each level of review is obliged to identify the most credible and critical threats, to prioritise, and to justify the prioritisation. Only through such a process can funding be allocated in a manner that will provide for the most effective capabilities of armed forces, to ensure they are prepared to address the threats.

4. The Threat Environment

The identification of threats has evolved over time from a national process to one that involves groups of countries, coalitions, or alliances. Perhaps the most significant example of this in the 20th century is that of the cold war, with NATO and the Warsaw Pact (WP) representing organisations that viewed one another as their greatest threat. To illustrate the importance of the value of addressing internal threats, the example of NATO is provided. With the disintegration of the WP it was not long before many pundits were calling for the dissolution of NATO, since, they argued - and some still do - it had lost its '*raison d'être*.' While reading the articles and papers, listening to the presentations and interviews on this argument for NATO to close its doors, one was struck at the lack of depth of understanding. Perhaps one of the greatest strengths and accomplishments of NATO was not the fact that it emerged from the cold war intact, but what it accomplished in terms of the integration of its members, the mutual trust and confidence that evolved over the years, the fact that it kept its member states from fighting with one another, and, indeed, worked constantly to address and resolve problems among and between its members.

Beyond collective security and defence, this aspect of the value of NATO applies as much today as ever. At the heart of NATO's *modus operandi* is the defence planning process, the transparent, above-the-table discussion and sharing of information oriented towards common benefit. It is also worth recalling that at the time of its creation, NATO's stated practice of transparent defence planning was not reflected in the practice of many of its subsequent members.

How does this relate to the threat environment? Once this 'greater good,' as it might be called, of NATO's accomplishments is recognised, its continued value must also be recognised, for it has dealt effectively with its internal threats, contributing in most significant ways to the well-being and prosperity of the Euro Atlantic countries, NATO and non-NATO alike. The threat environment changed dramatically between 1989 and 1991, however, NATO's proven ability to deal effectively with its internal threats, made it the ideal candidate, along side the EU, to put these skills to work in the form of the Partnership for Peace. Today this 'greater good' may be said to have even more significance, and need, than in the past, as the Alliance continues to deepen its interaction with the Partnership countries, encouraging and assisting in the development of effective democratic forms of governance.

It is important for the governments in transition countries to be aware of internal threats that for the most part are of a more subtle nature than a threatened military conflict, though of course, they are related. In SEE, and in other Partnership countries, the threat environment does not include the likelihood of armed forces of one nation, planning, or poised to threaten the sovereignty of another. But the threat arising from instability persists, and is certainly viewed as significant in this and other regions.

Many of the internal threats are not yet recognised as such, or as part of the threat environment. Within MODs and the military, work is progressing in putting into place democratic systems. The development of policies and management systems, and their effective implementation require competent and willing people, human capital, and an adequate investment in this capital.

Good leaders, managers, and staff officers, both civilian and military, constitute the key to success in any organisation. An old adage in leadership education states that leadership does not emerge from blind obedience to anyone. This adage was restated by the corporate leader of one of the world's most successful international corporations, when he warned senior managers that 'If you have a yes-man working for you, one of you is redundant.' His meaning was that effective leaders encourage the development of their people rather than stifle it. The essence of good leadership and good management extends across professional, and national boundaries. Investing in Human Capital requires good leaders and managers. To be effective, leaders must encourage people to challenge the process. Not surprisingly, in an environment where staff officers are encouraged to express their opinions and ideas, the best solutions to problems rise to the attention of decision-makers.

In terms of Human Capital, and optimising this capital, a number of steps are necessary. On the military side, professional education systems, that embody the principles of democratic governance, must be developed, and refined. The content of the courses, in essence, are likely to be similar to those in NATO nations, while obviously accounting and providing for individual national requirements. Work remains to be done in developing expertise in teaching staffs, and designating teaching positions as truly career enhancing. These will help to attract the best into the faculties, and therefore improve the quality of the education.

5. Internal Threats (Non-Traditional)

Personnel systems within the military continue to evolve. The legacy of history, and the culture still, too often, gives witness to many key positions being filled based on friendships, or where one is from, rather than as a result of a professional personnel selection process. This dilemma is also reflected in the promotion system, where many young and competent officers question the current system's ability to recognize and reward their skills. As we have seen in so many other transition countries, until merit based systems are put into place, many of the best and brightest young officers become frustrated, and look to the private sector for better opportunities, as economic conditions improve. Neither MODs, nor the military can afford to lose their best and brightest.

Equitable pay, allowances, and benefits are also undergoing review and change. Unreasonable pay differentials for personnel of the same grade must be reviewed. In those nations where the differential, or different amounts of pay, includes officers of the same rank,

serving in either a tactical unit or on the GS, this tends to frustrate a rotation process that would more effectively balance officer's skills and experience, and therefore better prepare them for more senior responsibilities. In some countries, where moving expenses are born by the officers, and government housing is not sufficient to meet demands, geographic reassignments also pose a difficult problem. The result, particularly in cases where the spouse works - keeping in mind high unemployment and the desirability and fiscal practicality of working wives - is that all too often the officer moves and the family does not. As we begin to combine such factors, a picture emerges of personnel systems that do not adequately facilitate professional development, or encourage a military career for many.

These "people issues" are characteristic, for the most part, of all transition nations, and beyond the policy and management aspects, many are heavily impacted by the state of the nation's economy, and hence linked to budgets. Identifying the problems and reviewing current policies, with the intent to find and implement remedies, are the first steps. In this regard, the level of activity in bringing about change in most countries in the region has been increasing, and as senior leadership become more aware of the value, indeed the necessity of investing adequately in their human capital, the pace of effective change in this area will increase.

On the civilian side of the equation there is a need to create a professional civil service. There is much discussion in conferences, workshops, and seminars about the requirement for the military to develop, as part of their ethic, an abiding respect for DCAF, to include the role and authority of civilian leadership. As MODs focus on reform of the military, this must go hand-in-hand with improving the competence of the civilian professionals. Very often the pace of the former exceeds that of the latter, for "the system" tends to impose greater pressure on the military.

This is not particularly surprising, especially in those transition nations that inherited some semblance of a military force, where officers had an understanding of their system. While the policies, systems and procedures they are familiar with, were often very different from those practices in mature democracies, nevertheless, many officers came with an understanding of training and education, logistics, maintenance, mobilization, force deployments, procurement, personnel management, and many other aspects of the complex nature of defence and military establishments. In contrast, most civilians entered this environment with little or no experience, and the daily demands of managing these large complexes, while providing an "on the job" education, must be augmented, particularly for the mid and lower level staff. Professional civil service career programs are needed to address this shortcoming. In terms of human capital, the threat posed by an insufficient or inadequate investment, is that the ability of defence and military establishments to affect real reform will be hobbled.

Regarding defence planning and management systems, without these being effective the threat is that

democratic control of armed forces will remain elusive, and stated goals and objectives are either partially or wholly unrealised.

It is difficult to establish control over defence planning, or to be effective in planning, in the absence of good management tools; or, in other words, in the absence of an adequate defence planning system. When we speak of control, not only are we talking about aspects such as civilian personnel in key positions in the MODs, and parliamentary oversight, and an effective public debate on issues of national security and defence, but also we want to be talking about the accountability of both civilian and military personnel in the MODs and GSs. Without formal management systems, there is no effective accountability which, by the way, is one of the reasons why it takes so long for these systems to really come alive. There is not always a great rush to be accountable, especially by those who benefit from its absence.

If, for example, a GS does not effectively employ formal systems for determining requirements, or projecting expenditures, or for how money is spent, and tracking expenditures, they will not have adequate data for their leaders to use to address the many questions associated with budgeting. This works its way through the MOD, and up to the parliament, where the tough questions about where the money is going, and why, and what the priorities are, and why, need to be asked (and adequately answered), and there is the need for parliamentarians to be able to draw upon more than just the MODs and GSs for their information.

When we speak of democratic control of defence policy, we are generally referring to control and oversight of the development of policy. More specifically, and importantly, we are referring, to the development of the management systems and programs that flow from policy, in effect, the policy tools. And even further, we assume, often incorrectly, that the policies almost automatically result in effective management systems, and that they will actually be implemented in the intended spirit of the policies. Just as strategic documents (National Security Strategies, White Papers, etc.), stating that defence planning and budgeting will be transparent, often do not result in such transparency, policies directing effective budgeting, realistic force structures, rational acquisition systems, or force readiness, often do not reach their goals. One of the primary reasons for this is the lack of effective management systems and/or a failure to properly implement or enforce the systems where they exist.

Effective management systems provide more than the rationale for such things as force restructuring or force modernization; they also provide a medium in which we can build more effective CMR. When they are not in place or not enforced, there is a strong likelihood that the wrong requirements may be identified for funding. We have seen over the past 10 years many examples of Partner nations funding NATO related activities or purchases, only to find later that due in large part to the absence of formal systems for determining requirements,

the funding was misplaced, or that sufficient funding was not available to support the activities they have signed up for, or materiel they have committed to purchase. There are certainly instances where the military have agreed at the outset that the goals can be reached, without having conducted the necessary analysis to support this, but it is also the case where the civilian leadership makes commitments, at times for strictly political purposes, that are beyond the ability of the military to meet. Inevitably, such outcomes lead to a search for the guilty, and increased conflict in CMR.

6. Conclusion

The non-traditional internal threats that have discussed are obviously not the only ones we have to be concerned with. The intention has been to discuss the threat posed by the lack or inadequacy of both ministerial and inter-agency crisis management systems. However, a passage from a report dated in Feb 1999, of the International Defence Advisory Board to the Baltic countries will be offered for your consideration, which stated, "We see the need to construct, embed, and practice on a regular basis the mechanisms required for the efficient functioning of a government in times of crisis or emergency...The study and understanding of the skills of crisis warning, prevention and management, both internally and with partners, should feature as a high priority in the early future." Dr. Trapans, a former MOD in Latvia, will surely be happy to discuss the relevance of this statement with those who are interested. Another threat is that of ineffective oversight of the defence and military establishments on the part of governments, parliaments or both.

In summary, it is clear to all of us that the general security environment includes a rather discomfoting number of concerns; among them, international terrorism, economic and political instability, organised crime, the proliferation and transfer of WMD, and unresolved border issues. These, and others, receive a rather high level of attention in the development of threat analyses. In contrast, the comments here were focused on the more subtle, internal issues of the transition process in SEE, for these issues contain threats of a different nature, that if not dealt with effectively, will preclude governments from addressing the familiar threats with any degree of success.

Threats associated with human capital and management systems will not be found on the checklists of intelligence analysts, however, if they are absent from the checklists of senior MOD and military leaders, the work of the analysts will be of limited value. ■