

# IT 4 Sec Reports

## *Challenges of Implementation of National Security Strategies in Transition Democracies from a Governance Perspective*

Todor Tagarev

*Предизвикателства пред прилагането на стратегии  
за национална сигурност на страни в преход  
от гледна точка на доброто управление*

Тодор Тагарев

---

***Challenges of Implementation  
of National Security Strategies  
in Transition Democracies  
from a Governance Perspective***

**Todor Tagarev**

---

Institute of Information and Communication Technologies  
CSDM | Centre for Security and Defence Management  
[www.IT4Sec.org](http://www.IT4Sec.org)

September 2012

Todor Tagarev, *Challenges of Implementation of National Security Strategies in Transition Democracies from a Governance Perspective*, IT4Sec Reports 103 (conference on “Transforming National Security Concepts as a Response to New Global and Security Challenges and Threats: Experiences from Ukraine and NATO”, Киев, 19 септември 2012 ).

**IT4Sec Reports 103.** Notes for the report to the conference on “Transforming National Security Concepts as a Response to New Global and Security Challenges and Threats: Experiences from Ukraine and NATO,” Kyiv, 19 September 2012, session “National Security Concepts of NATO and EU countries: Lessons Learned.”.

**IT4Sec Reports 103.** Основни тези от доклад в сесия „Концепции за национална сигурност на страни от НАТО и ЕС: Поуки от практиката” на конференцията „Трансформация на концепции за национална сигурност в отговор на нови предизвикателства и заплахи за сигурността: Опит на Украйна и НАТО”, проведена в Националния институт за стратегически изследвания в гр. Киев на 19 септември 2012 г.

**Key words:** security strategy, effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, smart security, corruption, terrorist attack at Burgas airport

**Todor Tagarev** is Senior Researcher at the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Head of its IT for Security Department, <[www.IT4Sec.org](http://www.IT4Sec.org)> and Centre for Security and Defence Management, <[www.defencemanagement.org](http://www.defencemanagement.org)>, Editor-in-Chief of *Information & Security: An International Journal*, <<http://infosec.procon.bg>> and the DCAF series in Security and Defence Management. At the time of delivering this report Dr. Tagarev is also advisor to the Minister of Defence of the Republic of Bulgaria.

© Todor Tagarev

Editors: Todor Tagarev, Velizar Shalamanov, Venelin Georgiev, Zlatogor Minchev

**ISSN 1314-5614**

National security policies and strategies are subject of studies by many organisations, pursuing specific goals. The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) is particularly active in the area of security sector transformation and security sector governance. DCAF supports processes of building institutional capacity, parliamentary control and societal involvement in various ways, including via dissemination of advanced knowledge and best practice.

This report builds on DCAF and others' knowledge and personal experience in security and defence management in Bulgaria. It is focused on how a national security strategy, or concept, can enhance security sector governance, including the integrity, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of security policy making. It builds on lessons learned and the experience of countries, that recently joined NATO and the European Union. However, these are personal views that cannot be attributed to DCAF or any governmental organization.

## INTEGRITY

In the narrow sense, the strengthening of integrity aims to limit the cases and the impact of corruption, understood as the use of public office in private interests. Most telling in that respect is an article published in the early summer of this year. The journal "Foreign Affairs" designated Ukraine, along with my home country and a few other states, as a "mafia state," e.g. where, and I will quote the author, "national interest and the interests of organized crime are now inextricably intertwined."<sup>1</sup>

The new national security strategy of Ukraine recognises this problem. Its article 3.2.1 speaks of "high level and systemic nature of corruption in state institutions."<sup>2</sup> This recognition of the problem potentially serves as a starting point towards the purpose of reducing corruption and eliminating its structural impacts. And this is only a start. The resolution of the problem is a complex issue. The adoption of a law or an anti-corruption strategy does not solve it. Neither does the creation of new committees, agencies, or working groups. In the spring of 2011, in this very room we started discussing potential approaches,<sup>3</sup> but I am not aware of any follow up activities.

In a broader sense, maintaining integrity means also to have a sound, well understood, auditable decision making process, and a clear link between decisions and practice. And this brings me to my second point – effectiveness, and I will provide here an example.

---

<sup>1</sup> Moisés Naím, "Mafia States," *Foreign Affairs* 91:3 (May/June 2012), quote on p. 101: "In mafia states, such as Bulgaria, Guinea-Bissau, Montenegro, Myanmar (also called Burma), Ukraine, and Venezuela, the national interest and the interests of organized crime are now inextricably intertwined."

<sup>2</sup> National Security Strategy of Ukraine: "Ukraine in a Changing World," endorsed by Decree # 105 of the President of Ukraine, 12 February 2007, as amended by Decree # 389 of the President of Ukraine of 8 June 2012. Translation by the author.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Todor Tagarev, *Countering Corruption in the Defence Sector: Main Risks and Challenges*, *IT4Sec Reports* 83 (Sofia: Institute of Information and Communication Technologies, 2011). [www.it4sec.org/node/2427](http://www.it4sec.org/node/2427).

## EFFECTIVENESS

Two months ago, terrorists succeeded in blowing up a tourist bus at the Burgas airport. The blast killed five Israeli tourists and a Bulgarian bus driver, along with the suicide bomber.<sup>4</sup>

Among the many views on this case, one showed the lack of integrity of the decision making process. The 2010 national security strategy practically treated the threat of terrorism exclusively in its international origin and response, referring to processes in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, Bulgaria's contribution to NATO and EU operations, and the Euroatlantic security.

In contrast, the Annual Report on the Status of National Security for 2011, states that "although there is no information pointing directly to the existence of structures of the international terrorist organizations on Bulgarian territory and stated targets in the country, the threat of terrorist acts is real."<sup>5</sup>

The latter report does not have the prominence and the visibility of the national security strategy, but does reflect current assessments of the security environment. However, no amendments were made to the security strategy, and in public interviews after the terrorist attack some very senior state officials seemed unaware of the most recent assessments, reflected in public, official state documents.

Obviously, this points to a problem of integrity in implementation at most senior level. In addition, in specific situations individuals on the ground<sup>6</sup> often may have a higher level of awareness than all security services combined. Simple implementation measures like establishing a system of alerts, reporting lines, guidance on reaction, etc., might have facilitated the prevention of this terrorist attack.

Other gaps come from the traditional 'institutional orientation' of the legislation in post-communist states, e.g. having laws on the Ministry of the Interior, of the counterintelligence service, and now on the remaining intelligence and security services.<sup>7</sup> Arguably, such approach has provided effectiveness in times of rather clear delineation between internal and external threats, military and law enforcement instruments, etc. Nowadays, however, attempts to preserve organizational stovepipes are doomed to fail.

In the example at hand, it was clear who was responsible for security on board of airplanes, in the air terminal, and in the area of the runway, but not so clear who was responsible for the

---

<sup>4</sup> For details the reader may refer to "2012 Burgas bus bombing," *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012\\_Burgas\\_bus\\_bombing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012_Burgas_bus_bombing); "7 reported killed in terror attack against Israelis in Bulgaria," *Haaretz*, [www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/7-reported-killed-in-terror-attack-against-israelis-in-bulgaria-1.452013](http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/7-reported-killed-in-terror-attack-against-israelis-in-bulgaria-1.452013).

<sup>5</sup> Council of Ministers, *Annual Report on the Status of National Security of the Republic of Bulgaria in 2011* (9 May 2012), [www.government.bg/cgi-bin/e-cms/vis/vis.pl?s=001&p=0211&n=37&g=](http://www.government.bg/cgi-bin/e-cms/vis/vis.pl?s=001&p=0211&n=37&g=). – in Bulgarian.

<sup>6</sup> In this particular example, the guards in the 'departures' section of the airport terminal.

<sup>7</sup> A package of four laws—on the system for protection of national security, the intelligence agency, the military intelligence service, and the national service for protection—are currently under discussion within the executive with contribution from civil society.

security in the surrounding infrastructure, including the parking lot, attacked by the terrorists.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the 'institutional orientation' may lead to lack in effectiveness. In addition, it severely limits the efficiency of security sectors.

## **EFFICIENCY**

In the fluid security environment of the Twenty first century, inherent uncertainty, evolving perceptions and changing societal priorities bring new requirements to national security sectors. Attempts to preserve organisational stovepipes in such environment is notoriously inefficient. Security sector organisations need to become much more responsive to change, agile, and open for cooperation. The latter applies not only to cooperation in operations, but also to coordination of policies and their implementation.

Bulgaria's 2010 National Security Strategy (article 160), somewhat shyly, but did outline the requirements for coordination and building cohesion, while preserving 'operational autonomy' of security sector ministries and agencies. And this applies not only to operational engagement, planning, training, and exercises, but also to coordination, and when possible – integration, of capability development plans and the actual procurement of capabilities.

There is still a long way to go to establish mechanisms—and a culture—for such cooperation and coordination. Advanced national security strategies and implementation mechanisms can—and should—support this process, that in time may lead to 'smarter security.' As an analogue, NATO promotes 'smart defence' through a variety of means, including its most recent Strategic Concept.<sup>9</sup> Its article 37, for example, calls for ensuring maximum coherence in defence planning, reducing unnecessary duplication, focusing capability development on modern requirements, developing and operating capabilities jointly, and engaging in a process of continual reform aimed to streamline structures, improve working methods and maximise efficiency.

The implementation of these principles in the management of national security sectors will increase the efficiency and, ultimately, the effectiveness in providing security to our citizens.

---

<sup>8</sup> This was pointed out in a masters thesis, defended two days before the terrorist attack. See Nevena Kostova, *Effective Aviation Transport Security Management through a Balanced Scorecard*, *IT4Sec Reports 102* (Sofia: Institute of Information and Communication Technologies, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> *Active Engagement, Modern Defence*, Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation adopted by Heads of State and Government in Lisbon, 19 November 2010.

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

National security strategies, and in particular mechanisms for their implementation, are expected to strengthen the transparency of security policies, including goals and objectives, organisational roles and rules of engagement, ways to guarantee respect to and protection of individual rights and liberties and related oversight mechanisms.<sup>10</sup> In addition, regular reports, assessments and audits allow parliaments and citizens to understand the level of security society gets and what is its cost.

## CONCLUSION

In terms of governance and democratic control, a national security strategy, along with a military doctrine or any other set of strategic or doctrinal documents, even if supported by most advanced scientific methods, cannot serve as a substitute of rigorous, regular democratic and parliamentary control. There are proven tools to support and provide the transparency of the decision making process, such as programme-based budgeting, that ultimately allow to make the security sector more effective, efficient, and accountable to parliament and society.

---

<sup>10</sup> For international norms and good practice in this respect see DCAF's series on intelligence governance, [www.dcaf.ch/Programmes/Intelligence-Governance](http://www.dcaf.ch/Programmes/Intelligence-Governance), as well as *Compilation of good practices on legal and institutional frameworks and measures that ensure respect for human rights by intelligence agencies while countering terrorism, including on their oversight*, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Martin Scheinin (UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council, 17 May 2010), [www.dcaf.ch/content/download/73465/1123242/version/1/file/A\\_HRC\\_14\\_46\\_english.pdf](http://www.dcaf.ch/content/download/73465/1123242/version/1/file/A_HRC_14_46_english.pdf); An official version of the report in Russian is available at [www.dcaf.ch/content/download/73469/1123250/version/1/file/A\\_HRC\\_14\\_46\\_russian.pdf](http://www.dcaf.ch/content/download/73469/1123250/version/1/file/A_HRC_14_46_russian.pdf).