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# “Reform of Security Institutions in the Caucasus and Black Sea Region: Five Years Perspectives from Now”

**Session 5: “The Role and Prospects of Defence Institution Building in Harnessing Stability in the South Caucasus.  
Case Study: Armenia”**

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# OVERVIEW



- ✘ **An Evolving Strategic Context**
- ✘ **The Prospects of DIB in Harnessing Regional Stability in the South Caucasus**
- ✘ **Case Study: Armenia**
- ✘ **Conclusions and Recommendations**



- **AN EVOLVING STRATEGIC CONTEXT**
- In the post-Cold War era, when the SSR and DIB concepts were developed, security no longer focused on just military power.
- Ukrainian crisis in 2014 shifted the European strategic context from cooperative security to geopolitical and strategic competition.
- The WBS region, as an integral part of the European order, is significantly affected by the current confrontation between Russia and the West.
- Irrespective of how we see the current crisis in Western-Russian relations, this could only come to an end by agreeing upon a new European security model.
- Unfortunately, we are far away from such an outcome, mainly due to the diverging visions among relevant actors on the nature, scope, and rules of the new European security model.





- **THE PROSPECTS OF DIB IN HARNESSING REGIONAL STABILITY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS**
- **15<sup>th</sup> RSSC SG jointly with SSR WG/PfPC workshop aimed at creating a common, politically neutral, perspective on the requirements for, and the benefits of, expanding and deepening DIB as a key tool for strengthening regional stability across South Caucasus region.**
- **Regional context matters a lot for successfully promoting DIB.**
- **Strengths of, and benefits from, DIB in promoting democratic development, transparency and accountability, democratic control of armed forces and rational defence management.**
- **Potential of DIB in enabling the South Caucasus countries to develop armed forces and band together against violent extremism and other common challenges.**
- **Applying DIB could have had adverse effects on the protracted conflicts in the WBS, and on external actors, namely Russia.**





- **THE PROSPECTS OF DIB IN HARNESSING REGIONAL STABILITY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS**
- **The workshop concluded that DIB has better chances of succeeding in fostering regional stability in the South Caucasus in a post-conflict context. Until a comprehensive stabilization of conflicts in the South Caucasus was achieved, the threats and weaknesses associated with DIB as an initiative and a process could be offset through:**
  - **promoting multilateral and integrated regional approaches;**
  - **re-shaping DIB as a vehicle for post-conflict regional cooperation;**
  - **focusing on common external challenges, such as energy security and the fight against violent extremism;**
  - **providing support for education and training for civilian and military professionals in defence institutions and in civil society (NGOs and think tanks) with an increased focus on understanding regional affairs, and the role and responsibilities of national defence institutions in maintaining regional stability;**
  - **applying DIB according to objective DCAF criteria, while managing the expectations for success.**





## CASE STUDY: ARMENIA

- ✘ As a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), Armenia has been a close regional ally of Russia.
- ✘ But...Yerevan has continuously struggled to balance its relations with Russia by strengthening ties with the West, including with NATO, the EU, and the US.
- ✘ Relations with NATO, US and the EU were deemed as providing the necessary models and means for the modernization of security and defence structures and processes.
- ✘ **“2018–2024 Modernization Program for the Armenian Armed Forces.”** that is very much in line with DIB objectives, **EXCEPT for...**
- ✘ It identifies Azerbaijan as an imminent security threat to Armenia, while it acknowledges that the Armenian Armed Forces will continue to serve as “the critical security guarantor for the population of Artsakh (Karabakh)”.



## CASE STUDY: ARMENIA

- ✘ In July 2018, the new Armenian defence minister, Davit Tonnoyan, issued his vision on the **“Development of the Defence Sector within the Concept of the Government Program”** post- **“Velvet Revolution”**.
- ✘ The minister’s vision stated that the paramount goal of the defence system is the formation of armed forces that are combat-ready, apolitical, subject to the democratic and civil oversight, and open to all-inclusive societal engagement.
- ✘ To reduce and manage corruption risks and enhance integrity norms in defence sector and armed forces, the Armenian minister of defence states that **“it is necessary to develop transparent procedures for management -i.e. planning, procurement, consumption, control and accountability- of material and technical resources.”**
- ✘ He also stressed on the need for his ministry to be as transparent to the civil society as possible.
- ✘ The minister’s vision also defined priority goals for the development of the defence sector and the armed forces.





## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Continued relevance of the DIB objectives in defining Armenian defence policy objectives and priorities over the next five years. However, in terms of “developing effective international co-operation and good neighbourly relations in defence and security matters” Armenia still has to make significant progress, foremost by creating appropriate conditions for reviving the currently stalled peace process on Nagorno-Karabakh.**

**Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has posed a heavy burden on the existing scarce human, economic, and financial resources of Armenia, while diminishing its capacity to implement the DIB objectives.**

**Richard Giragosyan (in “Armenian National Security: Drivers and Determinants of a Small State Strategy”, June 2016) proposed a set of national priorities for the Armenian government and civil society, and recommendations for the international community and relevant security stakeholders, which seem still relevant for enhancing the role and the prospects of DIB in Armenia over the next five years.**





## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of security oversight, however, the **parliament** has yet to fully meet expectations and **exercise its supervisory role as a main actor in the formulation of security policy and defence reform.**

**Strengthening the institutional capacity** to meet the evolving threat environment. The most notable example is the **Armenian National Security Council (NSC)**, which must be invested and endowed with greater authority and resources.

Despite the success of reforms so far, there is a need to **further deepen the role of civil society**, both in engaging in security- and defence-related public policy discussions and as a mechanism to bolster public confidence and trust in the armed forces as an institution.

**Information Warfare: Pre-emption and Prevention:** there should be a preparatory move to pre-empt and prevent “information warfare” by exposing the inaccuracies and outright deception in Russian propaganda.

**Incorporate more of a security-related element to the new Armenia-EU legal framework [n.a. the CEPA].** This security agenda could include measures related to “soft security,” including energy security (especially nuclear safety), disaster prevention, risk mitigation and crisis management, but also cybersecurity and other more advanced and innovative measures.”

# DISCUSSION

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