MODERNIZATION OF THE DEFENSE SECTOR

PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARGENTINE MODEL

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MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
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MODERNIZATION OF THE DEFENSE SECTOR

I. Overall diagnosis

The return to a democratic order in the Republic of Argentina created the political conditions necessary for a legally-constituted civil leadership to rethink national defense policy and, therefore, determine the new role of the Armed Forces under such framework.

The bases to enable the re-institutionalization of the Armed Forces according to democratic rules –especially in compliance with the principle of subordination to civilian control and the limited assignment of roles and responsibilities—were laid down through the enactment of a series of laws comprising the corpus iuris of national defense, namely: National Defense Act 23,554 (1988), Domestic Security Act 24,059 (1992), Volunteer Service Act 24,439 (1994), Armed Forces Reorganization Act (1998) and National Intelligence Act 25,520 (2001).

In spite of the progress represented by the creation of a regulatory framework for the sector, the efforts to make defense policy a truly consistent and agreed-upon State policy encountered several hindrances due to a complex range of factors.

It is important to underscore, among those factors, the dynamic nature of the global and regional context in which the defense sector is inserted (the profound reconfiguration of the world after the end of the cold war, followed by the dramatic turning-point of the post-cold war era represented by the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001), as well as the direct incidence of domestic political factors. In the latter case, we cannot ignore the particular characteristics of the country's democratic transition process triggered by the political, economic and military collapse of the last de-facto government. Some of the most significant features of such process were the large and chronic reduction of resources allocated to Defense –resulting in a decrease of more than half its share in budget priorities over the last twenty years—and the lack of a clear guideline by the political leadership regarding what military instrument model was required.

Such has been the context in which the defense sector has lived, marked by a delegation approach whereby civilian functions were delegated to the Armed Forces, as well as a real demobilization of their logistic capabilities and components.

With such basic diagnosis, it is essential to elaborate a comprehensive modernization program for the defense system, which may allow its insertion in today's world and to respond to the country's own national requirements, by optimizing existing capabilities and efficiently managing its available resources.

With the adoption of such course of action, Argentina's current modernization program has been designed around four dimensions:

(1) Operationalizing the existing legal framework and adapting Defense's strategic planning process accordingly, prioritizing the demilitarization of strictly civilian roles;

(2) Restructuring the resource management subsystem, recovering the Services' operational capability, coordinating and streamlining the areas of science, technology and production;

(3) Adjusting the subsystems of intelligence and military justice;

(4) Reorganizing the subsystem of civil and military education and training, introducing the human rights and gender perspectives.

Based on such considerations, this paper is aimed at describing the current modernization process undertaken by the Argentine Defense sector, considering its background and principles, as well as its strategic guidelines and key features.

II. Historical background

The inherited traditional model

Once democratic order was reinstated in the country, it was essential to set the foundations for the consolidation of a defense policy that could enable to put an end to the tutelary footprint ("impronta tutelar") whereby the Armed Forces had guided national life in previous decades, sustained on a domestic-security concept of national defense which encompassed both external military aggressions and internal conflicts under the same prism of analysis and resolution.

In fact, the so-called traditional model of defense organization and military institutions was shaped mainly in the second half of the 50's, consolidated during the 60's and continued until the 70's. As previously mentioned, it was based on a domestic-security ("seguritista") concept of national defense, in a context also characterized by a "protector" projection of the Armed Forces as actors in the political system.

This concept was framed in the period known as the Cold-War era, and was based on the thinking that national defense was a state effort aimed at achieving national security, encompassing both the protection against military aggressions from other countries and, more importantly, against risks in the domestic security arena. Consequently, national defense had to respond to a series of threats and conflicts derived from three spheres, namely:

(i) In the global scenario, antagonisms and competition derived from the strategic East-West confrontation.

(ii) At the subregional level, border and/or territorial disputes.

(iii) In the domestic sphere, conflicts resulting from confrontation against internal, political groups under the framework of the so-called "fight against subversion".

In that sense, it is important to underscore that along such period, the Armed Forces adopted an organization that could be called "bifront".

This means that, on the one hand, its architecture was designed around the possibility of a conventional military confrontation with a neighboring country. To that end, the Armed Forces embarked in expensive procurement programs that led to regional arms-races, the creation of large structures, the transformation of the employment doctrine, and the capillary deployment of military units in such zones considered key in the event of a military confrontation of that type.

Likewise, as the Armed Forces consolidated a tutelary role over the Argentine political system, an intelligence and domestic security structure was gradually shaped to exert control and a prospective direct action over opposing political and social actors.

Such structure, directly aimed at internal security matters, attained its highest expression in the years of the last military dictatorship, with the so-called domestic security zones and sub-zones, the deployment of operational intelligence structures, strong operational ties with law-enforcement and security forces –of which it exerted the effective conduct of such activities-, and the development of a counter-subversive strategy which, to a great extent, escaped legal and moral parameters and ended up as one of the most significant cases of State terrorism in the region.

Corpus Iuris of National Defense

The first step towards the creation of a new national defense policy under the democratic framework was made through the construction of a firm political and social consensus around the very concept of national defense, its relationship with, and differentiation from, domestic security, the role of the Armed Forces as military instrument of defense and the administrative-functional decision-making scheme.

The above-mentioned corpus iuris for national defense was the natural corollary of such consensus, which made it possible to delineate the regulatory foundations on which the Argentine defense policy would be elaborated and implemented thereafter.

As regards National Defense Act 23.554, it established the organic-functional bases of the defense system around general parameters aimed at ensuring: the exercise of civilian authority, the non-intervention of the Armed Forces in internal political affairs, the regulation -from a restrictive perspective- of military involvement in domestic-security matters, and the reinforcement of a military organization based on criteria of efficiency and jointness.

Likewise, the Domestic Security Act (24,059) specifically regulated the involvement of the Armed Forces in domestic security activities, ensuring that such role be exceptionally exercised in accordance with clear regulatory parameters.

Also, while the Volunteer Military Service Act eliminated the system of conscripts, National Intelligence Act 25,520 assigned to the military intelligence activities strictly limited to the sector, and established a level of coordination and civil-political conduct of the entire system.

Defense Policy in the Region

Concurrently with this period of legal and institutional order, the consolidation of a new defense policy was framed by a series of decisions focused on confidence-building measures in the regional arena which could enable to untangle the country's historical conflicts with neighboring countries, mainly as to border demarcation and nuclear proliferation.

These circumstances became more evident with Chile and Brazil, countries with which the Republic of Argentina had had historical conflicts susceptible to a military resolution, and with whom significant progress has been made in the area of cooperation.

The ratification of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (1993) and the Treaty of Nuclear Non-Proliferation (1995), as well as the final and peaceful settlement of "Laguna del Desierto" border dispute with Chile (1994), and the Memorandum of Understanding of Consultation and Coordination signed with Brazil (1997) are clear indicators in this respect.

It is also necessary to highlight that this process of more relaxed relations and progressive confidence-building was shaped and influenced by a strong tendency towards economic integration and cooperation, the promotion of a political bilateral and multilateral dialog, and the gradual establishment of democratic regimes in the region.

Importance of Peace-keeping Missions

It is also important to note that such redesign of national defense policy has also meant a strong commitment of Argentina in Peace-keeping Operations (PKO) under the United Nations mandate.

At present, our country has large military contingents and material in various missions under the UN flag, especially in Cyprus and Haiti, totaling almost 1,000 troops among such deployments.

To that end, the Argentine PKO Training Center (CAECOPAZ) continues to play an active role and is internationally recognized for the education and training of personnel assigned to peace-support operations.

III. Necessity and grounds for change

The legal architecture on which roles and responsibilities are assigned in terms of defense policy, as in any other government policy, requires a constant adaptation to the environment, in order to fulfill the main mission for which it was conceived.

This is most critical in the Argentine case, if we consider the major changes taken place both internationally and domestically, which have framed its defense policy since the new post-1983 period, namely: the end of the East-West confrontation; the consolidation of a process of integration, economic cooperation and political dialog at a regional (Latin American) level and subregional (South Cone) level, and the absence of armed political sectors or groups in the domestic sphere. os armados en el plano interno.

Derived from such complex scenario, we find an array of demands the Ministry of Defense must constantly respond to. In that regard, at the start of 2006, the following issues were still pending,

and the civilian defense leadership decided to start solving them:

- The lack of a presidential regulation (in some cases, a ministerial regulation) of key legal instruments for the sector, such as the National Defense Act itself, resulting in an inadequate enforcement of its provisions.

- The permanence of strictly-civilian functions under the Armed Forces competence, a remnant from the old holistic concept of their institutional role.

- The sustained lack of investment on maintenance and recovery of the Services' material means, thus resulting in a significant reduction of operational capabilities.

- Evidence of inefficiencies present in the defense resource management system.

- The mismatch between the areas of science, technology and production and the operational needs of the Services.

- The non-existence of a military justice regulation, tailored to new international standards.

- The distorsion between curriculum contents and methodologies of educational and training processes both for civilian and military personnel, to respond to new national defense challenges and needs.

The elaboration of a comprehensive defense system modernization program enabling to coordinate response channels to solve these and other issues is thus essential to revert the abovementioned delegation of roles to the Armed Forces and their empiric demobilization.

IV. The Argentine Modernization Model

In view of such situation, the Ministry of Defense has suggested to start up a comprehensive adjustment and modernization of the defense system, aimed at achieving a modern and efficient military instrument for the protection of the Nation's vital interests.

It is essential to underscore that the modernization process consists in consolidating operational capabilities required by the military instrument, in keeping with a defensive strategy to ensure the full exercise of the nation's inherent right to legitimate defense.

Consequently, the Defense System Modernization Process is supported on nine large lines of action, revolving around the underlying aim of strengthening civilian control in the sector, namely:

1) Implementation of National Defense's legal framework

2) Reorganization of Defense's strategic planning system

3) Reorganization of the resource management subsystem

4) Recovery of operational capabilities

5) Coordination of the areas of science, technology and production

6) Activation of the subsystem of military strategic intelligence

7) Changes to the civil and military education and training subsystem

8) Implementation of human rights and gender perspectives

9) Changes to the military justice subsystem

I) **Implementation of National Defense's legal framework**

Act 23,554 (1988) is the cornerstone of the national defense system, and as such sets forth the aforementioned guiding principles on which it is to be structured: civil authority supremacy, non-intervention of the Armed Forces in internal political affairs, restrictive military involvement in domestic security, efficient and joint organization.

Its regulations (Decree 727/06, dated June 13th 2006), neglected for 18 years, are established as one of the mainstays of the ongoing modernization process, laying down the foundations for a true civilian control of military matters.

Such Decree is aimed at making the aforementioned principles and guidelines fully operational, mainly in relation to organizational joint planning, geographic deployment, training, and procurement of weapons and equipment.

As regards the Joint Staff, Decree 727/06 strengthens its role as the main executor of strategic decisions taken by the civilian leadership, and the ultimate military body responsible for the command and organization of the Armed Forces.

Likewise, the regulation respects and reaffirms the spirit of the Defense Act, by specifying that the Armed Forces' primary responsibility is the defense against state military aggressions to the Nation's territorial sovereignty and integrity. Therefore, the military can only confront non-military threats, including transnational drug trafficking and terrorism, from time to time when called upon by the domestic security system in accordance with Domestic Security Act provisions.

Regarding the aforementioned, the National Defense Act, the Regulatory Decree 727/06, and the Armed Forces Reorganization Act are highly restrictive as regards the division of military-specific competences. In article 4, Act 23,554 is clear when underscoring that the difference between national security and domestic security shall always be taken into account. Decree 727, in Article 1, establishes that the military instrument of national defense shall be used in case of foreign aggressions perpetrated by (an)other State(s), notwithstanding Acts 24,059 and 24,948 which specify the events and scope of Armed Forces participation in domestic-security support operations.

Consequently, both the domestic security and national defense systems respond to assumptions unmistakably different and mutually exclusive in their implementation: the former, primarily responds to the prevention, pursuit, and punishment of illicit acts contained in the Criminal Code and in special laws, and the latter seeks to repel external aggressions against the United Nations charter provisions. Such assumptions where both systems interact are clearly specified, including mechanisms of coordination between both systems, and the occasional and exceptional use of the military instrument in domestic security matters or others not related to their main mission (for example, community support).

An example of the above is the ongoing process of Air Regions Command (Air Force civil aviation directorate) transfer from the Argentine Air Force to a new agency that will fall under the Secretariat of Transport in the Federal Planning Ministry (Ministerio de Planificación Federal), aimed at transferring civil-commercial air traffic to civilian hands. It is worth noting that this process is conducted with the advice of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

II) **Reorganization of the Defense Strategic Planning System**

Once the regulatory basis of national defense is fully consolidated, it is essential to proceed with the organization and implementation of a comprehensive planning scheme which, based on diagnoses and short, medium and long-term strategies, may enable to build the defense policy as a true State policy.

The first step in this path was to convene the National Defense Council (CODENA in Spanish) for the first time, as stipulated in the aforementioned Decree 727/06. Its purpose is to perform a full strategic profile diagnosis about the national, regional and international frameworks where our defense system is inserted, laying down the foundations for a subsequent drafting of the appropriate public policy.

For the purposes of strengthening the system's planning process, the National Executive Branch issued Decree Nº 1691/06, representing the first political guideline for the operation and organization of the Armed Forces. According to the criteria adopted by the higher political leadership and the Corpus Iuris of Defense, this guideline sets forth the parameters and principles based on which the Armed Forces shall structure their mission, modes

of employment, organization, deployment, and capabilities.

Likewise, in close cooperation with the Armed Forces Joint Staff, the Ministry of Defense is working on the elaboration of a Defense Planning Cycle in order to provide the National State with a regulatory tool that may set forth a number of guidelines and documents of a political, military-strategic, and specifically-military nature, as well as working procedures, in whose context the defense policy shall be elaborated, implemented and evaluated.

The ministerial resolution implementing the new Defense Planning Cycle will enable to plan the defense policy and its military aspects for the short, medium and long term, based on a foreseeable scheme which, in turn, may allow for the implementation of the necessary adjustments according to the present circumstances and the strategic horizon.

III) **Reorganization of the defense resource management subsystemnsa**

Given the aforementioned concepts, we can assert that since the return of democracy, in the area of civil-military relations, a sort of implicit pact was consolidated between the various government administrations to demand the military sector to recognize its full institutional submission to the Executive, which in turn would not become deeply involved in substantive military aspects such as its organization, deployment and equipping.

Such implicit pact of non-intervention was made evident, as we have seen, in the Ministry of Defense's excessive delegation of structural decisions to the Armed Forces and other government agencies.

In terms of resource management, it was reflected in the ministry of defense's low involvement in the elaboration of annual defense budgets. The Ministry systematically let the Economy Ministry define, year after year, not only the initial amount of resources allocated to the sector (a prerogative perfectly understandable given a global fiscal policy strategy), but also the resource allocations among the services, thus giving up the role of setting strategic criteria to support such relevant resource-sharing decisions.
Additionally, the Ministry of Defense (without further critical analysis) would post-facto put together the budget draft proposals that each service would separately submit to it, thus acting as a formal coordination body, thus validating draft budgets which were based on each Service's own strategic guidelines.

As a proof of that, the defense policy, reflected in the budgets of the last 20 years, shows a dramatic military instrument "downsizing" as the most relevant change. From 1983 to 2003, the total budget assigned to Defense was reduced by 58.7% and the sector's share in the national budget plunged from 13.78% to 7.7%, a tendency which has continued to date.

Such shrinking took place in a purely gradual and marginal manner. In other words, it did not respond to a medium and long term centralized strategic decision, defining which military capabilities were to be kept, promoted or eliminated. It is possible to see how successive weapon systems have been decommissioned because they reached the end of their operational life rather than as a result of a deliberate political decision based on a tactical-military analysis.

In terms of processes, the natural ageing of systems and the uncoordinated prioritization of capabilities by each service were key criteria taken when the "red pencil" had to be used to cross out capabilities the defense system had to give up in order to adapt to budget restrictions imposed.

As mentioned before, National Defense Act regulation lays the foundations to start a process which could not be deferred any longer: the creation of a definitely coordinated and organized defense system that may enable to respond to the National Executive guidelines with global coherence. In this sense, the strategic thinking CODENA will provide shall be the "input" for the development of the military-strategic planning, an ulterior and unavoidable guideline for the redesign of the military instrument from a joint perspective. Core aspects such as the size, deployment and equipping of the military instrument will be defined thereafter from a necessarily systemic and joint perspective.

The procurement of defense means will be the last link in the chain of a sequential and concatenated planning and programming process. The Armed Forces re-equipping will be aimed at strengthening jointly-defined operational capabilities, and will be in line with the defensive strategic posture adopted. The allocation of resources will be based on medium and long term policies set by the Ministry of Defense and executed under the supervision of the Joint Staff.

For the purposes of guaranteeing efficacy and transparency of the procurement process and the system's resource management, a number of reforms have been started, encompassing the budget dimension, specifically in relation to public and military investments and the purely logistic dimension, as well as the operational dimension to be dealt with in the next section.

In relation to the budgeting system, we seek to have a more detailed breakdown of the sector's budget, with more defined representative goals and a better matching of resources with specific budget allocations.

To consolidate said reforms, a Committee of Budgetary Policy was created by Ministerial Resolution 1267/06. Its role is to coordinate the process of formulation, execution and review of the budgets for the Armed Forces, the Joint Staff and decentralized bodies under the Ministry of Defense.

Such improvements have led to the creation of efficacy, efficiency and capability-utilization indicators, to be used on a Control Board under construction to monitor operations on a permanent basis. Its implementation is aimed at making profound organizational changes for the consolidation of a "management by results" model which, in turn, may promote accountability based on the performance of organizations. Thus, decisions will be supported by sound, precise and consistent management information.

As regards the sector's investment management, the new Comprehensive System of Defense Investment Management (SIGID in Spanish) has been approved and implemented, allowing the Ministry to have a permanent and standardized assessment tool for public and military investment projects. This system ensures that every project be reviewed based on its contribution to the capabilities required by the defense strategic planning. Thus, the only military investment projects to be given funds will be those which, adhering to peremptory times and preparation guidelines imposed by the SIGID, have been proposed by the Joint Staff and approved by the Planning Secretariat under the Ministry of Defense.

From the logistic perspective, it is important to highlight the creation of the Joint Logistic Committee (CLC in Spanish), an integration instance of technical support aimed at assisting the Ministry of Defense in the supply, storage, transportation, maintenance and final disposal of the Armed Forces' material resources, to comply with the President's guidelines and responsibilities arising from the defense strategic planning.

In addition to this, we can mention the regulation of Act 23,985 (Real Estate of the Armed Forces) and the constitution of the Joint Equipment Procurement Plan for Peace-Keeping Operations (PECOMP in Spanish). The first initiative is aimed at improving the mechanism by which real estate to be dispensed with by the Armed Forces is annually defined, as well as the intended destination of resources obtained from the disposal of such real estate. The second initiative responds to the need to restore the operational capabilities of forces committed to deploy material means in peace-keeping operations. Thus, the PECOMP, whose funding comes from reimbursements paid by the United Nations, is the first experience of joint equipment procurement towards a common end for the Armed Forces benefit.

On the other hand, a pleiad of specific projects intended to strengthen the strategic and operational capabilities of the three services is being implemented. In this sense, it is important to underscore both the purchase of new radars for civil and military use to consolidate the airspace surveillance and control capabilities, and the recovery of Tandanor shipyard for the Ministry of Defense, following a process of fraudulent privatization that took place in the previous decade.

Finally, it is especially relevant to mention that an external audit has been conducted on the Armed

Forces aviation material, to technically assess its maintenance condition and propose alternatives for its prompt modernization. This audit is the first in Argentine military history and constitutes an unprecedented experience in the region.

IV) **Operational capabilities improvement**

Our modernization model grants a key role to the military instrument's logistic and operational areas, especially to the recovery and strengthening of relative capabilities, which have been undermined over the years (and in many cases have disappeared), as a result of the above-mentioned historical background.

The determination of what capabilities to recover is based on military strategic appreciations so far made by the Armed Forces, as well as on the need to guarantee adequate safety levels to protect operators' lives and physical integrity.

One of the first steps taken in this process was the creation of the Joint Logistic Committee (CLC in Spanish), an coordination technical support body aimed at assisting the Ministry of Defense in the supply, storage, transportation, maintenance and final disposal of the Armed Forces' material resources, to comply with the President's guidelines and duties derived from the defense strategic planning.

The Committee, made up of civilian and military specialists, where all the system's logistic bodies are represented, reviews on a monthly basic the readiness of Armed Forces material, and plans such actions necessary to ensure its upgrading and recovery based on efficiency and transparency criteria and a joint perspective.

Under its leadership and follow-up, the so-called Program of Joint Supply of Common Items (Programa de Abastecimiento Conjunto de Insumos Comunes, PACIC) was created and implemented. Such program is intended to identify, standardize and procure, in a consolidated manner coordinated by the Joint Staff, such items required by the three Services simultaneously (including ammunitions, financial services, medicines, fuel, vehicles and insurance). The initiative seeks to create a centralized mechanism to acquire material means for civilian and military use, thus gradually streamlining a joint logistic system which, by economy of scale, may achieve better negotiation and price conditions.

Also under the CLC, with the technical support of SECADE (Defense Cataloguing Service), we have advanced in the start-up of an Armed Forces Maintenance Capability System (SICAMAN in Spanish). With the intention to provide each Service with real-time information on services and materials offered by the other services for material means maintenance, SICANAM has been built around an on-line catalogue of such available capabilities, which can be accessed by all military units with logistic support duties.

As a supplement to these measures and to fulfill its objective of overseeing each Service's maintenance program progress, the Ministry has decided to create, under its area of responsibility, a political-technical body solely devoted to Defense logistical and operational planning.

Such initiative is also closely linked to the conclusions and results of the external audit on Armed Forces aviation material requested by the Ministry in early 2006: the first experience of this kind in Argentine -and regional- military history. The audit was carried out by national renowned academic entities, to technically assess the maintenance status of aviation material and propose alternatives for its rapid modernization.

The audit results provided an impartial and updated diagnosis of the military instrument's logistics system –its aeronautical dimension-, and became the starting point of a series of specific programs for the recovery and strengthening of all strategic, operational and productive capabilities (namely, air, naval and ground) for the three Services.

In the aviation arena, it is important to mention the procurement of new civil-use radars (eleven 2-D radars acquired from the Argentine company INVAP) and military-use radars (four 3-D type), as well as the upgrading of key area control centers (ACC) to reinforce national air-space surveillance and control capabilities. It is worth noting that the technology presently applied dates back to the 70's.

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Hence, though the necessary technical upgrading has been made to render it operational, the modernization of equipment is considered imperative, and will be achieved by 2010 as planned, when all the above-mentioned acquisitions are completed.

Also in this year 2007, a phased action plan was launched to recover in a 5-year period 100% of aviation capabilities for all three Services, in the following priority order: 1) Transport aircraft, 2) Liaison and training aircraft and helicopters, and 3) fighter-bombers. The plan implies a total expenditure of $819 million pesos ($226 million for this year (2007) have already been spent), and provides for not only the upgrading of air means but also infrastructure, tools, technical handbooks and related professional training.

Moreover, the implementation of a military airworthiness regulation for the Armed Forces aircraft that perform operations in the civilian sphere was instructed for the purposes of certifying them according to similar requirements as those set forth by the aviation authority for civilian aircraft. This is further enhanced with the drafting of guidelines for licensing military crewmembers and technical personnel who operate or perform maintenance duties on aircraft used for purposes other than their defense-specific tasks. Such licensing guidelines shall also be consistent with civilian regulations, thus specifying similar requirements and training.

In terms of naval-operational capability, a $65 million (peso) budget increase was decided in 2007 to address key material priorities. This is coupled with the completion (for about $50 million pesos) of the half-life repair of Frigate ARA Libertad, an Argentine true floating embassy which set sail this year with the first women ensign class on board.

Furthermore, the Ministry continues to support the modernization of the Marine Corps material after the development of the Track Amphibious Vehicle (Vehículo Anfibio a Oruga, TAV), and plans to have two new units ready in 2007. The acquisition of basic engineering to build Multipurpose Ocean Patrol Boats (POM) intended for territorial sea control and surveillance, and the recovery of anti-submarine capabilities through the half-life repair of Submarine ARA San Juan at the Argentine shipyard Domecq García are other imminent actions.

It is also proper to mention the beginning of recovery activities, with a cost of $15 million pesos, to repair Icebreaker Almirante Irízar, a key piece of our Antarctic Campaign and undisputed symbol of Argentine presence in "the white continent".

Also, as regards naval aviation's tactical capacity, with the results rendered by the aforementioned external audit, it became necessary to increase the Naval Aviation Command's budget by $10 million pesos, to enable the organization to implement a repair program for detected failures. Along the same lines, the introduction of 4 helicopters offered by the US Navy is also anticipated.

Regarding ground operational capabilities of the military instrument, an increase of almost $68 million pesos was granted in 2007, in order to strengthen the professionalization of the sector's human resources and the recovery, modernization and safe operation of its material resources.

With respect to combat transport capabilities, the implementation of the upgrading program for M113 mechanized vehicles was accelerated, reaching two thirds (2/3) of the fleet considered as necessary.

The consolidation of the "Gaucho" project deserves a special consideration. The "Gaucho" vehicle, capable of accomplishing missions such as exploration, air-assault, command and control post, material transport and evacuation of wounded people, was jointly designed and executed with Brazil.

Moreover, a decision was made to acquire 700 parachute gears, thus resulting in full renewal of such parachutes about to reach the end of their service life, while doubling the existing operational equipment stock.

Regarding the Army's vehicle fleet, in addition to the restoration of repair shops in 2003, we decided to procure 39 fuel tankers and 5 semi-trailer heavy trucks for the transport of ammunitions, in strict compliance with current safety standards.

Additionally, it was decided to strengthen the field communication capabilities with the acquisition of high-frequency equipment, essential to conduct operations in the field.

Continuing with management actions aimed at consolidating the Army's air means, and to respond to the observations made by the external audit report, we instructed the implementation of an improvement plan in the Aviation Command's sphere. Such plan includes investments on infrastructure, tools and service bulletins, as well as the recovery of personnel and cargo hauling capabilities, and community support capacity in case of emergencies.

Such initiatives intended to strengthen air capabilities of the land military instrument also include the speeding up of "Hornero" project (transformation of UH-1H helicopters to Huey II) through extra budget allocations.

Finally, it is important to mention the regulation of Act 23,985 (Real Estate of the Armed Forces), and the creation of the Joint Equipment Procurement Plan for Peace-Keeping Operations (PECOMP in Spanish), the former aimed at improving the mechanism by which real estate to be disposed of by the Armed Forces is annually defined, as well as the intended destination of the proceeds of such real estate.

PECOMP responds to the need to restore the operational capabilities of the Services committed to deploy material means in peace-keeping operations, which, as mentioned before, is one of the subsidiary missions of the three Argentine Armed Forces and one of the country's priorities in the area of foreign policy and international cooperation. Thus, PECOMP, funded from reimbursements paid by the United Nations, is the first experience of joint equipment procurement towards a common end for the benefit all the Armed Forces as a whole.

V) **Coordination of Science and Technology**

The research and development functions have always played a leading role within the concepts of defense all over the world. While for developed countries these have been the matrix for the creation of new war fighting techniques, for the rest of the world they have represented the opportunity to adopt and adapt them, thus obtaining benefits that were internalized and extended to other sectors.

Therefore it is essential to institutionalize processes for the unification and strengthening of the scientific and technological system of defense, in order to achieve a more flexible coordination with the national science and technology system. In that sense, the Ministry has identified research and development projects the Armed Forces were conducting separately and without coordination among the services, trying to direct them under a joint vision that may allow the synergic utilization of those efforts.

Along the same lines, the process for the organizational redesign of the Ministry has been completed with the creation of a competent political instance for the areas of research and development. The purpose is to make this organization a coordinator of activities within the sector as well as with the other agencies in government having similar responsibilities.

It is essential to underscore that the modernization process currently under way grants a central role to enhancing capabilities of the Institute of Scientific and Technical Research of the Armed Forces (CITEFA), currently working, among other projects, on re-equipping laboratories for the performance of analyses, tests and measurements of a chemical, environmental and ballistic nature, as well as on a stabilized camera system which, when installed on board any kind of vehicle, can detect and track objects in a passive way.

The coordination of activities between CITEFA, the Military Geographic Institute (IGM), the Naval Hydrology Institute, the National Meteorology Service –to be dealt with below- and Research Institutes from the Services, including joint work with the national science and technology system, under the coordination of a new political organization created in the Ministry, are the operating pillars of this model.

It is specially relevant to note the transfer of the National Weather Service (Servicio Meteorológico Nacional, SMN), from the Air Regions Command (Commando de Regiones Aéreas, CRA) within the Air Force to the Ministry of Defense, thus fulfilling the fundamental premise of the modernization model, consisting in the demilitarization of strictly civilian tasks.

This initiative was specifically intended to promote the institutional strengthening of the agency through: I) the creation of a new organizational structure that may allow a substantial improvement in professionalism, II) the assignment of a higher degree of budget autonomy to apply currently available practices and technologies so as to provide a high quality and effective service.

Specifically regarding the naval industry, it is important to note the recovery of Tandanor shipyard into the Ministry of Defense, as a result of a process of fraudulent privatization in the previous decade. Tandanor (a unique shipyard in the country, with its Synchrolift-model elevator), along with Domecq García shipyard, make up the core of a true naval industry complex, which will allow the country to significantly increase its autonomy as regards recovery and upgrading of sea units.

A similar process is currently under way in the aviation industry, where priority has been given to the interaction and complementation of installed capacities among the countries of the region.

Furthermore, cooperation and assistance agreements have been signed with INTI (National Institute of Industrial Technology), National University of La Plata, University of Buenos Aires, the Professional Council of Aeronautical and Space Engineering (CPIAYE), and the Argentine Science and Technology Secretariat, thus proving the Ministry's willingness to involve the academic and specialized sectors into its modernization efforts.

At the international level, further progress has been made in terms of technical cooperation with Brazil, Italy, Spain, Chile, United States, People's Republic of China, and the Russian Federation. As a result, we have achieved the above-mentioned "Gaucho" vehicle, jointly produced with Brazil, and we will soon be able to announce the construction of the Multipurpose Oceanic Patrol Boats (POM), a subregional project which will provide its members shared and interoperable capabilities for the control and surveillance of surrounding territorial seas.

VI) **Implementation of the military intelligence subsystem as a part of the Defense Intelligence System**

In countries where the processes to consolidate a participatory democracy with high-institutional quality have been underway for many years, one of the challenges is to continually reformulate its military intelligence doctrine. In more recent democracies such as ours, the challenge is even more difficult and less explored, as it necessarily implies more profound changes, such as doctrinary and operational reforms which substantially change the bureaucratic production of intelligence previously at the service of non-democratic regimes.

Before Act 25,520 was passed in 2001, military intelligence was a duty planned and executed by the Armed Forces without any civilian involvement. Though with some delay, the statute finally became the first formal landmark that turned this situation to normal, by creating the military strategic intelligence subsystem under civilian authority directly reporting to the Minister of Defense.

As a result of the profound restructuring of military intelligence agencies, started in December 2005, continued in 2006, and intensified in 2007, they became an integrated and subordinated component of the recently created defense intelligence subsystem.

In keeping with this reform, a series of measures have been set in motion to consolidate the subsystem, based on the following guiding principles: oversight, operational transparency, professionalism, and democratic accountability.

First, the National Military Strategic Intelligence Directorate (Dirección Nacional de Inteligencia Estratégica Militar) was strengthened. This was an agency that had so far had only one non-military position, that of Director. Next, the subsystem's operation was regulated to make it follow the guidelines set in a yearly ministerial directive. Such guideline shall issue precise instructions for the planning and production of intelligence. Thirdly, in 2006 it worked jointly with the whole National Intelligence System, generating the first joint publications on military capabilities and components relevant to the current defense policy.

In addition, it is important to note that the regulation has unequivocally delineated the division of roles among various subsystem components, thus limiting the competence of military agencies solely to operational and tactical strategic intelligence production. To consolidate the latter guideline, the military have been instructed to –after making a thorough review of all manuals, plans and regulations –update, adapt and match them for consistency.

VII) **A Changes to the defense training and education subsystem**

Another axis underlying the modernization of the sector is the global adjustment of the educational processes of defense to the demands of a dynamic and complex regional and international context that calls for the eradication of unilateral and reductionist approaches and the emphasis of interdisciplinary learning.

The Ministry of Defense, following the deep sense of public service contained in the military function, consolidated the integration of the Services in the national educational system, in accordance with article 13 of the Law for the Restructuring of the Armed Forces. In addition, that integration is achieved based on the concept that, besides the specific functions of military corps and specialties, education must be uniform for the whole military instrument and in accordance with the policy implemented through the Joint Staff.

Education for defense and the education of military "citizens" are primary concepts in the new educational system, which is based on democratic values, guidelines and practices that reaffirm their role as citizens and specialized public servants. This creates a new institutional culture in the Services, which will be reflected in their day-to-day activities, habits, and skills. Hence, a profound reform of the educational system has been undertaken since 2006 in order to train the officers and NCOs from our Armed Forces, as well as properly professionalize such civilians who are responsible for National Defense.

To that end, the Ministry of Defense has taken a series of actions intended to consolidate such process, which are coordinated by the Unit of Education and Training Coordination especially created to oversee and follow up the educational activities of the Armed Forces, training of civilians on Defense, and the implementation of reforms conceived.

Such Unit is supported and assisted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), through the so-called PNUD-MINDEF ARG 06/019 project, mainly for the reform of the Armed Forces higher education system and its coordination with the national education system.

It also is relevant to underscore the creation of the Consultative Council for the Educational Reform of the Armed Forces, made up of representatives from universities, the Executive and Legislative branches, the Armed Forces, non-governmental organizations and the Ministry of Defense itself. Its purpose is to guide the curriculum reform at officers and NCOs schools and colleges from the three services.

One of the main advances in the modernization process, apart from the consolidation of the military aviation schools, has been the creation of the Joint War College (Escuela Superior de Guerra Conjunta) in 2007. Such effort involved a definition of themes and subject areas to be taught, a distribution of curriculum contents, times and extra activities appropriate for the training and further education of the Armed Forces senior officers.

As regards the training of civilians on defense matters, we have advanced in the definition of a training program aimed at professionalizing future civilian officials to be responsible for the Nation's defense, in the form of a postgraduate course including technical contents specific to the sector, currently not available in the national academic offering, and implemented through agreements with universities from the national university system.

In relation to the curriculum reform of the training institutes for Armed Forces officers, a proposal was drafted and agreed upon to be implemented soon, to introduce a core set of new humanistic subjects, namely: State, society and market; Argentine history; International Affairs; Sociology of organizations; Constitutional and administrative law; Military law, military justice code and law applied to each Service; and International law, human rights and international humanitarian law.

Likewise, a "Train the trainers" workshop is planned to be given to both current teachers at the Schools and new faculty, to understand the nature of the proposed academic change. As way of example, a course is also being designed to train qualified personnel to teach military training, taking into account the various factors that may put at risk both the physical and psychological integrity of military officers under training. The course will have a ninety-day duration and its curriculum will include concepts about Human Rights, Physical Training Techniques, Sports Medicine, Group Conduct and Leadership.

Much progress has also been made in the process of curriculum changes in the NCO Schools, to be completed in 2007. Additionally, a team was set up to revise and modify the admission system, both at Officer and NCO Schools, thus starting the collection of pertinent data in each Service.

In relation to another area, the Armed Forces University Institutes have had to comply with the requirements of the Higher Education Law and undergo quality assessment processes led by the National Committee of University Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEAU).

Finally, as regards training and further education of air controllers and inspectors, the Ministry has signed agreements with national universities to collaborate in this process. These institutions will strengthen the Education, Training and Updating Plan to be provided this year by CIPE (Center of Research, Education and Experimentation), an institution that trains technicians and air traffic controllers.

Specifically, they will be given English language courses, so that they may achieve the international standards required by ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization), as well as training on technical issues relating to navigation systems.

VIII) **Implementation of the human rights and genre perspectives**

The Modernization Program also includes a set of measures intended to introduce the human rights issue in the design and implementation of policies for the sector. These focus on the ideas of Executive Order 825/03 which authorized the Ministry to "participate in the enforcement and dissemination of International Humanitarian Law and the International Law of Human Rights".

Consequently, the Ministry is devoted to the organizational and functional strengthening of its structure in this area, through the creation of the National Center of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law that will operate as a coordinator of related efforts and initiatives.

In fact, also for the purposes of promoting discussion that may include key issues of Democratic Rule of Law, the Ministry has coordinated, under the auspices of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR), the Basic Course on Human Rights, given to 150 service members (officers and NCOs) from our country and the region.

A Permanent Seminar on Democracy, Citizenship and Human Rights is being organized jointly by the Ministry of Defense and the Latin American Institute of Democratic Security (ILSED), supported by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Argentina, and targeted to officers and NCOs from the three Services. The program is conducted simultaneously in the cities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba and Bahía Blanca. By the end of 2007, a total of 600 members from the three Services will have attended such seminar voluntarily. The activity consists of three-hour meetings held every two weeks, follow-up and discussion activities via a virtual platform, and the development of curriculum contents that will allow the Armed Forces to have a basic training kit on the subject.

On the other hand, the Modernization Program awards high importance to the consolidation of a genre perspective in the civilian conduct of military affairs, mainly centered on the professional relationship, the possibility to have access and make progress under equality conditions, and the eradication of various forms of violence against women in the military environment.

The coordination of a Cooperation Agreement with the National Women's Council, the implementation of a Comprehensive Plan for Strengthening

the Role of Women in the Armed Forces, and the creation of an Observatory on the status of Women in the Armed Forces, a tool for the collection of information, analysis and diagnosis of information on the situation of women and their insertion in the military environment, are key indicators in that respect.

Along the same line, the Ministry has passed Resolution 849/06 by which the Ministry of Defense urges the Armed Forces to amend the requirements for admission and permanence in their training institutions according to national legislation provisions with respect to females and women with children, or women who become pregnant during their military career.

The same principle has led to the promotion of the modification of the Executive Decree on Voluntary Military Service, which prevented those people with dependents from having access to said service. Although the prohibition did not make a formal distinction between men and women, as a result of the social and cultural context women were in fact the most affected by this limitation.

A book has been published in order to disseminate the information collected during the first year of operation of the Observatory on the situation of women in the Armed Forces, simultaneously with the systematization of the measures adopted by this Ministry in the matter of genre. Furthermore, the Ministry has created and summoned the Council on Policies of Genre for the area of Defense, which gathers specialists in the matter and female members of the three Armed Forces -officers and NCOs- in order to promote an agenda of changes based on the search for answers to obstacles still posed by the military career to their integration.

IX) **Changes to the military justice subsystem**

Finally, it is necessary to underline the importance of adapting the military justice system to the modernization process under way, which essentially implies adjusting it to the new international standards.

Under this premise, a Multidisciplinary Commission of Specialists was created with the mission to draft a project for the reform and modernization of the current Military Justice System from a truly global perspective, which mainly implies:

a) Elimination of the military jurisdiction for the prosecution of crimes committed by members of the Armed Forces, which in the future will be tried under the same conditions as all citizens;

b) Elimination of offenses that do not affect third parties, as they constitute behaviors within the privacy and individual autonomy of the person;

c) Inclusion of behaviors such as sexual harassment and disciplinary harassment as serious offenses;

d) Elimination of the capital punishment from the Argentine legal system;

e) Full redesign of the disciplinary system, balancing needs, limiting opportunities for arbitrariness and strengthening the value of due process.

The project is currently under consideration of the Legislative Branch for its enactment as National Law.

V. Conclusion

The modernization model being developed represents the strategic option by which Argentina has decided to adapt its defense system to its vital interest requirements, having a special consideration for the contribution to the consolidation of the region as a true peace zone.

Strengthening the defense policy as a State policy, a priority interest of any State to ensure its preservation, is the ultimate mission of the current modernization process, not only intended to complete and complement the initial period of reform following democratization, but also to establish a new concept that enables the national defense policy to meet the challenges present at the onset of the 21st century.

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