REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

# WHITE PAPER
## ON DEFENCE

Skopje

October 2005

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Ministry of Defence

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# PREFACE

Branko CRVENKOVSKI
**PRESIDENT**
**OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

As early as 1993, rather soon after our independence was internationally recognised, the Republic of Macedonia formally declared its aspiration to join the Alliance of shared democratic values.

No other project in the period since our independence, except our membership in the EU, has had such a high level of support from our citizens who have shown sound determination for consensus building when it comes to priorities in the military and security areas.

In November 1995 the Republic of Macedonia joined the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP) Programme. Within this context we embarked even more enthusiastically on a comprehensive reform of society as a whole in order to make it compatible with those of NATO member states.

In spite of these achievements, at the beginning of 2001 an internal conflict befell parts of the Republic of Macedonia. With the involvement of practically all major political parties of the country and with the help of the international community, especially NATO and the EU, the Ohrid Agreement was brokered in August 2001, which prevented the conflict from turning into a civil war with broader regional consequences.

The Framework Agreement marked the beginning of even more profound societal reforms. Constitutional and legislative changes followed in parallel with confidence building measures and broader reconciliation among our citizens.

The NATO Strategic Concept on expanding democracy offers flexibility for countries to contribute in the most appropriate manner to achieve their common objectives. In the field of regional political, security and defence cooperation, Republic of Macedonia has been a leading contributor and participant in advocating a genuine approach for the benefit of all. Within that context, the Adriatic Charter has played a crucial role in the past two years in reinforcing our contribution to the promotion of a concept for stability and security in the Western Balkans.

The Republic of Macedonia is becoming a role-model for overcoming inter-ethnic tensions by proving there are no issues that cannot be resolved through dialogue. Nowadays, after the completion of the major portions of the Framework Agreement there is a wide belief

that we have succeeded in bringing about the broadly based and durable consolidation of the country. Aware that the ongoing reforms are primarily for our own benefit and that they are paving the way to both NATO and EU membership, we are fully dedicated to contributing even more substantially to regional and international peace and stability.

The Republic of Macedonia has been forward-looking throughout, in assuming all its obligations and responsibilities stemming from its pro-reform Euro-Atlantic direction. That is why we are hopeful that, not later than during the next enlargement summit, NATO will formally decide to extend an invitation for membership to the Republic of Macedonia which will serve the overall political and strategic interests of the Alliance, strengthen its effectiveness and cohesion, and above all enhance the Euro-Atlantic community of nations.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
Branko **CRVENKOVSKI**

D-r Vlado BUCHKOVSKI
**PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

At the beginning of 2005, the Republic of Macedonia entered an exceptionally important period of consolidation and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. By successfully addressing the numerous challenges it faced in the last decade, our country has demonstrated its capacity to rise to the level of standards expected of a future NATO member and to serve as a model of democratic transformation for the countries in the region. These successes have reaffirmed our efforts to fulfill NATO membership criteria and graduate from this period of stabilisation and consolidation as a member of the North-Atlantic Alliance.

The successful implementation of Defence reforms envisioned by the Strategic Defence Review was at the forefront of these efforts. This process radically transformed our perspectives and approach towards defense. The Strategic Defence Review helped us to better understand the current status of our defense system; define its role in the future and develop structures and capabilities that will transform our vision into reality. This process has confirmed that the future of our defense lies in the development of small, mobile and efficient forces, capable of addressing the contemporary threats at home and acting shoulder to shoulder with NATO partners in missions abroad.

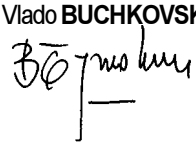
In parallel with the intensive defence and security sector transformation, Macedonia has continued its transformation from security beneficiary to security contributor. Macedonian soldiers continue their successful participation in the ISAF Mission in Afghanistan, in a period when this mission is a priority for the Alliance. The soldiers of the Macedonian Contingent in Iraq directly contribute to the Coalition efforts to stabilize and consolidate the democracy in this strategic Middle Eastern country. Through the performance of its soldiers in both missions, the Republic of Macedonia has proven it has the potential to recruit, train and motivate highly skilled soldiers, capable of dealing with modern security challenges, along side their colleagues from NATO. The experience gained from missions in Afghanistan and Iraq will help us transform our Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence into modern organisations that will guarantee our national security and will promote the Republic of Macedonia as a reliable partner in global security. We remain firmly committed to gradually increase this contribution.

Defence reforms are vital for the consolidation of the security system and its integration in the NATO, but they can also be an important catalyst for a number of priority reform processes in other departments across public administration. Thus for example, the structuring of the Crisis Management System, which was triggered by the adoption of the Crisis Management Law, will allow us to apply the experience we have gained in the defence reform process to build a modern and integrated security system, compatible with the security systems of our partners from NATO and the EU. The success of the Programm for equitable representation of ethnic communities represents a specific characteristic of the Macedonian defence system. It is a model for building inclusive security in the region of South-East Europe and will be used across the other segments of public administration in Macedonia.

The strongest guarantee that these wide-ranging reforms will provide the expected results is the broad consensus on Euro-Atlantic integration across the political spectrum and public opinion. According to the latest surveys, 88 percent of citizens support the efforts for integration of the Republic of Macedonia into NATO. Last spring, this figure stood at about 77 percent. The increase reflects the growing enthusiasm of the public as the Republic of Macedonia completes its transformation into a stable and functioning democracy and a mature candidate for NATO membership.

This consensus concerning NATO membership is our greatest assurance that the far-reaching reforms the Government has instigated will succeed, and that Macedonia will remain a dependable partner of the Alliance – at home, in the region and in missions throughout the world. I believe that the White Paper on Defence will reaffirm this message to our Partners, bring defence reforms closer to the citizens, and contribute to the existing consensus on Euro-Atlantic integration in our society.

PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
D-r Vlado **BUCHKOVSKI**



Jovan MANASIJEVSKI
**MINISTER OF DEFENCE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

The new strategic environment offers numerous opportunities, yet, there are also many new challenges and threats which require new responses. The Republic of Macedonia believes that meeting those challenges and threats can only be achieved through integration into Euro-Atlantic structures and in cooperation with all the countries of the region. Therefore, in 2003 the Republic of Macedonia initiated a profound transformation of its defence system. As an important conclusion from the defence reforms process it was concluded that national security is not the sole responsibility of the military.

Defence reforms are a product of continuous coordination and consultation between agencies with the Parliament and the President of the State. They reflect the understanding of contemporary defence as an integral task, which in addition to military goals includes the goals of internal security, foreign, economic and other policies. Therefore we must build a normative framework and a security culture that will assist the continual promotion of inter-agency coordination. It is in this spirit that we have developed and will distribute this White Paper as a document open to the whole of Macedonian society to ensure that our citizens are fully informed on the transformation and reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence and the Army of the Republic of Macedonia. By providing this information, our objective is to ensure that we remain fully transparent in all that we do and intend to do.

As defence transformation is an integral component of the reform of society as a whole, the Republic of Macedonia remains fully dedicated to completing the intensive reform processes in the defence area, and creating an efficient security system. The key programmes have already been endorsed and in the near future our efforts will be directed towards their full implementation.

In this regard, this White Paper will mark the end of a period of assessments, analyses, projections and strategic decisions taken. It will serve not only as a basis for what has been done to date, but also as a catalyst for continuing the implementation of defence sector transformation.

An ensuing result of this process is the establishment of a consistent defence security system, to be based on a small, mobile force, with greater flexibility and the ability to deploy rapidly.

In order to implement the ambitious reform objectives, we have introduced a modern defence planning and management system that will ensure continuous force development and efficiency in the use of the taxpayers' money. In this direction, our highest priority has been and will be to continue the implementation and improvement of a multi-year planning, programming, budgeting and execution system, providing appropriate development of strategy and forces with optimal use of the budget.

I am convinced that the reforms we are undertaking will provide achievement of the required defence capabilities and capacities. Being aware of the responsibility and the challenge to head the Ministry of Defence in an exceptionally dynamic transformation period, I want to encourage the overall civilian and military personnel to endure the reform process whose results are already evident.

MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
Jovan **MANASIJEVSKI**

## Major General Miroslav STOJANOVSKI
### CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARM

Today, the challenges to the security of the Republic of Macedonia arise from asymmetric and trans-national threats, rather than from nations with major conventional military capacities. There is no country that can afford to maintain sufficiently robust armed forces solely for defence of its own territory capable of conducting the whole range of expected operations and tasks. Therefore, forces today must be flexible, transformed and specially trained for the needs of the collective security systems.

The threats and challenges that the Republic of Macedonia is facing today do not essentially differ from those faced by NATO and the EU. Hence, the transformation of defence and the armed forces is of crucial interest to the Republic of Macedonia and one of the basic preconditions for membership to the Euro-Atlantic structure.

Today, the transformation of the armed forces of the Republic of Macedonia is undisputedly in line with the possibilities and the vital interests that improve the security situation in the region, and thus, create conditions for better life of the citizens and functioning of the state.

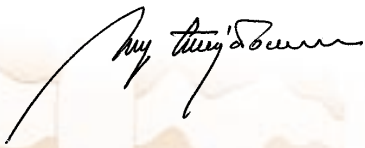
The new security challenges and the comprehensive Strategic Defence Review, which indicated the direction of the reform process, have projected the future defence missions and military tasks and encouraged the Armed Forces of the Republic of Macedonia to initiate the necessary changes whose imminent final goal already seems visible and achievable. The results of the transformation process to date confirm that in the near future, the Republic of Macedonia will have a small, mobile, well-trained and equipped army, deployable and sustainable, fully professional with sufficient value for the money of the taxpayers.

The transformation of the ARM will provide for military capabilities that will respond to the changes in the strategic environment. Considering the fact that the realization of the military missions and tasks assumes and is solely possible with the achievement of the capabilities and capacities necessary for each military task, the ARM will not stop at the current level of the reform process. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Macedonia will be transformed into a force that will be capable of rapid deployment beyond the designated area and operation in a new situation being interoperable with NATO.

Our future army will have a high standard of education and training of officers, NCOs and professional soldiers; will be capable of fighting against terrorism and will have developed capacities for operating with a wide range of military, administrative and other skills required for peacekeeping operations.

By appropriately balancing the capabilities and capacities for addressing non-conventional and asymmetric threats, we will fully meet the strict criteria and standards of the Alliance whose membership we are striving to attain. In addition, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, we will develop capabilities for providing support to the civilian authorities, creating thus new awareness of and mindset for the democratic changes and reforms in the society, and hence, for the changes and the reforms within the ARM.

CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF OF THE ARM
Major General Miroslav **STOJANOVSKI**



# INTRODUCTION

## Objectives of the White Paper on Defence

**1.** The White Paper on Defence (WPD) explains the Security and Defence strategy of the Republic of Macedonia. It is a fundamental document and follows the National Security and Defence Concept of the Republic of Macedonia of May 2003 and the Policy Framework of the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) of October 2003.

**2.** The WPD sets out the progress and transformation that has already been made in defence reform. However, the WPD also raises some new issues that have developed since the adoption of the National Security and Defence Concept. These issues will need to be addressed as part of the final stages of transformation.

**3.** Additionally, the WPD has been set against the assessments of both the new internal and international strategic realities and the threats to the security and stability of the Republic of Macedonia.

**4.** Building upon the lessons identified within the Republic of Macedonia and externally, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq, the WPD assesses the Republic of Macedonia's strategic context. It also incorporates the defence strategy and policy for integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures, particularly from the standpoint of capabilities, resources and readiness.

**5.** The WPD has been prepared in close cooperation with all the relevant ministries and institutions associated with the realization of the tasks and goals relating to the Security and Defence Policy of the Republic of Macedonia.

**6.** The WPD is intended to be fully transparent. This will then provide a better understanding of defence strategy and the activities of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Army of the Republic of Macedonia (ARM).

**7.** The strategic objective of the WPD is to contribute to an enhanced comprehension of the Republic of Macedonia continued commitment to achieve the two national goals of full-fledged membership of NATO and the European Union.

# I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF THE COUNTRY

## CHAPTER I
## The Role of Defence and the Armed Forces in a Wider Security Context

**8.** The Republic of Macedonia considers its internal security as being inseparable from the wider international framework. To accomplish its own national interests and strategic objectives, against the contemporary threats, the Republic of Macedonia relies on cooperation with other countries from the region, international organisations, and its allies and partners worldwide. In this sense, the following values and interests are recognised as being fundamental:

• Basic human rights and freedoms, the rule of law, peace and stability within the Republic of Macedonia.

• Free market, social justice and economic welfare.

• The development of a multiethnic society based on mutual confidence and the universal aim of all ethnic communities to have a stable and comprehensive advancement of the State.

• The integration and equitable representation, at every level, of all the ethnic communities within public administration and institutions.

• The integration of Republic of Macedonia into NATO and the European Union.

• The Republic of Macedonia to be seen as a recognised contributor to peace and stability in South-Eastern Europe in order to expand democracy, security and prosperity throughout all of the region.

**9.** As the new millennium unfolds, the threat of inter-state conflicts is low. However in Europe there are new challenges and threats to peace and international stability. Within the Balkans, the legacy of a decade of hostilities, the unfinished process of reconciliation, ethnic and religious extremism and intolerance and remaining stockpiles of weapons could result in the realistic preconditions for confrontation. In addition, all countries from the region, including the Republic of Macedonia, could be affected by:

- Activities linked to international terrorism, organised crime and illegal migration.
- Transitional problems such as: the weak judicial system, corruption and tax evasion.
- The hostile activities of foreign special services.

**10.** The Republic of Macedonia cannot respond alone to all of these security challenges. The development of a domestic security system integrated into collective security structures is a strategic investment for the State and an important contribution to the Euro-Atlantic security area.

**11.** NATO and EU enlargement towards South East Europe has significantly improved the security environment of the Republic of Macedonia. The next enlargement is expected to include the Adriatic Group, the Republics of Macedonia, Albania and Croatia, which will provide further security and act as a catalyst for the development of a regional security system based upon common Euro-Atlantic values. The prospective accession of Serbia and Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina to the NATO sponsored Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme will be a significant step towards further stabilisation and democratisation within the Balkans.

**12.** The new strategic environment offers numerous opportunities. There are also many new challenges and threats which require new responses. The Republic of Macedonia believes that meeting these challenges and threats can only be achieved through integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures. This will require cooperation with all the countries of the region and within the Euro-Atlantic area.

# CHAPTER II
# The NATO framework and regional initiatives

**13.** The Republic of Macedonia sees NATO as one of the key pillars of the modern Euro-Atlantic security architecture. NATO is the premier effective political, defence and security organisation that has guarded the basic values of democracy over the past 56 years. These values are widely shared by the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. In the past, the Organisation has made a marked contribution to the security of the Republic of Macedonia. The Republic of Macedonia contributions to the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the KFOR mission, the support to the refugees from the Kosovo conflict, among others, are important testaments to the mutual efforts of protecting common values shared by both sides. These efforts have shown the Republic of Macedonia as a principled NATO ally.

**14.** The Republic of Macedonia is of the firm belief that isolated security systems, especially those of small and developing countries, are irrational and inefficient. Since its independence the Republic of Macedonia has therefore focused on participating in collective security activities with the ultimate objective of becoming a NATO member. To the Republic of Macedonia, there is no alternative approach except to join NATO and the EU. This opinion has a wide political consensus robustly supported by the vast majority of the citizens.

**15.** The road towards NATO integration started in early 1990s. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, at the session held on 23 December 1993 passed the decision for accession of the country to NATO. On 15 November 1995, the Republic of Macedonia, as the 27th country to apply, acceded to the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. Since April 1999, the Republic of Macedonia has been a candidate country for membership of NATO. Through a number of Annual National Programmes and within the cycles of the Membership Action Plan (MAP), the Republic of Macedonia has continuously followed the path to full NATO membership.

**16.** The Republic of Macedonia is preparing to undertake the responsibilities that will ensure its future NATO membership. It has developed many forms of inter-institutional cooperation such as: the Working Committee, chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with the Minister of Defence as a Deputy, to coordinate the key activities related to the MAP and the recent appointment of a national coordinator for NATO integration in January 2005. Additionally, a Consultative Group has been established to improve the coordination of regional security issues in the context of cooperation with NATO, EU, OSCE, UN and other international and regional organisations and initiatives.

**17.** The presence in the Republic of Macedonia of the NATO Advisory Team and the bilateral offices (Booz, Allan Hamilton and the US Bilateral Office), all embedded within the MoD, is especially important. In its preparations for NATO membership, the Republic of Macedonia continues to develop dynamic communication and cooperation with both the NATO Advisory Team and bilateral offices.

**18.** EU integration is a strategic decision of vital interest to the Republic of Macedonia. It views the integration into the EU and NATO as two complementary processes based on the same values and principles. Integration into the EU will be a complex issue but, in terms of the Republic of Macedonia strategic interest, it will have far-reaching and positive consequences for the whole country. Within the context of preparing to join NATO, the Republic of Macedonia is already preparing the general framework for involvement in some levels of EU security policies.

**19.** The Republic of Macedonia is devoted to building good-neighbourly relations and to actively participate in regional cooperation initiatives. The intensification and deepening of neighbourly cooperation is of utmost importance for the sake of peace and security within our region and throughout Europe.

**20.** The Republic of Macedonia continues to promote concrete forms of regional cooperation. It is a fully fledged member of South East Europe Cooperation Programme (SEECP), the Central European Initiative (CEI) and the Stability Pact and Cooperation Initiative for South East Europe. The Republic of Macedonia is actively involved in the South East European Defence Ministers (SEDM) Process and the NATO South East European (SEE) Initiative. The Republic of Macedonia has observer status in the Adriatic - Ionian Initiative, in the Danube Process and the Szeged Process.

**21.** One of the prime examples for regional engagement is the Charter of Partnership between the Republics of Macedonia, Albania and Croatia and the USA. This Charter was promoted and politically endorsed within the margins of the NATO-Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) Summit in November 2002 in Prague. The Charter was signed on 2 May 2003 in Tirana.

**22.** The three aspiring countries are determined to enhance cooperation which is reflected by a strong mechanism for cooperation within the Framework of the Charter. The Partners are intensifying democratic, political, economic and military reforms necessary for attaining full and fast integration in Euro-Atlantic institutions. Specifically, they are undertaking activities in strengthening border security and joint international contribution that resulted in the deployment of a combined medical unit to Afghanistan in August 2005.

# II. STRATEGY AND CAPABILITIES

## CHAPTER III
## Defence Strategy and Transformation of the Armed Forces

**23.** The National Security and Defence Concept of the Republic of Macedonia, published in May 2003, remains as the basic guideline for the Republic of Macedonia security and defence needs within the new strategic and security environment. The defence concept of the Republic of Macedonia aims to: protect the country's territorial integrity and independence, contribute to the development of a multi-ethnic society, seek integration into Euro-Atlantic structures through NATO and EU membership, maintain internal and regional stability through balanced neighbourly cooperation, protect and promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

**24.** Following the National Concept, the Government decided to conduct a full Strategic Defence Review (SDR) in order to provide a political Framework and more detailed guidance for carrying out further defence reforms. The Strategic Defence Review was developed with strong interdepartmental coordination and consultations. This coordination provided a wide-ranging assessment of the current and future security challenges for the country.

**25.** An important conclusion from the defence reform process is the recognition that national security is not the sole responsibility of the military. Today, the military is viewed as one of a range of security instruments, which can be employed in support of other government institutions. Consequently, the country has undertaken efforts to increase its investments in the Ministry of Interior ( including border police forces), customs services and crisis management instruments. In these altered circumstances, the ARM has a primary mission of protecting the territorial integrity of the country, but also of countering asymmetric threats, which are in essence trans-national in nature.

**26.** As a result of the change to the political and security landscape in the Republic of Macedonia and the region, the country's leadership took the decision to undertake a Strategic Defence Review:

• Stage 1 of the SDR which was adopted by the Government in October 2003, involved the construction of a policy framework that provides the foundation for the defence reform plans.

• Stage 2 of the SDR which was promulgated in March 2004 and approved by Resolution of Parliament in May 2004, produced defence missions, functional analyses of the MOD, ARM and operational commands, as well as the future structure of the ARM.

• Stage 3 of the SDR which is currently underway, involves the production of the Dynamic Plan for Transformation of the Armed Forces 2005-2007 to implement the new armed forces structure with detailed programmes covering logistics, personnel (including equitable ethnic representation), education and training, defence diplomacy, reserve forces and equipment procurement.

**27.** The Dynamic Plan for Transformation of the Armed Forces 2005-2007 sets out the timetable for restructuring of the military units. This programme calls for the new command structure to be in place, transformation of the air force to be completed, five reserve brigades to have been disbanded and the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade to be fully formed at Stip and Kumanovo by the end of 2005, and 2st Mechanized Infantry Brigade to be fully formed at Kicevo, Tetovo and Ohrid by the first half of 2006.

**28.** SDR Stage 3 has presented some significant challenges for the MoD and ARM but each issue is being addressed in a professional and thorough manner. The majority of the ARM will be transformed and equipped for conducting missions in the new strategic environment well before the final completion date of 31 December 2007. The Istanbul Summit of NATO of June 2004 recognised the progress achieved in defence reforms so far, and provided an important spur to the successful completion of the process of defence transformation.

**29.** Within the new Republic of Macedonia Defence Strategy, the mission of the ARM can be summarised as follows:

• Homeland Security: to have available forces for the protection of the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Macedonia in a crisis, emergency situation or in war in order to provide military assistance to internal services whenever it is requested by the civilian authorities in accordance with the law.

• Peace support and humanitarian operations: to have forces available for contributing to the efforts for dealing with humanitarian crisis and catastrophes.

• Regional conflicts and crises: to have declared military units at readiness in case of regional conflict and crisis and to operate within the structures of NATO, EU and UN led operations, and in other internationally agreed security arrangements.

# CHAPTER IV
# Armed Forces Capabilities: A Defence Structure in Support of the Defence Strategy

**30.** The Strategic Defence Review's assessment of its current and future defence requirements included a thorough examination of the financial, technical and human resources (HR) challenges facing the country. A number of alternative courses of action were considered to ensure the final design of the transformed ARM would be of the right size, structure and capability; with the appropriate personnel, equipment and training. All of which would be affordable in both the short and long term.

**31.** The new strategic realities advocate that the ARM should have a broader spectrum of capabilities with greater flexibility and the ability to deploy rapidly. NATO membership does not simply provide access to a shared security and defence umbrella, it also requires a contribution to the promotion of stability and well-being in the Euro-Atlantic area and beyond. The Republic of Macedonia is determined to build the capabilities and declared forces for deployment beyond its territory. Therefore, the goal has been to restructure the ARM to become smaller, but more deployable and flexible, with particular attention given to the development of forces with the specialised capabilities and skills required for countering future threats. For example, the Special Operations Regiment will be able to provide a purposeful and valuable contribution to Homeland, Regional, European and global security.

**32.** On completion of the Dynamic Plan for Transformation, the new Republic of Macedonia defence structure, organisation and posture will be fully interoperable with NATO forces in terms of doctrine, training, structure, equipment, logistics, budgeting and planning systems.

**33.** In this direction, the Republic of Macedonia has undertaken the commitment to be able to:

- Deploy and operate a unit beyond the territory of the Republic of Macedonia with full logistical support and provide the capability to rotate the unit for a certain period of time.
- Through the Host Nation Support Co-ordination Centre (HNSCC), enable the reception and support of NATO forces within the territory of the Republic of Macedonia to inter operate with its own forces.
- Act as security forces to support the police force in NATO led peacekeeping and/or stabilisation operations.

• To abandon the concept of a "People's Army" and develop the ARM as a modern, committed, well trained and motivated professional force providing equal opportunities for all members.

**34.** The ARM will have an active strength of 7,696 and a transitional reserve component with a strength of 4,850. The new force structure of the ARM comprises three commands: Joint Operational Command, Logistics Support Command and Training Command; and units directly subordinated to the ARM GS: a Special Operations Regiment; an Electronic Surveillance Centre and a Air Space Operational Centre (ASOC). The key points to note are as follows:

• Joint Operational Command will have two mechanized infantry brigades and a reserve infantry brigade. The reserve brigade will be only retained until the country obtains NATO membership. The command will also have:

– Aviation wing.
– Tank battalion, with one active company.
– Artillery battalion, with one active battery.
– Military Police battalion
– Signals battalion
– Air-Defence battalion, with one active battery.
– NBC company.

• Logistic Support Command includes:

– Logistics battalion
– Logistic engineering battalion, with one active company.
– Honour guard battalion, which includes ceremonial units.
– Garrison Support battalion.

• Training Command will control all of the training centres. The aim of the Strategy on Military Education and Training is to establish a permanent professional military education system with research activities in the areas of strategy, doctrine and utilisation of lessons-learned.

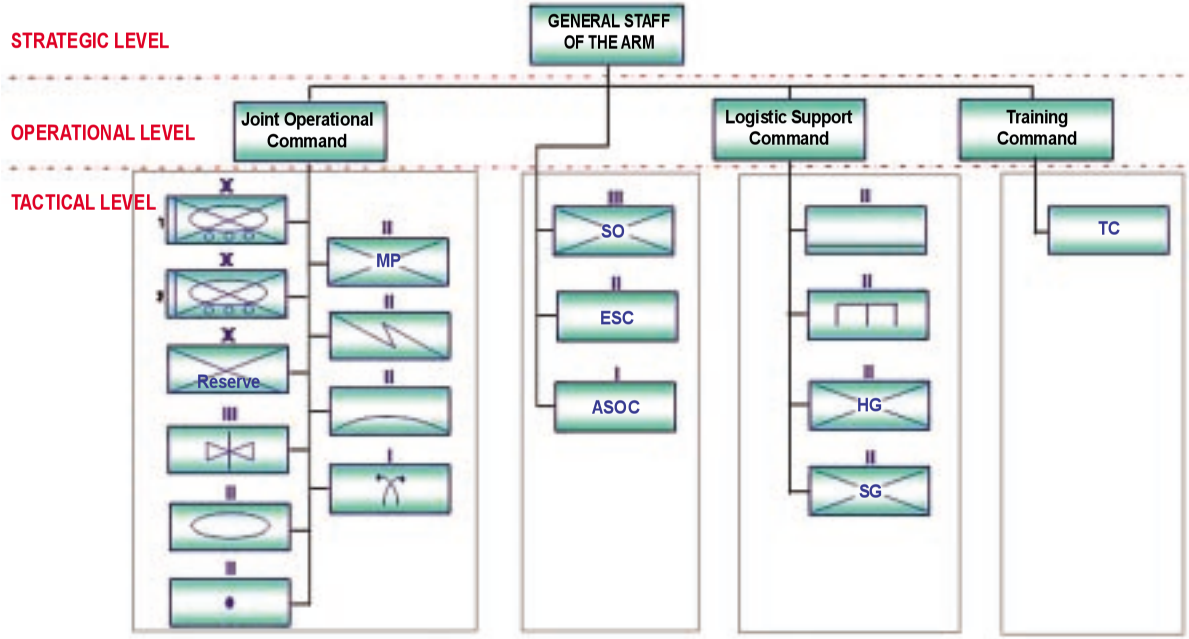
• The Military Hospital will be transformed in accordance with the new needs of the ARM. The transformation will involve a sympathetic reduction of personnel numbers and appropriate downsizing functions to match the reduced requirements.

• The MoD is also reorganizing the military-diplomatic missions with the first priority being the establishment of a defence section within the Republic of Macedonia Mission to NATO. Two defence policy experts have already been appointed.

**35.** The new structure enables the General Staff and the respective Commands to plan and implement personnel management, training and logistics support. This action will prepare declared forces for operations or allow them to be ready to deploy. This will result in a fundamental change to the effectiveness and efficiency of the ARM.

**36.** Since the initiation of the SDR personnel downsizing has been one of the key priorities of the defence plans of the Republic of Macedonia. The Human Resources Strategy has consisted of various policies and programmes, including regular and early retirement, voluntary leave, divestiture, personnel retraining programs and finally by the transfer of personnel to new institutions, such as the Border Police, the Protection and Rescue Directorate

## NEW FORCE STRUCTURE OF THE ARM




**ESC** – ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE CENTER
**ASOC** – AIR SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONAL CENTER
**SO** – SPECIAL OPERATIONS
**MP** – MILITARY POLICE
**TC** – TRAINING CENTRE
**HG** – HONOUR GUARD
**SG** – SAFEGUARD

and the Crisis Management Centre. Currently there is a moratorium on enrollment of new Military Academy (MA) cadets until the new education and training system is established. The number of conscripts has been continuously decreased and conscription will be abandoned by 2007. The implementation of the downsizing policy poses a serious challenge taking into account the overall economic and social situation in the country.

**37.** In order to achieve an integrated border management system, the border security mission is currently being transferred from the ARM to the border police. The transfer of the responsibility was initiated in May 2004 and it was completed in August 2005, several months ahead of schedule, completing thus the overall process.

**38.** In order to clarify the responsibilities of various ministries during an internal crisis, and to regulate the role of the military, the Government developed a Crisis Management Law. After a long process of wide consensus, the Assembly passed the law in April 2005. The Centre achieved an initial operating capability in September 2005 with a full capability planned for June 2006.

**39.** In January 2004, the Government initiated a process of divesting obsolete equipment. All 91 T55 tanks have now been destroyed and the remaining obsolete equipment have been stored ready for disposal. The SU-25 aircraft have been grounded for over a year and by Government decision dated June 2005, they have been eliminated from the inventory list of the ARM. An assessment of equipment and ammunition holdings to determine surpluses for disposal is currently under way.

**40.** Over 100 facilities and real estate properties formerly owned or used by the MoD and ARM have been disposed of as part of the estate divestiture plan. Much needed financial resources will be saved through the divestiture process and the money saved will be used to improve the quality of life for our professional military and civil servant personnel.

**41.** The experience gained by the Republic of Macedonia through participation in international peace operations is irreplaceable. Encouraged by the recommendations at NATO Istanbul Summit, the Republic of Macedonia will continue to increase the scope of its participation in international peace missions. Macedonian forces first deployed to Afghanistan in August 2002 as part of ISAF and seven rotations have now been completed. For ISAF-2, liaison officers were deployed to the Turkish contingent and for ISAFs 3 to 8 an infantry section has been deployed in support of the German contingent. In total, 95 personnel have been engaged in the ISAF mission.

As a result of the enhanced regional cooperation within the Adriatic Group, a 12-person combined medical team drawn from the Republics of Macedonia, Albania and Croatia was deploied in support of ISAF in August 2005.

**42.** The current deployment in support of the Operation Iraqi Freedom mission includes one special operations platoon. In addition, two liaison officers work in the Multinational Force in Baghdad and two officers in the US Central Command based in Florida giving a total of 35 deployed personnel. The forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom have now completed five rotations with 174 personnes.

**43.** The participation in international missions has enriched our knowledge, skills and experiences. The lessons identified from these missions have had a direct influence on defence reforms enabling us to improve our present capabilities and capacities. Despite limited funds, the Republic of Macedonia is energetically approaching the SDR concept in the area of declared forces. We will achieve our goal of providing resources to support the deployment of 210 personnel, at any one time,to support various missions by the end of 2007.

**44.** The Republic of Macedonia has prepared an Infantry company, an engineering platoon and the National Support Element (a total of 162 personnel) for possible participation in peace operations as part of SEEBRIG in 2006.

**45.** PfP activities and programmes are one of the main mechanisms of the transformation process of the ARM. By participating in numerous exercises and activities, the Republic of Macedonia has continued to meet the international standards. These activities represent a base for building interoperability in all areas of the MoD and ARM.

**46.** Additionally, in order to achieve interoperability with NATO's forces and structures, the Republic of Macedonia is fulfilling the Partnership Goals and the Military Tasks for Interoperability as part of the Membership Action Plan. By achieving the national goals of interoperability in the future the Republic of Macedonia will be able to conduct joint planning and force generation for international NATO led operations.

**47.** Our active PfP and EAPC participation is of great importance interest to our regional and NATO allies. In order to achieve these goals, as part of the Individual Partnership Programme and the Planning and Review Process (PARP), the ARM requires the following:

• The capability to deploy rapidly and sustain, for a defined period, beyond the borders of the Republic of Macedonia in order to operate in a new environment.

• Interoperability with NATO at the highest military levels of decision-making as well as at the operational and tactical levels. Great significance is placed on the use of NATO doctrine and English language.

• High standards of education and training for officers, NCOs and professional soldiers, with a special emphasis on the establishment of a new professional NCO corps as the core of the modern ARM.

• The capability to fight against terrorists and to act within a wide range of military, administrative and other skills required in peace keeping operations.

• Balancing the structure of the ARM for war fighting as well as for acting as a force against asymmetric threats in Republic of Macedonia and beyond.

• The capability to conduct a conventional battle for the defence of territory within a graduated readiness system, which can react in time to any medium and long-term threats.

• The creation of a new professional culture, which was started when the ARM was de-politicized, to reflect the democratic changes in our society

**48.** The Dynamic Plan for the Transformation of the ARM involves a major restructuring and change management process. Therefore to maintain our current operational commitments and in order to focus resources, especially financial, the following priorities for transformation process have been established by the MoD:

• A harmonized force structure and internal capabilities balanced to cope with the new threats over a 7-10 year program. The establishment of highly capable forces for special operations. Establishing smaller reserve forces at high levels of readiness with limited reserve forces at low levels of readiness. As a result the ARM should be more mobile and flexible, with a broader scope of competencies for responding to a wider spectrum of threats. The objective is to fully professionalise the ARM by the end of 2007.

• The introduction of cost-effectiveness and the allocation of resources within the framework of the budget, in accordance with the NATO standards. This will ensure more funds are available for professional development, training, exercises and operations.

• The phased achievement of full NATO interoperability, including the capability to operate with NATO rapid reaction forces. The implementation of NATO standards for evaluating operational capabilities and the readiness of personnel, equipment, training and available resources will be essential in realising this goal.

• Providing for long term Mission Essential Task List (METL) directed planning of forces structures and capabilities, based upon the multi-year system of Planning, Programming,

Budgeting and Execution (PPBE). This will also require the decentralisation of budget funds to units and commands for optimal use of the limited resources.

• The establishment of the force structures, capabilities and processes to provide better co-ordination of the support to the civil authorities and the internal security forces within the crisis management process.

• The development of strategies in the areas of education, training, operational capabilities, readiness, procurement and maintenance of equipment, logistics, standardisation and codification.

• The development of strategies for personnel management to cover recruitment, training, retention, development and resettlement.

• Improving the balance of representation of the ethnic communities in the ARM with the aim to achieve equitable and appropriate representation in accordance with the Constitution.

**49.** The Republic of Macedonia will continue to provide Host Nation Support (HNS) support to KFOR. The ability of the Republic of Macedonia to provide HNS in the past was confirmed by the assistance given to previous NATO and EU missions. HNS is an important factor for NATO. In this context, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2005 to regulate cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and NATO for upgrading the road and communication infrastructure according to NATO standards. The Republic of Macedonia has also started to develop a Capability Catalogue and plans to establish a Host Nation Support Co-ordination Centre by mid 2006 with a full operational capability established by mid 2007. The HNSCC will provide continuous support the efforts of the Alliance to stabilise the Balkans through the provision of logistic support for KFOR troops who stay or transit through Republic of Macedonia territory.

**50.** Within the process of defining the required capacities and proper size of the force structure, the reserve units are of major importance for accomplishing the basic missions and tasks of the military. Current estimates state that in the next 10 years there is no need to maintain a large reserve force, as no conventional threats exist. A completely professional reserve force will therefore replace the current conscript training system by 2007. The large number of already trained personnel insures that ample cadres of high quality will remain in the reserve force in the interim.

**51.** The MoD has adopted the Reserve Force Concept based on a voluntary engagement of individuals who will receive contractually to based financial compensation. Reserve personnel will be primarily trained for specified or special duties. The reserve forces will be completely integrated into the defence system and will be able to be mobilised for a vast array of tasks, including international peace support operations.

# III. RESOURCES

## CHAPTER V
## Human Resources

**52.** People are vitally important to the future defence capability of the Republic of Macedonia. Even the best military equipment does not constitute a capability but rather the personnel who operate it. The nation's security rests in our ability to attract, motivate and keep the best quality personnel possible for the MoD.

**53.** Our goal in defence is to offer equal opportunities to all. This will require development of a sound, long term personnel management strategy, which will include, as a vital part, the equitable representation of all ethnic communities.

**54.** The MoD is committed to the strategic goal of achieving equitable representation of the ethnic communities in order to improve the current ethnic imbalance. The activities will be in three main areas:

• Implementation of well-developed targeted recruiting actions.

• Candidates, regardless of ethnicity, will be considered for all jobs and selected solely on their proven qualifications.

Thus, the MoD can guarantee that the operational capability of defence will continue at the highest level while simultaneously protecting the tenet of equal opportunity.

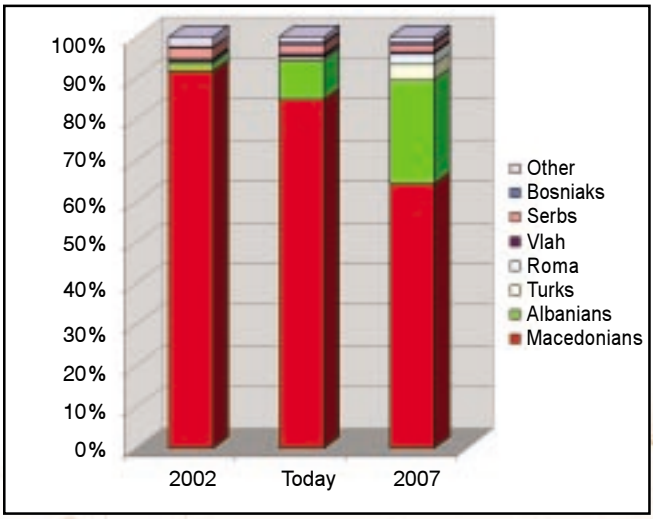
• Programmes have been developed to recruit professional soldier candidates, with a high-school education, by 2007. Our intent is to complete the recruitment of officer candidates, with a university education, by 2013. This incremental approach will allow us to reach our goals without compromising the current level of operational readiness.

**55.** The MoD will attract able people by the following methods:

• From 2008, the MoD will recruit officer candidates directly from the civilian universities with military training being conducted prior to obtaining a commission.

• Non-commissioned officers will be recruited from the ranks of professional soldiers and follow a career path that includes education and training.

• We will continue our successful programme of recruiting volunteers to become professional soldiers from segments of the civilian population. These individuals have received training and follow-on assignments in the Armed Forces. Based on the needs of the Army and the




*Equitable representation of communities in the MOD and ARM in 2002, actual and projection for 2007*

individuals' continued desire to serve the nation, they will be offered the opportunity for continued service in the ranks or as non commissioned officers.

• Civil servants will be employed in accordance with the existing rules for public administration servants.

**56.** Personnel reduction is one of our greatest challenges. While being conscious of the unpopularity of the downsizing measures, it is important for the efficient performance of the ARM to achieve the correct balance at each rank. As illustrated at paragraph 36, the MoD has employed a number of strategies to reduce the sting of downsizing, in particular through transfers to other government institutions. Unfortunately, this can only fulfill part of the requirement. The MoD has therefore pioneered two programmes for retraining and resettlement, which will be further developed for the professional era.

**57.** As one of the largest employers in the public sector, the MoD has the responsibility to set the highest standards in management and employment. Supervisors must understand the importance of managing and developing the potential of every individual for the benefit of the country.

**58.** To date, a total of 20 different policies and 30 programmes have been developed with the aim of improving the human resource management system. These policies address the continuing requirements of a transforming military. Examples are as follows:

• Appointing able leaders and managers that can operate effectively within the MoD and ARM.

• The introduction of new Human Resource business practices within a Personnel Management Information System.

• Determining honest, transparent and fair criteria for selection, promotion and evaluation of all MoD personnel on a merit-based system.

• Managing the current human resources structure according to NATO and EU standards.

• The improvement of MoD and ARM structures in order to provide good working conditions and equal employment rights.

• Accomplishment of equal opportunity policies that respect equitable representation of ethnic community members based on their expertise and competence.

• Continued evolution of the human resources management policies and programmes to match evolving requirements.

• Planning, provision and management of the financial resources required for all programmes within the HR field.

• Development of a full life cycle career path that includes the possibility of retraining and resettlement for a civilian career after military employment.

• The implementation of an efficient and consistent health and welfare policy that covers on-duty and off-duty periods for all defence personnel.

**59.** We have developed human resource policies that demonstrate our steadfast commitment to improve the quality of life in all ARM facilities, barracks and military housing. We are considering new initiatives including a remodelled pension policy and modernized personnel administration system. We are determined to ensure there is a new working environment free of any type of discrimination.

**60.** The Military Education and Training Strategy places high quality training and combat readiness as a top priority. The basic training goal is to produce disciplined, educated, well trained, motivated, efficient and combat ready soldiers. Our forces are required to operate and maintain complex equipment as part of our equipment modernization programme. In order to prepare each soldier for battle-focused training at the individual and collective level, they need the best leadership and equipment to maintain the warrior ethos. Tactical and technical competence, confidence in equipment and initiative will reap big results. Advancements in information technology, simulation and distance learning will be harnessed as tools for educating and training defence personnel.

**61.** The MoD priorities for training, based on specialist skills and functional tasks, are as follows:

• Training of declared units.

• Training of special operations forces and military police.

• Training of conventional forces.

• International Military Education and Training.

• Training of instructors and essential cadre.
• Foreign language training.
• Training to establish common values and instill the warrior ethos.
• Training on new combat equipment.
• Training of reserve forces, in accordance with the missions and tasks of the units.

**62.** In support of the three existing educational establishments an MoD section responsible for the education and training policy and scientific research work is being established. The section will be responsible for the:

• Establishment of a doctrine and standards office.
• Conducting the development of an education and training doctrine in accordance with NATO standards.
• Coordinating all activities in terms of education and training needs, plans and means.
• Synchronize, through verification and validation, all resource requests.
• Evaluate the output of the education and training system.

**63.** The distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the three educational establishments are as follows:

• The Military Academy will be responsible for education and training of officers and SNCOs.
• Training Command will be responsible for basic individual training for all professional soldiers, and JNCOs. It will also be responsible for crisis management training and search and rescue training for specialized units.
• The Dr. Joseph Kruzel Centre will be responsible for training key civil servants and selected military personnel in foreign languages, information technology, public relations, and civil military operations.

**64.** The situation of having a surplus of officers has forced us to halt the process of enrolling new cadets. One of the criteria for NATO membership is a professional NCO corps compatible with NATO members. The plan to institutionalise our NCOs, their roles, duties and responsibilities was signed by the Defence Minister in February 2005. As part of this process an NCO Development Concept has been developed that promotes a career-long NCO training and development programme.

**65.** With the introduction of professional soldier education, soldiers will now receive individual specialised training in their assigned specialty after their basic combat training. The MoD is developing a continuous career path for all enlisted soldiers in the future.

**66.** The future force structure will reduce the number of field training areas from four to one integrated training centre, allowing the MoD to streamline and rationalise the available means.

# CHAPTER VI
# Budget

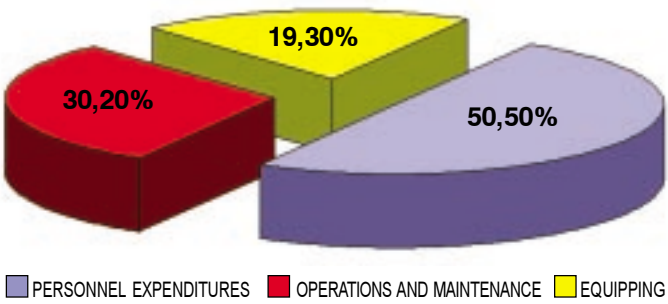
**67.** The Republic of Macedonia is a country of limited resources. Therefore, a key goal is a cost-effective defence system that provides value for money to the taxpayers. The main objective of the Government is to provide defence that is in accordance with the capabilities, resources and the needs of the Republic of Macedonia in the context of the new strategic realities. The defence sub-system should contribute to the development of the other spheres of the society in the interest of peace and prosperity of the nation.

**68.** We recognise that in the process of modernization and development of the defence system, the Republic of Macedonia must conduct reforms supported from its own resources. In order to obtain long term stable financing of the defence and guided by the interests and goals which are to be achieved, the Government has decided that the defence budget in future years is going to stay within the parameters of 2.3 -2.6 % of the GDP. Assistance with our plans and activities from partners and allies is welcome, but this cannot be the basis of our future development.

**69.** The long term financing of defence is the cornerstone of coherent and reliable planning of the expenditures and resource allocation. In accordance with the new force structure, capabilities and capacities that are to be achieved by 2007:

- The expenditure on personnel, including food and uniform, is to be reduced to maximum 50 % of the available budget (AB).
- Expenditure on operations and maintenance should be brought to a level of approximately 30 % of the AB.
- At least 20% of the AB is to be allocated for equipping and modernization.

A long term defence budget projection has been developed as shown in the table on page 35.




*Proposed MoD Budget for 2006*

**70.** With regards to the declared forces, all the requirements and assets for preparation of these units are planned and covered by the MoD budget. In case of their deployment abroad, the Government has decided to cover all deployment related expenses from their contingency funds.

**71.** The basic precondition for implementing the MoD financial concept was the introduction of the Planning, Programming, Budget and Execution (PPBE) system. The

LONG TERM DEFENCE BUDGET PROJECTION

(MK DENARS X 1.000)

| CATEGORY | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BUDGET | 6,292,020 | 6,522,556 | 7,023,970 | 7,486,845 | 7,980,241 | 8,506,136 | 8,780,000 | 9,043,400 |
| PERSONNAL EXPENDITURES | 3,531,082 | 3,293,890 | 3,509,175 | 3,743,422 | 3,990,120 | 4,253,068 | 4,390,000 | 4,521,700 |
| OPERATIONS AND MAINTAINANCE | 1,764,282 | 1,969,812 | 2,091,738 | 2.246..054 | 2,394,072 | 2,551,840 | 2,634,000 | 2,713,020 |
| EQUIPPING | 996,656 | 1,258,854 | 1,423,057 | 1,497,369 | 1,596,049 | 1,701,228 | 1,756,000 | 1,808,680 |
| **CATEGORY** | **PERCENTUAL ATTENDING OF THE EXPENDITURES BY YEARS** | | | | | | | |
| BUDGET | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| PERSONNAL EXPENDITURES | 56.12 | 50.50 | 49.96 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 | 50.00 |
| OPERATIONS AND MAINTAINANCE | 28.04 | 30.20 | 29.78 | 30.00 | 30.00 | 30.00 | 30.00 | 30.00 |
| EQUIPPING | 15.84 | 19.30 | 20.26 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 20.00 |

training of the relevant personnel in the MoD and ARM has been completed and the new principles in the process of preparation, adoption and execution of the budget were established in 2003, 2004 and 2005.

**72.** The use of the PPBE system has been strengthened by the decision of the Ministry of Finance in 2004 to provide resource management guidelines for the following year and detailed projections for the next three years. The use of the PPBE system will undoubtedly further improve the realism in financial planning.

**73.** The successful implementation of the PPBE system by the MoD has led to an agreement on introduction of the PPBE system by the other Ministries and institutions involved in the accomplishment of the MAP. MoD staff are now assisting in providing training to the other Ministries and institutions.

**74.** Through SDR, the MoD managed to establish a ten-year Equipment Plan consisting of a detailed medium term plan and a broad plan covering the longer period. The introduction of the PPBE has allowed the equipment plan to be developed into a rolling, five-year procurement plan. This will be incorporated into an holistic Defence Acquisition Process and Integrated Logistic Support (ILS) system, both of which are currently being developed.

**75.** Downsizing will release funds that will be used for improving training, equipment modernization and establishing a logistic system capable of supporting overseas deployments.

# CHAPTER VII
# Logistics

**76.** The mission of logistics is to provide timely and effective support to ensure readiness and sustainability for all military forces across the spectrum of defence missions, especially the following aspects of military operations dealing with:

- Design and development, acquisition, storage, movement of troops.
- Distribution, maintenance, evacuation, and disposition of materiel.
- Acquisition or construction, operation, and disposition of facilities.
- Acquisition or furnishing of services and medical and health service support.

**77.** In June 2004, by Ministerial decision, the Senior Executive Committee for Logistic Reform (SECLR) was established as a Senior MoD Logistics Steering Committee. It was tasked to develop and implement logistic reform and transformation through a Defence Logistics Transformation Programme. Consequently, the MoD and ARM logistic communities have undertaken initiatives to reform processes, realign functions, roles and responsibilities and establish policies and procedures. A new Logistic Support Concept will be approved by the SECLR for implementation by the end of 2005.

**78.** The work of the logistics transformation is therefore a perpetual process that identifies the required adjustments to the functions, organizations, and processes in order to meet the operational and situational shifts. A recent study on logistic roles and responsibilities has established the division of responsibilities with the Logistic chain of command as follows:

- The MoD is responsible to provide policy, guidance and resources.
- ARM is responsible for logistic planning and policy implementation.
- The Joint Operational Command (JOC) is responsible for identifying its operational and logistic requirements.
- The Logistic Support Command (LSC) is responsible for executing logistic support at the operational and tactical level.

**79.** When implemented, the logistic support system will be divided into two functions: field (combat) and base logistics. The field logistics function becomes operational on mobilization, during the training for specific peacetime activities, to aid the civilian authorities and in support of operations abroad. The base logistics function will enable routine execution of logistics for units in ARM barraccs.

**80.** The ARM's logistic support is organized into four lines of support. In peacetime, the first line of support is provided by the logistic elements of the tactical units and formations. The Logistic Support Command carries out the second and third lines of support. The fourth line of support is provided through national resources. The helicopter wing has its own specific support elements.

**81.** In operational conditions, the logistic system will rely on its principle of modularity and mission tailoring to achieve the required support. This methodology ensures effective and efficient support of operations through cost-effective use of available logistic resources.

**82.** Some of the equipment currently used in the defence sector does not meet the needs of the ARM future structure and cannot support all operational requirements. Therefore, guided by established requirements, a multi-year equipment plan has been developed for future acquisition, taking into account the financial limitations of the defence budget.

**83.** The acquisition/equipment plan is based on the following priorities:

- Upgrading the mobility, deployability and efficiency (fire power and all weather capabilities) of the declared forces. The intent is to ensure that units are fully equipped no later than 6 months before commencement of a mission.
- Fully equipping the Special Operations Regiment by the end of 2006.

**84.** The MoD and ARM are scheduled to receive bilateral assistance in 2005 for the development and implementation of a Defence Acquisition System, Integrated Logistics Support (ILS) system, and to introduce equipment management programmes. The assistance programme will provide an assessment and analysis of the current state of affairs and, based on NATO country best business practices, will recommend a Defence Acquisition Programme for the MoD.

**85.** Further defence logistic priorities are:

- Development of a mobile system for command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I).
- Development of a logistic system that will provide sustainability for the forces declared for missions outside the country.
- The procurement of weapons systems and calibres compatible with those used by the NATO member states especially by strategic partners.

**86.** The planned acquisition process has to be requirements driven and embedded in reality. A constant revision of the needs and timely planning of procurements is essential. The integration of the multi-year planning, budgeting and execution system will facilitate efficient and transparent acquisitions based on the Public Procurement Law. The MoD will manage the acquisition projects transparently taking the whole life cycle costs into account. Transparency in the procurement process will enable stronger supervision until the introduction of a simplified procedure, which will allow a more economical use of the allocated funds. The research and development process n will make best use of the affordable opportunities within domestic industrial capacities.

**87.** In developing a Defence Acquisition Programme it is intended to achieve three objectives:

- Ensuring that the taxpayers are informed that their security is being met through sound financial plans..
- Ensuring interested suppliers are aware that, during the acquisition and procurement phase, decisions will be based on quality, value for money, and the ability to deliver as advertised.
- Ensuring that the equipment users realise that the MoD is providing them with the highest quality equipment, which can be purchased within the available financial resources.

# IV. DEFENCE AND SOCIETY

## CHAPTER VIII
## The Armed Forces and Society

**88.** It is essential that there is a growing consensus in society and a shared vision of the security and defence needs of the Republic of Macedonia. Society must understand the tasks and mission of the Military. A new feeling of clarity, coherence and consensus concerning the place and role of the Army in the society will reinforce its further development.

**89.** Transparency is a fundamental objective of Government which will be achieved by providing detailed, accurate and timely information to the citizens of our country. As a democracy, the Republic of Macedonia offers its citizens the opportunity to criticize policies including basic Defence and Security programmes. Constructive criticism will give the MoD and ARM the ability to review and make necessary changes.

**90.** The principles for informing the public during operations, while maintaining personnel security, include:

- Transparency.
- Accountability and authority in the delivery of information.
- Timely and accurate release of the information to the public.
- Equal access to information for all media.
- Internal MOD information programs.

**91.** The Ministry of Defence prepares annual Media plans in accordance with the public information principles. Those plans include set goals for regular and planned information intended for both domestic and international public consumption, about the activities and achievements of the Ministry of Defence and the Army. This will be delivered through planned regular informative briefings, press conferences, regular public information statements, a variety of publications, manuals and magazines, as well as the public web page of the Ministry of Defence (www.morm.gov.mk).

For better public information and personnel training it is intended to open a Regional Public Information Centre to start functioning in Skopje by the end of 2005.

**92.** Open communication between society and the military will contribute to building a vital bond of mutual trust between the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and its defence institutions. This trust contributes to a sense of national cohesion, which is a basic pillar of a stable and prosperous state.