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John DREWIENKIEWICZ<sup>1</sup>

## The Current State of Defence Reform in Bosnia And Herzegovina

### Trenutno stanje u procesu reforme sektora odbrane u Bosni i Hercegovini

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#### Sažetak

*Proces reformi u oblasti odbrane u Bosni i Hercegovini se kreće ka provedbi odredbi državnog Zakona o odbrani koji je usvojen prošle godine. Nadalje, ovo se proširuje i na uspostavljanje državnih institucija u oblasti odbrane, funkcioniranje lanca komandovanja sa njegovim operationim i administrativnim dijelovima, te operative sposobnosti sistema komande i kontrole na čijem je čelu Predsjedništvo BiH kao civilni komandant Oružanih snaga Bosne i Hercegovine.*

*Cilj ovog procesa je osigurati sposobnost države da izvrši svoje odgovornosti i time svoju dominantnost za pitanja u oblasti odbrane u Bosni i Hercegovini.*

*Ključne riječi: reforma, sektor odbrane, Bosna i Hercegovina*

#### Summary

*The process of defence reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina has moved towards the implementation of the provisions of the State Defence Law passed last year. Moreover, this extends towards the standing-up of the State defence institutions, the functioning of the chain of command with its operational and administrative branches, and the operating capability of a system of command and control headed by the BiH Presidency as civilian commander of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

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<sup>1</sup> Director Department of Security Co-operation, Military Advisor to the High Representative, Vice-Chair Defence Reform Commission

*The goal of this process is to ensure that the State is able to exercise its responsibilities and thus its supremacy for defence matters in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

*Key words: reform, defense sector, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

## **1. Introduction**

NATO endorsed and presented benchmarks outlining broad criteria for credible candidacy by BiH for the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme in December 2003. These benchmarks have formed the basis for the defence reform agenda in 2004 – as BiH moves closer to PfP membership and the implementation of wider defence reforms. Work towards the fulfilment of these benchmarks has encompassed cross-cutting efforts of local authorities and the international community – in particular the BiH Ministry of Defence, with the assistance of the entity ministries of defence. As can be seen below, these collaborative efforts have produced fruitful results.

## **2. Legislative Benchmarks**

The legislative benchmarks required the adoption of all legislation arising from the Defence Reform Commission's deliberations and recommendations last year. All State-level legislative benchmarks have been fulfilled. The Defence Law of Bosnia and Herzegovina was passed in December 2003, as were the amendments to other laws necessary to create the State-level Ministry of Defence. As far as FBiH Law on Defence and Law on Army Service are concerned, the harmonised texts were passed by the House of Representatives on 26 May and the House of Peoples on 31 May. These have yet to come into force as they are awaiting publication in the FBiH Official Gazette.

## **3. Personnel Benchmarks**

The personnel benchmarks require the appointment and assumption of office of all BiH senior defence officials in the Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff, and Operational Command.

The Minister and Deputy Ministers of Defence were appointed in March. The Chief of Joint Staff and his/her two Deputies as well as the Commander of the Operational Command and his/her two Deputies, have yet to assume office. The BiH Parliamentary Assembly approved the nomination for the Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff for Resources, Deputy Commander for Resources and Deputy Commander for Operations on 11 May. Other officials have been nominated by the BiH Presidency and are pending BiH Parliamentary approval.

#### **4. Institutional Benchmarks**

The institutional benchmarks require the establishment of a defence and security policy committee in the BiH Parliamentary Assembly and the adoption of a Book of Rules for the BiH defence structures with the recruitment of 65 percent of projected staff positions.

The Joint Defence and Security Policy Committee of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly was established and its inaugural session held on 18 December 2003. Since then, it has held a further seven sessions, including hearings with the BiH Minister of Defence appearing before the committee.

The Book of Rules on Internal Organisation for the BiH Ministry of Defence, Joint Staff, and Operational Command was approved by the BiH Council of Ministers on 20 May. The Book of Rules now foresees a total of 172 positions for the BiH defence institutions – 100 MoD, 44 Joint Staff, and 28 Operational Command. The benchmark requires the recruitment of 65 percent of this total, which would equal 112 positions. Currently, there are a total of 42 people assigned to positions, including all positions – senior officials and deputies, plus advisors. The BiH Joint Staff and Operational Command are not yet operational.

#### **5. Restructuring Benchmarks**

The restructuring benchmarks require the downsizing and re-organisation of the entity ministries of defence and general staffs, as well as the reduction of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The restructuring and downsizing of each entity ministry of defence by 25 percent of positions is still underway. The Books of Rules and new organisations for both entity ministries have been adopted. All individuals to be demobilised have been notified.

With the March BiH Presidency Decision on the Size and Structure of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH), the size of the AFBiH has been reduced to 12,000 military professionals, including a reduction in reserves to 60,000 and a decrease in the conscription intake and length of service. This decision has also provided for the restructuring and downsizing of the VRS General Staff and VFBiH Joint Command. Although not a benchmark for PfP membership, efforts will continue to re-organise the AFBiH in-line with the BiH Presidency decision.

## **6. Budgetary Benchmarks**

The budgetary benchmarks require the establishment of a State and entity defence budget system, with plans for a Common Defence Resource Management System, including the development of defence budget estimates for 2005 through 2007.

The 2004 State defence budget was adopted at the end of last year. FBiH and RS 2004 defence budgets have been adopted. 2005 through 2007 budget estimates are under development.

A comprehensive Defence Budgeting System, bringing together the State and entity defence budgets, has been proposed and is pending further staffing and approval. The Common Defence Resource Management System, which ties BiH Armed Forces and defence institutions plans, personnel, logistics, and operations together with resources, is pending staffing with all other functional parties as a prerequisite to BiH MoD approval.

## 7. Concluding Statement

Through the collaborative efforts of both local and international actors, defence reform implementation has proceeded with a remarkable pace. Many of the benchmarks have been fulfilled, and it is expected that those remaining will be completed in due time.

There are many areas that will continue to require intensive work over the coming months, and indeed into next year. The technical nature of these reforms requires a deliberative approach towards the implementation of solutions corresponding to the defence needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Given the commitment and activities shown to date, we can expect continued positive results.

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## 1. Uvod

NATO je u decembru 2003. godine podržao i predstavio uslove u kojima se navode širi kriteriji za kredibilnu kandidaturu BiH za program Partnerstvo za mir. Ti uslovi su stvorili osnovu za plan reforme odbrane u 2004. godini – kako BiH bude bliža članstvu u Partnerstvu za mir i provedbi reformi odbrane u širem smislu. Rad ka ispunjavanju ovih uslova je obuhvatio izuzetne napore domaćih vlasti i međunarodne zajednice – posebno Ministarstva odbrane BiH, uz pomoć entitetskih ministarstava odbrane. Kao što je navedeno u nastavku, ovi zajednički napori su doveli do plodonosnih rezultata.

## 2. Zakonodavni uslovi

Zakonodavni uslovi su zahtijevali usvajanje svih zakona koji su proizašli iz razmatranja i preporuka Komisije za reformu odbrane od prošle godine. Svi zakonodavni uslovi na državnom nivou su ispunjeni. Zakon o odbrani BiH je usvojen u decembru 2003. godine, kao i amandmani na ostale zakone potrebne za stvaranje državnog Ministarstva odbrane. Što se tiče Zakona o odbrani i Zakona o službi u