

# **Changing the Image of Corporate Security in Macedonia: Could Macedonian Corporate Security Legacy Cope With The Global Market And Security Trends?**

**PhD Hadji-Janev, Metodi (LtC)**

**Assistant professor, Military academy “General Mihailo Apostolski”-Skopje**

## **Abstract**

Globalization has brought many changes to the world order. Among other is the rising role of the private sector. As a result today private sector owns many of critical “levers” that on one or another way have enabled states’ monopoly in the past. Considering as one of the fastest growing businesses, employment of the private security corporations during post-conflict management is becoming significant trend. However, there are two specific things about this trend. First, U.S. and U.K. are two countries that have so far most benefits from the business. Second, critics hold that private security corporations during the post-conflict operations pose serious legal and ethical challenges and thus indirectly threaten peace and security efforts.

Additional issue for Macedonia in this context is that like the rest of the South-East European countries (SEE), increasing number of former security and civilian personnel become part of this business without Government’s consent. Many issues regarding this private civilian involvement, like the decapitation of Macedonian workers in 2006, 2007 and 2010 arguable could have been managed better.

Therefore article first explains how corporate security management struggles for place in international market in an age of globalization and how this struggle ends in legal and moral dilemmas. In order to prove that Macedonian corporate security management (like the rest of the SEE management) could compete on the international global market and provide liable partners for international peace and security, the article first briefly describes the short legacy of Macedonian corporate security management and identifies the weakest and strongest points. At the end article provides a “framework proposal” for a “triple win-win” situation, where Government, International organizations and Macedonian corporate security management could benefit.

**Key words: globalization, corporate security management, post-conflict operations,**

## **1. Introduction**

Spread of globalization after the fall of the Iron Curtains have affected virtually all countries around the globe. Globalization has changed the environment and opened new opportunities. In this new environment new non-state actors have challenged state's sovereignty and have overtaken some of the roles that were traditionally available for the states. As an emerging trend, demands for private security have become fashion and necessity that have spread all around the world.

Requirements for private security corporation under the so called "privatization of war" trend have come as a result of many creative ideas of their engagement. Beside economic benefits political benefits from employing private security corporations have met UN criteria calculus for the post-conflict operations. As a result today their services are used by governments and non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations, humanitarian organizations, the media and international organizations. Private corporate from US and UK have by so far realized real opportunity of the market. Nevertheless, many accusations for illegal activities have arguably affected the image of private security corporations.

Macedonia like the rest of the South-East European (SEE) countries has little experience in private corporate security management. The business had begun poorly and is healing from the rough transition. However, creative ideas in the age of globalization can always secure shift from losing to winning side.

Well designed projects with the Macedonian Government's contribution toward improving corporate social responsibility could create "triple win-win" situation. The Government will benefit from the project by improving social responsibility and stability. International community will receive liable partner and will avoid double edge sword situations by employing private security companies. Finally, corporate security management will also improve its potentials, increase the profit and expand its horizons.

## **2. Corporate security's struggle for place on international market in a globalized world: challenge for security and stability?**

### **2.1. Changing environment in the globalized world**

Globalization has largely affected international relations and states' sovereignty. Pursue for wealth and prosperity in the age of globalization has established horizontal connections among geographical, political, and cultural boundaries. Although positive in the context of wealth and

prosperity these connections have flattened hierarchical structures (Friedman, 2005), that were arguably, perceived by many as a source of stability.

The emergence of new non-state actors in the flattened environment has largely affected states' ability to effectively exercise its sovereignty. Today private sector owns many of critical "levers" that on one or another way have enabled states' monopoly in the past. "Privatization of warfare" and the utilization of armed force by transnational corporations to do business as a growing trend in many parts of the world have affected states' monopoly too (Nye, 2002). Although some argue that use of force by non-state actors and acquiring these actors to do business for the states is not new in international relations there are significant signs that indicate the possibility of privatizing UN peace operations (Thompson, 1994).

The issue however, according to some critical views, rises from corporate nurture which is dominated by economic, not moral responsibility (Wright, 2004). Criticism of transnational corporate in globalized world further continues regarding the security issues. Cost reduction and efficiency as the highest priority usually squeeze security considerations. Critics hold that ownership of defense industries, transportation, utilities, and ports could conceivably compromise security by increasing foreign access to critical security information even unintentionally (Blustein and Pincus, 2006; Ervin, 2006; Etter, 2006).

On a contrary in the age of globalization states' have to a certain degree lost ability to attribute its power on these actors. Traditionally, private actors were objects, not subjects of international law and politics. States, or groups of states acting through international institutions, might try to regulate their behavior, but the private groups had little responsibility for setting norms (Treverton, 2003).

Although there some that heavily criticize globalization there are many who believe that globalization is a clear net good. Discussing the effects of globalization Barnett recognizes both sides of the double-edged sword of globalization (Barnett, 2004). Cheering for globalization Fukuyama argues that "*modern liberal democratic societies had grown sufficiently aware and interconnected through modern technology to protect against cataclysmic warfare among superpowers, marking an end to the Cold War, limiting prospects for authoritarian regimes, and substantively altering pre-existing patterns of history*" (Fukuyama, 1992). Thus, ideas for self-sufficiency and economic fragmentation largely sank under the advance of the need for free flow of capital, goods, people, money and services (Wolf, 2004). The growing trend of these processes in the past twenty years has significantly contributed to expansion of private security companies (UNGA Report, 2008).

## **2.2. Security corporations' place in the international market**

The demand for private security and protection of property at the domestic level has tremendously increased all over the world (Wulf, 2006). Security corporations currently offer and provide in the international market a broad spectrum of services. These activities include, but are not limited to, building and site security, convoy and transport security, personal security, advisory and training, air support and logistical support, prisons security, propaganda tactics, intelligence, covert operations and surveillance. Practice shows that security corporations also provide armed protection for transnational corporations in unstable regions. Their services are used by governments and non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations, humanitarian organizations, the media, the United Nations and international organizations (ICRC, 2006).

Beside economic dimension, this growing trend on the international market has political dimension too. Engaging private security corporations is politically safer for many governments and politicians. It avoids direct public opinion accountability and arguably to a certain degree, political too. Same political variables take place on international level. Many states would rather avoid political risk and restrain for engaging in UN operations while private corporations are heavily involved in UN Peace operations managed by Security Council. The Executive Director of International Peace Organization Association (where many private corporations are members) is proud to explain that a number of the companies associated have larger contingents of personnel working in UN and African Union peace operations than most of the countries' members of these two international organizations. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Sudan the security personnel individuals of these transnational companies is vital for United Nations peacekeeping missions (Peterson, 2007). In addition, discussing the U.S. involvement in Iraq according to some authors, the United States Government should have substituted international diplomacy with war contracts and a "coalition of willing nations" ready to provide token forces with a "coalition of billing corporations" ready to supply the brigades of contractors and private security guards (Scahill, 2006).

In order to avoid the accusations and labeling their activities as mercenaries in pursue for legitimacy many private security corporations are members of International Peace Organization Association. Similar to this Association is the British Association of Private Security Companies which was launched to promote the interests and regulate the activities of firms in the United Kingdom that provide armed defensive security services in countries outside the UK (Traynor, 2003). According to its chairperson, the services that these 23 members of the Association provide

to Iraq are probably the largest export of the United Kingdom to that country (Gómez del Prado, 2009).

Even though the industry has expanded on a global scale more than 70% of the security services in the global market are run by companies from the USA and the UK (Gómez del Prado, 2009). Recent trends in the business show that usual labor for these employments come from -third country nationals. Many South-Eastern European Countries (including Macedonia) are priceless source for recruitment. Former military and police officers from Macedonia (but this is not limited to the country) accept jobs as “private security guards” for socio-economic reasons such as unemployment, debts or to provide a better future for their families. When they sign their contracts they waive a number of rights including their right to sue the company which employs them “including even where loss, damage, personal injury or death is caused or contributed to any manner by the company”. However, practice with Chileans, Fijians, Hondurans and Peruvians rises serious concerns that this might happened with Macedonian citizens too (Pincus, 2007).

Since the process of transition among other have introduced private sector in security environment in Macedonia like in the rest of the SEE countries one might ask, why private security corporations from SEE are not present on the international market? This could not just stimulate the economy but will also cover some issues and unregulated areas that could potentially hurt not just local political elites but populace too. In many cases, like for example in Macedonia (Tomic, 2007), there is no certain information on how many people are involved in this business which is also relevant for Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Serbia (Hoffman, 2008).

Furthermore the practice shows that usually private security companies are in their turn subcontracted to other companies registered in the USA or abroad. Many of them are private employment agencies (and some of them “ghost” companies, which may never be legally registered) entrusted with the selection of former military and police personnel from third countries. In many cases these companies are at odds with local regulations. (Trpcevska, 2006, Stankovic, 2008). Serious accusations of abuses or regarding accountability issues of these corporations’ employees (whether in the States contracting them, the States of their citizenship or in the countries where they operate) are another issue that needs attention. The growing number of Macedonians and SEE’s individuals willing to participate in the business on free market further elevates the necessity for a closer look in the management of corporate security sector in Macedonia. Having all these in mind before one should offer a solution to overcome Macedonia’s corporate security abstention from a global market and foreseeable social, political and legal issues (regarding

uncontrolled involvement of the individuals in the business) one should first understand Macedonia's corporate security legacy.

### **3. Management of Macedonian corporate security**

Macedonian decision for independence from Yugoslavia was also decision for ideological shift. Like the rest of the SEE countries process of transition toward democracy was introduced in the overall society. Nevertheless, independence euphoria had soon faced transition reality.

Among other, transition had challenged inherited and new born political elites with hard questions of security. Both, internal and external securities, beside other issues (the name issue, border demarcation, struggle for international recognition, political accommodation of the changes) were just one of the hotspots for founding fathers. Overburdened with other issues (destruction of the market, privatization of the former corporate, monetary stability and issues with waves of job losses) corporate security was neglected. In this context one could argue that inexperience and legal vacuum have mainly contributed to ill management of corporate security sector in Macedonia.

#### **3.1. Early mistakes in Macedonian corporate security management**

Following the western liberal and democratic patterns the process of democratization in Macedonia along with the transition opened the door for private sector in corporate security. However, this decision had caused an earthquake inside the security sector. In fact the mentality did not follow reality.

Centralized security system controlled by military and police professionals in specific parts, switched to decentralized civilian control type security sector. As the private sector was entering in specific public spheres, formerly secured by the state, the number of unregulated and unsecured areas had significantly grown. Global and regional trend endemic for all SEE' countries have soon become evident. Driven by interest not by citizenship, the new owners had seen security considerations as obstacle easy to avoid. This however, was understandable since the political climate had stimulated such behavior.

Without experience in the security sector and without any strategic planning the new political elites have lost corporate security management in transition. Moving to the opposite extreme, they have not just dramatically cut-off the funds for security of crucial infrastructures but have introduced inappropriate defense concept and logistics management. Thus the former homeland security management heavily depended on corporations' and labor's readiness had vanished.

These early mistakes of inexperience have contributed to serious legal vacuum. Operating under the legal darkness for almost nine years private security companies in Macedonia have not avoided “thin red line” from organized crime accusation (Cain, 2010). Transitioning from police and armed forces trained professionals switched to private security companies, protecting banks, schools, money transfers and important people. As some extreme critics see this “the private security sector became its own political, criminal and social force” (Cain, 2010). Nevertheless, pursuit for Euro-Atlantic values over the years has helped Macedonian society to heal from the inappropriate transition.

### **3.2. From inexperienced to credential partner: healing the legacy of Macedonian corporate security management**

Although there were serious mistakes from the beginning some have embraced privatization and have bravely introduced professionalization of Macedonian corporate security management. Understood as a function that supervise and manages the close coordination of all functions within the company that are concerned with security, continuity and safety, private security companies supposed to replace former corporate security. In practice, personal security and physical security, and to some extent, crime prevention and detection and fraud deterrence (in later stages), were the only offer that private security companies could have provide (OSA, Private security Agency).

Having in mind that the nature of the market and the surrounding environment was not ready for such type of correlation this was quite acceptable. Even more, since there was no real experience in this field on both side (new owners of the corporation and the private security companies) the true value of corporate security has not been understood properly. To some extent this is also true for the recent Macedonian corporate security management, but we will refer to this later.

The process of healing of Macedonian corporate security management has been largely enabled by the government’s constructive efforts toward internal security sector. Nine years of legal vacuum in corporate security in the Republic of Macedonia disappear when the Macedonian Parliament passed the law that entrenched the private sector in this field. The “Security of property and personnel Act” (also known as the “Act for Private security agencies”) proclaimed the private security companies’ actions as “public interest actions” (The Official Gazette of R.M. 80/99). The Establishment of Crisis Management Center and Protection and Rescue Directorate has replaced emptiness and overlapping in the internal security and protection area. All of these efforts along

with the emergence of the new agencies and governmental bodies have given guidance of “who should do what in this area”.

Nevertheless Macedonian legacy in corporate security like the rest of the SEE still could not match the global trends. In the last 20 years development of corporate security in Macedonia has stopped at level of personal security and physical security. Although some offer additional services (NIKOB, Security) many services correlated with the global practice are not on the list of Macedonian security corporations. Information security, risk management, not to speak about the compliance and ethic programs, corporate governance, business continuity planning, environment safety and health are something that generally is missing from the service lists of Macedonian corporate security management.

Absence of additional important services that modern corporate security offer is present despite the fact that globalization has entered this sector in Macedonia. Many foreign security corporations have opened its subsidiary offices in Macedonia but yet there is no tradition of expanding services toward other areas than physical security or personal security (including transport of goods and safeguard of cultural, sport and other events-(IBA, Macedonia). One could argue that the reasons for this outcome come from the market requirements' nature.

Many of the Macedonian corporations are still struggling with other issues relapses of transition like reconsolidation and restructuring toward self-sufficiency and the quest for foreign investors (Blazevski, 2003). Recent Macedonian Economic Chamber's study for credit capabilities of small and middle business corporations in Macedonia for example shows that basically all of the Macedonian firms have not consider security risk assessment before they decided to apply for credit approval. (Stefanovski, 2008).

The question than is, whether this is the maximum that corporate security management could do in Macedonia? The answer is simple, no. There is much that could be done. As renowned authority on international economics Professor Bhagwati argues: “...when implemented intelligently globalization could be the most powerful force for social good in the world today, providing especially great opportunities for economic and social uplift in the poorest pockets of the globe...” (Bhagwati, 2004).

Analyses of the global trends and market requirements in the business of corporate security have shown that among other opportunities there are serious requirements that could make this business driving export force for the country. As we saw from above demands for security companies and their services involvement in institution building during post-conflict situations is more than evident. The clear net good from “smart proposal” could also provide answers to the

serious questions regarding private security sector's sustainability and its actual contribution in ending low intensity conflicts. Thus largely perceived picture of "spoilers" or as unregulated but needed actors could be turned into a positive effort and change the image of corporate security from foe to a partner of multinational organizations in providing global security.

### **3.3. Could Macedonian corporate security legacy cope with global market and security trends?**

Following the global market requirements one of the opportunities for Macedonian private security sector (also relevant for the rest of the SEE) is to seek place under the global arena. Several factors are in compliance with these theses. Cost efficiency and decade long tradition of participation in post-conflict security management and nation building are assets that should not be underestimated. Furthermore if managed appropriately these efforts are likely to be welcomed as a contributor to the global peace and stability.

Trend of cheap labor from the Region has already been recognized. Recruitment from Macedonia has become especially popular since 2005 and 2006 and is growing trend. Beside for security sector other corporation like, offering different public services necessary in post-conflict nation building. First for Iraq and now for Afghanistan these corporations recruit employees from Macedonian on a large scale.

Arguably Macedonian effective military contribution to the stability and support operations and its subsequent phases – "enabling civil authorities" both in Afghanistan and Iraq have attracted transnational corporation to seek labor force from Macedonia. This is also relevant for other SEE countries. Many army professionals (officers, non-commission officers and privates) after serving in Afghanistan or Iraq have left the service and joined private corporations for a higher salary. Nevertheless the question that needs to be answered is how Macedonian security corporations could win the piece of the pie?

Credible government support in this process will be more than welcome. It would not just open the door for security corporations but will also turn the story with corporate security from neutral into a success. The Government will also benefit from this. It will establish some level of control over the people that work in these areas, it will increase social stability and by definition government involvement will increase the level of accountability of the private security employees.

## **4. Moving forward, Macedonian Government project: “means to an end” for corporate security management**

Much has been written about the relationship between government and corporate security. Many governments around the world have joined other stakeholders in assuming relevant role as drivers of corporate and social stability (Moon, 2004). Credible arguments confirm that serious measures have been undertaken in adopting public sector's role in strengthening development of corporations and providing for its success (Fox, Ward, and Howard, 2002). International and regional organizations (Global Compact and the European Commission), have also recognized the value of to promote and endorse government's role for this manner.

Macedonian Government could use all instruments of national power in order to support the success of the security corporations on the global market. Diplomacy, Information, Military and Economy could all be employed to achieve success. In fact, project like this will create “win –win” scenario for all stakeholders.

### **4.1. How can Macedonian Government profit from this?**

Macedonia like the rest of the SEE countries is healing from the rough transition. World economic crises although not directly has stormed Macedonian business community too. Name issue with south neighbor Greece is clear example of how politic can sometimes create absurd situation. Macedonia has fulfilled all NATO requirements and has become a leader in the Region. Yet due to the *de facto* Greek's veto at the Bucharest NATO Summit only Albania and Croatia were granted membership and Macedonia has further been stopped in its efforts of joining EU.

The Euro-Atlantic integration is crucial for political security and economic reasons. There is general believe that NATO memberships is the key for Macedonian stability. Although Ohrid Framework agreement has so far proven as a success it would be naïve to neglect centrifugal forces that are using cheap political agenda to spur ethnic tensions. Social stability on the other hand has proven so far as key supporter or driving force for overcoming political and ethnic tensions.

The new NATO strategic concept seems to open the door for such efforts too. Under the idea for cooperative security it recognizes the potentials for addressing modern challenges not just with allies but also with partner nations (NATO, 2010). Furthermore one of the key requirements for the post-conflict nation building success is larger involvement of civil sector (Lyon, 2004). In fact big military foot on the ground has so far eroded NATO legitimacy and failed to achieve desired end-state in fighting global insurgency while building nations both in Iraq and Afghanistan

(Bergen, 2011). Although not directly connected to this idea fresh ideas are also welcomed for future post ISAF NATO efforts.

This indirect approach will create the right framework from which Macedonian Government will benefit by achieving change through market forces. Exporting accountable labor force will stimulate more jobs, will give chance for smaller security corporations (since the stronger will occupy global market), and will improve international Government image. Additionally Government will reduce chances of facing awkward situation like 2006 execution of Macedonian workers in Afghanistan. Arguably if the Government had direct information about the Macedonian labor's condition it could have act differently since we also had forces on the ground (Dnevnik, 2006, but also see: Avramovski, September 29, 2007, or Vecer, March 07, 2010).

Of course diplomacy should play crucial role too. In this context, building on the successful military contribution should be the trump of a Government's diplomatic strategy. This potential project if properly managed will provide for global stability and security too.

#### **4.2. How can international organization benefit from this?**

The 2007 Swiss Peace Institute's research study indicate that private security guards contribute to insecurity by perpetuating a "culture of war", and raise concerns as to the lack of transparency blurring responsibility and accountability of private military companies and their employees (Swisspeace, 2007). A large number of these private security guards are neither nationals of one of the parties to the conflict nor residents of the country in conflict. Recruited in their respective countries from all over the world as "private security guards" they have not been officially sent by their respective States to provide protection. These individuals are essentially motivated by private gain. Arguably these are all characteristics of the mercenary-related activities and modalities of the conflicts of the twenty-first century (Chesterman and Lehnardt, 2007).

Government efforts in providing corporate social responsibility as we have concluded could serve as credential antidote to this unregulated area. In fact this new ways of collaborating between corporations, governments and civil society can create innovative mechanisms for governance (Zadek 2001, Midttun 2004, 2005). It won't be hard to conclude that the issue of accountability will improve stability and security in the post-conflict areas. Accountability would be the price for gaining the place on board.

Since most of the SEE countries share similar challenges and tradition with small adjustments this proposal could be applied with ease in the rest of the Region. Indirectly it will

increase the competition, but will also increase the quality and accountability. Thus it will improve corporate security image and will also contribute to a regional cooperation and stability. Government's role in building accountability leads us to the final beneficiary in this story i.e. the private corporate security management.

### **4.3. Benefits for corporate security management**

The end-state of this proposal's goal goes far beyond the direct effects of the biggest beneficiary i.e. corporate security management. Despite opportunity for immediate profit there is serious chance for long term profit too. Since the Government will be a sponsor for the program (and in returns will require accountability and ethic behavior) the valuable training for the corporate security employees could also be in place. This training and lessons learned will increase security corporations' image and will gave opportunity to expand their services beyond traditional physical and personal security.

Good performance will attract other international corporate to require security analyses, risk management and other security performance on their regards. This could not just improve the image but will improve the profit of the company too (Albareda , Lozano and Ysa 2004). Ultimately if this proposal turns in to a success it will attract other Macedonian corporation to start their own quest in conquering global market in this manner.

## **5. Conclusion**

The spread of globalization has changed the World environment. On one hand globalization has brought financial and economic advantages, but on the other it has brought social and cultural challenges. In the new environment private corporations have begun to overtake some of the traditional state's roles. Among other, the most significant opportunity that globalization has offered is the "privatization of war".

Economic and political benefits have urged UN to employ large number of private security corporations during post-conflict nation building. This trend is largely followed by governments, non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations, humanitarian organizations, the media, and other international organizations. Operating under the legal vacuum some of the private security corporations actions' have faced legal, ethical and moral challenges.

Although West has been fast in adopting of the market requirements, private security corporations from Macedonia, like the rest of the SEE are still largely limited on the home market.

Following the opportunity for better salary many officers, noncommissioned officers and privates from Macedonian security forces leave Macedonian security sector and join these companies on the global market in the post-conflict areas.

Well designed project with the Government's support in the process in encouraging corporate social responsibility will have great net good. Government will provide liable partner on the market. It will establish significant control over the Macedonian population abroad. The Government will also improve social stability. International community will receive valuable partner that for now is unregulated phenomenon which is desperately needed. Ultimately, the project will expand private corporations' horizons and will improve their financial situation.

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